



Detroit River Canadian Cleanup
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Meeting Record: DRCC Steering & Implementation Committee

January 27, 2019 10 am-12:00 pm
Teleconference

Welcome, introductions, approval of agenda

Review of Action Items (see Appendix II); Approval of Meeting Record from June 19, 2019

April began the meeting by introducing Sara as the meeting's chair. Sara started with a round of introductions. The meeting attendance is included in Appendix I. The agenda and meeting record from June 2019 was approved by consensus and the action items from the June 2019 meeting and their updates are included as Appendix II of this meeting record.

Canada Ontario Agreement (COA) update and Updates from COA Executive / GLWQA or Great Lakes Protection Initiative (GLPI); Four Agency Management Committee

Canadian Ontario Agreement

Sara shared that negotiations are still taking place between the federal and provincial governments to finalize the new COA agreement. Ted added that the COA funds from the province, which fund Remedial Action Plan (RAP) governance and outreach were put on hold in June 2018. In September 2019, the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks approved the release of these held funds. Ted has since been working with ERCA and the DR RAP coordinator to provide the funding for RAP governance and outreach. In addition to this COA grant, Ted mentioned he is currently working with UWindsor to transfer COA funds for data collection relating to fish consumption and other BUI reviews. Both the RAP governance and outreach and the UWindsor grants are currently in legal review.

GLPI

Sara explained that the call for proposals for the Great Lakes Protection Initiative recently went out, and the deadline to apply is March 3. There are a few categories for projects including science, action based projects, and RAP governance. Sara recommended that any application should fit within any of those three categories and be tied to BUIs. There is not a requirement for matching funding any more, but it is an evaluation criteria that will be taken into consideration.

FAMC

April mentioned an in person FAMC meeting took place in Windsor in October 2019. The meeting was hosted by the U.S. but took place in Windsor due to travel restrictions. The formal portion of the meeting took place in the morning and the afternoon was spent out on the river. GLIER provided boats and the group explored the lower Detroit River and its habitat restoration projects. The next FAMC is being planned and that one of the agenda items is going to be the collapse of the shoreline at the former Revere Copper site in the US.

DRCC membership – review/update/vacancies

Jackie presented a full update on the various working groups of the DRCC to identify vacancies and partnership opportunities. Her presentation is included in Appendix III.

Steering and Implementation Committee

Currently two vacancies exist: one Town of LaSalle vacancy and one industry vacancy. Jackie asked SIC how it is determined who sits on these committees from each municipality and who might be a good fit for these positions. For the industry committee member, Jackie suggested they reach out to LaFarge and BASF as the DRCC has done projects with them in the past. April suggested drafting a letter to send out to the Town of LaSalle and Detroit River industries describing the RAP to seek a representative from these organizations. The organizations can then determine who might be the best fit for the SIC, if interested. Paul mentioned that the terms of reference for the SIC mention that the CAO should be contacted to see if each municipality is willing to participate, and if not, they can delegate to other staff members. Jackie agreed to send the letter to the CAO of LaSalle as a starting place.

ACTION ITEM: Jackie to draft a letter to solicit representatives on the SIC.

April asked about Dave Richards and wondered if he should still be included on the SIC as his role with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has changed. Jackie answered that Dave is likely an alternate to Rich, and attends when Rich is unable to. Rich later confirmed that Dave should be removed and Stephen Marklevitz should be added as he is the current Acting COA coordinator. April asked Sharilyn if she would like to continue sitting on the SIC moving forward. She said that her Environment Committee agreed to participate when they can.

Habitat Work Group

The Habitat WG does not currently have a Ducks Unlimited representative. Ted confirmed that Darryl Randall was the last Ducks Unlimited representative and he has since retired. Jackie suggested contacting Owen Steele from DU and Ted offered to provide a contact at DU for someone to potentially sit on the Habitat Work Group. Jackie informed the group that the Essex County Stewardship Network is identified as a member of the Habitat Work Group in the Stage 2 terms of reference, but that this group does not exist anymore, so it will be removed from the list. April suggested that Dave Richards (MNRF) be removed and substituted with Stephen Marklevitz. April later mentioned that the manager of the north section of Ruwe marsh could also be considered as a potential member.

ACTION ITEM: Ted to provide contact name for DU.

ACTION ITEM: Update the Habitat WG to include Stephen Marklevitz.

ACTION ITEM: April to reach out to Ruwe marsh manager.

Loadings/PP Work Group

This group has not met since 2013. Ted or April have not had any involvement with this group,. Ted thought we could reach out to Teri to determine what she thinks might be best moving forward.

ACTION ITEM: Reach out to Teri to determine the fate of the Loadings and PP Work Group.

Monitoring and Research and the Education and Public Involvement Work Group

Both are in good standing.

ACTION ITEM: Jackie to draft a letter to the Town of LaSalle and industries along the Detroit River to seek representation for the SIC.

ACTION ITEM: Jackie to update all DRCC Work Group members and their affiliations before next SIC meeting.

Indigenous Engagement

Jackie provided a brief update on previous First Nations engagement the RAP has conducted. In June of 2018, the DRCC sent letters to the five First Nations that were signatories to the McKee Treaty of 1879 (Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Bkejwanong (Walpole Island) First Nation, Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Caldwell First Nation). A letter also went to Oneida Nation of the Thames as they are the closest nation to the Detroit River included in the Nanfan Treaty of 1701. A letter was also sent to Delaware First Nation as they requested engagement with the Detroit River RAP during a Canada Ontario Agreement Executive meeting in the Niagara area in May 2018.

Since these letters were sent, Aamjiwnaang and Caldwell expressed interest in being involved in the RAP process. Claire has presented to Caldwell and Aamjiwnaang First Nations about the RAP and ERCA in the past and have invited their members to all SIC meetings. In addition, the Tumour and Benthos BUI re-designation reports were circulated to Aamjiwnaang and Caldwell for comment in September 2019; no response was received. Moving forward, Jackie plans to develop an Indigenous Engagement Strategy within the DRCC Communications Plan to outline how we continue Indigenous engagement as BUIs are re-designated and we move towards delisting. Jackie's presentation is included as Appendix III of the meeting record.

ACTION ITEM: Create an Indigenous Engagement Strategy for the DRCC.

Key Discussion Points

Raj suggested the DRCC consider including TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) in any future BUI assessments. TEK is regarded as a key piece to engaging with First Nations when conducting any science based projects, restoration, and more.

Kevin shared that there was First Nations consultation via the permit process for the Peche Island. Through this consultation, Walpole Island First Nation staff and ERCA identified that geographically it is difficult to engage, and a tour of ERCA's watershed and properties was suggested to help establish a partnership.

Sharilyn commented that several First Nations meet as a group to discuss challenges, opportunities, and their progress with consultation. She suggested this may be a good venue for the DRCC to present about their program. She also suggested resending letters to all the Chiefs and cc their consultation staff.

April mentioned that ECCC is doing work to engage with the Métis and Jackie asked to be updated as this process moves along.

A discussion took place regarding First Nations events the DRCC could potentially attend to disseminate information about the RAP program, and Sharilyn suggested St. Clair River Days on March 7th and Earth Day on April 25th as possibilities. Sharilyn will send more information about these events.

ACTION ITEM- Jackie to prepare and send letters by mail and e-mail to Chiefs and consultation persons to Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation,

Caldwell First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Delaware First Nation to introduce the DRCC, RAP and welcome their participation in the program.

Detroit River Habitat Projects (Collavino & Peche Island)

Collavino

Kevin mentioned the project is essentially complete from a construction perspective and has engineer sign off. A draft wetland management plan has been created and the actions outlined in the document will be implemented in the spring. Kevin is considering seeking funding through GLPI to support the actions outlined in the draft management plan. Within a week or two, a test drawdown will take place to ensure that the pumping infrastructure is functional. He informed the group that an additional DFO permit will be needed to conduct drawdowns to ensure that no fish will be killed in the drawdown process and fish can seek refuge in deep water areas.

Peche

The Peche Island project has been delayed due to delays with the DFO permit. Some of the rock islands that would serve as habitat and erosion protection were located in endangered Northern Madtom critical habitat. Discussions with the project engineer and City of Windsor led exploring alternative options for constructing the project. These options include revetments, removing the rock islands from the critical habitat, and other erosion protection measures options on the northeast side of the island. ERCA is currently waiting to hear back from the project engineer with a revised design. The new design will likely consist of a rock revetment without habitat features on the northeast side, as DFO seems more receptive to this new project approach.

BUI Status Updates

Update on Benthos and Tumour Re-designation

April presented an update on the status of the BUIs for the Detroit River. Her presentation is included as Appendix IV. Both Fish Tumours and other Deformities (BUI #4), and Degradation of Benthos (BUI #6) assessment reports were presented at the last SIC. Since then, the completed assessment reports have been presented to the PAC and sent to the FAMC for comments. No critical flaws were identified and the DRCC is in the process of creating an appendix to the reports addressing these comments. Some additional work needs to be done on the BUI #6 assessment report, then both reports will be sent to the COA leads for review. The goal is to have both assessment reports submitted by the end of March 2020.

The next BUI assessment will be the Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton (BUI #13) BUI. DFO, the expert federal agency for this BUI, recommended additional sampling be completed which was conducted in summer 2019. So far, all of the taxonomy analysis has been completed on the collected samples. DFO is now in the process of reviewing the additional sampling data to provide a recommendation on the status of Phyto and Zooplankton in the Detroit River. DFO has been invited to the next Monitoring and Research Work Group meeting to provide an update, and the writing of the assessment report will follow. The plan is for DFO to provide a written status recommendation report in the spring of 2020.

Harmonized criteria for fish consumption BUI

The delisting criteria for the fish consumption BUI has presented challenges to the DR and other AOCs. In response, GLIER, MECP, and ECCC created generic delisting criteria that states that this BUI could be considered not impaired when there are no restrictions on fish consumption in the AOC that are

attributable to local controllable sources. April proposed to the SIC that the DR AOC delisting criteria and the generic delisting criteria be used in the assessment of this BUI. This tiered approach was recommended by the DRCC Monitoring and Research Work Group. The SIC did not have any objections to using this approach for BUI #1 moving forward.

The DRCC is also running a fish consumption survey that will be used as one of the lines of evidence in the fish consumption BUI assessment. Through preliminary 2019 results, Jackie explained that freshwater drum is not commonly consumed, which is important as this was the only species, as identified by GLIER, whose fish consumption guidelines would benefit from sediment remediation on the Canadian side of the river. Jackie mentioned that the fish survey will continue in the spring to capture data from various fish runs through the Detroit River. April concluded by saying that she is now in the process of engaging GLIER to compile and analyze the fish consumption data for this BUI with an assessment report expected in Fall 2020.

ACTION ITEM: April to send more information regarding the Generic Delisting Criteria to the group.

Other BUI Updates

With the expected completion of these four BUIs, we will have three BUIs remaining. Moving forward in 2020, we have identified our approach to addressing these three remaining BUIs below.

Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations (BUI #3)

The Habitat Work Group is working on developing sub-criteria for this BUI. The delisting criteria states this BUI will be considered not impaired when environmental conditions support self-sustaining and healthy communities and the established sub-criteria will help identify what lines of evidence that can be used to assess this BUI. April reminded the group that populations is tightly linked to habitat (also developing sub-criteria), and informed them that the DRCC is keeping that in mind as we go through this process.

Bird/Animal Deformities or Other Reproductive Problems (BUI #5)

April informed the group that the snapping turtle reproduction research completes the animal research component of this BUI. In 2019, tree swallow sampling was conducted and once these data are analyzed, we will be in good shape to evaluate next steps for this BUI in 2020.

Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat (BUI #14)

The Habitat Work Group is working on identifying measurable sub-criteria for each habitat type. In addition to subcriteria, one need is determining which types of habitat should be the restoration priority. Phil mentioned that the Town of Amherstburg would consider fish/coastal wetland habitat projects at Ranta and Angstrom Park.

Work Group Priorities for 2020

April presented what the priorities are for the Monitoring and Research Work Group which includes reviewing assessment reports, BUI re-designations, and preparing for updates at the June 2020 SIC meeting. As for Habitat Work Group, they will be finalizing sub criteria, supporting implementation projects, working on the habitat suitability model with DFO, and completing much needed GIS work to determine the amount of habitat work done to date in the DR and its watershed.

Communications Plan Update (Gina Pannunzio, DRCC)

Gina provided an update on outreach efforts including the fall TD Tree Days planting at the Earth Day site in Little River and recognizing Ric Coronado at the 2019 ERCA Conservation Awards with an Environmental

Achievement award. She explained that the DRCC was not able to fund as many tree plantings in 2018/19. Coming up in March, the DRCC will host a film screening event, A Plastic Ocean, at the Capitol Theatre, and the Great Global Cleanup along American and Canadian sides of the Detroit River will take place on April 25 2020. Her presentation is included as Appendix III of this meeting record. April asked Gina to share outreach/social media content with her for these events.

ACTION ITEM: Gina to share outreach/social media content with April.

Public Advisory Council Report (Tom Henderson, DRCC PAC Chair)

Tom was not able to attend in person, as he was attending the budget meetings for the City of Windsor. Jackie provided his update to the SIC. She reminded the group that WDBA agreed to provide seed money to support an eco passage through the Ojibway Prairie Complex. Tom is asking the City to include this project in their capital budget. In addition, Tom sent a letter to Premier Doug Ford to thank him for current COA funding. He would also like to meet with Irek Kusmierczyk, MPP (formerly ERCA Chair) to discuss the importance of DRCC.

Round Table Updates

Paul mentioned that the ESR for CSO control west of Caron Avenue for the City of Windsor has been completed. Kevin shared that ERCA is preparing for spring restoration projects in the AOC aside from Peche and Collavino. Neil explained that Brighton Beach is now fully owned by OPG and they are working on some greening projects on site.

April reminded everyone that GLPI is looking for projects that include science, restoration, and governance support for AOCs. Applications are time consuming, and she recommended getting in touch with her discuss any potential projects. More consideration would be given to applications that tie into the RAP work plan and BUIs.

Other items/ Closing Remarks/ Next Meeting

April concluded the meeting and said that June 17 2020 would be the next in person SIC meeting followed by an activity and the Detroit River Evening.

Appendix I. Meeting Attendance

Jacqueline Serran	Detroit River Canadian Cleanup
Gina Pannunzio	Detroit River Canadian Cleanup
Kevin Money	Essex Region Conservation Authority
April White	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Sara Varty	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Paul Drca	City of Windsor
Ted Briggs	Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks
Sean Morrison	Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks
Raj Bejankiwar	International Joint Commission
Neil Finnerty	Brighton Beach Power
Phil Roberts	Town of Amherstburg
Sharilyn Johnston	Aamjiwnaang First Nation

Appendix II. Action Items from June 19, 2019 and their Updates

ACTION ITEM: DRCC to bring forward fish tumour and other deformities assessment to the EPI/PAC and then to FAMC and First Nations, and then post for public comment for 40 to 60 days. **Done.**

ACTION ITEM: DRCC to bring forward the degradation of benthos assessment report and recommendation for re-designation to the EPI/PAC, the FAMC, First Nations and the public. The report will be posted for public comment for 40 to 60 days. **Done.**

ACTION ITEM: DRCC PAC to invite American colleagues to present their progress at an upcoming PAC meeting. **Done.**

ACTION ITEM: Jackie to send updated 2019 Pathway to Delisting document to SIC group. **Done.**