

St. Marys River Bi-National Public Advisory Council (BPAC) Meeting Minutes

Place: Thompson Room, Civic Centre
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

When: January 18th, 2011
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

1. Call to order/introductions

Present: Don Marles, Al Wright, Mike Ripley, Corrina Barrett, Lorelei Premo, Crystal Bole, Amanda Bosak, Klaas Oswald, Corey Jerome, Paige Filice, Greg Zimmerman, Susan Hamilton Beach
New: Tym Garside (ENE, MOE District Manager)
Regrets: Paula Antunes, Suzanne Lieurance, Mary Rossiter, James Dukes
Guest: Jason Bertrim (Q104 Rogers Radio)

2. Approval of minutes

June 29, 2010

- Mark Chambers (EC) requested minutes amendment. Amendment approved. Minutes approved.

November 18, 2010

- Corrina Barrett requested minutes amendment. Amendment approved. Minutes approved.

December 8, 2010

- Minutes not available at this time, member working on them, should be available next meeting.

3. Business arising from previous minutes

Possibility of obtaining funding for a minutes recorder:

- A digital recorder has been purchased under funding for the RAP Coordinator, and Corrina will ensure its use during BPAC meetings on Ontario side.

Sediment containment in the area involving the lock construction on the state side

- Don followed up and talked to Sue Greenwood who said she had not been contacted by the Corps & knew nothing about it. Don will contact the Corps about this.

4. Office Reports

- *Note: the Fish and Wildlife Restoration Plan which is the delisting criteria for fish and wildlife BUI in Michigan waters calls for two projects: Little Rapids at the head of Sugar Island, and Neebish Island Rock Cut.* Greg participated in a call with the EPA Great Lakes National Program Office: the EPA is not able to provide funding for Little Rapids without a feasibility study, and they are no longer able to provide funding for feasibility study itself (Corps of Engineers had said on a previous call that they may be able to cover the hydrologic model of the Little Rapids). On a more recent call with the Corps, the Corps mentioned that they had done a feasibility study on the Neebish Rock Cut idea and it would cost \$35 million to restore approx. 20 acres, so it is not considered a feasible idea. Therefore, must revisit the delisting criteria, taking Neebish Rock Cut out and replacing with a more feasible project.

- Environmental Summit: Greg and Paige mentioned that it might be time for a new approach. Instead of presentations or panel discussions on a particular topic, it might be in BPACs interest to do a “St. Marys River Appreciation Night” and focus on the history, culture, and natural history instead of on habitat restoration or water quality. Try and involve elementary/high school/college students. Possibility of creating an art contest for children, or essays for older youth with a St. Marys River theme. BPAC agreed there should be a change in the structure of the summit, possibly to be held on World Water Day (March 22, 2011).
- Celebration Coordinators: Greg Zimmerman and Paige Filice
- Volunteer Celebration Committee: Al Wright, Crystal Bole, Amanda Bosak, Lorelei Premo

5. Agency Reports

MCM Marine Update (see notes attached to agenda):

- Feelings that the timeline for Phase 2 of the GLLA is a little short, especially as BPAC was told there would be consultation prior to the implementation of Stage 2 (which is scheduled for spring 2011).
- Greg will follow up with those involved and find out about any updates, etc.

Sediment Management Plan Update (see notes attached to agenda):

- Feelings as though Conceptual Site Model might not be of a big enough scope, instead would like to see a complete comprehensive sediment management plan.
- Worried that lowering water levels will lead to the need for more dredging by industry etc. as boats are scrapping across bottom of the channels. This dredging could lead to contaminants being resuspended if the “official” decision is to leave the sediments where they are.
- Wondering if BPAC will be kept in the loop with regards to how decisions are made and if BPAC will have a say at all.
- Corrina assured BPAC that they will be “kept in the loop” and that she would follow up with EC/MOE regarding their concerns.

4 Agency Report (attached):

- Corrina will follow up with MOE to see if there is a timeline for the GIS interactive mapping.
- Note: Although ENVIRON is based out of the United States, the work they were hired to do was focused on the Ontario side, although there is some overlap with the Michigan side. Once the report is finalized, it will be shared with BPAC.

RAP Coordinator:

- BPAC members are to contact Corrina directly if they are interested in participating in the Home and Outdoor Show (March 11-13).
- Discussion on BPAC website content. Left it up to Corrina to decide what is or is not appropriate at this time.
- SSMRCA/Lorelei Premo would like to know if anyone is interested in becoming the CHRS contact (as her contract is up in March 2011). No one volunteered at this time, but there are a few members still to ask. Lorelei also mentioned that she might be able to be the contact, as long as BPAC members continued to be a resource to her for information.

6. Public Comments

No comments at this time.

7. Memberships

No new members were present at meeting.

8. New Business

Sediment contamination in the area involving the lock construction on the state side

- Covered previously in Business Arising.

Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership Call for Project Proposals for 2011

- Possibility of a proposal for a comprehensive study starting at the tailgates at the rapids and coming all the way down, figuring out where contaminated sediments start and stop. Need to find out if any agencies, universities etc. want to run with this. No additional comments.
- Potential of using surplus aggregate (possibly from construction of locks on American side) for restoration purposes of rapids, etc. Must make sure we are not enhancing spawning habitat for sea lampreys etc. in the process. No additional comments.

Funding opportunity for Michigan's AOCs -- Michigan Sea Grant Invites Pre-proposals

- No comments at this time.

Restoring Michigan's Great Lakes: Opportunities in Year Two of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Mike Ripley & Corey Jerome

- All of the AOCs in Michigan were present, and started off with a session explaining the amount of money available. In about a month there will be a request for applications/proposals for \$40 million, looking for projects similar to how BPAC had applied to the "Little Rapids Project".
- Mike and Corey sat down with Michelle Selzer and the Corps of Engineers, found out what Greg Zimmerman had already mentioned in Office Reports. Mrs. Selzer mentioned that BPAC should think about and agree upon other projects that could be done and added on to the Fish and Wildlife Habitat BUI on the US side (such as the Watershed Implementation Plan (focusing on polluted Urban Creeks on US Side)). Greg discussed bringing the Technical Fish and Wildlife Team back together to better assess this potential project and other ones to add on to this BUI.
- Corey mentioned that the district has applied for the DNRE Michigan Clean Initiative for a planning project focusing on the Charlotte River. Should know by March if it goes through.
- Don requested that Mike and Corey follow up with a written paragraph to recap what went on at the Lansing meeting and what is now expected of BPAC to be included in the minutes.

Bottled water

<http://www.bottledwaterfreeday.ca>

- Left it up to individuals to visit website and decide, bring issues up at next meeting if applicable.

Ellsin Environmental Ltd.

<http://www.ellsin.com>

(above address doesn't work, try going to <http://209.91.190.247/ellsin/Ellsin/Home.html>)

- Don had a phone call with the new Plant Manager (Mr. Ian Constable), and participated in a plant tour.
- Suggested going to above website to view the "recycling concept", as it is an accurate representation of what happens within the plant. Plant is about 40% completed at this time.

- The Plant Manager may come to a future BPAC meeting, and there is a ribbon cutting ceremony in the works for when the plant is in operation including an open house, to which BPAC may be included.
- Take home messages from Plant Manager: No tires will be held on site (not a dumping ground), and tires are only accepted from a licenced distributor

Final St. Marys River *E. coli* Monitoring Report <ftp://ftp.deq.state.mi.us/deq-outgoing/>

- Not out yet, but will be soon. BPAC will follow up when it is available.

DEQ/MNR Departments now separate

Great Lakes Day in Washington: the commission will pay for one BPAC member to attend the convention in Washington. If anyone is interested in going this year, please let the Executive know so that arrangements can be made.

Corey mentioned the district may need a letter of support from BPAC for potential projects through NOAA funding (i.e. Sustain Our Great Lakes).

Susan mentioned that the City of SSM may need a letter of support from BPAC for a potential project through the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund.

9. Next meeting

- Date to be determined (end of February, early March)
- Next meeting should have elections for a new Chair/Executive

10. Adjourn

- Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm

Additional Information:

Sault Naturalists annual dinner meeting Sault College February 8, 2011

Four Agency Report to the St. Marys River BPAC Meeting January 18, 2011

City Hall [Thompson Room], Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

Environment Canada (EC)

- EC is accepting proposals for the Government of Canada's Great Lakes Sustainability Fund. The Fund provides grant money to organizations working on projects that advance priorities of Areas of Concern – such as the St. Marys River – and actions outlined under the Remedial Action Plan. The proposal package was sent to BPAC and other groups in the Sault area in mid-December. Deadline for submissions is February 1, 2011.

Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE)

- A GIS specialist with the MOE is taking the lead on mapping sediment quality data that has been collected over the past 15+ years within the AOC. EC provided relevant data in the Fall, which is to be used to complete the interactive map. MOE will communicate with BPAC to ensure the map is useful for BPAC members and other stakeholders.

EC/MOE Sediment Technical Team [includes other stakeholders]

- Phase 1 of the Sediment Transport + Fate Model for Bellevue Marine Park is complete, which successfully gathered available data and selected appropriate models. For Phase 2, samples to support the model were taken in Sept. 2010 and the data results are pending. The study is expected to be completed by the Spring, which will assess the stability of surface sediments to determine if the deeper, more contaminated sediments might be exposed under various scenarios. A presentation to BPAC will be arranged for March/April.
- Results from sediment quality and benthic health studies are currently pending. Analysis and interpretation of 2009 benthic assessment of sediment toxicity is near completion. Additional samples from east of Bellevue Marine Park and the Lake George Channel were collected in late 2010 to better delineate the areas. Moreover, core samples were taken from these areas to assess contamination levels at depth to obtain a vertical profile of contamination, and an analysis was conducted to assess potential impacts from contaminants present in porewater. Data results for these studies are expected this Summer; at which time the Sediment Technical Team will determine if sufficient information is available to make an informed decision, and if so, to then advise whether active sediment management action(s) are needed. A presentation to BPAC will be arranged for late Summer/early Fall.
- *Environ* was hired with the help of AlgomaU to prepare a Conceptual Site Model, which is a narrative and pictorial tool to better understand the current conditions with respect to contaminated sediment. It will illustrate sources of contaminants, migration pathways, and their impacts. When finalized in the coming weeks, it will be shared with BPAC.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment (DNRE)

- The Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council, in partnership with the DNRE, held a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative workshop on January 13th in Lansing. The workshop brought stakeholders together to prepare for year two of the GLRI. The AOC program coordinators identified restoration priorities for each AOC and staff from federal agencies discussed upcoming funding opportunities under the GLRI. Workshop participants were also provided the status of the Great Lakes Legacy Act and options for generating non-federal cost share for contaminated

sediment cleanup projects. A networking period followed the formal presentations during which participants met with AOC leaders, agency staff, consultants and other partners to discuss project ideas and considered the best approach for developing funding proposals.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA)

- The Great Lakes Legacy Act, Phase 1, cleanup of a section of the St. Marys River near the MCM Marine facility was completed in the spring of 2010. Phase 2 of the project is currently in the design phase and is focused on the contaminated sediments located near the shipping channel. Implementation of Phase 2 is expected to begin in the spring of 2011. The goal of the \$4 million project is to reduce impacts to human health and the environment and improve water quality in the St. Marys River.