

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

**Place:** Russ Ramsay Room, Civic Centre  
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

**When:** March 10th, 2011  
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

### **1. Call to order/introductions**

**Present:** Al Wright, Paula Antunes, Corrina Barrett, Don Elliot, Amanda Bosak, Corey Jerome, Mike Ripely, Mark Chambers, Michelle McChristie, Klaas Oswald, Don Marles

**New:** Chris Tenaglia (M. R. Wright), Robert Bressan (Conestoga Rovers Associates)

**Regrets:** Greg Zimmerman, Susan Hamilton Beach, Lorelei Premo, Crystal Bole, Suzanne Lieurance, Tym Garside

**Guests:** John Murtha (EZ Rock), Marcus Scornaienchi

### **2. Approval of minutes**

December 8, 2010

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

January 18, 2011

- Don Marles requested minutes amendment. Amendment approved. Minutes approved.

### **3. Business arising from previous minutes**

None.

### **4. Office Reports**

Home and Outdoor Show: taking place Friday March 11-13. Corrina mentioned that anyone interested in volunteering on behalf of BPAC should talk to her at the end of the meeting.

Environmental Summit: taking place on March 26, 2011 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm in the Cisler Centre at Lake Superior State University. For information on the summit contact Paige Filice or Greg Zimmerman.

### **5. Agency Reports**

4 – Agency Update (attached)

- Mark and Michelle discussed the 4-Agency update with BPAC members.
- Questions were brought up about:
  - Where will tern study will be conducted? Answer: from Gros Cap to St. Joes Island.
  - Will fish also be assessed? Answer: No, the DFO and SMRFTG will be conducting their own studies starting in 2012. MOE also has a sport fish contaminant program, and there are looking at small fish/young of year to assess contamination. Results from the fish tumor study of 2009 will be available soon as well.

- Comments were made about the possibility of making the GIS mapping more local (i.e. GIS at SSMIC), this way there would be more interest as local stakeholders would be involved, would be longer term and may help it move forward faster.

## **6. Presentation**

Slides for presentation will be available on BPAC website

- Are chemicals of emerging concern addressed at all? Answer: this is covered more in the Lake Superior LaMP than in the RAP. All known parameters are tested for in pore water analysis though.
- Bellevue Marine Park is at step 7 of the Canada-Ontario Decision Making Framework (assessing deeper sediments and their risk), Lake George Channel and East of Bellevue Marine Park are at about step 4 (assessing the potential for biomagnification, sediment toxicity, and impacts on benthic communities).
- The decisions regarding prioritized sites were made by the Clean-Up and Restoration Task Team in the early 2000's. The group prioritized sites based on sediment contaminant levels (exceedances of Severe Effect Levels). The larger RAP Team accepted the prioritized list when it produced the AOC's Stage 2 RAP report in 2002. 2010 was the most recent sampling year and results from this study will be presented by Danielle Milani (i.e. pore water analysis) to BPAC soon.
- The possibility of a BPAC member joining Essar's Communication Committee, Michelle McChristie will follow up with this.
- Dr. Bommanna Krishnappan's Flow and Transport Model does look at shipping impacts alongside environmental forms of resuspension. The presentation to BPAC should be ready for early spring.
- What is BPACs role? Answer: BPAC represents the public opinion and the public needs representation throughout this process. BPAC is informed by the agencies and therefore concerns can be brought up and looked into. The role is that of advisors, local knowledge, and public representation.

## **7. Public Comments**

- None.

## **8. Memberships**

- For new members, applications must be received & prospective members present for confirmation – standard procedure.
- The addition of Paula Antunes to BPAC was moved by Al Wright. Seconded by Mike Ripley. Paula Antunes was welcomed as a new member.
- Chris Tenaglia expressed interest in becoming a new member. The Chair said that as long as he brings the appropriate paperwork and is present at the next meeting he can apply.
- Concern was expressed regarding the membership process for new members. The Chair informed that the process can be changed, but must be done so officially.

## **9. New Business**

- Peggy Wilson (Acting Stewardship Coordinator) from the East Algoma Stewardship Council was not able to make it to the meeting, but would like to present at a future meeting
- St. Marys Blog on Website: Greg will be setting up, idea was well received
- Cities Planning departments: BPAC no longer feeling in the loop with regards to plans and construction that may be affecting the AOC. New Executive may want to consider contacting both cities and ensuring BPAC is kept informed.
- Contaminated soils disposal: soils from gas station in Sault Ste. Marie, ON may be being disposed of illegally in a landfill that affects the AOC. Don Marles received this information and will look into.
- International disposal of garbage: Michigan maybe taking garbage from Ontario, why? How does this affect AOC? Must look into.

Ran out for time, remainder of New Business will be included on next agenda:

- Congressional letter from Michigan's Areas of Concern
- Little Rapids Grant
- CN Railway bridge over St. Marys River
- St Marys River Fisheries Task Group recent presentations
- GLWQA Renegotiation Consultation for BPAC's Letter
- Discussion as a group reinforcing BPACs role as an advisory group and to follow the mandate

## **10. 2011 Executive Elections**

Elections held:

Greg was nominated for USA Chair by Amanda Bosak. Seconded by Mike Ripley. Approved, Greg Zimmerman is new BPAC Chair.

Don was nominated for CAN 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair by Klaas Oswald. Seconded by Al Wright. Approved, Don Marles is new BPAC 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

Amanda was nominated for USA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair by Mike Ripley. Seconded by Corey Jerome. Approved, Amanada Bosak is new BPAC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair.

## **11. Next Meeting**

- Date to be determined, 7 p.m. @ LSSU Cisler Center

## **12. Adjourn**

- Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

## Four Agency Report to the St. Marys River BPAC Meeting March 10, 2011

Civic Centre – Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

### Environment Canada (EC)

- Two applications were received under the Government of Canada's *Great Lakes Sustainability Fund* for initiatives in the St. Marys River AOC. Both have been recommended for funding; pending the Minister's approval. The first is to extend the RAP Coordinator position and office support for another 4 years, from April 2011 to March 2015. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment is looking to support this through a contribution as well. The second is to support the City of Sault Ste. Marie's (Ontario) efforts in urban stormwater management via a targeted, multi-year data collection and identification of remedial actions to address the environmental issues from stormwater and snowmelt runoff. This initiative stems from findings and recommendations of the City's *Stormwater Investigative Study*.
  - the annual Fund provides grant money to organizations working on projects that advance priorities of the Areas of Concern and actions outlined under the Remedial Action Plans.
- With the help of the RAP Coordinator, EC and the MOE are progressing on the development of a RAP Implementation Annex for the Ontario side of the river. It will provide a status update on all actions recommended in the Stage 2 RAP, and will outline those that remain going forward – with identified resource needs, roles and responsibilities, and timelines. A draft framework will soon be ready for BPAC's review for comment on the structure and content of the actual Annex.
  - included will be a set of updated delisting criteria for some of the BUIs, which have been revised based on last year's workshop and subsequent expert and peer review.
- One action that will be part of the Implementation Annex is a planned study starting this year to assess the status of two beneficial use impairments (BUIs) for the AOC. As per the Feb. 17 email to the BPAC executives, EC's Wildlife Toxicology staff are planning to undertake a study in 2011 and 2012 to assess deformities, reproductive health, and chemical contamination (in eggs) within Common terns and Herring gulls around the St. Marys River. This specific study is identified as an action under the Stage 2 RAP. A goal is to make this a binational effort.
  - other planned actions starting in 2011 include: 1) EC's Canadian Wildlife Service plans to conduct a 4-year assessment of baseline wildlife habitat condition in the SMR to determine level of impairment; 2) with support from Transport Canada, RAP lead agencies will assess environmental impacts from shipping within the river; 3) RAP Coordinator will work with relevant agencies to update the status (and delisting criteria) for the BUIs: Beach Closures; and Eutrophication & Undesirable Algae.

### Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE)

- The MOE is in the process of hiring a Senior Environmental Scientist for the northern Areas of Concern and Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan; the successful candidate is expected to start on March 21.
- A GIS specialist with the MOE continues to develop a GIS map of sediment quality data collected over the past 15+ years within the AOC. EC is assisting with the data organization. The goal is for a useful, interactive map available for anyone to see the history of sediment work in the AOC.

### **EC/MOE Sediment Technical Team** [includes other stakeholders]

- The Flow & Sediment Transport model and report for Bellevue Marine Park are expected soon. A presentation will be given to BPAC in Spring 2011. The model and report will assess the stability of surface sediments within the area to determine if the deeper, more contaminated sediments could be exposed under various scenarios.
- *Environ* is expanding and revising a Conceptual Site Model, which is a narrative and pictorial tool to better understand the current conditions with respect to contaminated sediment in the SMR. It will illustrate sources of contaminants, migration pathways, and their impacts. When finalized, it will be shared with BPAC in Spring 2011.
- Results from sediment quality and benthic health studies (both surface and core samples) for east of Bellevue Marine Park and the Lake George Channel are expected in Summer 2011. These were collected in late 2010 to better delineate the areas. 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. A presentation to BPAC will be arranged for late Summer/early Fall.

### **Michigan Department of Environmental Quality**

- Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment were re-separated; with Department of Environmental Quality again hosting the Great Lakes Areas of Concern office.
- *From Jan 18 '11 update: Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council, in partnership with the DNRE, held a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative workshop on January 13 in Lansing. The workshop brought stakeholders together to prepare for year 2 of GLRI. The AOC program coordinators identified restoration priorities for each AOC and staff from federal agencies discussed upcoming funding opportunities under the GLRI. 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 U.S. EPA and Consumers Energy have partnered to implement a *Great Lakes Legacy Act* sediment cleanup project at the former Manufactured Gas Plant. The purpose of the project is to remove approximately 25,000 cubic yards of sediments contaminated with Polyaromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), a legacy of historic contamination at the former plant site. It is hoped that this project will lead to the delisting of sediment-related beneficial use impairments in the AOC.
- The project is being carried out in two phases. The Phase 1 cleanup was conducted in Summer 2010, and removed approximately 6,000 cubic yards of PAH contaminated sediment. As of March 1, 2011, the Phase 2 remedial design was almost complete, and permit requests had been submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The design calls for the removal of an additional 15-20,000 cubic yards of PAH contaminated sediments, as well as nearshore habitat restoration features. The 100% Plans and Specifications will be completed by the middle of March 2011. It is anticipated that the Phase 2 cleanup will be conducted in Summer-Fall 2011.