

St. Marys River AOC BPAC Meeting Minutes

Place: Webex Meeting
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario & Michigan

When: Monday September 27, 2021
6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Call to order/introductions

Members: Aubrey Maccoux-Leduc, Al Wright, Jessica Wesolek, Brian Wesolek, Peter Greve, Klaas Oswald, Nary Rossiter, Mike Ripley, Ron Pricket, Paula Antunes, Jim Dukes, Joanie McGuffin

Agency Reps: Catherine Taddo (City), Chris Glibota (APH), Heather Williams (USEPA), John Riley (EGLE), Meagan Sutherland (AU), Lisa Derickx (AU)

Guests: NA

Regrets: Don Marles

Approval of Minutes

- May 10, 2021 – Approved with inclusion of concerns regarding the connection between the Community Fish Consumption survey and the Restrictions on Fish Consumption BUI.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

- Community Fish Consumption Survey – update on progress
 - The *St. Marys River Community Fish Consumption Survey* is currently active. Algoma University's Survey Coordinator, Meagan Sutherland, has been actively collecting in-person surveys at locations throughout the AOC. Survey cards with a link to the online survey have been handed-out to people who indicate they would like to complete the survey at a later time. Cards were also left on vehicles located by marinas and public boat launches.
 - The online survey is active and can be accessed on the BPAC website: http://bpac.algomau.ca/?page_id=3871
 - BPAC members can help promote the survey by sharing the link with contacts/email lists.

Presentations

- Draft Sediment Management Strategy – *postponed until after Federal Election process is complete*

Agency Updates

- SPAC update –
 - SPAC is sponsoring a “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee” and they are looking for participants. The goal is to solicit interest and get BPAC/PAC members involved. The subcommittee will meet 3-4 times per year and training will be available through the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. The goal is to expand representation in

each of the Public Advisory Councils. Anyone who is interested should reach out to John Riley for more information.

- Mike Ripley has volunteered to be the SPAC representative, thank you to Aubrey for her work in this capacity over the past couple of years
- Algoma Public Health –
 - Has APH been involved in the issue of Firefighting foam (PFAS) out at the airport?
 - APH is actively involved. Chris will request more information and provide an update at a future meeting.
 - BPAC would welcome a presentation from APH in the future about the topic.
- Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy
 - Partnered with Batchewana First Nation to hold a Water Day centered around water knowledge – sunrise ceremony, water ceremony, and Conservancy took people out on the big canoe.
 - Peter did a fundraising paddle from SSM to Wawa in August. Spent 11 days of paddling and interviewed people that he met along the way. Collected footage along the way to create a video to highlight the shoreline. Stay tuned of the video!
 - Facilitated through the canoes for conservation program is the installment of a 40-foot dock at Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig.

New Business

- Stack Watch Sault Ste. Marie
 - Stack Watch SSM is a new project that is working to close the gap between industrial air pollution regulations and enforcement through increased community involvement. We have two primary goals: 1) to encourage the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks to enforce its air emissions regulations more routinely; and 2) to encourage the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks and Algoma Public Health to erect an independently operated air quality monitoring network that is geographically diverse. Link to website: <http://www.stackwatchssm.com>
 - This is a push to make sure that events are reported to the MECP and Algoma Steel.
 - Is it only voluntary reporting? Yes, but puts a bit more scrutiny on MECP monitoring stations.
 - Algoma Steel will be switching from coke process to electric arc furnace – good news! Received funding to get the process started.
 - Call to action – If an incident is observed please report to (1) MECP, (2) Algoma Steel, (3) MP's. We need to complain and push elected officials to help Algoma Steel retrofit as soon as possible.
 - BPAC should be concerned about air pollution – mercury can enter the river via air deposition. Burning coal is a source of mercury.
 - Mercury information from fish can help us learn more about the concentrations that fall into the water.
 - BPAC would be interested in a presentation from both Algoma Steel and the MECP relating to air pollution in Sault Ste. Marie (what is Algoma Steel doing about it and how does the MECP monitor it?).
- Bay Mills Indian Community
 - Brian has been monitoring macroinvertebrates and identified unnatural particulates in sediments. They appear to be man-made metallic magnetic particles.

- Suggestion was made to send samples to a company who can fingerprint to help Identify the source.
- BPAC would welcome a presentation from Brian regarding his work.
- Lake Huron LAMP – update on progress
 - The *Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* commits Canada and the United States to prepare and issue Lakewide Action and Management Plans (LAMPS) for each of the five Great Lakes every five years on a rotational basis.
 - A new edition is being written and should be released to the public for comments near the end of this year. It will cover management, monitoring and actions for 2022-2026.
 - You can currently view the existing LAMP which has a lot of similarities (most actions are long-term projects).
 - Interested in providing comments? Here is a link to the website: <https://binational.net/2021/03/16/2022-2026-lake-huron-lwam/>
 - View the Annual Report for small progress updates on different activities going on around the Lake and the AOC: <https://binational.net/2021/11/15/lake-huron-lakewide-action-and-management-plan-annual-report-2020/>
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Standing Items

- Ferrochrome plant
 - Noront Resources will be selling their properties in the Ring of Fire. Two Australian Mining companies are currently in a bidding war. These companies are more interested in nickel than in the chrome (based on news releases). They anticipate a huge need for nickel in batteries and see a way to profit from this. Will be a long time before mining commences and bidding wars end. They don't seem to have a desire to rush into ferrechrome development.

Memberships

- New application - For new members, applications must be received & prospective members present for confirmation – standard procedure.
 - Joanie McGuffin submitted membership request last meeting. She was requested to seek approval from the Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy Board (as she will represent the Conservancy at BPAC meetings). The board supported her request. Joanie was accepted as a member.
 - It was suggested that BPAC bylaws may need to be updated to prevent future impediments for recruitment of new members
 - The “Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” SPAC Subcommittee will be creating a recruitment package for each of the PACs. These materials to help with recruitment of new members.

Public Comments

- No public comments

