

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

Place: Cisler Center (Lake Superior State University)
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

When: May 24, 2012
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

1. Call to order/introductions

Present: Corrina Barrett, Paula Antunes, Klaas Oswald, Jim Dukes, Mary Rossiter, Donald Marles, Mike Ripley, Nancy Griffin, Barb Keller, Greg Zimmerman, Trish Westman, Kristina Denison, Amanda Bosak, Crystal Bole, Lorelei Premo, Catherine Taddo

Regrets: Marilyn Burton, Dave Samp

Guests: Angela Dukes

2. Approval of minutes

- February 7, 2012
- March 27, 2012

Comments can be sent to RAP Coordinator via e-mail.

3. Business arising from previous minutes

- Action item follow-up from March 27 BPAC presentation from Pointes Protection: A letter was drafted for the SSMRCA stating BPAC's support in Pointes Protection in preventing such development of the wetland.
- Paula mentioned the possibility of IBI sampling this summer

4. Office Reports

LSSU BPAC has Conservation Leadership student employed for the summer. Give student access to Water Portal for posting events.

Little Rapids Update

Hosted by [Jeff Hagen](#), invited press and elected officials to Bayliss Public Library to hear about the Little Rapids Project.

SPAC meeting next week, both Amanda & Greg are attending it at the McMullin Conference Center. Offering a ride to anyone who wants to go.

LSSU BPAC Office PAC support grant renewed.

5. Agency Updates

Attached.

The Lake Superior Work Group (LSWG) meeting is being held in Sault, Ontario, May 31/June 1 at the Delta Waterfront Hotel regarding LAMP. The RAP Coordinator is presenting Friday morning on the St. Marys River AOC.

No EPA update, last report repeated in this months update.

DEQ has collected fish recently for fish consumption advisory and aesthetic monitoring.

6. Public Comment

A BPAC member brought to the Councils attention an article:
Contamination Continues: River Sewage troubles watchdog group published online by Soo Evening News (unknown author May 24, 2012 at 3:41 PM).

The article is founded on an interview with three Sugar Island residents claiming Canada's raw sewage is still being dumped into the SMR by way of the Sault, ON Sewage Treatment Plant bypasses.

BPAC members who have not yet toured the EEWTP are encouraged to do so in order to experience what a bypass is considered; the water entering the SMR during a bypass has no 'floaties' or garbage or debris. That is due to non-point source pollution such as garbage on the ground washing into the river via runoff. There is also all the garbage that has been left on the ice over the winter.

BPAC member was out sailing over the weekend and saw 'floating' debris which appeared to be raw sewage and upon further investigation, it was identified to be pollen clumped up, floating on the water.

BPAC discussed making an official comment against the article, possibly with a letter to Sugar Islands watchdog group, Soo Evening News or making a public statement in support of Sault Ontario's upgraded WWTP **NOT** being the source of garbage and 'raw sewage' in the SMR. This is an action item deferred until next meeting for more member input. BPAC already wrote a letter after EEWTP upgrade.

MOE will be providing 'snapshots' on Ontario side as part of Sugar Island Protocol.

Ashmun Creek Task Group – "Walking the Ashmun", BPAC summer student will be coordinating.

Non motorized trail plan SSM, MI is working on, South shore walkway. Locals are tired of waiting for grant; as a group they want to invited people to walk property and have community build and maintain the trail with property owners permission by having land owners use signage to indicated the public is welcome.

Member mentioned DWSP program public notice regarding drinking water.

Follow-up: The Sault Ste. Marie Region Source Protection Committee will be hosted two public consultation sessions in April 2012 where technical experts, committee members and representatives of the Drinking Water Source Protection Program will be available to discuss how the plan will safeguard the quality of our municipal drinking water sources. Public comments were due by May 4, 2012.

7. Membership

Kristina Denison will be replacing Corey Jerome for the Chippewa East Mackinac Conservation District.

8. New Business

MDEQ Implementation Annex deferred until next meeting to allowing technical work group to review the document.

Discussion on earlier start time:

Members briefly discussed the convenience of meeting times. Most members preferred to meet 6-8 to leave from work and still have time for family and other responsibilities after the meeting. Not all members can be accommodated therefore; it was decided to continue conducting doodle polls to determine which date & time is best for the majority of attending BPAC members.

Upcoming Events:

- Soo Lock's Engineers Day/ARL Open House June 29, 2012
- Mother Earth June 2
- Green Expo July 6-7, Johnson Community Centre Desbarats ON
- Lake Superior Day July 15
- Sault Ships & Sailabration Aug 3-4, Celebrate Maritime and Cultural History!

MRWright will be presenting the Geotechnical Sediment Study results to BPAC in the near future. Environ has been contracted to conduct a third party review of the report.

9. 2012 Executive Elections

Chair: Dr. Paula Antunes (Canadian)

1st Vice Chair: Mike Ripley (U.S.)

2nd Vice Chair: Don Marles (U.S.)

Past Chair: Greg Zimmerman

1st: Barb Keller

2nd: Lorelei Premo

Passed by consensus

10. Next Meeting

Date to be determined – will send out **doodle poll**.

11. Adjourn 7:45 PM

Four Agency Report to the St. Marys River BPAC Meeting
May 24 2012
Cisler Center – LSSU, Sault Ste. Marie, MI

All agencies

The Lake Superior Work Group is meeting in Sault Ste. Marie on May 30 – June 1; this is the group of government representatives, including EC, MOE, EPA and MDEQ that work on the implementation of the Lakewide Management Plan. Corrina will be attending part of the meeting and giving a presentation on the St. Marys River AOC.

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

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development Commission received a grant from NOAA to conduct the engineering and design phase of the Little Rapids habitat restoration project. This analysis will be completed sometime in 2012.

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

- SPAC meeting and training workshop is scheduled for May 30-31st at the MacMullan Center on Higgins Lake in the Lower Peninsula. Up to 6 members of a PAC can participate in the meeting and workshop. The purpose of the training workshop is to strengthen the mission, membership and future direction of the AOC Public Advisory Councils. It will include three training sessions: 1) Enhancing membership, diversity and stakeholder engagement; 2) Operations, meeting facilitation and conflict resolution; and 3) Strategic planning, mission evolution and managing transitions. The keynote speakers will be Todd Ambs, director of the River Network, and David Lorenz, manager of the Travel Michigan program. Please let Greg know if you have an interest in attending.
- On March 29th, the EUP Regional Planning team held a public information session on Sugar Island to discuss the feasibility study with Sugar Island residents and other members of the public. On May 1 & 2, EUP Regional Planning also held meetings and a site visit with area dignitaries to showcase the work being proposed.

Environment Canada (EC) and Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE)

The MOE has finalized its funding agreement with Algoma University to continue support for the local RAP coordinator position in 2012-13. EC's 2010 agreement with Algoma University to support this position continues until 2015.

EC/MOE Sediment Technical Team [includes other stakeholders]

- ENVIRON International Corporation (an environmental consulting firm) was hired to provide a third party review of the geotechnical project carried out by MRWright and Associates and to interpret the overall significance of the results obtained with respect to next-steps and possible remedial actions.
- Bathymetric maps of the area East of Topsail Island showing the contaminant profiles were created by CTech Development Corporation and Mrs. Marilyn Dunnett (a former Environment Canada employee) with the help of Mr. Hans Biberhofer of the Canadian Centre for Inland Waters.
- Metal speciation calculations were performed by Paula Antunes of SSMIC / Algoma University in an effort to reduce the amount of data scatter in dose-response relationships for individual contaminants and the measured toxic response (in previous tests carried out by Environment Canada).