

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

## Meeting Minutes

**Place:** Ontario Room, LSSU Cisler Center  
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

**When:** November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

### 1. Call to order/introductions

**Present:** Donald Marles, Klaas Oswald, Corrina Barrett, Paula Antunes, Lorelei Premo, Barb Keller, Greg Zimmerman, Don Elliott  
**New:** Corey Jerome (Munuscong River Watershed Coordinator/Chippewa County Conservation District), Paige Filice (BPAC Student)  
**Regrets:** Mike Ripley, Al Wright, Kira Fry  
**Guest:** Amy Berglund (Carl Levin's office)

### 2. Approval of minutes

June 29, 2010 & September 15, 2010

Minutes are still unavailable for the date of June 29, 2010

- Crystal Bole available and emailed the minutes of September 15, 2010
- Corrina Barrett agreed to take the minutes for meetings in Ontario from now on, funding through Algoma U

### 3. Business arising from previous minutes

- Possibility of obtaining funding for a minutes recorder – In the past, funds were available for hiring someone to take minutes, we can look into that again, but the minutes should be covered now.
- The Lake Superior Binational Forum website now displays St. Marys River Area of Concern information.
- Sediment containment in the area involving the lock construction on the US side. Earlier this fall, Chris McKechnie (Algoma Public Health) stated that there was color in the St. Marys River seemingly related to the lock construction. MOE staff had looked into it and the US Army Corps of Engineers commented that they notified BPAC of the upcoming coffer dam construction and asked BPAC and MOE for comments. MOE staff nor BPAC members recall having gotten the information or being asked for comments. The work did not appear to represent a danger of resuspending contaminated sediments since it was work directly in the shipping lane where there isn't contaminated sediment.
- Agreed it would be a good idea to write a letter to the US Army Corps of Engineers to let them know communication with agencies could be improved. First double check with Sue Greenwood to verify there was not communication.
- BMIC 319 Public Comment Period – Bay Mills Indian Community is working on non-point source issues in Waishkey River and as part of the 319 project put out a request for public comments.

#### **4. Office Reports**

- Paige is currently inputting the BPAC library information into the Access database for public browsing of what's available in the collection
- Corrina Barrett is taking over the website
- PAC support grant is to working with Michelle Selzer on further developing the BUI removal strategy for the Michigan waters of the St. Marys River.

#### **5. Agency Reports**

- Four Agency Report (see attached)

#### **6. Public Comments**

#### **7. Memberships**

- Finalized: received letter from Corey Jerome. He will be replacing Pat Carr for the Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District.

#### **8. New Business**

- BPAC Poster made by Corrina Barrett. Suggest to change the 'new' sewer plant in Canada to 'upgraded' sewer plant. Plans to make a handout to go along with the poster. Home and outdoor show in Canada held in the Essar Center. Plan to have poster there.
- St. Marys River celebrations planned for the War of 1812 Bicentennial- all agree this would be a good opportunity for public outreach
- Just as a reminder to members, Don read a letter from Sault, Ontario City Hall stating that there should be no food or drink permitted in the building, meetings must be planned 1 month in advance, must have 10 or more people present, and hours are from 5:30-9:30pm.
- Klaas mentioned that a Canada municipality near Thunder Bay recently banned Mercury thermometers. Law states that a municipality has the right to do so because it's not infringing upon any national laws. BPAC members discussed whether a similar by-law would be useful for the Sault Sainte Marie area at least as a symbolic action for reducing potential release of mercury from broken thermometers. Discussion included the idea of collaborating with other groups, working with retail outlets to ask them to stop selling mercury thermometers. Chippewa County Health had a thermometer exchange program some time back. . Members left the idea as something that the city could look into.

#### **9. Next Meeting**

- The next meeting is a scheduled public outreach meeting by MDNRE regarding the *E. coli* study done on the river this summer. BPAC is hosting the meeting on 8 December but it is not a BPAC business meeting.
- Next BPAC meeting is 7 PM, Tuesday January 18<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Centre, Sault, Ontario

#### **10. Adjourned at 8:45 pm**

# **Four Agency Report to the St. Marys River BPAC Meeting**

**November 18, 2010**

**Lake Superior State University, SSM – Michigan**

## **Environment Canada (EC)**

- Completion of Phase 2 of the St. Marys River Sediment Fate & Transport Study is expected soon. The work will assess the stability of surficial contaminated sediments to determine whether bottom, more contaminated sediments can be exposed under various scenarios. The study lead will present his results to BPAC early next year.
- In late October-early November, EC collected surface and core sediment samples from the river; focusing around east of Bellevue Marine Park and the Lake George Channel. Data analysis and interpretation will be included for sediment chemistry, toxicity and benthic community health.

## **Ontario Ministry of Environment (MOE)**

- An interactive map of sediment/water quality data is under development. The map will present data that has been collected for the St. Marys River AOC over the past 15+ years in a user-friendly and useful interface. The MOE will seek BPAC comment when there is an initial version to view and react to.

## **Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment (DNRE)**

- Michigan's AOC Program has been moved out of the MDNRE's Water Bureau and is now housed under the Office of the Great Lakes.
- The Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council had a fall meeting on October 28 in Lansing. The focus of the meeting was to discuss development of AOC-specific delisting strategies for Michigan's 14 AOCs.
- The BPAC received a \$7,192 to assist the DNRE with developing a delisting strategy for the U.S. portion of the AOC. This work will be completed by March 2011.
- 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.
- The Chippewa County Health Department received a \$230,000 grant from EPA under the GLRI for beach related assessments in St. Marys River.

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

- Phase 1 of the sediment remediation at the former Manufacturers Gas Plant site occurred throughout the summer in Sault Ste. Marie, MI. Plans called for the removal of ~ 6,000 cubic yards of PAH contaminated sediments from the boat slip next to the MCM Marine dock.