



ST. LAWRENCE RIVER RESTORATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 18, 2019

10:00am to 1:00pm

St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences

Present: Elaine Kennedy (Meeting Chair, Citizen), Sara Varty (ECC), Jeff Ridal (RI), Richard Pilon (RRCA), Dale Phippen (Citizen), Dorothy Hamilton (OWA), Michael Fawthrop (City of Cornwall), Joe Arthur (Cornwall Lunker Club), Andrew Morley (MECP), Patricia O'Hara (GRN)

Teleconference: Jake LaRose (MNRF)

Observers: Natasha Pozega (RAP Coordinator), Karen Cooper (MCA), Brendan Jacobs (ALUS), Candice McKay (MECP), Jessica Jock (SRMT), Leigh McGaughey (RI)

Regrets: Chris Moran (Citizen), Walter Oeggerli (OFA)

- 1. Call to Order and Introductions**
- 2. Approval of the Agenda**

Motion: Be it resolved that SLRRC approves the Agenda of the meeting of September 18, 2019.

Moved by: Dorothy Hamilton

Seconded by: Richard Pilon

Result: Carried

- 3. Approval of the Minutes from the regular meeting on June 13, 2019**

Motion: Be it resolved that SLRRC approves the minutes of the meeting of June 13, 2019.

Moved by: Dale Phippen

Seconded by: Jeff Ridal

Result: Carried

- 4. Business Arising**

- a. By-law amendments → addition of community groups as members (ALUS Canada, Transition Cornwall +, Seaway Valley Divers, Cooper Marsh Conservators, and South Lancaster Fish and Game Club) (Elaine Kennedy)**

-Postponed until December meeting. **Elaine to reach out to groups.**

- **Elections if approved- the addition of these members would need to be ratified at the 2020 AGM.**

- b. Open Council Seats (OPG, Counties of SD&G, citizen)**

-OPG was contacted but no response was received.

- Natasha and Elaine/Walter will attempt to recruit a citizen member to fill the final citizen seat.
- Elaine to reach out to Counties of SD&G

c. BUI Workplan Update (Sara Varty)

Updates since last SLRRC meeting:

Fish Consumption:

- Fish Consumption Guides come out every two years. Should be expecting new guide for 2019-2020.
- WQWG to strike sub-committee to review delisting criteria with representation from MCA to determine their needs surrounding this BUI.
- Gap in fish data identified on the south side of Akwesasne.

Fish and Wildlife Populations:

- New data collected for Colonial Water birds and Snapping Turtles- populations same or increasing. Some populations being impacted by increasing Cormorant Populations.
- Sara to circulate the water bird report (by Bird Studies Canada) to the group. Snapping turtle egg analysis being done in the fall, will be added to report later on.
- All new information since draft of Stage 3 to be gathered to be included in the updated BUI report.
- Lissa Deslandes still coordinating Marsh Monitoring Program through RRCA
- Update on index fish community? surveys → Lake Ontario Fish Communities report- produced annually. Jake will circulate to the group. Includes fish community index gill netting. Two write-ups for attention. Hosted on the Great Lakes fisheries commission website. Shows results of 2018 and puts them in a historical context. Covers all species listed in the FCOs.

Degradation of Benthos (Not Impaired) - 2017 data available → Sara to circulate.

Eutrophication and Undesirable Algae:

- Proposal submitted from RRCA
- MCA working to develop monitoring strategy.

Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zoo Plankton:

- Contract with Duncan Boyd to write a white paper to be applied across AOCs. What do we need in order to declare this BUI is not impaired?

Q: How do our BUI delisting criteria (for all BUIs) compare with the Massena/Akwesasne criteria?

Fish and Wildlife Habitat

- Work being done at RRCA.

d. Beach Closures Report- Status (Jeff Ridal)

- Natasha is preparing a public friendly summary of the Beach Closures status. Discussion on report and public outreach strategy. **Masters swim club of Cornwall and South Glengarry Council to be added to distribution list.**
- Small revisions were made to the report to remove names of Akwesasne beaches at the request of the MCA.

e. Fish Tumors Report (Jeff Ridal)

Jeff presented summary of report prepared on fish tumours and other deformities.

- Fish exposure to PAHs (that causes tumours) appears to be stable over past 20 years. There is limited historical PAH data, different methods and different sites.
- On June 26, 2019, the WQWG approved forwarding the Fish Tumours BUI Report to SLRRC to be released to the public for comment with the caveat that PAH concentrations in sediments are to be monitored under CSS to ensure that they are trending lower. If trending upwards, it should regain attention, but agencies will still be required to address these issues.

Motion: be it resolved that approval of the report on the status of the fish tumors be deferred to the next SLRRC meeting to provide more time for the council to thoroughly review the report.

Moved by: Dale Phippen

Seconded by: Mark Kaddie

Result: Carried

Sara to circulate table showing of comparison of St. Lawrence River (Cornwall) AOC to the rest of the AOCs in relation to fish tumors BUI.

f. Fish Consumption BUI- Next steps

-Discussed in item 4.c.

g. City of Cornwall- PCP results (Michael Fawthrop)

- Sewer infrastructure maps now available on City of Cornwall website.
- City has long term plan for sewer separation, which includes separation of sewers on all road reconstruction projects.
- Annual budget for sewer separation is increasing year to year.
- Presentation by Cole Consulting to be circulated.**
- Note: Approval of CSS videos produced by Vince Pilon still pending. **Mike Fawthrop to update at next meeting.**

h. Grass River Update (Jeff Ridal)

-3 year project on schedule→ dredging nearly complete; next stage is capping.

-No fish collected south of Cornwall Island, some done in Quebec, but at location near St. Anicet downstream of Cornwall Island. This is concerning because the water south of Cornwall Island are close to the construction zone and in the heart of Akwesasne. Akwesasne is discussing fish collections in these waters with Environment Canada. ECC working on developing ongoing communication strategy between ECCC and US-EPA. Meeting between agencies to be held in October.

i. RAC Update (Jessica Jock from St. Regis Mohawk Tribe)

- RAC performing full overhaul of BUI delisting criteria.
- Working to identify responsibilities of SRMT and the state.

5. Committee Reports

a. Water Quality Working Group (Brendan Jacobs)

- Past meeting on June 26, 2019. Next meeting TBD.
- Eutrophication sub-committee (Sara Varty) past meeting on June 26, 2019. No upcoming meetings scheduled.
 - Raisin has submitted proposal to ECC for tributary monitoring.

b. Cornwall Sediment Strategy (Andrew Morley)

i. HHRA Report Status

- Human Health Risk Assessment presentation at CSS Meeting on Sept 18 at 1:30pm.
- HHRA technical report is now complete and **will be circulated**.
- No existing health standards for sediments anywhere in the world, Ontario MECP has developed a technical framework for assessing the risks at Cornwall.
- 3 contaminants assessed for health risk: mercury, PAHs, lead.
- Report developed a risk management tool that can be used going forward.
- Has been reviewed by local health unit.
- The Eastern Ontario Health Unit reviewed the study, due to the location of the sediments Health Unit has no real concerns. One location with elevated lead and PAH, one area within zone 2 on border of east and west with slightly elevated lead levels. Deeper waters, not a lot of public access so no major health concerns. Intent to meet with local residents to go over the report.

6. New Business

- RAP Communications- website, engagement strategy (Beach Closures), RAP Engagement group strategy & structure. (Natasha Pozega)

-Encourage community members to register for the mailing list by visiting stlawrenceriverrap.ca

- Cornwall Waterfront Plan

-No public beaches will be established by the city in the Zone 2 areas. Potential to establish a beach in the Guindon Park region, but has not officially been voted upon by the City Council.

7. Next Meeting

Next meeting to be held on Thursday, December 12, 2019 from 1pm-4pm at River institute.

8. Adjournment

Motion: to adjourn.

Moved by: Andrew Morley