



## ST. LAWRENCE RIVER RESTORATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

*Thursday, December 12, 2019*

*1:00pm to 4:00pm*

St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences

**Present:** Dorothy Hamilton (SDG-OWA), Will Robertson (citizen), Jeff Ridal (RI), Elaine Kennedy (citizen), Sara Varty (ECCC), Mark Kaddie (citizen), Dale Phippen (citizen), Patricia O'Hara (GRN), Jake LaRose (MNR), Andrew Morley (MECP), Walter Oeggerli (GFA), Richard Pilon (RRCA), Keith Leclaire (MCA-DoH)

**Observers:** Natasha Pozega (RAP Coordinator), Karen Cooper (Akwasasne RAP Coordinator), Jessica Jock (SRMT), Ian McIntosh (Cooper Marsh Conservators), Marco Vincelli (EVB Engineering), Jaclyn Franceschini (RI), Kristin Geater (ECCC), Brendan Jacobs (ALUS), Emma Tahirali (MECP)

**Teleconference:** Lisa Richmond (MECP), Rupert (ECCC), Mark McMaster (ECCC), Caroline Kuate (EOHU)

**Regrets:** Benoit Lebeau (OMAFRA)

### 1. Call to Order and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 1:00pm

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

**Motion:** Be it resolved that SLRRC approves the Agenda of the meeting of December 12, 2019.

Moved by: Elaine Kennedy

Second by: Richard Pilon

Result: Carried

### 3. Approval of the Minutes from the regular meeting on Sept. 18, 2019

Moved by: Richard Pilon

Second by: Elaine Kennedy

Result: Carried

### 4. Business Arising

- Human Health Risk Assessment Report: Presented by Andrew Morley

Presented on Sept 18<sup>th</sup> to CSS Steering Committee

-Assessment performed by Marco Pagliarulo

-Documents include technical document, slide deck and memo

Technical document acts as risk management tool moving forward.

-Taken all sediment data available and used assessment tool to create risk management type guideline.

-Currently no human health-based sediment contaminant criteria existing in the world, therefore used a modified human health assessment strategy.

Q: Were there any surveys conducted to talk to parents about how often their children are exposed to the sediments?

-Area determined not to be easily accessible to the public. However, there was a trail used by the triathlon to access deeper waters. Not determined to be a typical area where you would find young children because it is not an ideal beach setting.

Q: Did they apply the risk assessment to a range of exposure?

-Technical question that Marco is not here to answer, but he took the most conservative measures when looking at exposure.

All RM0's for mercury, Zone 2 where lead could be a concern.

Q: Table 2-2. Maximum concentrations for Pb differ between slide and technical report.

**NATASHA TO CIRCULATE THE MEMO**- Complete

Q: Regarding exposure of teenagers who would be using the area more frequently if this was considered - A: Model based on lifetime exposure.

Presented at CSS, presented to EOHU, presented to City of Cornwall. → No general health concerns, EOHU offered presentation on Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> to residents of Zone 2 but no attendance.

Offering to do more presentations if required.

There's a mound that was picked up with sonar in the area, so expected to be a pipe beneath. No discharge, but evidence for something that has been covered. Nearshore outfall. Sediment samples collected from that area as well. Consideration would need to be made whether or not it should be removed. Should it be removed? **ADD TO CSS AGENDA.** District area was looking into it.

**Can this model be applied for Akwesasne?**

Question regarding PAH maximums discrepancy between HHRA and Fish tumours FAQ → thought to be because one is looking at exposure depths and the other is overall.

Point made that south of Zone 1 on the south shore of Akwesasne, there are PAHs.

Suggestion for EOHU to present to Cornwall City Council and Akwesasne Council before report is released to public.

Long-term monitoring group under the CSS to incorporate HHRA results into work they perform under that strategy.

Availability to present report results to other groups of interest.

Asking for the health unit to provide a memo to the SLRRC regarding the health concerns

EOHU: Did not at this time see any concern when it comes to human health and support long term monitoring.

Q: What were the original monitoring locations surrounding the shores of Akwesasne?

Interest in having a public meeting to present results to all member organizations in one haul. Good information session and provide reassurance to member organizations.

Interest in investigating the risk of eating the fish from those zones.

Should a FAQ sheet be drafted about consuming fish from the area? How does this look on the state side?

**Motion:** SLRRC along with its member organizations partner with MECP, ECC, EOHU, MCA and others to have a public session on the Human Health Risk Assessment along the

Cornwall Waterfront, but that the MNRF be prepared for questions that will arise on fish consumption.

**NATASHA TO MAKE THESE ARRANGEMENTS**- Complete

Moved by: Elaine Kennedy

Seconded by: Dale Phippen

Result: Carried

- By-law amendments – Tabled to next meeting
  - 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).
  - Elections if approved- the addition of these members would need to be ratified at the 2020 AGM.
- BUI Workplan Update (Sara Varty)
  - Haven't been many revisions so not updated document circulated.
  - Fish Consumption: Still waiting on updated fish consumption guide. Also interested in initiating sub-committee (action item of WQWG). MCA to take the lead to pull together the group.
  - Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations: Kristin working on pulling together all data (new and old).
  - Eutrophication: Tied to eutrophication sub-committee. New contract signed, Brendan to call next meeting. Proposing to meet just before WQWG on January 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton: Working draft of the white paper being circulated on how to address this BUI across all AOCs. Will not be into the tribs.
  - Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat: Contracts with RRCA to look at Provincially sig wetlands. After data is collected, will look at doing the assessment report.
  - Piece completed last year with MCA
- Beach Closures Report (Natasha Pozega)
- Fish Tumors Report (Kristin Geater)

Presentation by Kristin Geater

Mark McMaster fisheries expert for ECCC

Overview of some of the concerns that were brought up at the last SLRRC meeting when Jeff presented the fish tumours report.

Some data gaps on the south side of Cornwall Island

Historical PAH inputs due to historical industry.

Walleyes and suckers showed abnormalities and skin lesions at that time.

Typically bottom-dwelling fish that had more occurrences.

Known sources of PAHs have been stopped, no longer any known sources in the AOC.

According to timeline (Presented by Jessica Jock), last known source into the St. Lawrence of PAHs was 2009.

Levels >10ppm would trigger a clean-up for PAH on the states side.

Results showing that there are no new PAH inputs, and that these levels are remaining consistent over time.

Question regarding range of brown bullheads. Why were fish collected from Gray's Creek (Farfield site). Originally the study was done to look at reproductive impacts.

Suckers and Walleye were collected back in the early 90's. Suckers used on states side because Bullheads were hard to find.

**What were some of the percentages in other AOCs?**

Wide discrepancy of when these BUIs have been delisted in other AOCs.

Cause and Effect → no new PAH inputs so there shouldn't be any concerns with delisting the AOC due to older data because there are no more inputs.

2004 and 2005 presented good results, but concerns that the data is from 15 years ago. One member expressing interest in having one new data point.

ECCC responds that it will be hard to justify because it would be going over and above for this region compared to others. Tumours are measured over time so if PAHs haven't changed, tumours shouldn't either. Latest PAH data in 2018.

States waited because they wanted to do more follow-up sampling post Grasse River dredging. Following the same protocol, and same age. Were targeting bullhead first but moved to suckers based on availability.

Reporting Fish Tumours- MNRF hotline.

WQWG comments: one caveat that the ministry add PAH monitoring into the sediment monitoring (document goes against what was in the WQWG approval).

One consideration for doing more fish monitoring → we are at 2% which is the threshold. Average across Great Lakes is 2%, which is where we should expect to be.

Committee was reminded that this BUI was never considered impaired, only Requires Further Assessment

**Motion:** Received report and table this issue until further information comes back from discussions between ECC and MCA

Moved by: Jeff Ridal

Seconded by: Elaine Kennedy

Result: Carried

- Grasse River Update (Jeff Ridal) -No update
- MCA Update (Karen Cooper)
  - Presentation
  - Spirit of work moving forward “Giving Water Back Its Voice”
  - Planning to revisit the collective history of the Area of Concern. Mohawks were the ones who pushed for this are to be considered an AOC.

Akwesasne is one community. SRMT is co-manager of the U.S. AOC with the State of NY.

Q: How will we ensure one consistent message is being shared with two different communications strategies?

-Regular communication, working together, sharing links between websites.

## 5. Committee Reports

- **Water Quality Working Group (Brendan Jacobs)**
  - i. Past meetings on October 30, 2019. Next meeting January 29<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am at the RRCA.
  - ii. Eutrophication sub-committee update
    - 1. Next meeting to beheld around January 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - iii. Fish Consumption sub-committee to be struck by MCA
- **Cornwall Sediment Strategy (Andrew Morley)**
  - i. Updates
  - ii. Met Sept. 18<sup>th</sup>. Main discussion on HHRA.
  - iii. Lisa has a report coming out on baseline sediment.
  - iv. Will besetting up a meeting for the long-term monitoring sub group.

Looking into doing a survey about illegal dock installations? If so, what will be done about it?

## **6. New Business**

Reminder of upcoming webinar on Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup> from 1pm-2pm. Group viewing to be held in River Institute Boardroom.

Webinar: "A sub-watershed monitoring and modelling approach to estimate the efficacy of agricultural BMPs in Southern Ontario." A presentation by Kevin McKague, Water Engineer, OMAFRA

## **7. Next Meeting**

AGM to be held Tuesday, March 31, 2020 @ 10am

Regular meeting to be held Tuesday, March 31, 2020 immediately following the AGM.

## **8. Adjournment**

Moved by: Elaine Kennedy