



ST. LAWRENCE RIVER RESTORATION COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, June 9th 2021

10:00am to 12:00pm

Minutes

Present: Marco Vincelli (Chair-Citizen), Abraham Francis (MCA), Brendan Jacobs (RRCA), Chris Moran (Citizen), Dale Phippen (Citizen), Dorothy Hamilton (SDG-OWA); Emma Tahirali (MECP), Idalia Milan (EOHU); Jake La Rose (MNDMNR); Jeff Ridal (RI); Joff Côté (MNDMNR); Kristin Geater (ECCC); Nick Cox (Citizen); Patricia O'Hara (GRN); Sara Varty (ECCC); Shawna Rousseau (Glengarry Fish and Game Club); Stephanie Jaworski (South Glengarry); Bill Smirle (ALUS); Georgia Bock (RAP Coordinator); Britney Bourdages (MCA RAP Coordinator)

Observers: Aimee Benedict (SRMT), Chris Fidler (NYS DEC); Lee Theodore (RI); Leigh McGaughey (RI)

Regrets: Elaine Kennedy (Citizen); John Towndrow (Transition Cornwall +); Matt Windle (RI); Richard Pilon (RRCA); Will Robertson (Citizen)

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Marco Vincelli, Chair, called the meeting to order on Wednesday June 9, 2021 at 10:03 am and welcomed all attendees.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion: Be it resolved that the St. Lawrence River Restoration Council (SLRRC) approves the agenda of the Annual General Meeting and General Meeting of the SLRRC for June 9, 2021 as amended.

The order of the agenda was changed, switching items #3 (approval of minutes from February 10, 2021) and #4 (Business Arising).

Agenda item #3 was modified to the following:

3. SLRRC Annual General Meeting
 - a) Approval of AGM minutes from July 16, 2020
 - b) Appointment of SLRRC for 2021- 2022
 - i) Appointment of Organization Representatives
 - ii) Appointment of Citizen Members
 - c) Election of Chair/Vice-Chair
 - d) Fees

- e) SLRRC Annual Progress Report
- f) Constitution and by-laws
- g) Adjournment of AGM

Moved by: Bill Smirle

Seconded by: Dale Phippen

Result: Carried

3. St. Lawrence River Restoration Council (SLRRC) Annual General Meeting

a) Approval of the Minutes from the Annual General Meeting on July 16, 2020

Motion: Be it resolved that the minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting held on July 16, 2020 be approved.

Moved by: Dale Phippen

Seconded by: Patricia O’Hara

Result: Carried

b) Appointment of SLRRC for 2021- 2022

i) Appointment of Organization Representatives:

In accordance with Article 8.1.1 of the SLRRC Constitution, Council Members representing participating organizations will be appointed by their respective organizations.

Organization	Representative
Environment and Climate Change Canada	Sara Varty
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Environment Program	Abraham Francis
Mohawk Council of Akwesasne Department of Health	
Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks	Emma Tahirali
Ontario Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry	Jake LaRose, Joff Côté
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	Benoit LeBeau
City of Cornwall	Michael Fawthrop
Township of South Glengarry	Stephanie Jaworski
Raisin Region Conservation Authority	Richard Pilon
Eastern Ontario Health Unit	Idalia Milan
St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences	Jeff Ridal

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association	Dorothy Hamilton
Glengarry Federation of Agriculture	
Ontario Power Generation	
Cornwall Lunker Club	Joe Arthur
Great River Network	Patricia O'Hara
ALUS Canada	Bill Smirle
Transition Cornwall +	John Towndrow
Seaway Valley Divers	
Cooper Marsh Conservation	
Glengarry Fish and Game Club	Shawna Rousseau

Discussion:

There is a new Health Manager for MCA, Cindy Francis Mitchell.

Action: Marco Vincelli will reach out to Cindy Francis-Mitchell to see if she would like to represent the MCA Department of Health on the SLRRC.

➤ **Renaming of South Glengarry Fish and Game Club**

Motion: Be it resolved that the 'South Glengarry Fish and Game Club' be changed to the 'Glengarry Fish and Game Club'.

Moved by: Patricia O'Hara

Seconded by: Jeff Ridal

Result: Carried

ii) Appointment of Citizen Members

Article 8.1.3.1 of the SLRRC Constitution stipulated that up to seven (7) citizen members may be elected to the Council. The Current citizen members are:

Nick Cox
Mark Kaddie
Elaine Kennedy
Chris Moran
Dale Phippen
Will Robertson
Marco Vincelli

Motion: Be it resolved that SLRRC elects Nick Cox, Mark Kaddie, Elaine Kennedy, Chris Moran, Dale Phippen, Will Robertson, and Marco Vincelli as citizen members of the SLRRC.

Moved by: Dorothy Hamilton

Seconded by: Bill Smirle

Result: Carried

c) Election of Chair/Vice-Chair

i) Election of the Chair

Motion: Be it resolved that Marco Vincelli be appointed as the Chair of the SLRRC.

Moved by: Dale Phippen

Seconded by: Brendan Jacobs

Result: Carried

ii) Election of the Vice-Chair

Motion: Be it resolved that Elaine Kennedy be appointed as the Vice-Chair of the SLRRC.

Moved by: Stephanie Jaworski

Seconded by: Dale Phippen

Result: Carried

Action: Georgia Bock will update the membership list.

d) Fees

Motion: Be it resolved that SLRRC membership fees be considered time and energy donated to the organization by the council members.

Moved by: Mark Kaddie

Seconded by: Patricia O'Harra

Result: Carried

e) SLRRC Annual Progress Report - Georgia Bock

Marco Vincelli deferred to Georgia Bock, the Remedial Action Plan Coordinator, to present the Annual Progress Report, which will be posted on the SLRRC Sharepoint site.

Action: Georgia Bock will upload the Annual Progress Report to the stlawrenceriverrap.ca website.

f) Constitution and by-laws

It was noted that the Constitution and by-laws should be approved. It was agreed that a motion to accept the Constitution in its current form would be needed.

Motion: Be it resolved that the 2020 Constitution and By-laws are accepted.

Moved by: Shawna Rousseau

Seconded by: Bill Smirle

Result: Carried

g) Adjournment of Annual General Meeting

Motion: Be it resolved that the 2021 St. Lawrence River Restoration Council Annual General Meeting be adjourned.

Moved by: Mark Kaddie

Seconded by: Jeff Ridal

Result: Carried

- The Council moved to the SLRRC General Meeting –

5) Approval of February 10, 2021 SLRRC Minutes

- Amendment: Joff Côté was moved from the observer list to attendee list.

Motion: Be it resolved that the SLRRC approved the minutes from February 10, 2021 as amended.

Moved by: Bill Wilson

Seconded by: Mark Kaddie

Result: Carried

6) Review Action Items Feb 10, 2021 Meeting

- *Action: Georgia Bock will recirculate September 20, 2020 minutes after making minor changes.*
Complete
- *Action: Kristin Geater will present an update at the next SLRRC meeting.* Deferred to next meeting.
- *Action: Sara Varty will provide SLRRC with an update on progress on BUI #4 (Fish Tumours or other Deformities) at the next SLRRC meeting.* The first Fish Tumours Working Group meeting will be held on June 23, 2021. Aimee Benedict from St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and Chris Fidler (NYS DEC) are invited.
- *Action: Kristin Geater will circulate a chart showing when other BUIs were redesignated.*
Complete.
- *Action: Georgia Bock will add delisting process as an appendix to the communication strategy.*
Complete, and Georgia uploaded the document to the SharePoint site.

7. Working Groups – Kristin Geater

Kristin reviewed the four new working groups:

1. Fish Consumption Working Group – BUI 1 – Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption. The first meeting will be held in the fall.
2. Water Quality Working Group – BUI 8 - Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae, BUI 10 – Beach Closings and BUI 13 – Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations. The first meeting occurred on May 17, 2021. Brendan presented the Eutrophication Strategy and Georgia presented on the status of the Beach Closing BUI.
3. Fish and Wildlife Working Group – BUI 3 – Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations, and BUI 14 – Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat. The first meeting is TBD.
4. Fish Tumours Working Group – BUI 4 – Fish Tumours or Other Deformities. The first meeting is scheduled for June 23, 2021.

8. BUI Updates

BUI # 1 Restrictions on Fish Consumption - *Abraham Francis, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne*
 Finishing up work with IJC on framework and are writing a mid-project report, update will be provided at next SLRRC meeting. The 2nd field season of the fish contaminant study is underway this summer with the River Institute.

BUI #3, 14 Fish and Wildlife Populations and Habitat - *Brendan Jacobs, Raisin Region Conservation Authority*

Working group has yet to meet. The *Re-evaluation of Coastal Wetlands Report* is in draft form and has been submitted to ECCC and MECP for review. Each individual wetland re-Evaluation was also submitted to MNMNR for official review and approval. The final results (updated wetland boundaries and total loss of wetland habitat in surface area) from MNMNR's review will have an impact on the broader report, which maybe then be amended and re-submitted to ECCC and MECP.

There has been a combined total loss of 34 ha of wetlands in the 3 provincially significant wetlands within the AOC. There are recommendations within the report to support ongoing restoration and protection of wetlands. Once comments are received, Brendan will submit to the Fish and Wildlife Working Group for review and then to the SLRRC.

Discussion:

Q: Timespan of the wetland loss? Ans: The last time it was surveyed was in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

Q: Would restoration prevent further loss to the wetlands? Ans: Brendan replied saying there are steps identified in the report to help protect further loss of wetlands. Community workshops will be undertaken to encourage involvement in wetland conservation and restoration.

BUI# 4 Fish Tumours and Other Deformities – *Kristin Geater, Environment and Climate Change Canada*
 The first meeting of the Fish Tumours Working Group will be held on June 23, 2021. Aimee Benedict (St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and Co-RAP Coordinator for the Massena/Akwesasne AOC) and Chris Fidler, New York State Co- RAP coordinator for the Massena/Akwesasne AOC) have been invited to participate. This BUI is poised for redesignation on both sides of the border.

Discussion:

Q: Will there be a comparison of what our goals are to what Americans are trying to achieve? Ans: Have representation of the American side at this working group, so hopefully we can have those conversations there.

Abe said that it is very important for Akwesasne community to have both sides at this discussion.

Q: Will there be sampling done in Lake. St. Francis? Ans: Sampling has been concluded for Fish Tumours (last sampling in 2004-2005).

Action: Kristin Geater to send Fish Tumour Assessment Report and background information to Shawna Rousseau.

BUI # 8 Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae - Brendan Jacobs, Raisin Region Conservation Authority

Draft final Eutrophication Study submitted to MECP and ECCC for review and comment. After comments are received, he will present to Water Quality Working Group. The [Eutrophication Study PowerPoint](#) presentation is available on the SLRRC SharePoint. Some key information included in the strategy is: updated background data, scoring of AOC subwatersheds to help identify priority restoration projects, and a long-term monitoring plan. Eight restoration projects are slated for this year, and are hoping to have 12 in total. He is looking for funding for restoration projects in AOC.

BUI #10 Beach Closings - Abraham Francis, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne

Georgia has received beach data from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, but is waiting on Mohawk Council of Akwesasne beach data. Once all data has been made available, the Beach Closing BUI Assessment Report will be updated. Abe says he might be able to get approval letter from MCA's Executive Director.

Action: Abraham Francis and Idalia Milan to discuss how to acquire MCA beach data.

BUI # 13 – Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations - Sara Varty, Environment and Climate Change Canada

The current status of this BUI is 'requires further assessment'. The current BUI assessment report was completed in 2018, but was inconclusive in part because there were no delisting criteria to assess the ecosystem against. A consultant has been hired to update the draft BUI 13 (Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations) assessment report for the St. Lawrence AOC and provide a recommendation on the current status using available lines of evidence. The consultant will be working with the Water Quality Working Group during the development and technical review of the report. The draft assessment report will be completed by December 31, 2021. The formal technical review will be completed by June 30, 2022.

The final assessment report with associated presentation material will be completed by September, 2022. At that time, it is anticipated that a 'not impaired' status will be recommended to the SLRRC, along with the recommendation to proceed with public engagement.

9. Cornwall Sediment Strategy Update - Emma Tahirali, MECP (5-10 minutes)

MECP has funded the 3rd phase of sediment model. The project goal is to create a mathematical model to determine sediment transport and fate of contaminated sediments along the Cornwall waterfront.

Emma noted that there is a long-term monitoring subcommittee meeting occurring this afternoon. There has also been one request of a dock in CSS zones, it is currently under review by the CSS committee. Georgia is leading a review of communication materials, she is also looking at developing a short video on what the CSS is and steps landowners should take.

10. New Business

➤ **New COA Agreement Signed** – *Emma Tahirali (MECP)*

The new COA has been signed earlier this month for another 5-year term (until 2026). This reaffirms the work that we are doing in the Area of Concern.

Action: Georgia Bock to circulate new COA document.

➤ **Abe's Presentation this Afternoon** – *Abraham Francis*

Abe mentioned he is presenting this afternoon along with St. Regis Mohawk Tribe on the joint Area of Concern and our collaboration at the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Webinar Series. Please feel free to attend.

➤ **South Glengarry Council Item: Docks** - *Stephanie Jaworski*

The Township of The Archipelago (Parry Sound District) have a motion to discontinue the use of unencapsulated polystyrene foam on docks, as it is harmful to the environment. Is there someone on the SLRRC that Stephanie would be able to approach for expert advice on this?

Brendan: Lissa Delandes would have the most information. Not aware of any regulation that would prohibit floatation substances for docks, although it is important to make sure it is not getting into our water.

➤ **Port Lands Public Engagement** -*Dale Phippen*

There is currently a public engagement session for the Port Lands (MCA/City of Cornwall). [Get Involved - The Port Lands](#) **Action:** Georgia to circulate link for Port Lands Public Comment Period.

➤ **CSS Model** – *Jeff Ridal*

Jeff let Abe know that he would like MCA's involvement in the development of the CSS model. It would be good to pull someone from MCA and the City of Cornwall who work on the Port, as one of the zones of contaminated sediments is located there. Abe said he would like to be involved.

➤ **Next meeting – October 13, 2021 – 10am-12pm**

11. Adjournment

Motion: To Adjourn the June 9, 2021 SLRRC Meeting.

Moved: Mark Kaddie

Seconded: Dale Phippen

Result: Carried

11:12 am