

# BONNECHERE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Minutes of Meeting #1, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005  
Bonnechere Valley Township Office, Eganville

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## Attendees:

**SAC:** Kevin O'Connor, Ross Campbell, Murray Borer, Lucy King, Don Pouliot, Steve Munger, Niall McArdle, Murray Bimm

**Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn:** Jan Leroux

**MNR:** Michael Radford, Joanna Samson, Ian Crawford, Paul Moreau

**Waterpower Producers:** Peter Boldt (RPG), Andreas Vornweg (Vornweg Waterpower), Frank Scheer (Eganville Generation Corporation), Janusz Rydel (Multistream Power Corp.)

**Other:** Chris Hintsburger (Bonnechere Caves)

## Regrets:

Aurel Boucher

### 1. Introduction of Members and Review of Contact Information

A round table introduction of everyone present took place.

Ian Crawford, Acting District Manager Pembroke District MNR, welcomed the new Bonnechere River Standing Advisory Committee. He thanked the members, representing a vast set of skills, interest and knowledge, for showing an interest and becoming involved. He talked about the role of the SAC, which is to provide advice to MNR & the power producers and to keep the advisory role front and centre.

Ian provided some background for water management planning by mentioning that in 1996, with a change in government, there was a change in the way electricity was bought and sold in the province. Water management planning was thought to be a way to keep power producers honest by setting operating requirements & ensure public accountability. A requirement was made for all waterpower producers (approx. 200) in the province to produce a plan and be operating under it by March 31, 2006.

Ian mentioned that the major challenge of water management planning is the balancing of all interests and the needs of all users (social, economical, environmental, recreational and power production).

He also discussed the fact the Ontario is faced with an energy crisis and that we need all the power we can get. In addition, that economics is very important to this government as is ecological sustainability\*.

Don Pouliot asked about the Bonnechere River with respect to the importance of hydro-electricity as it is relatively small and doesn't produce much. He questioned if we would be looking to maximize it. Ian indicated that every facility is important; as all the pieces add up and replace other non-renewable forms (i.e. coal fired generating plants). The challenge being that sometimes we have to act locally but think globally.

Don Pouliot also asked whether this means that MNR would like to see more waterpower developments. Ian replied yes, however, they must be in balance. There are currently 17 new

proposals in the province; however, they likely won't be as big as they would have been 20 years ago.

A list of contact information was handed out to everyone. Some corrections were made to a master copy, which was given back to Joanna to finalize. The corrected version will be attached in the email with the draft minutes.

*\*Ecological Sustainability:* "The MNR's mission is to manage our natural resources in an ecologically sustainable way to ensure that they are available for the enjoyment and use of future generations. Ecological sustainability focuses on safeguarding the province's natural capital and nature's capacity to renew itself. It is directed toward resource management practices that protect and maintain nature's capacity to renew itself and generate sufficient natural "interest" to meet Ontarians' present and future needs." Definition taken from *Our Sustainable Future*, February 2005

## 2. Bios/News Release

The MNR and waterpower producers would like to issue a news release announcing the formation of the SAC, which includes a short biography of each member. The SAC members were asked to put together a short biography. A copy of the news release used for the Madawaska WMP SAC and the Bonnechere River WMP PAC was handed out to use as an example.

**ACTION: SAC members to email ([joanna.samson@mnr.gov.on.ca](mailto:joanna.samson@mnr.gov.on.ca)) or fax (613) 732-2972 biography to Joanna by Friday October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2005.**

## 3. Plan Overview Presentation Q's & A's

Joanna gave a quick overview of the plan. The presentation included the planning process, plan approval, and plan implementation.

Niall McArdle asked how a plan term of 10 years was determined or why the plan term was 10 years. It was explained that it takes that amount of time to adequately manage the resources. A planning process can take 2 or more years itself. Typically water management plans are for a 7-10 year term.

Niall McArdle also questioned if plans were legally binding and what would be the consequences of not following the contract. Ian explained that the plans were legally binding between the power producers and MNR and that power producers are generally very responsible. There definitely are exceptions, for instance during flood or drought conditions, as weather anomalies cannot be controlled. The MNR would investigate each deviation outside the operating requirements. Consequences range, usually at the discretion of the court, if charges were laid as a result of an investigation:

- 1 Million plus 20K/day.
- New criminal penalties, jail terms for officers of the company
- Additional imposition of penalty in the amount of the value of the energy generated.

Kevin O'Connor asked what it was like prior to the plans being in place. Ian responded by saying that it varied however; for the most part it was a hand-shake agreement. Michael Radford added that a Licence of Occupation was still in effect, however it only gave the producer an upper limit to which they could legally flood to and no lower limit.

#### 4. Terms of Reference

##### 4.1 General Discussion - For Review & Input from SAC

A copy of the draft Terms of Reference for the SAC has handed out. It was mentioned that the version distributed had changed slightly since the original draft that the SAC would of received in the Application Package. There was no expectation that the Terms of Reference was to be finalized at the meeting, however, it was handed out for the SAC members to review it and put forward any comments/questions/revisions they would like to see to Joanna. A discussion regarding the finalization of the Terms of Reference will be an agenda topic for the next meeting.

Some initial questions/comments on the document were:

- What constitutes quorum?
- Will the SAC meetings be open to the public as it was listed in an earlier version?

Joanna will put some wording around these and others questions raised in the next draft.

**ACTION: SAC members to send comments to Joanna.**

**ACTION: Joanna to circulate new draft prior to next SAC meeting**

##### 4.2 Selection of Chair, Secretary

The issue of selecting a chair, co-chair, and secretary was discussed briefly. The decision will be left up to the SAC to decide if this is what they would like to do. Michael Radford mentioned that if this is the way the SAC would like to go, that MNR could bring a professional in to talk to them about roles and facilitate a selection process. This is to be discussed further at the next meeting.

MNR and the power producers are willing to provide secretarial duties, i.e. minute taking, agenda

#### 5. Other

##### 5.1 Date for a Tour

**Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005** - Selected as a date to tour the dams and generating stations on the Bonnechere River. The tour will start at 8:30am and likely end early afternoon. We will be travelling together, however a meeting location and other specifics will follow.

**ACTION: Joanna to co-ordinate arrangements and notify SAC by the end of October.**

## **5.2 Date of next meeting**

A discussion regarding the best meeting night occurred. The majority thought that Wednesday nights would work well. A suggestion was made that we attempt to hold the meetings sooner in the evening. The majority also thought that Eganville was a central enough and the meetings should be held there.

**Wednesday November 23, 2005** – Bonnechere SAC meeting #2 @ 6pm in Eganville. The location of the meeting place in Eganville is yet to be decided but will be sent to the SAC with the meeting agenda.

The agenda for this meeting will focus on an ice damage study that MNR and RPG commissioned from an engineering company in Kanata (BMT Fleet Technologies Inc.) to look into the ice related damages to Round and Golden Lake over the last two winters. The final report is due by the end of October. If possible, a copy of the report from the consultants will be shared with the SAC prior to the meeting.

## **5.3 Letter from Round Lake Property Owners' Association**

A letter dated September 23, 2005 from Wendy Engel, RLPOA, regarding Round Lake High Water Levels was circulated to the SAC. The letter was addressed to Michael Radford and Paul Moreau (MNR), Members of the BRWMP Standing Advisory Committee, and Peter Boldt (RPG). Michael Radford stated that the MNR plans on responding to the letter, however, the concerns expressed in the letter are similar concerns that were voiced during the planning process. Michael noted that at some point down the road, once the SAC has been brought up to speed, this issue as well as the RLPOA's letter can be discussed.

## **5.4 Confidentiality**

The question of confidentiality was also discussed. It was explained that this is a public committee and that confidentiality shouldn't be an issue. The minutes to all meetings will be made available to the public as they are subject to the *Freedom of Information Act*. However, it was asked that draft minutes be kept within the confines of the SAC until they have been approved by everyone and have been finalized.

## **5.5 Liability**

The question of whether or not the SAC could be held liable for any discussion/decision relating to the implementation of the WMP was raised. Ian Crawford responded by saying that the SAC is an advisory board and not a decision making board and that the SAC would in no way be liable.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.