

BONNECHERE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

Minutes of Meeting #4 – February 22, 2006
Royal Canadian Legion, Eganville

Attendees:

SAC: Ross Campbell, Lucy King, Don Pouliot, Steve Munger, Niall McArdle, Murray Bimm, Aurel Boucher, Murray Borer

Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn: Jan Leroux

MNR: Michael Radford, Joanna Samson, Paul Moreau

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

Regrets:

Kevin O'Connor,

1. Housekeeping Items

1.1 Review of Agenda

No items were added to the agenda.

Correction was made to the date listed on the agenda. Agenda should read “*Meeting #4, Wednesday February 22, 2006, Royal Canadian Legion, Eganville*”.

2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting #3 – January 18/06

Steve Munger’s email with changes to section 6.0 was approved. The first three sentences in the paragraph to be replaced with “Steve Munger discussed performance indicators, a topic he had brought up at the last meeting. **He acknowledged that water levels were the primary performance indicator and the maximum and minimum water levels established in the management plan were the primary performance targets.** After reading the WMP in greater detail, he countered his original idea of **developing additional** performance indicators as a measure of the success of the SAC and the WMP.”

Don Pouliot had also submitted comments on the minutes and the following changes were accepted:

Page 2 – sentence to be added to the 2nd last paragraph – “...had put stones last summer to repair last year’s damage. **The ice push ranges all along Dunne’s Bay up to Dombroski’s point.**”

Page 3 – replace wording – “...If there is no frost barrier, Peter indicated that the **ice will push inward and not buckle. This is due to the fact there is no resistance in the shore and the force of the ice will more inward.**”

Page 4 – wording in 2nd paragraph to be replaced with “...that if you reduce water levels in the fall, **creating a buffer area large enough to accommodate expected ice expansion, ice push would occur only in the buffer zone instead of against the shoreline banks and you would have your solution.**”

Page 6 – Add to sentence “A. Paul indicated that the population is probably not that high. A survey was conducted several years ago.

ACTION: Find out the year the survey was conducted & whether or not Lake Trout were actually tagged during the survey.

Page 6 – Add to sentence “Q. Don indicated that he thought it was in decline everywhere in southern Ontario.”

Minutes were approved by all SAC members present.

3. Water Management Plan: Walk-through of operating regimes continued

Paul Moreau picked up where he left off at the last SAC meeting, starting with a recap of the following:

Lake Trout Box (Round Lake)

- Ensure spawning beds on Victoria Island have enough water over them so that the Lake Trout eggs remain viable.
- Agreement between MNR & RPG. RPG needs to ensure that the eggs are protected.
- Certain conditions may arise that would have MNR authorize RPG to enter into the Lake Trout box area in preparation for the spring freshet.
- We now currently have an ice damage study that recommends a drawdown of 4cm/week starting at freeze-up. The trajectory of this drawdown goes through the Lake Trout box.
- Lake Trout was stocked up to a certain point. **ACTION:** Information on stocking would be beneficial during a future SAC meeting (MNR biologist).

Golden Lake

- water needs to cover the walleye spawning shoals
- RPG can put more water into Golden Lake than can be taken out because of the natural constriction. All logs can be removed from the dam; however, the water will not go out any faster.

Minimum Flows

There is a commitment in the plan to establish minimum flows for all control structures. There is a need for further discussion around this with MNR, waterpower producers, MOE & possibly others to establish the necessary approach and methodology. Once this has been established, it will be passed by the SAC.

Reach 7: Golden Lake Continued

Old Killaloe Mill

- Manual operation with minimal impact on the system. Not usually a problem for them to stay in range, some fluctuations
- May have some problems with dry conditions – not enough water to run the turbines.

Andreas – have to let some water through for leakage

Paul – in some cases where there is not enough water in the system (logs not in, turbines are not running) and the level is lower than the lower limit, we wouldn't lay a charge because the water just isn't there.

Murray Borer asked about the sewage effluent. Andreas responded that it's further down, closer to Golden Lake.

MOE found no link between Vornweg's Plan and the sewage facility.

Reach 6: Wilbur Lake (Golden Lake Dam to Eganville Dam)

Wilbur Lake

- Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) and has the ability to hold back water.
- Control of Wilbur Lake is Crooked Rapids

Eganville Facility-

- Recently upgraded with all new turbines and electronic gauges; fairly automated
- Straight lines in operation

Frank S. – facility can pass pretty much all water in the system; more precarious – high volume of water; have to react very quickly if there is a lot of water; things are usually more stable in the winter.

- Upstream – water intake
- Downstream – sewage treatment plant
- DFO concerned during assessment that there was no flow through the dam and this was identified in the plan. This will hopefully get captured when the minimum flow is established for the facility.

Lake Clear

- controlled by beavers and there have been years where they have rendered the dam useless
- channel between Lake Clear & little Lake Clear – sediment build-up
- no financial benefit to RPG
- may get a couple of days of running in the fall
- this year Bonnechere Valley wanted to do some repairs to roads, drawdown went as far as possible
- RPG doesn't see this as financially feasible at this time, however, at some point they may want to dredge and remove the beavers. RPG may have a hard time with public perception if/when they go this route.
- Reporting: weekly level check (manual), don't check in the winter months
- **Information Need:** Need to assess by survey, the sill of the dam in order to establish the lower limit.

Reach 5: Eganville Dam to Fourth Chute

- Reach created by a natural constriction at the site of an old non-operational dam
- Eganville caves located at Fourth Chute

Reach 4: Fourth Chute to Douglas Dam

- Multistream was initially reluctant in participating in the process and as a result the working group developed an operating regime for them.

- This motivated Multistream to come on board as they didn't think the new operating regime was workable.
- The new restrictive operating regime was to address concerns with upstream flooding in the spring and fishery concerns on the downstream side of the dam.
- An amendment to the operating regime was processed after the plan was approved to better reflect historic operations.
- The plant is operated remotely. There are 3 small units. Similar reporting requirements as RPG.

JR: Some spikes occur when ice builds up and we can't react fast enough. As a result we end up going over the upper limit.

NOTE: (Michael R.) There were 2 amendments processed since plan implementation. One for Douglas and the other for Eganville. These two amendments had been identified in the plan and in the absence of a SAC, were elevated to a "minor" amendment status (potentially from "administrative") so that public consultation could take place.

Reach 3: Douglas Dam to Renfrew Dam #2

- Cattle country & erosion issues taken into account in this reach.
- Looking for constant flows through the facility and over the dam if need be
- Fluctuation of 30cm/day
- Allowance for spring freshet

Peter Boldt made some comments with respect to the water management plan being a living document and that things can change as we move forward. Ranges that were feasible before may not always be feasible as dynamics change. If all parties agree that something is not working, things can change.

Michael Radford agreed that the plan can be amended if necessary; however, we won't be making numerous changes. A buffer was built in by the working group during the planning process, and the intention was that the operators wouldn't be riding the line.

15 Minute BREAK

During the break, Peter Boldt handed out letter he sent to Ontario Parks regarding building reservoirs in Algonquin Park. He wanted to make the SAC aware that he had a meeting with set up on March 1st, 2006 with Ontario Parks to discuss RPG's proposal of building 4 dams in the Park.

4. Spring Flood Review

Peter showed pictures of the 2005 spring freshet/flood event.

Joanna handed out the Spring Flood Review Information Package to the SAC

Michael gave an overview of the package and said that due to the time, we would move the discussion of the spring flooding to the next meeting.

The package included:

1. Non-Compliance Letter from RPG to MNR
2. Chronology of Events
3. Summary of Investigation
4. MNR's compliance letter to RPG

5. Other

We are looking at having 2 more meetings before the summer & possibly having a boat tour.

Michael showed a list of potential topics for future meetings;

- Effectiveness Monitoring
- Information Needs
- Historical Operations – RPG
- Fisheries 101
- Shoreline Erosion Dynamics
- Non-compliance
- Review of Operations

Aurel B. asked how much do the MNR know about the Lake Trout population. And will it ever respond? Michael answered that - yes there is a possibility that the population can respond.

Lucy – interested in shoreline erosion

Aurel – Non compliance

M Borer – Information Needs

Steve – Other indicators, indicators of success

By consensus, the next meeting will look at covering:

- Spring Flood review
- Waterpower Producers Update of Operations: *to become a standard agenda topic*
- Information Needs
- Effectiveness Monitoring

6. Date of Next Meeting

Bonnechere SAC meeting #5 @ 6pm in Eganville – **Wednesday, April 12, 2006**

ACTION: Frank Scheer to book the Township Office

Meeting #6 to take place at the end of May (after the long weekend)

ACTION: Joanna -add to next agenda (housekeeping) – Alternate locations for meetings

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.