

BONNECHERE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN
STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)
FINAL-Minutes of Meeting #19 – February 11, 2009
Eagles Nest, Eganville

Attendees:

SAC: Don Pouliot, Ross Campbell, Murray Borer, Murray Bimm, Lucy King, Steve Munger

Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn: Jan Leroux

MNR: Mike Radford, Joanna Samson, Tom Giesler

Waterpower Producers: Jeff Featherston (RPG), Frank Scheer (Eganville Generation Corporation), Janusz Rydel (Multistream Power Corp.)

Guest: Kevin O'Connor (GLPOA President)

Regrets:

Andreas Vornweg, Niall McArdle

1. Housekeeping Items

1.1 Review of Agenda

Michael welcomed back Kevin O'Connor and explained that Kevin was in attendance representing GLPOA.

No items were added to the agenda.

2. Review & Approval of Minutes of Meeting #18 – November 26/08

- Joanna indicated the revision to the draft from Wendy Engle.
- There was some discussion around having a presentation on the Endangered Species Act. Mike explained that it's something we could look at down the road but it may be to a - broader group than just our SAC.
- Mike indicated that Darwin Rosien is still working diligently at the Lake Trout Study and that there will likely be the need for it to be peer reviewed.

3. Update on 4 RPG Amendments

Joanna:

- 3 administrative amendments were approved January 30, 2009 by Ray Bonenberg (Regional Director). They are in affect
- Golden Lake minor amendment: hit the papers this week, 15 days for comments, inspection ends Feb 26th. We will review comments received and the Regional Director will make a decision on the amendment.

Jan Leroux indicated that her Chief and Council will be submitting a letter.

Don Pouliot asked if the trial amendment will impact this amendment should it go forward. It was explained that yes, it will, however we still needed to proceed with this amendment as it's been over 2 years in the making and there are no guarantees that we will be able to move forward with the trial.

Kevin inquired about where people could go to inspect the amendment. Mike explained both MNR and RPG had copies of the amendment but that there was no open house because it is a minor amendment (15 day inspection period).

Steve asked if anything had been resolved around the affect on Whitefish. Kirby Punt did not believe that the Whitefish would be affected because the fall drawdown isn't any lower than the winter drawdown and there shouldn't be any winter freezing impacts any more than there might be currently.

4. Round Lake Trial Amendment

Mike handed out the graph prepared by RPG, illustrating the potential trial amendment with a new lower limit and typical operating line for Round Lake. Mike pointed out that the graph was not finalized; however, it was a good starting point for discussion.

Mike:

- Last spring a package came from RPG, RLPOA, & GLPOA, and it was handed out in June to the SAC. It contained 2 proposals for Round Lake in it.
- A meeting was held in July between MNR, RPG, & Don Pouliot.
- DFO approval to go to 169.8, but Jeff shows it on the graph as a little lower.
- Majority of eggs are found 165.4-169.5 so anything level below the pink line (current lower limit)– will affect lake trout eggs for both proposals
- 1st-proposal (RPG) was to draw down throughout the fall to new lower limit
- RLPOA proposal was a sharper drawdown after Labour Day to thanksgiving.
- MNR was prepared to not accept either proposal due to the affect on the Lake Trout but Kirby Punt put the idea of a trial on the table at the meeting in July. The trial would be to see if the Lake Trout can be influenced to spawn lower on the shoal; some studies have shown that this can be successful. Kirby is looking at some work that has been done in Quebec where they have a very sharp draw down.
- The whole premise is sharp drawdown after Labour Day until they spawn, check to see where they spawn through diving and see if it's repeatable.
- DFO has given their approval and are willing to accept that some eggs may be lost.
- Amend plan for 3-4 year trial with a sunset clause. It will go back to the existing operating regime unless an amendment is proposed because the trial is working.
- Long shot but worth a try
- RPG has indicated to MNR that they are no longer a proponent of the amendment; however, they will be an active participant.
- Looking to the SAC to determine if members are supportive and type of category

Jeff commented that the graph is draft and doesn't endorse what RPG wants. It needs more touch up from RPG perspective.

Continued discussion took place. Major Points;

- MNR, RPG, Don – finalize typical operating line
- Submit to ACRES for modelling; MNR has offered to pay for this
- Proposal is very important from an RLPOA position to help alleviate risk of damage from thermal ice push.

- Want to maintain recreational levels in summer as much as possible.
- This trial will change the operations on Golden lake as well; which will be a part of the model
- If the Trial fails, it will revert back.
- Natural Lake Trout Population so MNR's direction is that we can't stock. They have survived 35 years of a stocking program. Strain is resilient.
- Trial will only commit to diving each year to check eggs see where the eggs are deposited. But we may end up doing additional studies depending on where MNR's funds and workload are allocated.

Some discussion regarding Coalition 108 took place:

- RPG is meeting with them in the spring
- Issues haven't changed and litigation is still pending
- Reason why RPG can't be a major driver for the amendment according to RPG.
- They are looking for money for damages
- Lots of members and growing.
- Want lower levels in the summer
- Some members of Coalition 108 are also members of the RLPOA
- Kevin mentioned that 2 members of coalition 108 attended a directors meeting for GLPOA, asking people if they had damage. The environment on Golden Lake is different than on Round Lake. They had a difficult time understanding the coalition and their actions. After labour day- 70-75% of people leave the lake.

COMMENTS:

Kevin: GLPOA wants to cooperate and support the trial.

Lucy: In Favour

Steve: in favour

Ross: in favour

Murray Bimm: in favour

Murray Borer: in favour

Jan: should try it

Janusz: would like rate of winter drop, Start at 170.4 – bottom that it is now – to ensure that water flows through winter and turbines don't freeze. In fall would like to see bottom a little higher. Same in spring as in fall. If dry fall, there will be no water around the turbines in the winter and they may freeze. Would like a guarantee that there will be water in the winter.

Mike: doesn't mean you are going to have less flow through the system. If you keep the difference in the winter than is currently there, would negate the lake trout trial.

Frank: Never received Appendix J; **ACTION Joanna: Send Frank Appendix J.**

AMENDMENT TYPE:

Don: strongly feels that any water level change is a major amendment.

Kevin: MAJOR

Jan: MAJOR

Murray Bimm: MAJOR. If we say minor and there is a problem, we would have to backtrack

Murry Borer: This is a major issue of the plan since the beginning - MAJOR

Ross: MAJOR

Steve: MAJOR

Lucy: MAJOR

All SAC members present recommend that the trial amendment move forward as a major amendment.

NEXT STEPS:

- look further in to science, studies
- come up with an agreed upon bottom limit and typical line
- Run through the ACRES model,
- Categorization of Amendment by Regional Director
- scheduling an information session in the spring
- Consultation
- Final decision & approval or not
- Inspection of approved amendment if approved

5. Operations Update – Power Producers

Jeff Featherston:

- Round Lake is below target, had to put logs in to get around corner of the box.
- 20-25 inches of ice on the lakes
- 15 inches of wet snow in bush
- Golden Lake is above typical operating line but normal operations. All logs are out of the dam. This is a good will issue as there is no real affect of removing all the logs.
- Renfrew; by-passing 4 cms

Frank Scheer:

- good January, February is petering out
- Not seeing the freeze up at intake as much this winter

Janusz Rydel:

- winter has been good so far
- no frazil ice
- couple of hydro one issues; several power outages
- EA for Douglas upgrade has finished, no bump ups, now at permitting/approvals stage.

6. Walk-on Agenda Items

There was some confusion around the table regarding the letter the SAC received for MNR's Volunteer recognition Dinner, Saturday March 7/09. Joanna explained that there was mis-hap with the letter and that the SAC received the letter intended for the Clubs. Joanna clarified that all members of the SAC were invited to attend with their spouse and to please let Corrie Steinberg know asap if they wish to attend.

7. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday April 8, 2009 @ Eagles' Nest in Eganville.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.