

REGULATION OF LAKE ONTARIO AND THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

CANADA–UNITED STATES WORKING GROUP

Backgrounder

The overall objective of the Working Group is to provide advice in response to International Joint Commission proposals on how to (a) manage water levels and flows in the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence system and (b) better define and adequately protect all interests – environmental, social and economic – both upstream and downstream of the Moses-Saunders Dam, in compliance with the Boundary Waters Treaty.

To achieve this objective, the Commission will:

- provide an issues analysis and recommendations to the Working Group, particularly regarding issues raised during the Commission’s public consultations about its previously proposed Order of Approval and regulation plan;
- compile a summary of regulation plans and variants developed during the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Study and thereafter;
- explain the relative strengths and weaknesses of each plan, outline the public views submitted, and assess the suitability of any of these plans and/or the need for further plan development or other measures; and
- taking into account the advice of the Working Group, develop any new Order of Approval and/or regulation plan that might be required.

For its part, the Working Group will respond to Commission proposals by:

- advising whether all Boundary Waters Treaty interests, including those not specified in the existing Order and regulation plan, can be protected, enhanced or restored under current arrangements or whether a new Order and/or regulation plan should be put in place;
- considering whether any programs or measures (such as adaptive management or mitigation) should be implemented to enhance the protection of all interests, and whether/how these could be coordinated with existing programs and measures;
- offering feedback regarding the potential environmental, social and economic impacts of any specific proposal on all interests; and
- providing advice on Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River system governance, communications issues and any proposed changes in the composition of the International

St. Lawrence River Board of Control or on any new interests to be considered by the Board under the current regulation plan.

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Canada

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada
Environment Canada

United States

U.S. Department of State
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Québec

Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs (MDDEP)
Centre d'expertise hydrique du Québec (CEHQ)

New York

Department of Environmental Conservation
Office of the Governor

Ontario

Ministry of Natural Resources

International Joint Commission

U.S. Section
Canadian Section