

INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD
Final minutes of meeting held on June 20, 2008
Ambassador B Room, CanadInn, Brandon, Manitoba

Russell Boals convened the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

1. **Review of agenda.** Discussion of the annual report, Rafferty and Alameda gate maintenance, and water quality monitoring were added to Other Business.
2. **Approval of minutes from February 2008 ISRB meeting**

Col. Jonathan Christensen moved to approve the minutes. Megan Estep seconded the motion. Carried.

3. **Review of action items from February 2008 meeting and outstanding items from previous meetings**

- Coordinate a meeting of the Natural Flow Methods Committee in May 2008. Doug Johnson reported that he had not arranged for this meeting. The NFMC Agenda would include discussion of NFMC structure and the Procedures Manual

ACTION: Doug Johnson to arrange meeting of the Natural Flow Methods Committee by September 15, 2008.

- Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee to review monitoring for E. Coli vs. Total Coliform and to review water quality objectives. No progress as formation of the committee is pending agreement on committee structure and terms of reference.
- Confirm that Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) has been engaged with regard to coal mine expansion project in SK. Richard Zitta reported that Prairie Mines and Royalty expect to have the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) into CEAA in mid-August, 2008. Megan Estep requested a copy of the EIA once it becomes public. It was suggested that the EIA go to the entire Board.

ACTION: Richard Zitta to distribute a copy of the coal mine expansion EIA to the Board once the EIA becomes public.

- Develop draft workplan and discussion document on governance. Russell Boals reported that this has been completed and is on the agenda as item 4.
- Letters of appointment of Board members. Brian Yee reported that Paul Pilon has provided the appointment letters for Canadian Board members. Appointment letters for the US Board members are outstanding.

ACTION: Brian Yee to follow-up with US section of IJC to obtain appointment letters of US Board members.

- Meeting of Souris watershed integrated mapping initiative stakeholders. Brian Yee reported that he has not arranged the meeting pending agreement by the Board on the

work plan and priorities.

- Water quality annual report for 2003-05. Bruce Holliday and Mike Sauer reported that the report is still a work in progress.

ACTION: Bruce Holliday and Mike Sauer to continue to work on the report as their schedule permits.

4. Review of June 19 public meeting.

Russell Boals noted that no public attended the meeting. However, CKX Brandon television media was present at the meeting and Russell Boals, Dale Frink, and Brian Yee were interviewed. Brian Yee also noted that he was interviewed by CKLQ Radio in Brandon prior to the meeting, shortly after the press release was distributed to the media.

5. ISRB multi-year workplan and committee structure and terms of reference

Russell Boals reviewed the draft committee Terms of Reference that he had circulated to the Board. Doug Johnson asked if the committees would be responsible for preparation or review of their respective portions of the annual report. Ed Eaton expressed concerns about the ability of personnel in member agencies to meet deliverables of the Board and its Committees. There was general agreement that review of the report by committees would be useful. Megan Estep nominated Ken Bottle to represent USFWS on the Hydrology Committee. Doug Johnson nominated Bart Oegema to represent SWA on the Hydrology Committee. Bob Harrison nominated Duane Kelln to represent MWS on the Hydrology Committee. Steve Robinson noted that he can represent USGS on the Hydrology Committee. Richard Zitta will represent Saskatchewan Environment on the Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee and he will be the Board representative on the AEHC. Charlene Prindiville is leaving the NWS and her name should be removed from the Flow Forecasting Committee.

ACTION: Board members to review Terms of Reference and provide comments to other members of the Board by August 8, 2008.

Russell Boals noted that there was discussion of workplans at the IJC Integrated Watershed Initiative meeting in March. A workplan was developed for the ISRB following the IJC's framework. Ed Eaton suggested that core on-going functions be separated from special projects. He also suggested that resource requirements for those special projects be identified to obtain commitment from the IJC. Ed Eaton also noted that there is difficulty in obtaining commitment from member agencies. Dale Frink asked for clarification on process regarding how the IJC would provide special project funds to the Board. Ed Eaton and Russell Boals reviewed some of their experience dealing with the IJC with funding for special projects. The Board does not have means to accept funds. The Canadian or USA sections of the IJC will transfer funds to respective member agencies and contracts would be administered through those member agencies.

ACTION: Board members to review Work Plan and provide comments on structure and identify priorities to other members of the Board by August

8, 2008.

6. Operation of U.S. refuges and reservoirs on the Souris River

Megan Estep reviewed highlights from a report on Refuge Operations and Flows for the period January 1 to May 31, 2008. Lake Darling elevation on June 1 was 1590.41 feet on June 1. No additional releases from Lake Darling are anticipated. There was some thought that the severe drought criteria may be invoked. Bob Harrison expressed concerns that the severe drought criteria could be invoked as a result of the operations of the USFWS. Gary Erickson noted that the first priority of operations for the refuges would be to meet the requirements for wildlife. The Service is mandated to manage water levels on Lake Darling and the other pools to meet the wildlife habitat objectives of the Refuges, and cannot operate simply to avoid invoking the severe drought criteria. The larger issue in meeting the flow requirement to Manitoba of 20 cfs (0.57 m³/s) is the fact that the concrete spillway and carp barrier are 3.5 feet (1.06 metres) higher than they should be, and it is difficult to maintain sufficient head in Pool 357 to meet and maintain the required flow.

7. Determination of Natural Flow of Souris River at Sherwood to May 31, 2008

Don Hood reviewed the Determination of Natural Flow of Souris River at International Boundary (Sherwood). He noted that many of the reservoirs had a negative storage which indicates a net release of water (vs. storage) which is a result of the limited spring snowmelt runoff. For example, Souris River at Ralph inflow to Rafferty Reservoir was only 77 dam³ and there were several tributaries that did not flow at all. Russell Boals noted that the Canada/USA share is 50/50 as the natural flow is less than 50,000 dam³.

Bob Harrison moved to accept the Determination of Natural Flows. Seconded by Dale Frink. Carried.

Mike Sauer noted concerns with release of water from Alameda Reservoir from the bottom outlet rather than the mid-level outlet. He noted that that the mid-level outlet was installed and paid for by the City of Minot in part due to the water quality concerns. Mike Sauer noted that ammonia can build up in deep water under ice cover in a reservoir which can have an impact on dissolved oxygen levels downstream of the dam. Bruce Holliday noted that during the winter, low dissolved oxygen and ammonia build up under ice cover throughout the Souris River basin. For example, he noted that water quality at Westhope shows reduction of DO and build-up of ammonia during the winter period. Ed Eaton suggested that as a best management practice, a release from the mid-level outlet may be desirable. There was further discussion of monitoring the water quality during a release from the lower and mid-level outlets. Doug Johnson indicated that SWA's water quality science had indicated that a release from the mid-level outlet would make no difference in the water quality.

8. Review of current hydrologic conditions and forecast for summer and fall 2008

- Saskatchewan. Scott Hill and Doug Johnson reviewed flow conditions in the Saskatchewan portion of the Souris River basin.. Spring runoff was well below normal throughout the Saskatchewan portion of the basin. Doug Johnson noted that Rafferty Reservoir is about 2 m below FSL.
- North Dakota. Steve Robinson reviewed flow conditions in the North Dakota portion of the Souris River basin. He noted that flow recorded at Sherwood and Westhope were

well below normal.

- Manitoba. Bob Harrison reviewed flow conditions in the Manitoba portion of the Souris River basin. The 2008 snowmelt runoff was well below average. On farm surface water supplies are very low. However, flows on the Souris River will be adequate based on a continuous flow of 20 cfs from North Dakota.

9. Update on water-management projects

- Boundary Dam coal mine expansion, dewatering project. Update was provided in review of the action items.
- Northwest Area Water Supply project. Dale Frink noted that the final EIS is still in preparation. It is expected in December 2008.

10. Upper Souris Watershed Planning in Saskatchewan. Jim Gerhardt gave a presentation on Saskatchewan Watershed Authority's Upper Souris Water Planning activity. A series of public meetings has been held in Saskatchewan and a technical advisory committee will meet June 25 in Weyburn. Mike Sauer noted that Heather Duchscherer, North Dakota Department of Health, has participated in the public meetings and will participate in the technical advisory committee.

11. IJC Integrated Watershed Initiative

- Report on March 18-19, 2008 IJC Workshop on IWI. Russell Boals, Doug Johnson, Mike Sauer, and Ed Eaton attended the meeting. Dale Frink noted that a report on the meeting is on the IJC website. Doug Johnson noted that there was value in meeting individuals on the other Boards and meeting the IJC Commissioners. Ed Eaton noted that the IJC thought there would be value in the four IWI Boards meeting for discussion.
- Discussion: expectations, plans, resource requirements, next steps. Russell Boals reviewed a request for proposals received from the IJC. Russell Boals suggested that he would prepare proposals for review by the Board and submission to the IJC.

ACTION: Russell Boals to prepare proposals using the IJC template, and submit to the Board for review, and subsequent submission to the IJC.

12. IJC update. No report as IJC representatives was not present.

13. Other business

- Annual report. Dale Frink noted that the target date for publication of the final report is October 1, 2008. Mike Sauer noted that most of the data has been compiled. Dale Frink noted that a new photo is required for the report cover.

ACTION: Each Board member to provide photos suitable for use on the annual report cover to Bob White by August 31, 2008.

- Rafferty and Alameda gate maintenance. Doug Johnson provided an update on the maintenance work being done on the spillway gates at Rafferty and Alameda.

ACTION: Doug Johnson to provide dam safety

report to Megan Estep and Ed Eaton.

ACTION: Doug Johnson to give a presentation on dam safety at the February 2009 meeting.

Water quality monitoring. Bruce Holliday reported that he collects 8 samples at Westhope with one under ice. He is considering adding one more sample in the winter to get a better understanding of ammonia build-up. Mike Sauer noted that at Sherwood, water quality sampling has been reduced from 9 samples to 7 samples as a result of a statistical analysis that indicated 7 samples would be sufficient.

14. Date of September 2008 conference call.

September 25, 2008. 9:00 a.m. Regina, Denver; 10:00 a.m. Winnipeg and Bismarck

15. Meeting close

Meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

FINAL AGENDA -- INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD
Ambassador B Room, CanadaInn, Brandon, Manitoba, 8:30 a.m. CDT, June 20, 2008

1. Review of agenda (*Russell Boals and Dale Frink*)
2. Approval of minutes from February 2008 ISRB meeting
3. Review of action items from February 2008 meeting and outstanding items from previous meetings.
 - Coordinate a meeting of the Natural Flow Methods Committee in May 2008 (*Doug Johnson*)
 - Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee to review monitoring for E. Coli vs. Total Coliform and to review water quality objectives
 - Confirm that CEAA has been engaged with regard to coal-mine expansion project in SK (*Richard Zitta*)
 - Develop draft workplan and discussion document on governance (*Russell Boals*)
 - Letters of appointment of Board members (*Paul Pilon*)
 - Meeting of Souris watershed IWI stakeholders (*Brian Yee*)
 - Water quality annual report for 2003-05 (*Bruce Holliday and Mike Sauer*)
4. Review of June 19 public meeting (*Russ Boals and Dale Frink*)
5. ISRB multi-year workplan and committee structure and terms of reference (*Russell Boals*)
6. Operation of U.S. refuges and reservoirs on the Souris River (*Megan Estep*)
7. Determination of Natural Flow of Souris River at Sherwood to May 31, 2008 (*Don Hood*)
8. Review of current hydrologic conditions and forecast for summer and fall 2008
 - Saskatchewan (*Scott Hill and Doug Johnson*)
 - North Dakota (*Steve Robinson and Charlene Prindiville*)
 - Manitoba (*Bob Harrison*)
9. Update on water-management projects
 - Boundary Dam coal mine expansion, dewatering project (*Doug Johnson and Richard Zitta*)
 - Northwest Area Water Supply project (*Dale Frink*)
10. Upper Souris Watershed Planning in Saskatchewan (*Jim Gerhardt*)
11. IJC Integrated Mapping Initiative (*Russell Boals, Doug Johnson, Mike Laitta*)
 - Report on March 18-19, 2008 IJC Workshop on IWI
 - Discussion: expectations, plans, resource requirements, next steps
12. IJC update (*Paul Pilon, IJC Commissioners*)
13. Other business
 - Annual Report
 - Rafferty and Alameda gate maintenance
 - Water Quality monitoring
14. Date of September 2008 conference call
15. Close of meeting

List of Attendees, International Souris River Board

June 20, 2008 meeting

Board Members in Attendance

Russell Boals, Canadian Co-chair, Environment Canada
Dale Frink, USA Co-chair, ND State Water Commission
Bob Harrison, Member for Canada, Manitoba Water Stewardship
Doug Johnson, Member for Canada, Saskatchewan Watershed Authority
Megan Estep, Member for the USA, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Col. Jonathan Christensen, Member for the USA, US Army Corps of Engineers
Richard Zitta, Member for Canada, Saskatchewan Environment

Regrets

Gregg Wiche, Member for the USA, US Geological Survey
Dwight Williamson, Member for Canada, Manitoba Water Stewardship
Dennis Fewless, Member for the USA, ND Department of Health

Support Staff in Attendance

Brian Yee, Canadian Co-secretary, Transboundary Waters Unit, Environment Canada
Ed Eaton, IJC Technical Specialist, US Army Corps of Engineers
Gary Erickson, Refuge Manager, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Ken Bottle, Hydrologist, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Steve Robinson, North Dakota Data Chief, US Geological Survey
Don Hood, Acting Hydrometric Supervisor, Water Survey of Canada, Environment Canada
Scott Hill, Operations Manager, Water Survey of Canada, Environment Canada
Bruce Holliday, District Officer, Water Quality Monitoring, Environment Canada
Mike Sauer, USA Co-secretary, ND Department of Health
Jim Gerhart, Director, Watershed and Aquifer Planning, Saskatchewan Watershed Authority

Regrets

Bob White, USA Co-secretary, ND State Water Commission
Mike Laitta, GIS Coordinator, IJC
Willem Brakel, Senior Advisor, IJC
Paul Pilon, Engineering Advisor, IJC
Mark Colisomo, Engineering Advisor, IJC

Observer

Greg MacCulloch, Water Survey of Canada, Calgary