



## IJC Science Advisory Board – Science Priority Committee Fifteenth Meeting Summary

Capitol Skyline Hotel  
Washington DC

May 3, 2017 – 8:30am to 12 noon & May 4, 2017 – 8:30am to 10am

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<b>U.S. Members</b>	<b>Canadian Members</b>	<b>Commission Staff</b>
Carol Miller (Co-Chair)	Jeff Ridal (Co-Chair)	Matthew Child (Secretary)
Dave Allan	Andrea Kirkwood (May 3 by phone)	Victor Serveiss (U.S. Liaison)
Mike Murray	Christina Semeniuk (May 4 by phone)	Glenn Benoy (Canadian Liaison)
Scott Sowa	Clare Robinson	Raj Bejankiwar
Dale Phenicie	Henry Lickers	Antonette Arvai
Lucinda Johnson	John Livernois	Mark Burrows
		Cindy Warwick

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Regrets: Joe DePinto, Bob Hecky

### 1. Welcome and Approval of Draft Agenda

The U.S. Co-Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The draft agenda was approved by consensus.

### 2. Triennial Assessment of Progress

The U.S. Co-Chair thanked members for their contributions to the SPC's input on the draft TAP report. Advisory Board comments were provided to Commissioners, and Commissioners are currently deliberating on the process and timeline to complete the final TAP report.

**Action:** Secretary to forward the TAP input prepared by the Water Quality Board and Research Coordination Committee, for SPC members information.

There was a brief discussion of potential TAP recommendations, and it was suggested that TAP include high level recommendations that are supported by findings. If new material is added to the TAP report based on Advisory Board input and/or completed public consultations there may need to be new supporting material added to the Technical Appendix.

**Action:** Suggestions for TAP report recommendations should be forwarded to the Secretary by June 9, 2017.

### 3. Work Group Updates

Information on the progress of each Work Group is summarized in the attached SPC PowerPoint Appearance, and was reviewed during the meeting.

#### Information Coordination and Flow (Scott Sowa)

The Work Group is currently focusing on its report, including the development of 5-6 recommendations. In response to questions, it was clarified that there is unlikely to ever be a single information sharing platform, but rather a limited number of separate platforms that integrate data well and over longer timelines. The Work Group expects to send a report out for review by mid-August, and finalize the report by late September. The report will be ready for Commission review at the Fall Semi-Annual meeting.

#### Fertilizer Application Work Group (Mike Murray)

Key findings so far include the spatial distribution and resolution of manure vs. commercial fertilizer impacts. There needs to be careful consideration of whether available data advance our understanding of how watershed applications of different nutrient sources translate to loads to the lake, since this connection will directly inform management and policy recommendations. The project has also documented that legacy soil P has been declining over the last 10-15 years. Through discussion it was observed that poor management of smaller farm operations, including lack of best management practices, can have significant incremental impacts on water quality. Developing agricultural sectors (e.g. greenhouse operations) may also have the potential for increased impacts. The nascent Water Quality Board project assessing the policy aspects of CAFOs will benefit from the SPC project reporting.

**Action:** Work Group Co-Chairs will be provided with additional details on the WQB CAFO policy project, once those details are developed.

#### Energy Work Group (Dave Allan)

In response to questions, it was clarified that response capability will be considered as part of the project – including a review of hazard mitigation and the unintended consequences of cleanup actions.

#### Declining Offshore Lake Productivity Work Group (Mark Burrows on behalf of the Co-Chairs)

LimnoTech was recently selected as the contractor. It was acknowledged that the Work Group would benefit from an RCC member, and that the recommendations evolving from this study will need to be carefully crafted and managed so as not to cause confusion given that the prevailing message from the IJC and the Parties is that nutrient loads to the lakes are too high.

#### Great Lakes Early Warning System (Lucinda Johnson)

This is a joint project with RCC, and will result in a framework for identifying emerging stressors and threats, and a preliminary list of emerging stressors and threats. It was suggested that Work Group members be recruited from other visioning efforts e.g., Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, etc. It was acknowledged that containing the project scope (in part given available funding) will be important as the project progresses, and there was general agreement that a preliminary list of stressors, perhaps by category of stressor, would be a preferred output of the project. A detailed and comprehensive risk analysis of a large number of emerging stressors and threats is not realistic for the initial phase of the project. It was noted that different categories of stressors have different

levels of difficulty to forecast. The EPA's Great Lakes Advisory Board is also actively considering the topic and it will rely to a degree on the SAB project.

**Action:** SPC members are requested to suggest potential contractors for the GLEWS project; suggestions for both for-profit consultants and academic entities would be welcomed.

#### **4. Lake Ecosystem Objectives**

In the coming weeks the Lake Erie Lakewide Management and Action Plan (LAMP) team is expected to seek input on a set of draft Lake Ecosystem Objectives (LEOs). LEOs will be developed for each of the nine General Objectives included in the Agreement.

There was general agreement that the SPC is well suited to provide input on the draft LEOs. Members will be asked to provide their comments on the draft LEOs based on the General Objective they expressed an interest in for the TAP's Technical Appendix. Members can also provide input on the LEOs for other General Objectives if they wish.

**Action:** Secretary to circulate the draft Lake Erie LEOs for SPC member input when the consultation process begins.

#### **5. Other Business**

It was clarified that Commissioner Bouchard's term ends in June, 2017. Commissioners Pollack and Moy will continue to serve until they are replaced by the current U.S. Administration.

A staff team is examining the issue of *Phragmites*. Staff will attend a relevant IAGLR session, and a white paper and/or workshop on this topic may be pursued. Staff will consult with the SPC as the process unfolds.

#### **6. Emerging Issues and Work Planning**

On the morning of May 4 the SPC met for 90 minutes to discuss emerging issues that could be considered for future SPC work plans. There was recognition that the SPC is currently very busy with five projects that are at different stages of completion. Highlights of the previous day's meeting between the Advisory Board Co-Chairs were discussed, including a preference that cross-Board dialogue should occur at the project conception stage. Accordingly, a call will be scheduled with the Advisory Board Co-Chairs in July to discuss anticipated work plans that will be submitted for the Fall 2017 Semi-Annual meeting.

There was general consensus that the issue of stressor interactions is highly relevant and is a suitable topic for an SPC work plan. The multiple effects of climate change – including implications for water quality, various habitats and ecosystem processes, as well as consumer/societal behavior – were noted. There was general agreement that an SPC work plan should be developed for the fall 2017 Semi-Annual meeting addressing the science aspects of interacting stressors, while a separate work plan could be developed for a subsequent cycle that addresses the social science aspects.

The Co-Chairs reported that the WQB has recently adopted a policy respecting their practices to ensure engagement with Indigenous and Tribal Great Lakes communities. The important role of

Indigenous peoples and Indigenous organizations, and traditional ecological knowledge related to interacting stressors, was discussed.

**Action:** Dave Allan will generate some preliminary thoughts on the science aspects of interacting stressors, and John Livernois will do the same for the social science aspects.

**Action:** Henry Likers volunteered to provide some feedback on the policy for WQB and the Secretary will engage with him to facilitate. A presentation on traditional ecological knowledge will be provided at the next SPC face-to-face meeting.

## **7. Next Meeting and Adjournment**

A Doodle poll will be sent out to schedule the next SPC meeting, which will occur by conference call.

*Meeting record prepared by Matthew Child and reviewed by Carol Miller and Jeff Ridal.  
Please forward any errors or omissions to [childm@windsor.ijc.org](mailto:childm@windsor.ijc.org)*