



# The Current

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September 2018

The [Public Advisory Group](#) publishes this bimonthly newsletter to keep you informed about the Lake Champlain Richelieu River flooding study.

## Welcome Message from the study co-Chairs

The dates of the public meetings have been set! We hope that you will join our Canadian and US study members this November to learn of the progress we've made toward developing potential solutions to reduce the impacts of flooding in the basin since last year's public events. You will have an opportunity to hear about current work of the study, present your questions to the study's technical experts, and share your views. [Visit us online](#) to learn more as details become available, and plan to have your say.

**Keith Robinson**  
US study co-Chair

**Jean-François Cantin**  
Canadian study co-Chair

## Public Meetings: **SAVE THE DATE!**

November 7, 2018 – Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec

November 8, 2018 – Whallonsburg, New York

November 9, 2018 – Burlington, Vermont

## **Flood Management & Mitigation Measures (FMMM) Technical Working Group**

*Evaluates effectiveness and acceptability of various flood mitigation and preparedness measures, and develops a support tool to assist in making flood response decisions.*

Discussions with elected officials in both countries have kept this group busy over the summer months. In late August, meetings with the Lake Champlain US Federal Partners Workgroup, as well as with state officials from Vermont and New York were held to discuss how this study relates to the flood management and forecasting work of other agencies.

The group has come up with potential flood mitigation alternatives based on four themes. These will be presented to study board members in October to support a more complete understanding of the challenges and opportunities of potential solutions before these alternatives are presented to the public in November.

Plans are also underway for a workshop with study members in January 2019 on

climate change and its impacts on flood preparedness and mitigation.

### **Hydrology, Hydraulics & Mapping (HHM) Technical Working Group**

*Develops models for forecasting floods and for testing mitigation measures in reducing flooding.*

The group is continuing to develop a computerized model to forecast and map floods. Among other features, the model will predict water levels and simulate wind speeds in various weather scenarios. Small inland islands are being included in the data being modelled, as well as simulations with inflow and outflow from 13 major tributaries. Various phases of developing, testing and calibrating the models are underway. The improved models will help determine how effective and acceptable various measures to manage and mitigate floods being developed by the study could be.

The group is also gathering historical hydrologic data. This analysis will contribute to a better understanding of the causes and impacts of past floods, especially the one that occurred in 2011.

### **Resource Response (RR) Technical Working Group**

*Develops response indicators to evaluate flood impacts and mitigation effectiveness.*

The group continues its work on a major report outlining the causes and impacts of the flooding in 2011, with input from other technical working groups. The report, to be released in early 2019, will include case studies of people and places affected during times of flooding.

In August, study members and experts from research and academic sectors on both sides of the border attended a workshop to identify and discuss potential economic and social factors that could be assessed in the study. Referred to as performance indicators, the impacts of varying water levels on loss of crops, public health, or buildings and residences, for example, might be measured and analyzed using a computer simulation model. This data would assist the study group in forming recommendations around flood mitigation. While performance indicator work continues over the long term, the workshop was instrumental in gathering a binational perspective of economic and social factors that are worthy of further examination.

### **Social, Political & Economic (SPE) Analysis Group**

*Evaluates and assists in finding relevant and acceptable solutions to flooding by considering social, political, and economic impacts of measures.*

The analysis group met with representatives from the Vermont state government to discuss hazards related to flooding, as well as with a municipal government official from Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu regarding flooding impacts, town management and response, and the political and social feasibility of various mitigation measures.

Two of this group's reports are nearing completion: an historical analysis of flooding from various perspectives, and a literature review on the impacts of flooding to the basin. This information will help the study develop performance indicators related to social, political, economic and public health. The group is also developing a story map as an interactive tool to display media stories published during the 2011 floods.

The media review will include stories related to tropical storm Irene, which swept through the basin during August 2011, as well as flooding in tributaries to Lake Champlain.

## **Stay connected and be involved.**

Public participation is an important component of the Study. Here's how you can learn more and be involved:

- Visit our [Study webpage](#) and view our [calendar of activities](#)
- Attend one of the upcoming public meetings
- Email your questions or comments to [lcr@ijc.org](mailto:lcr@ijc.org)