

**Great Lakes Water Quality Board
203rd Meeting**

Summary of Discussion

January 28, 2019
Teleconference

U.S. Member Participants

Dave Ullrich (Co-Chair)
Sandy Bihn
Marvourneen Dolor
Jane Elder
Stephen Galarneau
Brandon Hofmeister
Chris Korleski
Karen Sands
Joe Tomandl III

Canadian Member Participants

Rob de Loë (Co-Chair)
Sandra Cooper
Mark Fisher
Chris Hilkenne
John Jackson
Irving Leblanc
Gayle Wood

U.S. Member Regrets

Jon Allan
Jessica Dexter
Frank Ettawageshik
Kelsey Leonard
Simone Lightfoot

Canadian Member Regrets

Michael Goffin
Ling Mark
Mark Mattson
Mark Wales
James Wagar

Observers

Carolyn O'Neill – Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks

Commission Staff

Raj Bejankiwar – Great Lakes Regional Office
David Burden – Director, Great Lakes Regional Office
Mark Burrows – Great Lakes Regional Office
Matthew Child – Great Lakes Regional Office
Sally Cole-Misch – Great Lakes Regional Office

Commission Liaisons

Paul Allen – Canadian Section
Victor Serveiss – U.S. Section

Secretariat

Antonette Arvai – Great Lakes Regional Office

1. Welcome and Introductions (Co-Chairs)

The Co-Chairs welcomed everyone to the 203rd meeting of the board. Members and other participants identified themselves on the phone. Members were informed that James Wagar's term with the board will be ending in February 2019. Co-chairs welcomed new board members Chris Korleski (U. S. Environmental Protection Agency) and Stephen Galarneau (Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources) to their first WQB meeting.

2. Triennial Assessment of Progress (TAP) 2020 Update (R. de Loë)

In mid-July 2018 the Commission approved a Second Triennial Assessment of Progress Study Board Directive. The directive establishes a Study Board (SB) that will provide advice and guidance to the Commission on matters of Great Lakes water quality and government progress in meeting the general and specific objectives of the GLWQA. The Study Board will develop a report that will provide advice and recommendations on a small number of priority topics relative to the Agreement, to be used as a basis for the Commission's triennial assessment of progress. Two topics were ultimately selected for the focus of the Study Board's report – climate change adaptation and nutrients. A Study Board Work Group is to be formed for each of the climate change adaptation and nutrients topics, co-chaired by Water Quality Board and Science Advisory Board members, respectively.

The recent circumstances of the U.S. government shutdown and lack of Commissioner quorum, have created challenges for contracting and staffing to support the Study Board work and receiving direction from the Commission on the development of the overall TAP report. As a result this has put strain on the timelines for completing the Commission's TAP report, including the Study Board work that supports it. Alternate options for the completion of the TAP report are currently being considered in light of these challenges. In addition, the U.S. government shutdown may delay the release of the governments' Progress Report of the Parties, which would also impact the Commission's assessment process and timelines.

Members will continue to be kept updated on the progress of the Study Board, and more broadly the Commission's triennial assessment of progress, as well any further role the WQB will play as the process moves forward.

3. WQB Watching Briefs (D. Ullrich)

The board previously made a decision to make their watching briefs publicly available through posting on the board's website. Watching briefs are informational documents developed by the board to keep abreast of developments on a particular topic, which may also be a useful resource to the Great Lakes community. It was noted that if a watching brief were to include any recommendations, Commission approval would be needed before posting. A draft procedure for posting watching briefs was shared with the board in advance of the call for comment and approval. Members provided suggested additions to the procedure. Members approved the procedure with the additional suggested items.

ACTION ITEM: The Board Secretary will revise the board's procedure for the posting of watching briefs as discussed.

4. Work Group Activity Updates (R. de Loë)

Members were informed that letters of response from Environment and Climate Change Canada and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, to the Commission, were received in October 2018 regarding endorsement of the recommendations from the WQB's 2017 report on polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs). The Commission provided the recommendations for use by the governments in finalizing and implementing their draft Binational Strategy for PBDEs Risk Management. The response letters outline how

the recommendations have been (or will be) considered in the development and finalization of the binational strategy. Work group co-leads then provided a report-out of their activities.

Legacy Issues (G. Wood)

Members were provided with updates on the work group's manure and nuclear decommissioning projects. A draft work group manure report has been developed. On November 13-14, 2018 a binational workshop was held to receive feedback on the work group's draft report and recommendations. The work group will be using the outcomes of the workshop to refine their draft report. A final work group report is expected to be submitted to the board for review in early March.

A contract was issued in late September 2018 for the nuclear decommissioning project. The contractor has completed work on a table of contents, identification of non-Great Lakes facilities as case studies and list of expert interviewees. An interim contractor report is due in early April 2019.

Emerging Issues (J. Elder)

Members were provided updates on the work group's climate change adaptation and wetlands projects. The work group held a session at the Latornell Symposium in November 2018 in Alliston, ON to gather input on a proposed recommendation that Canada and the United States could play a global leadership role in developing a binational approach to climate change adaptation in the Great Lakes. A session was also scheduled at the October 2018 Healing Our Waters (HOW) conference, but was cancelled due to a hotel worker strike. The work group will develop a survey to canvass the HOW registrants in lieu of holding the conference session. The survey is expected to go out early February. The results from the symposium session and survey will be incorporated into a webinar to be held in early March.

On December 19th the work group co-hosted a webinar with the Great Lakes Coastal Assembly and the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes, which brought together 402 participants to discuss the challenges and opportunities to achieving net habitat gain for Great Lakes coastal wetlands. The outcomes of the webinar are expected to be developed into a summary report by the end of March. The webinar will be posted on the WQB website.

Engagement (R. Bejankiwar on behalf of co-leads K. Leonard and M. Mattson)

In October 2018 the work group developed a short video presentation on the findings of the board's second binational poll. The video is currently available on the WQB website.

The work group has been undertaking planning for a field tour and public event for the board's upcoming meeting on May 8-9 in Green Bay, WI. An outline of proposed ideas for these events was provided to the board in advance of the call for their input. A proposed theme is on agriculture and water, with a strong indigenous component. Members provided both written comment in advance of the call as well as verbally during the call.

Action Item: The Engagement Work Group will consider the feedback provided by members to further shape planning for the May WQB meeting events.

Action Item: The Engagement Work Group will continue to coordinate with those board members who reside in Wisconsin to assist with planning.

5. Cross-board Collaboration (D. Ullrich)

In an effort to increase cross-board collaboration and communication, WQB members serving on other advisory board work groups provide updates on the progress of these projects. Currently, WQB members

serve on the Science Advisory Board's (SAB) Great Lakes Early Warning System (GLEWS) project and their Interacting Stressors project.

The GLEWS work group co-chairs have developed a report outline, based on contractor report material. The report outline and proposed content is to be discussed by the work group in the near future.

The contractor for the Interacting Stressors project has completed a literature review and identified potential priority stressor combinations. A workshop is being planned for early April, 2019 to further identify/confirm priority stressor pairs, summarize available knowledge, and develop preliminary recommendations.

The Legacy Issues Work Group has cross-board members on its manure and nuclear decommissioning projects. The Science Advisory Board member on the manure project has recently ended their term on the board. Staff will work to seek a cross-board replacement. It was acknowledged that these cross-board members have provided valuable and useful input and that cross-board membership is a worthy effort to continue.

6. Great Lakes Issues (R. de Loë)

Members were provided an opportunity to bring Great Lakes issues to the attention of the board. No issues were raised. Members were reminded that they can provide issues for discussion in advance of board meetings.

7. Next WQB Meetings (D. Ullrich)

The board discussed its 2019 meeting schedule as follows:

- May 8-9, 2019 – Green Bay, WI
- July 3, 2019 @ 10:00 – 11:30 AM Eastern - Teleconference
- October 2019 (date TBD) – Ottawa, ON in conjunction with the IJC Fall Semi-Annual Meeting

Members will be notified as soon as dates for the IJC Fall Semi-Annual Meeting are identified.

8. Public Comments & Adjourn (Co-Chairs)

No members of the public were present on the call. The Co-Chairs thanked members and others for their participation and adjourned the meeting.