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International Souris River Board  
AMC Committee Meeting  
January 12, 2024

**Final Minutes**

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Rebecca Seal-Soileau (USACE), Mark Lee (Government of Manitoba), Lacy Kontzie (Government of Manitoba), Mike Shantz (ECCC), Katie Slimmon (ECCC), Gregg Wiche (USGS emeritus), Laura Ackerman (ND Dept. of Water Resources), Brian Caruso (USFWS), James Noren (USACE), Richard Aisaican (Cowessess First Nation) (had technical difficulties joining).

**Non-Committee Members:** Felicia Minotti (Global Affairs Canada), **Regrets:** Charlotte Suka (US Dept. of State)

**Review of IJC Consensus Definition, ISRB Directive, and TOR (Mark Lee)**

- IJC Guidance on Board Consensus –

The IJC committees operate by consensus. If we have a disagreement, we'll try and work towards consensus with a quorum at our meetings and if we can't come to an agreement, we will elevate the decision to a higher level. For our committee, we might have to get clarification if we would send our decision to the ISRB.

- 2022 ISRB Directive –

It is what gives the board its authority and mandate from IJC. Recently updated. Previous update was in 2007. Pretty heavy read. Scanning the IJC website might be an easier way to learn about the mandate of the board. There is also the 1989 agreement (downloadable from ISRB website) which is an operating agreement of the trans boundary dams which the IJC has some oversight? Also, after the 2011 flooding in Minot, a 5-year study of Annex A, which is the operating rules of the 1989 agreement, was completed and reviewed.

- Terms of Reference for Adaptive Management Committee-

With the restructuring of the ISRB, new TORs were developed for all the committees. The AMC is a new committee as of Nov. 17th, 2022. According to the TOR, adaptive management is an approach for improving decisions through long term monitoring, modeling, and evaluation. The AMC is to support the ISRB mandate through adaptive management.

A major task of the committee is in twelve years, we're supposed to provide a synthesis of the collective public- and peer-reviewed science and information from the tasks outlined in the work plan related to ongoing evaluation of the operating plans that has to do with that 1989 agreement and prepare formal recommendations to the board of any changes that may be warranted. We have ten years left, but don't worry about the magnitude of the task even though it sounds like they want us to redo the previous study. Instead, we should focus on smaller goals that we should be getting from the board over the next few years.

Other tasks:

- Collaborate with the other committees so we can adaptively manage the resource and update every 5 years the performance indicators (PIs) that were developed in the previous study.
- Be the keeper of data and information produced for any future reviews of the 1989 agreement.
- Need to develop a work plan to meet TOR.
- Collaborate with the reservoir operation subcommittee (ROS). But without Saskatchewan participating in the IRSB right now, the oversight role of the IJC is not currently defined adequately by all parties for the 1989 agreement. We will need to wait for a resolution before we can be a fully functioning committee.
- Report to the IRSB.
- Prepare meeting minutes posted to the IRSB website. Transparency is important to the IJC.
- All board and committee members act in their personal and professional capacities for the greater good of the basin, so we don't act as lobbyists for our own agencies.

### **Address Membership Issues / questions (Rebecca)**

- "Ad hoc status" IJC assigns members. Usually, membership selections are motions to the board.
- Prescriptive of what agencies are represented. Good so far apart from Saskatchewan. So, until we have all necessary representatives from Sask, we will work in good faith, but any decisions by this committee may need to be redone. Encouraging feedback from indigenous groups.
- Strive for equal representation/members of Canada and America.
- Co-chair terms are 3 years and are voted in by committee members.
- We have an action officer (Jim Noren)
- We are asking for a Secretariat (like the study managers of the study). Gregg Wiche may be able to perform that role for the US side but may be limited due to work issues.
- IJC can cover travel costs to meetings for members that need support.
- Global affairs Canada and Dept. of State are invited as observers to our committee.
- Other IRSB committee members are welcome to observe AMC meetings and vice versa.
- At least 2 meeting per year. Probably more right away to develop work plan. 1 face to face meeting annual.
- Starting next year, we can provide feedback on TOR every 3 years.

- AMC reports at bi-annual board meetings.

### **Work Plan Milestone for Delivery to IJC - 15 months from Nov 17, 22 = Feb 17 2024**

- Hope to get AMC members a 1-year Work Plan draft in a month, then in Feb we can get an iteration done and delivered to the board by the end of Feb, 2024. AMC has a pool of money that is available.
- Committee Administration – Meetings will be in coordination with all of the other Committees. Maybe start after next meeting, including Flow Apportionment and FFLS.

### **Discussion of AMC Work Plan Development Process (Mark Lee)**

- We have an example adaptive management committee workplan from the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board. This is an accepted plan that we can modify.
- Several adaptive management projects have already been funded using the AMC funds even though this committee was not yet operational. Check out their status on IJC website. These projects were prioritized by using the recommendations of the International Souris River Study Board but not yet approved by the two Governments, which is a little awkward.

### **Projects underway – Updates to follow meeting for discussion at next meeting (Rebecca)**

- Enabling Water Sampling for Indigenous Communities – CoCoRas Kits
- Improving Short-term and Seasonal Forecasting in the Souris River Basin
- Preparing Inputs and Tools Required to Support Climate Change Modeling for Decision Making
- Technical Transparency in Apportionment

### **Projects on the early horizon (Rebecca)**

- Adaptive Management Plan for the Basin – proposal was submitted to IJC in consideration for contracting. \$100-150K needed. Money already available in the Canadian share of the AMC funding pot. Big part of plan is stakeholder engagement. Probably take a year to develop plan.
- Bathymetry for J. Clarke – Provided AMC Co-Chair Blessing – concerned that future work be part of the AMP process. Didn't fit in IWI processes. Reminder of Adaptive Management Funding process – outside of the IWI proposal schedule and process.

### **Schedule for Next Committee Meeting (Jim)**

Friday April 5<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM- Noon CST.

Will try to schedule a late July meeting at the 4/5/2024 meeting.

As a place holder we will shoot for 7/25/2024, 10 AM- Noon CST.

### **Proposed Report to the Board Feb 27 Meeting**

- Approving Membership Status  
AMC is unusual, we don't need the board to approve members, but we will forward to ISRB Co-Chairs our list of members.

- 2024 Work Plan “lite” submitted 17-Feb – Draft to Committee by Feb 13, return to Co-chairs by the 23d COB.
- Project Status.
- Meeting Schedule.
- Can AMC members listen in to the board meeting? Yes, you can, and we will add everyone to the invite list.

**Action items:**

- The AMC committee will be using a SharePoint site for storing our data and materials. Invites from IJC IT folks should be in your inbox soon.