

REPORT TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA ON FLOODING AND WATER SUPPLY IN THE SOURIS RIVER BASIN

Introduction

This Letter Report provides recommendations from the IJC to the Governments of Canada and the United States on the recently completed study: **Managing Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin: Review of the 1989 International Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America for Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin.** (See *Final and Highlights Reports*: <https://www.ijc.org/en/srsb>)

As described in Section 2.2 of the Final Report, the Reference for the Study directed the IJC to evaluate and make recommendations regarding:

- 1) the Operating Plan contained in Annex A to the 1989 Agreement for Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin; and,
- 2) how the provision of flood control and water supply benefits in the basin might be maximized

The following is a summary of the key elements from the Study, what the IJC heard during the public hearing and comment period, IJC findings, and IJC recommendations moving forward. These key points are organized into themes.

Theme 1: Evaluating and reviewing Annex A of the 1989 Agreement

1a. Evaluating the Performance of the 1989 Operating Plan

Key elements from the Study:

The Study Board found that the 1989 Operating Plan has performed well in providing water supply and flood control benefits. There are no major operational changes that will result in significant improvements in both water supply and flood control benefits across the basin (see *Final Report Section 4.3 Evaluation of the Performance of the 1989 Operating Plan*, pp. 67-95).

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

During the Commission hearing and public comment period, the Commission received the following questions/comments:

- The 2011 flood was not caused by the mismanagement of Canadian waters in the basin.
- The recommendation to study additional flood-control options near the City of Minot.
- The suggestion from North Dakota residents that keeping dams in Saskatchewan empty should be rejected since they have several water-storage benefits in dry and normal years.
- A longer drawdown duration makes more sense than a quick fall drawdown that risks a low-precipitation winter, leaving the reservoirs very low such as happened during the fall of 2020. If a large snowfall happens, then the reservoir level could be adjusted accordingly.

Commission Findings:

Given the board's finding that the 1989 Agreement ('Agreement') and Annex A (Operating Plan) to the Agreement have been effective, and considering the public and agency comments received, the Commission continues to have confidence in the existing Agreement.

Commission Recommendations:

The Commission recommends governments support the Commission's plan for the International Souris River Board (ISRB) to use the modeling tools developed in the study to continually assess operational performance of the Agreement through adaptive management studies. The Commission is exploring options to restructure the ISRB, and this recommendation would likely be implemented through the board's proposed Adaptive Management (AMC) and Water Quantity committees (WQC). The Commission is expecting to ask the ISRB to draw up committee work plans within 15 months of the formation of the committees, at which time public comments will be directly factored into committee activities. Developing these workplans will require the board, and the associated agencies, as well as the Commission to detail and secure the human and financial resources required to implement this recommendation; the Commission recommends governments consider supporting these resource needs as appropriate once they are determined via the committee workplans.

1b. Review of the 1989 Operating Plan Annex A Language**Key elements from the Study:**

The unprecedented 2011 spring and summer flooding events in the basin challenged operations as never before. The flooding highlighted long-standing language ambiguities in the Agreement and the need to clarify some of its provisions. The Study Board advanced a 2013 ISRB-initiated cooperative review of the language used in the Agreement. (See *Final Report Review of the Language of Annex A Section 4.2.3 Key Findings on pp. 62-66, and Table 9 Review of 1989 Operating Plan Language: summary of outstanding concerns on p. 67*)

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings:

The Commission finds that the suggested plain language revisions and clarifications to Annex A of the Agreement, where consensus was reached, provide needed clarity, while not changing the meaning of the Agreement. The Commission also finds that five of the remaining six items, where consensus could not be reached, are substantive items and need legal review by governments before they can be considered for implementation. The sixth item, duplication in the Agreement regarding production of the Post-Flood Report, is not critical. The six items are all relevant to "Flood Operation" in Annex A.

Commission Recommendations:

The Commission recommends that Governments strike an interagency task team by March of 2022 to review the plain language consensus revisions and clarifications recommended by the Study Board. The Commission also recommends that Governments direct the task team to further consider the six items

the Study Board identified as needing clarification but on which they could not reach consensus. An interagency task team is recommended because any language changes to the Agreement could change how it is interpreted. This task team should be comprised of legal and technical staff from governments, IJC staff and operating agencies. IJC is willing to manage and facilitate discussions between agencies to ensure timely and appropriate action is taken. This could be completed under or outside of the ISRB.

Another option is, pending government agreement, the IJC, could strike the task team in collaboration with governments, including the designated entities and other relevant agencies associated with the ISRB. If this proceeds, one of their first items of business would be developing action items and resource needs. Since many of the non-consensus items are dependent on assessing change in basin hydrology, including timing shifts (for example, the Flood Operation non-consensus items labeled as 4.3.1, 4.3.3, 4.3.4, 4.3.5, described in the Study Board's final report (pages 62 to 65), the proposed Reservoir Operations Subcommittee (ROSC) of the ISRB including the Designated Entities could serve this role. A memo dated October 8, 2021, sent from the Designated Entities to governments, recommends a Reservoir Operations Task Team (ROTT) be incorporated into and report to the ISRB. They propose its members include Water Security Agency, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Manitoba Agriculture & Resource Development, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and North Dakota Department of Water Resources. One of the proposed functions of the ROTT is to further investigate changing hydrology in the basin. IJC agrees with the inclusion of a reservoir operations team to the ISRB and proposes that it be included as a subcommittee (ROSC) of the ISRB's Water Quantity Committee (WQC) to ensure proper collaboration with all other proposed committees/subcommittees of the ISRB.

The Study Board's side-by-side 2020 suggested language vs. 1989 language comparison document can serve as the foundation for conducting these next steps. *See attached comparison document.*

The Commission supports the recommendation made by several ISRB members that a consolidation of all relevant key binational Souris River basin governance documents (e.g., versions of Interim Apportionment Measures, 1989 Agreement, Reference to the IJC, Directive to the ISRB, etc.) by the governments, ISRB and the IJC is due and that the ISRB's microsite be the authoritative repository for relevant public-facing information and publications. The Commission plans to work with the ISRB to undertake consolidating applicable documents and recommends governments provide input into this process. The Commission has done this in other transboundary basins in which there are Commission boards and found it to be useful.

Theme 2: Strengthening the Operating Plan for Water Supply & Flood Control Benefits

Key elements from the Study:

After modeling over 60 discrete scenarios, the final report presented the most promising suite of alternative operations. The Study Board concluded that the suite of alternative measures could be considered for incremental or marginal improvements to the Agreement.

The Study Board noted that careful analysis of regional and policy trade-offs will be required by the Governments of Canada and the United States to find the best and most balanced options for all people in the basin.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings:

The analyses and tools the Study Board developed have significant value and importance in guiding application for any future operational changes, and for better understanding the value and importance of the existing Agreement.

Commission Recommendations:

The Commission recommends governments consider the proposed alternatives and the trade-offs in determining whether they should be implemented through an update to the 1989 Agreement. Within the next year, the Commission recommends governments engage the IJC in further discussion to determine the necessity for a process to further evaluate and possibly implement alternatives. The Commission will expect the proposed AMC and/or WQC and their subcommittees, including the ROSC, to fold operating plan alternative investigations, including those described above, using the tools the Study Board developed, into their roles and responsibilities. Future analyses may include risk analyses using flow forecast uncertainty, climate-change hydrology and/or a greater number of stochastic inputs. Agencies involved in doing the work within the AMC and/or WQC will need to ensure that they have appropriate resources available to undertake these tasks; the Commission recommends governments consider these resource needs, should the agencies indicate they would require government support.

Theme 3: Addressing Other Important Water Management Challenges in the Basin**3a. Climate Variability and Change in the Basin****Key elements from the Study:**

The Study Board indicates there is significant evidence pointing to a high degree of natural variability in the basin's climate. Both natural climate variability and the potential future impacts of human-driven climate change pose formidable challenges to formulating an enduring water management plan for the basin.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings:

Understanding the implications of climate change for water management within the basin, within the context of natural variability, requires further work.

Commission Recommendations:

The IJC expects further work on basin climate change to be undertaken by the ISRB (potentially the proposed AMC and/or WQC, including the ROSC) and plans to advise the ISRB and its committees to consider projects that fall into the following four areas identified by the Study:

1. The evolution of observing networks for meteorological, streamflow and other hydrologic variables such as soil moisture, snow, and evapotranspiration.
2. The determination of whether human-driven climate change is creating hydroclimatic conditions

- that fall outside of the range of natural variability.
3. The development of downscaled and bias-corrected meteorological forcing products for transboundary watershed models, and the application of hydrological models to assess and better understand how climate change may influence the basin.
 4. The pursuit of adaptive management options being included in the Operating Plan.

The ISRB and its committees will detail in their work planning the human and financial resources required to implement this recommendation; the Commission plans to request committees draft their initial workplan within 15 months of their creation.

Beyond the IJC, additional resources should be sought from collaborating agencies to provide a consistent stream of funding or other forms of support for this work; the Commission recommends governments consider these resource needs, should the agencies indicate they would require government support. Estimated resource needs are on the order of \$100K to \$200K per IJC section per year. Results from these studies would be used in the routine review of the Operating Plan. Further details on the routine review of the Operating Plan are provided in Section 3b.

One of IJC's Strategic Initiatives is examining climate change implications to water management in each of its basins with the [Climate Change Guidance Framework](#). The purpose of this framework is to provide a process for the IJC to maintain, to the extent reasonably possible, the resilience of IJC's responsible systems, such as the ability to continue to maintain ecosystems, economic and social benefits and impacts within preferred ranges relative to water levels and flow. With the Study now complete, the ISRB is in a good position to further undertake a review of the basin's climate change resiliency, the results of which could be folded into actions of the AMC, which has ramifications in the periodic review of the Operating Plan.

IJC will ensure there is no duplication of efforts among ISRB committees and resource agencies, such as the work the planned ROSC is completing on changing basin hydrology; ROSC will reside with the ISRB and take part in ISRB discussions to help ensure there is collaboration where needed.

3b. Adaptive Management

Key elements from the Study:

The aim of adaptive management is to ensure, using a structured, iterative approach of long-term monitoring, modelling, scientific evaluation, and policy dialogue, that outcomes of decisions are reviewed and plans are adjusted, if necessary, as new knowledge becomes available or conditions change. In such a complex, binational basin, adaptive management can help resource management agencies assess the effectiveness of water management efforts in light of changing environmental and socioeconomic conditions, including the uncertainty of water supplies associated with climate variability and change.

Adaptive management is already an existing component of the Agreement (e.g., under Article 5, Item 3, and under Article 5, Item 6d). The primary purpose for the adaptive management recommendations provided by the Souris study is to enhance the sustainability and ensure prolonged success of the Agreement.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings

Over the past few decades, the IJC has adopted and promoted adaptive management as a key component of basin-scale water management and finds that an adaptive management approach should be implemented in the Souris basin.

Commission Recommendations:

The IJC supports the Study Board's proposed adaptive management approaches outlined in Section 4, challenge 3, item 3 of the Highlights Report. Furthermore, the IJC recommends that the planned Reservoir Operations Subcommittee (ROSC) become a permanent subcommittee of the WQC with an open line of communication with the ISRB and the ROSC's own terms of Reference.

To further enhance adaptive management efforts, the IJC plans to strike an adaptive management committee under the ISRB. Key responsibilities of the AMC proposed are to:

- Assess changes in basin hydrology in a timely manner, as well as assess how those changes might impact the Operating Plan (Annex A) and 1989 Agreement, in collaboration with the recommended ROSC.
- Monitor the Operating Plan contained in Annex A of the 1989 Agreement and make recommendations through the board in collaboration with the Designated Entities on how flood forecasting and operations and coordination activities could be improved.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of Appendix A of the Commission's 2007 Directive to the ISRB (consolidation of the Interim Measures as Modified for Apportionment of the Souris River) and make recommendations for improvements. Recommendations must be consistent with the 1948 Reference from governments.
- Determine if there are opportunities to improve the management of levels and flows per the Operations Plan (Annex A) based on improved understanding of the system.
- Undertake on-going evaluations as specified above and address other questions that may arise due to changing conditions in consultation with the ISRB. Consider all relevant and available monitoring information and modelling tools provided by government agencies and others.
- In close collaboration with the Parties/governments and the ISRB's ROSC, the AMC will review the Operating Plan at five-year intervals, or as mutually agreed, to maximize the provision of flood control and water supply benefits that can be provided consistent with the terms of this Agreement. This collaborative group will cooperate and consult, as necessary, with interested states and provinces.

Additionally, between 10 and 15 years after the establishment of the AMC (exact time frame to be determined), as determined by the Commission, the AMC is proposed to facilitate the comprehensive review and evaluation of the Operating Plan, in collaboration with the proposed ROSC, based on the available data and information garnered over the review period and available at the time of the review. Such evaluations will be supported by all the board's other committees and facilitated by leveraging IWI funding and other sources such as Review of Orders funds and in-kind contributions from collaborating agencies. The Commission's findings and recommendations culminating from the comprehensive review, will be presented to governments for their consideration, including assessing implications to the 1989 Agreement.

3c. Water Apportionment and Minimum Flow Requirements

Key elements from the Study:

Annex B of the Agreement outlines the water apportionment agreement between Saskatchewan and North Dakota. The annex was amended in 2000 to provide greater clarification of conditions that must prevail for making apportionment determinations. Evaluation of improvements to the procedures used for the determination of apportioned flow is part of ISRB's charge.

Manitoba-based concerns regarding water-sharing and minimum-flow requirements were raised by the public advisory group (PAG) throughout the Study's engagement process. During the Study, Manitoba's PAG representatives expressed a desire for a more-comprehensive understanding of how upstream structures impact or benefit the minimum flow rules for the Souris River at Westhope into Manitoba, with or without the upstream control structures, including the operations of the J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings

The knowledge gained within the study may be helpful in refining the apportionment procedures.

In June 2020, the ISRB formed the Ad Hoc Working Group on Apportionment Reporting and the Delivery of Delayed Entitlements. Due to the dry conditions in the summer and fall seasons of 2021 in the basin, the ISRB's working group evaluated improving a process to be followed in delivering minimum flow requirements at the border of North Dakota and Manitoba during dry conditions.

Commission Recommendations:

The IJC supports the Study Board's suggestion that the ISRB review, update and finalize the Natural Flow Procedures. This recommendation stems from the IJC's role under the 1948 reference. The Natural Flow Procedures recommended by the ISRB are referenced in the 1989 Agreement. This will be completed using the study's technical results, modeling results and performance Indicators to study and refine the procedures for determination of natural flow. The IJC suggests that this work be finalized by December 31, 2024, and then become a regular review item under the proposed WQC. The Commission also plans for the ISRB to complete its work to finalize recommendations to the governments for the *Procedures for the Apportionment of Flows in the Souris River* by December 31, 2024. The Natural Flow Procedures are intended to inform the Procedures for Apportionment of Flows in the Souris River. This work was being conducted by the ISRB's Hydrology Committee and is recommended it be continued by the Natural Flow and Apportionment Subcommittee (NFAS) under the WQC of the ISRB.

The IJC also supports the ISRB continuing its discussions around the minimum flow requirements between North Dakota and Manitoba and plans to request the ISRB work with the proposed Public Advisory and Outreach Committee to consider how to best communicate information about minimum flow requirements between Manitoba and North Dakota to the public and other interests in the basin; these discussions should commence by December 2022.

3d. Assessing Changes in basin hydrology and its impacts on Dam Safety

Key elements from the Study:

The Study Board identified that the IJC and Governments of Canada and the United States will need to determine an appropriate path forward to implement changes to the Agreement. Key factors will require resolving issues related to current hydrology, changes in basin hydrology since the Agreement was developed including timing shifts, dam safety approaches and addressing any issues prior to changing the Operating Plan. Resolving these issues was beyond the scope of the ISRSB.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings

No Commission findings. In December 2020, the Governments directed the Designated Entities to discuss technical details outside of the Study.

Commission Recommendations:

The Commission recommends that the ISRB work with the proposed ROSC to resolve remaining issues around updating the hydrology and better understanding dam safety approaches (some outlined in *Final Report Section 4.2.3 [Key findings], pp. 62-67*, others to be provided by the proposed ROSC) in Canada and the United States. Once these issues are resolved, the ISRB and its committees will provide recommendations on whether the alternatives proposed by the ISRSB need to be re-analyzed using the updated hydrology.

3e. Artificial Drainage

Key elements from the Study:

There are concerns that the drainage of marshes, prairie potholes and other wetlands – undertaken to allow increased or more efficient agricultural production – has increased the severity of flooding in the basin and affected water quality and wetlands.

The Study Board recommended that the ISRB report on the scientific understanding of artificial drainage every two years, to advance evolving expert and public knowledge of the impacts, as well as the associated legal and regulatory requirements.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings

The Commission supports the Study recommendation.

Commission Recommendations:

The Commission concurs with the Study Boards' suggestions on artificial drainage and will incorporate the recommendation of artificial drainage investigations every two years into the roles and responsibilities of the proposed Natural Flow and Apportionment Subcommittee of the WQC.

3f. Water Quality

Key elements from the Study:

Per the Reference received from governments, IJC was charged with, “Identifying and, as appropriate, making recommendations regarding improvements to the Operating Plan contained in Annex A of the 1989 Agreement to reduce the flooding and water supply risks in the Souris River basin with consideration to low flow, apportionment, water quality and aquatic ecosystem health.” Water quality was identified as an important issue during public engagement. In response, the Study developed a series of water quality performance indicators to help evaluate potential alternative operating measures. The Study Board concludes that water-quality monitoring should be continued as a basin-wide, long-term activity, to capture a full range of hydrological conditions, changes on the landscape and reservoir operations.

Throughout the Study’s engagement process, PAG members from Manitoba raised concerns related to how the river’s water quality in Manitoba may be impacted or benefited by operations. The interest of Manitoba PAG members is to better understand if the upstream water control structure at the J. Clark Salyer National Wildlife Refuge is influencing river water quality in Manitoba.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings

A separate water quality trends analysis project is being undertaken by the USGS that will provide insight into how processes in the basin affect exceedances of water quality objectives at the two river border crossings. A database was created for this project and will be maintained to ensure a basin-wide picture of water quality. This project may enhance the water quality performance indicators developed under the Study and help assess the effectiveness of the operational changes with respect to water quality conditions. The resulting long-term dataset will be critical for evaluating changes in water quality as well as improving knowledge of interconnections between hydrological conditions, landscape changes and reservoir operations on water quality.

Commission Recommendations:

The IJC encourages governments to support the maintenance of existing federal, state, and provincial water quality sampling programs and expansion of these programs including the bilateral water quality monitoring provisions of the 1989 agreement (and the subsequent IJC role in assisting governments in carrying out these provisions). Concerning government-issued water quality objectives (WQOs), the IJC encourages governments to also expand their current WQO parameter lists to gain a greater understanding of water quality and ecosystem health conditions. In support of greater transparency of water quality conditions in the basin, it is proposed that a modified Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee (AEHC) will be required to formally report to the Commission through the ISRB on government issued WQOs and sampling programs every five years. The Study Board indicated the need for a water quality study on waters of the J. Clark Salyer wildlife preserve. Such a study would fall within the ISRB mandate; the ISRB should consider this study in their work planning by December 2024.

3g. Aquatic Ecosystem Health

Key elements from the Study:

Although the Study did not directly investigate aquatic ecosystem health, it did develop several Performance Indicators that provide a measure of the influence that a proposed operational change may have.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

No related comments were received.

Commission Findings

A continuous dissolved oxygen (DO) monitoring investigation being conducted by the ISRB will be beneficial and contribute greatly to understanding the processes affecting concentrations, such as flow, nutrient dynamics, algal growth in the channel, and sediment oxygen demand for different times of the year.

Commission Recommendations:

IJC will task the ISRB's AEHC to further review the ISRSB's developed performance indicators as the indicators relate to the results produced from the ISRB's dissolved oxygen monitoring study, including work the ISRB board is undertaking related to water quality trends analysis.

The potential for coupling or interconnecting water quantity and quality modelling should be explored. The additional data and knowledge gained from the efforts related to water quality trend analysis and continuous water quality monitoring will offer new insights into the possible interactions between hydrology, climate-driven flow conditions, aquatic ecosystem health and landscape changes.

The ISRB and its committees will detail in their work planning the human and financial resources required to implement this recommendation; the Commission plans to request committees draft their initial workplan within 15 months of their creation or through existing annual workplans for committees already in place. Agencies involved in doing this work will need to ensure that they have appropriate resources available to undertake these tasks; the Commission recommends governments consider these resource needs, should the agencies indicate, they would require government support.

Theme 4: Improving Data Collection and Management

Key elements from the Study:

The Study identified important gaps in the current system of water data collection and management in the basin. These gaps limit the ability of dam operators and other government agencies to predict and manage water levels and flows. Recommendations were offered on how to close the gaps where precipitation and streamflow gauges were missing.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

During the Commission hearing and public comment period, the Commission received the following questions/comments:

- I recommend, going forward, that groundwater levels, carrying capacity, snowpack and rainfall levels all be made publicly available as they occur. This would reduce misinformation in the basin and blaming of other jurisdictions.

- Better communication about the operation of control structures during and after flood events is critical to reduce cross-border tensions.

Commission Findings

The Commission concurs with the Study Board that important gaps in the current system of water data collection and management exist in the basin that need to be filled.

Commission Recommendations:

In-line with public comments received, IJC recommends that the board investigate posting information related to rainfall, flood forecasts and flow information on the board’s microsite similar to the actions by the IJC’s International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board and the International Rainy River-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board.

Because observed data is key to understanding long term trends, IJC recommends that governments strike an interagency team comprised of the Designated Entities (WSA, FWS, USACE), monitoring agencies (WSA, ECCO and USGS), funding agencies (ND), and IJC to discuss expanding the network of gauges currently in operation; the Commission recommends governments strike this team by December 2022. IJC recommends the ISRB engage with all appropriate agencies to routinely identify gaps in precipitation, streamflow, snow, soil moisture and evapotranspiration observations. The Commission is planning on asking the ISRB to draw up committee work plans within 15 months of the formation of the committees, at which time public comments will be directly factored into committee activities.

Theme 5: Building on the Study’s Engagement and Outreach

Key elements from the Study:

Over the course of the Study, the Study Board planned and carried out extensive public and resource agency engagement and outreach initiatives. The Study also sought input from Indigenous Nations with current and ancestral interests in the basin.

What the IJC Heard During its Public Hearing and Comment Period:

During the Commission hearing and public comment period, the Commission received the following questions/comments:

- How will the study’s findings be used across Tribal communities?
- Better communication about the operation of control structures during and after flood events is critical to reduce cross-border tensions.

Commission Findings

Engagement and outreach are key to continued success in water management in the basin.

Commission Recommendations:

Considering the public comments received and the Study Board recommendations, the IJC plans to request that select members of the Study PAG join the proposed ISRB Public Advisory and Outreach Committee; the Commission will work with the ISRB to determine these members. This will help to foster continuity and retain the expertise these group members have on basin public interest issues as they relate to water levels and flows. Throughout the course of the study, the IJC regularly collaborated with Indigenous Peoples that had ties to the basin. The IJC is in the process of working with several of these individuals to form a proposed Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) that will support the ISRB,

similar in construct to the other committees of the ISRB. Part of the intended role for the IAC is to enhance awareness of the ISRB to Indigenous peoples' concerns relating to the ISRB mandate, including next steps following the study and input into the performance indicators developed for the study. The intent is for these committees to be in place by the IJC's October 2022 semi-annual meeting, and to develop their workplans within 15 months of their creation. Agencies involved in doing this work will need to ensure that they have appropriate resources available to undertake these tasks; the Commission recommends governments consider these resource needs, should the agencies indicate they would require government support.

Concluding Remarks

The Commission appreciates the Governments' consideration of the findings and recommendations from the ISRSB as well as recommendations in this report. The Commission thanks governments for their continued collaboration throughout this study and looks forward to working with them to implement or consider recommendations where appropriate. As noted in the ISRSB report and this Commission report, certain recommendations, if implemented, will require continued collaboration with governments as well as attention to resource needs. We thank the Governments for their consideration and partnership over the course of the study.

Signed on January 5, 2022 as the final report of the Commission on the July 5, 2017 reference on *“Managing Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin: Review of the 1989 International Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America for Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin”*.



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