

Thames River Clear Water Revival (TRCWR) Initiative Steering Committee Meeting # 11 MINUTES

HOST: City of London (Dave Colvin - Emergency Management and Henry Klausnitzer - Emergency Management Technologist)
DATE: **Tuesday September 17, 2013**
LOCATION: City of London's Emergency Operations & Training Centre
275 Boler Road, London (#12 Fire Hall Byron)
TIME: **12 PM – 4 PM** (Lunch, snacks and drinks provided)
CHAIR: Chris Harrington
PROJECT WEBSITE: www.thamesrevival.ca

ATTENDEES: Tara Tchir
James Jenkins
Pat Donnelly
Jason Wintermute
Eleanor Heagy
April Varewyck
Levi Antone (*Oneida Nation of the Thames Environment Portfolio councilor*)
Angela Homewood (*Ministry of the Environment*)
Dan McDonald
Rob Wallis
Tom Copeland
Chris Harrington
Luca Cargnelli

GUESTS: Mark Shifflet (*UTRCA*)
Adam Yates (*Western University*)

REGRETS: Dave Richards (secondment)
Ian Kerr (secondment)
Lareina Rising
Jenn Richards
Trevor Robak

Steering Committee Member Changes:

Ted Briggs is stepping back from active involvement, although he will remain on the contact list. Mary Ellen Scanlon is still the Lake lead and will be receiving minutes.

Ian Kerr is on secondment. Angela Homewood is replacing Ian.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- ✓ *Final approval and next steps of Water Management Plan TOR*
- ✓ *Progress reports and presentations of work since last meeting*
- ✓ *Review and discuss potential upcoming projects / next steps*



1. WELCOME AND REVIEW OF AGENDA

A. Introductions

- New members and guests were welcomed after roundtable introduction

B. Additions to September 17th agenda

- No additions

2. MINUTES OF MARCH 26TH, 2013 MEETING #8

A. No minutes were compiled.

- All comments were captured in the revised Terms of Reference

3. THAMES RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

A. Changes to TOR since sign-off

- Since the last meeting, there was a suggestion to explicitly state the relationship between the Thames River and Lake Erie in the goals and objectives. All agencies and First Nations that had signed off on the Terms of Reference prior to the changes agreed that this was acceptable.

B. Outstanding approval sign-off

- Oneida Nation of the Thames: April will present the TOR to the Environment Committee and is not anticipating any issues. Chris H offered to send April a copy of the presentation that was used at the UTRCA BOD.
- Environment Canada: waiting for finalization of the TOR. Now that committee has agreed with the changes, a final copy will be sent to Environment Canada for sign-off.
- City of London: wanted to present at council, but will instead approach the City Manager in early October to sign off.

C. Distribution of final copies

- Tara will send each member a copy of the current TOR by email.
- Once sign-off is complete, the TOR with signatures will be posted on the website.

D. Role of Project Manager is to act as the central contact for all projects related to Thames River TOR and ensure regular updates

- Steering committee agreed to keep Tara informed of projects or information related to the Thames River

4. PROGRESS UPDATES ON PROJECTS RELATED TO TRWMP

A. PRESENTATIONS (see attached):

- Tara included presentations to the steering committee in September 27th email. Note that some of the work is still in draft form, so the steering committee is not to share the following two presentations:



- i. Flood forecasting and warning renewal - Status Update - Mark Shifflet (UTRCA) – 15 minutes
- ii. Mesocosm study and benthic variability study of sub watershed outflows in the Thames - Adam Yates (Western University) – 20 minutes.

B. UPPER THAMES RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY:

- i. Water Quality Assessment –
 - o Following an RFP process in July 2013, Freshwater Research (Gertrud Nurnberg, PhD) was selected as the consultant working on the project. The overall goal of the Water Quality Assessment Project is to better understand nutrient sources, fate, and delivery throughout the Thames River system to help in targeting implementation programs in the watershed. The project relies on the use of best available nutrient and flow data for the Thames watershed.
 - o A meeting is set tentatively for October 4th for the technical water quality committee to review the consultant's initial evaluation of existing information and provide project input (see point 5D below).
- ii. Storm water Management Low Impact Designs (LIDs) –
 - o We were unsuccessful in receiving the RBC Bluewater Fund. However, an application is in to Environment Canada and the MOE Great Lakes Advisor to fund the project.
- iii. SWI extension
 - o We were granted an extension on the SWI projects from December 2013 to September 2014, which now gives us a full 3 years.

C. LOWER THAMES VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (LTVCA)

- o Partnering with flood control software to integrate and correct (where necessary) the Lower Thames Valley CA and the Upper Thames River CA data.
- o Environment Canada is putting in continuous water quality monitoring stations
- o With some funding from OMAF, the LTVCA is trying to initiate a benthic program and improve capacity

D. FIRST NATIONS (FN)

- o Joint proposal on Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) that 7 First Nations submitted in partnership to the Minister of Culture. Although this was unsuccessful in getting funding, other funding opportunities are being sought.



- Walpole Island First Nation has some committed funding for Treaty #2, which is a significant portion of the watershed. The intent is to assemble historical information (ecology, land use, archeology) and to build capacity by hiring a GIS technician. The MOE offered to help train the GIS technician if needed.

5. UPDATES ON TECHNICAL WORKING GROUPS

A. First Nations Diversity Committee

- i. Need to reconvene to develop support for the project among First Nations. There have been some changes in the watershed as a result of elections and it would be a good time to seek membership on this committee.

B. Communications Committee –

- i. Late October meeting being planned to showcase results of SWI.

C. Municipal Engagement Committee

- i. Municipal Infrastructure Project Ask. Pat is coordinating with the watershed municipalities the development of a “wish list” of projects related to improving the health of the river that need funding before the elections. At the same time he is using this to update the municipalities about the Thames River Clearwater Revival.

D. Water Quality and Water Quantity Committee

- i. Inaugural Meeting: April 2013
 - a. Summary of projects developed by technical committee (Table 1 attached)
- ii. Next Meeting is tentatively set for October 4th

6. DISCUSSION OF TABLE 1 (Table 1 attached)

- A. Review table and agree on project priority
- B. Determine resources, support and who is accountable
- C. Brainstorm work plans for top 2 projects
 - The steering committee agreed that the first two projects in Table 1 (attached): i) Compilation of water quality and quantity data, and ii) Values assessment of the Thames River and watershed; should be the focus of the steering committee.
 - The steering committee will meet to determine:
 - ✓ what data model to use (e.g. OPEN, WISKI, etc?)
 - ✓ who the caretakers should be
 - ✓ what data exists
 - ✓ who has the data
 - ✓ what should be done with the data, based on the other projects in the list



7. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Ministers Award of Excellence (application deadline OCTOBER 18, 2013 at 5pm):
<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/about/EnvironmentalExcellence/index.htm>
- Steering committee members support application under “leadership”
 - Pat Donnelly agreed to write-up the application
- B. WWF Freshwater Health Assessment:
<http://www.wwf.ca/conservation/freshwater/freshwaterhealth/>
- The Thames was ranked as the worst river studied by the WWF
 - The steering committee agreed that this could be an opportunity to enhance the profile of this group and the projects of the Clearwater Revival. Additional messages that this may be useful to pitch as a call to action for the watershed strategy were suggested by Walpole Island, and changing the negative designation into positive media attention.
 - With these points in mind, messaging that responds to studies on the Thames river will need to be developed by the Communications Committee for the future so that we can take advantage of these “opportunities”
 - Tara emphasized the importance of keeping her informed of issues that may have high media profile.
- C. Sharing agricultural science, technology & data to improve Great Lakes Water Quality Field Tour, June 13, 2013
- Dan McDonald provided a link to the Essex Region website with the information from the bi-national workshop, sharing agricultural science, technology & Data. This includes links to the presentations shared over the 2 days:
<http://erca.org/programs-services/bi-national-workshop-sharing-science-technology-data/>

