

Thames River Clear Water Revival – Thames River Water Management Plan
Steering Committee Meeting Draft Minutes
Thursday October 9, 2014, 12 – 4:00 pm
Museum of Ontario Archaeology, 1600 Attawandaron Road, London

In Attendance:

Luca Cargnelli, Environment Canada
Pat Donnelly, City of London
Chris Harrington, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Eleanor Heagy, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Courtney Jackson, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Dean Jacobs, Walpole Island First Nation
Aimee Johnson, Walpole Island First Nation
Ian Kerr, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (chair)
Isabel Lewis, Caldwell First Nation
Trevor Robak, Ministry of Agriculture and Food/Ministry of Rural Affairs
Christine Rogers, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Tara Tchir, Project Manager, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Cherlene Vieira, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Jason Wintermute, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority

Guest Presenter:

Jeff Brick, UTRCA

Regrets:

Ted Briggs, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Tom Copeland, City of London
Chief Louise Hillier, Caldwell First Nation
James Jenkins, Walpole Island First Nation
Sharilyn Johnson, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Dan McDonald, Ministry of Agriculture and Food/Ministry of Rural Affairs
Bonnie Plain, Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Dave Richards, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Jenn Richards, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Lareina Rising, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Rob Wallis, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Absent:

Mary Alikakos, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Levi Antone, Oneida Nation of the Thames
Larry French, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Tina Jacobs, Delaware Nation - Moravian of the Thames

Purpose of Meeting

- Thames River Water Management Plan (TRWMP) update (discussion of governance model) and Showcasing Water Innovation project updates
- Present WISKI proposal for water quality database
- Planning for the TRWMP including Table of Contents



Lunchtime Presentation – Rural Landowner Behaviours and Attitudes in the Upper Thames River and Grand River Watersheds

Tara introduced Jeff Brick, Coordinator of Hydrology and Regulatory Services at the UTRCA. Jeff presented an overview of his Masters thesis research looking at rural landowners in the Upper Thames and Grand River watersheds. The study focused on the conservation behaviour and attitudes of 3,200 plus survey respondents, with specific emphasis on a subset of more than 600 respondents that are considered to be farmers. The study provides insights that can be used to guide the design of stewardship and education programming in the future.

1. WELCOME AND REVIEW OF AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

- a. Ian welcomed everyone and introductions were made around the table.
- b. Meeting Agenda
Ian reviewed the goals of the meeting (listed above). Another item was added to the agenda: 2c Funding.
- c. March 25, 2014 Minutes
The March 25, 2014 minutes were reviewed. Dean amended item 6 Other Business. He has been appointed to a three year term on the Great Lakes Water Quality Board of the IJC, as well as sitting on the Annex 2 Subcommittee of the GLWQA and the Communications Team of the Water Quality Board.
- d. Outstanding Action Items
There were two action items in the March 25, 2014 minutes. Under item 4c, the UTRCA has been investigating the WISKI water quality module and will be reporting later at this meeting.
Under item 6, committee members inventoried where the TRWMP is represented on the various GLWQA committees:
 - As mentioned above, Dean Jacobs is on the Annex 2 Subcommittee.
 - Tom Copeland (Pat Donnelly alternate) is on the group looking at urban and rural nutrients, underneath the Annex 4 Nutrients Subcommittee.
 - Karen Maaskant (Jeff Brick alternate) is on the Annex 4 group looking at agriculture.
 - Teresa Hollingsworth (UTRCA) is on Annex 2 outreach group.
 - OMAFRA has representation on the Annex 4 Subcommittee at a senior level.
 - Cheriene Vieira is involved with Annex 4 and the Lake Erie LAMP.
 - MOECC is also involved in the policy branch.

ACTION: Ian will arrange a presentation at a future Steering Committee meeting on policies, the COA agreement, etc.

ACTION: Ian will circulate a graphic illustrating the Great Lakes programs and how they fit together.

ACTION: Dean, Luca, Ian and Cheriene will coordinate a presentation at the next SC meeting focusing on the Great Lakes programs, as it is strategically important to tie these into the TRWMP.

2. PROJECT UPDATES

- a. Water Management Plan and Showcasing Water Innovation (SWI) Technical Work
Tara presented a brief overview of work on the Plan and SWI-funded projects.



DISCUSSION

- Ian: *A lot of technical work and projects are coming to an end. We need to look for funding opportunities to get more projects underway. The water quality project, in particular, is a key report that will help to target what needs to be done. Look for an increased focus on the Thames, resulting from new research that looked at the Lake St. Clair algal bloom late in the summer (2014), which moved downstream to the west basin of Lake Erie and caused a Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) there. The HAB is originating in the Thames, so there will be tributary and lake targets for nutrients. This is a key issue we can focus on; the SWI work is really timely. We may be able to access COA funding, too.*
- Pat: *We should make the link to Jeff's research regarding conservation attitudes and behaviour in the agricultural community, too. We may also be able to get into storm water monitoring, as this aspect is not well monitored. Adam Yates is a researcher at Western University who has presented his mesocosm work to the Steering Committee. He is doing a study at a London pollution control plant over the next three years. Wastewater treatment plants are good sources of monitoring.*
- Chris: *The overarching goals of the TRWMP are water quantity and quality. The SWI program was an excellent opportunity to build a technical base. SWI wraps up this year.*
- Ian: *The City of London started the Clear Water Revival concept, and the UTRCA came on board. The Steering Committee came together and decided to focus on a water management plan, as opposed to a watershed management strategy. Terms of Reference were developed and funding came available for technical work.*
- Tara: *There are additional projects that are not SWI that we need to revisit. Some of these are on our wish list.*
- Dean: *How will the reports be presented out to the SC, partners and interested public?*
- Tara: *We are planning a symposium on December 2/3 where the SWI projects will be presented. There may also be presentations to the SC and/or to the Technical Subcommittees. The website and a newsletter are other ways to get the information out.*

ACTION: Tara will circulate the list of TRWMP projects.

ACTION: Steering Committee to follow up with members on the Water Quality working group to make sure they respond to Karen Maaskant about participation in the review and presentation of the Water Quality Assessment report (10:30 on Oct 24th at Watershed Conservation Centre)

b. Introduce proposed Co-Chair role and Governance Model for TRWMP

Chris and Ian explained that there were concerns with how practical the original governance model was, and a need was identified to designate co-chairs for the Steering Committee. Ian Kerr and Tom Copeland (Pat Donnelly alternate) have offered to co-chair the SC. Tara, who is project manager, can then focus on the technical project management rather than having to look after administrative tasks, too. The co-chairs will drive the agenda and provide strategic guidance. The SC should be steering the work of other committees and making decisions. This approach also gives accountability and responsibility to other SC members.

ACTION: Chris will draft text for the Terms of Reference outlining the revised governance model, as well as a note that the model can be reviewed or modified as needed, and circulate it to the SC for feedback.



DISCUSSION

- Trevor: *This is an excellent approach; it will ensure we have “champions” for the project. It will also help interaction, engagement and communication with other groups.*
- Dean: *Agrees with decision. It will help provide focus.*
- Isabel: *Agrees with decision.*
- Ian: *MNR staff has also agreed with this approach.*
- Luca: *Agrees with decision.*
- Jason: *Agrees with Decision. It is similar to how the Source Water Protection Committee functions. The chair is a committee member but not a UTRCA staff member or director, while the project manager is a UTRCA staff member.*
- Courtney and Christine: *Agree with decision.*

3. New Business

a. December 2/3 Symposium and Communications Committee Update

Eleanor explained that plans are underway for a symposium on December 2/3, focusing on the SWI projects. There will be a communications committee meeting in late October to help with the planning. The symposium is a requirement of the SWI funding, but it will also bring profile to the TRWMP and function as a technical transfer. The audience will be technical rather than general public. It will be an opportunity to connect the dots between the technical work and the water management plan and where we're going from here.

Eleanor is scheduling a communications committee meeting for later October. She is updating the website (www.thamesrevival.ca) and working on a newsletter. She will post the charette notes on the website.

ACTION: Ian will identify a new MOE person to sit on the communications committee (Jim Durham has retired). In the interim, Eleanor will add Ian to the committee correspondence.

ACTION: Please provide any input on the draft outline and suggested invitees to Eleanor or Ian or your communications committee representative by Friday, October 24.

DISCUSSION

- Ian: *The symposium may be an opportunity to make the connection to the bigger picture of Annex 4 and/or the IJC.*
- Dean: *regarding the First Nations members presenting something at the symposium – Aamjiwnaang FN has completed the TEK for the Enbridge 9 and may wish to talk about that. James and Dean will discuss presenting something from WIFN.*

b. Draft Proposal for WISKI Water Quality Data Module

Chris presented information that Tara had compiled regarding the WISKI module.

DISCUSSION

- Cheriene: *Can any portions of the proposal be initiated sooner, i.e., within four to five months? What can be accomplished by the end of March, which is the end of the EC calendar year for funding?*
- Chris: *We can spend \$20,000 to purchase software in that time frame. It will probably take two to three months to get the developer position hired. The GIS specialist and*



researcher positions would be filled after that. UTRCA does have some flexibility with “soft” revenue.

- Pat: City of London supports this initiative; it is an excellent opportunity.
- Ian/Cherienne: support this initiative.
- Jason: Yes, this will be a very helpful piece.
- Luca: Yes, being able to look basin-wide is excellent.
- Dean: Yes, especially if there is an opportunity to build on stewardship programs. They are relatively easy to start but hard to sustain. The Secretariat may have some capacity, although not all of the First Nations are part of the Secretariat.
- Trevor: Yes, it’s an excellent approach.
- Ian: We have consensus from the SC that this is a good project. It sounds like the First Nations are particularly interested in bringing in the community-based monitoring aspect.
- Cherienne: Needs to see the proposal to come up with language to “sell it.” Funders also like to see as many partnerships as possible.
- Ian: The COA funding agencies in the SC will discuss funding options. It may line up with a COA proposal.
- Cherienne: It may be difficult for EC funding this fiscal year, although funding often becomes available near the March deadline. Finding funding is quite possible for the next fiscal year.
- Pat: He will look into possibilities at the City of London and will approach other municipalities for ideas.
- Dean: This proposal may bring Chatham-Kent to the table.

ACTION: Tara will provide the WISKI website to the SC.

ACTION: If anyone has ideas for other projects that may line up with COA initiatives, please bring them to the next meeting.

c. TRWMP Table of Contents

ACTION: Tara will provide the draft Table of Contents to the SC to review for the next meeting.

WRAP UP

Ian suggested that we need to schedule another SC meeting in November. Major agenda items will include (in no particular order):

- December Symposium
- WISKI proposal
- Revised governance text for the Terms of Reference
- TRWMP Table of Contents
- Presentations on policy and Great Lakes Programs
- Updates from the SC members

