

Thames River Clear Water Revival - Thames River Water Management Plan
Steering Committee Meeting # 17 - Minutes
Monday April 27, 2015, 12:00 – 3:30pm
UTRCA Watershed Conservation Centre

CHAIRS: Dan McDonald / (Tom Copeland)

ATTENDEES:

Chris Harrington, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Dan McDonald, Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Eleanor Heagy, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Isabel Lewis, Caldwell First Nation
Jason Wintermute, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
Larry French, Chippewas of the Thames
Luca Cargnelli, Environment Canada
Pat Donnelly, City of London
Tara Tchir, Project Manager, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Tom Copeland, City of London
Trevor Robak, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

REGRETS:

Aimee Johnson, Walpole Island First Nation
Chief Louise Hillier, Caldwell First Nation
Dave Richards, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Dean Jacobs, Walpole Island First Nation
George Henry, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
Jenn Richards, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Rob Wallis, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Sharilyn Johnston, Aamjiwnaang First Nation

PURPOSE OF MEETING

- Goals of the Water Management Plan
- Work plan for the Water Management Plan

WELCOME AND REVIEW OF AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

- a) Introductions were made around the table.
- b) Additions to April 27, 2015 agenda – Items were added to the round table section below.
- c) Errors or omissions in minutes of March 31, 2015 – None.

REVIEW OUTSTANDING ACTION ITEMS

- a) LTV Water Quality Monitoring: the draft proposal was presented to the steering committee. Rather than chasing grant money every year, it would be preferable for the municipalities to step forward and establish funding for the monitoring program in their annual budget.
ACTION ITEM: LTVCA to pursue potential funding and report back.
- b) Thamesville Water Quality Monitoring Site: due to the complexity and challenges of the location, the operation and maintenance of this site needs to be led by EC/MOECC. CAs can provide support. Tom suggested finding out whether the equipment in the station can be upgraded for easier maintenance. Gertrud's gap analysis recommended establishing new stations and increasing the number of samples at existing stations.
ACTION ITEM: MOECC will investigate possibility of lab analysis of samples.



ACTION ITEM: Luca will confirm when the funding is going to end and find out if the lab will still be available, if someone else provides the samples. Luca is going to bring the information from the proposal back to Chereine to determine if this station can remain funded.

ACTION ITEM: A conference call is suggested with EC, MOECC and the CAs.

ACTION ITEM: Tom will contact the municipalities to determine if they conduct water quality samples on the receiving stream from their sewage treatment plants and if they have capacity.

ACTION ITEM: Dan will determine whether the C-K- Sewage data shows effluent results or in-stream monitoring results. **Answer: effluent.**

- c) Pumping Stations: a small tour is being organized between City of London, MOECC, UTRCA and LTVCA.

ACTION ITEM: Jason will give a presentation that includes highlights from this tour at the next steering committee.

WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN

- a) COTTFN is working on how they are going to handle the Treaty Right and with thoughts on water quality given that they take groundwater for drinking water. Look at the Great Lakes “shed” and recognize that what we do for the TRCWR should be tied into what should be done.

ACTION ITEM: Tara to look to Source Water Protection for description of First Nations found in source water areas.

ACTION ITEM: Dan to provide information on the Thames River and what a healthy river means and schedule a meeting by May 25th with other interested team members.

- b) Tara presented the spreadsheet showing a draft work plan. The spreadsheet identifies the lead agency or partner (in brackets) who is responsible for the chapter section.

ACTION ITEM: Each member of the steering committee will use the spreadsheet as a guidance document and report back to steering committee on progress

- c) Nutrients and Lake Erie - external considerations for the TRCWR Team

ACTION ITEM: Tara to add the following to spreadsheet of related / complementary initiatives)

Domestic

- **Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health**
- **MOECC Mandate Letter** – Great Lakes Protection Act, development of nutrient target by 2016 to address algal blooms in the Great Lakes and recommendations to meet that target, and greater focus on climate change.
- **OMAFRA Mandate Letter** – reducing nutrient runoff
- **Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy** - released in 2012 to establish Ontario’s priorities for action on the Great Lakes with all partners, featuring enhanced engagement with the public and First Nations, supporting the development of innovative technologies, services and practices, and providing greater public access to monitoring results and scientific information on the Great Lakes.
- **Proposed Ontario Great Lakes Protection Act** - enshrining the importance of the Great Lakes in legislation, establishing a Great Lakes Council, committing to reporting on progress, and creating opportunities for Geographically Focused Initiatives (GFI) that improve the Great Lakes. If the Thames River is identified as a GFI, there could be some funding opportunities.

Binational

- **Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement** (Annex 4, Nutrients) – Nutrient Targets and Priority Watersheds (2016) and Domestic Action Plans (2018)



- **Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement** (Annex 2, Lakewide Management) - Development of the Binational Lake Erie Lakewide Action Management Plan working group.
- **International Joint Commission** Lake Erie Ecosystem Report (LEEP): A Balanced Diet For Lake Erie – Recommended 46% reduction from Western and Central Basins; hypoxia reduced by 50%
- **Great Lakes Commission** – Lake Erie Nutrient Targets Working Group (Action Plan September 2015)

Great Lakes Community

- **Environmental Defence Report** (Aug 2014) with four recommendations: 1) harness market forces to help farmers reduce nutrients 2) smart communities; water smart citizens 3) improve scientific understanding
- **Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative** (Dec 2014) press release calls for accelerated action to protect drinking water from toxic algae

ROUND TABLE (*Steering committee members will provide updates to the steering committee on implementation projects that need additional capacity or help from partners*)

a) Representation – Jason Wintermute

Jason gave a presentation on the TRCWR to the LTVCA's board of directors. There was interest in participating in the TRCWR from Dean McKillop (Dutton-Dunwich). He will talk with West Elgin/Southwold about possibly providing a counsellor to represent these small municipalities. Larger municipalities are interested and want to be kept informed; they just do not have enough resources to contribute. As well, Gayle Bogart is the OFA representative for Essex-Kent and can provide OFA contacts. Jason provided the contact to Trevor.

ACTION ITEM: Trevor to follow-up with Jennifer.

b) Communication Committee Terms of Reference – Eleanor Heagy

ACTION ITEM: The TOR will be distributed prior to the next steering committee meeting for discussion/approval.

c) Website – Eleanor Heagy

The Communications Committee viewed the TRCWR website at its meeting earlier in the day. Committee members are encouraged to provide information on activities related to this project. They also discussed showcasing featured projects, such as stewardship activities that may improve water quantity and/or quality.

ACTION ITEM: Pat to provide link to City of London website that has information about teaching water conservation as well as subwatershed storm drainage mapping

d) Great Lakes Cities Initiative – Tom Copeland

This group is interested in working on the Thames River. They have contacted the LTVCA and the UTRCA, and are going to be speaking with Pat and Tom from the City of London tomorrow to finalize a proposal for COA funding to look at phosphorus inputs into the Thames.

ACTION ITEM: Tom and Pat will report back to the committee about this meeting.

NEXT MEETING – Proposed for June 16th at MOECC office in London (733 Exeter Road)

