

**MADAWASKA RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT REVIEW
STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting #42, Wednesday October 22, 2008
Board Room of OPG/OSPG Office, Renfrew**

Attendees:

SAC: Steve Roy, Lucien Lacombe, Brian Moran, Dan White, George Newton, Brian Wright

MNR: Kirby Punt, Karen Handford, Joanna Samson

OPG: Don Ferko, Chris Tonkin, Jerry Lapierre, Bob Vinski, Martin Kelly, Linda Halliday

Regrets: JP de Grandmont, Damian Hanel

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Acting Chair, Lucien Lacombe

2. Review of Agenda

No additions.

3. Delegations:

Chris Tonkin introduced Martin Kelly from Energy Markets as a new OPG representative, and Bob Vinski from Hydroelectric, who was involved with the original Madawaska WMP from 1997 to 2000 is visiting this evening.

4. Approval of Minutes

Steve Roy inquired whether the following had taken place:

Page 2, under 5.1: ACTION: “Damian to send to Joanna the wording from the proposal submitted previously for a trial period. Joanna will submit to MNR’s Enforcement Section for a response.”

Page 3, under 5.2: ACTION: “Don to provide a brief summary of the actions taken and potential impact on muskrats for the Minutes.”

Motion: Proposed by George Newton and seconded by Steve Roy, the Minutes of meeting #41 of the Madawaska SAC, February 27, 2008 to be approved as amended. Carried unanimously.

5. Business arising from the Minutes:

5.1 The Planning Process

- ◆ Amendments to/deviations from water management plans – Al Mack sent a summary of what might happen, how to handle trial periods, etc. From point 1, paragraph 3:

“To consider a deviation without going through the process of making an amendment to the plan, would expose those involved to accusations that the plan was somewhat of a farce if some could simply agree “on the side” to something different after the plan was approved. Therefore MNR should not allow, encourage or condone operations different than approved in the plan, without going through an amendment process.”

This came from a request by Damian for a “shoulder season level and flow adjustment” on Centennial Lake. A trial period for this was suggested.

(Madawaska WMP, Chapter 9, amendment process, no public consultation unless people would be impacted). Oversight would be provided by the Madawaska SAC.

There are various methods of dealing with minor or major amendments.

- ◆ Timeline Update – it is hoped to submit all Plan chapters to the publisher by December 31.

Public consultation process slated for Feb-April 2009 – 60 days. Meetings, on-line feedback for cottagers’ associations, advertising and other media would be used.

Steve Roy comment – does not believe time is of the essence because of the importance of the public consultation process. He believes that stakeholder meetings should be held later in June/July. The time frame should be defined and made available to as many people as possible.

Dan White asked if it could at least be in May at the start of the cottage season.

Consensus – we will extend the public consultation process from March to May. The decision will be made finally by the regulator.

- ◆ Chapters 2 and 3 also will be sent out shortly.
- ◆ Chapter 5 comments – George Newton mentioned many redundancies – could we shorten the Chapter by removing these?

Action items from 2000 Plan were retained in the 2008 version so that they would be retained in the original sections and not lost.

Steve Roy commented that he was disappointed by the low number of comments received and is of the opinion that this does not reflect well on the process and the level of interest.

We do not want to change the context of the questions because they are recorded as asked. Since this is an update, not a new plan, they remain the same.

OPG does attend Community Association meetings when invited/requested.

In the Plan it is not the mandate to task other organizations to take actions, but recommendations can be made.

George Newton asked what regulation covers OPG flooding of private property. If there is not flooding easement in a property deed then OPG would be liable for property damage if it flooded private land.

A comment about permanent docks – MNR will allow crib docks of less than 6 sq. metres, but MNR Pembroke prefers floating docks due to minimal impact on waterways, less ice damage and damage to fish habitat.

For clarification purposes with respect to water levels, the use of “control” rather than “regulation” would be less confusing.

SR – will you rework the Stewartville section based on MNR comments?
CT – the intention is to leave the section as is. This has been discussed at length.
DF showed data for the week June 7/14 to show the fluctuations in the Stewartville reach including above 144.48 for several hours. Flows in that week were above 100 cms in general.

5.2 Levels and Flow Update

- ◆ Bark Lake – went down below 308 because of potential for a wetter than normal year. In every month from Jan-Sept. the flows on the system were higher than normal. Now flows are approaching normal for the time of year. May 10 – 102 discharge, Kam Lake over 300)
- ◆ Kamaniskeg Lake – flows higher than normal until May. Daily data show slightly different trends from the monthly average. Differences between lakes depend on where rain falls. The whole basin shows variations. Kam Lake did exceed summer range a few times this summer.
- ◆ Stewartville – higher than average flows in mid May, drop off then rise again in the summer.
- ◆ SR commented that the daily average graphs pinpoint the problems with the Stewartville Reach.
- ◆ In 2008 for flow control OPG spilled water on the Madawaska River. First time in at least 20 years.
- ◆ Kam Lake flow impact on muskrats – in high flows in January (highest on record), winter ops suspended for muskrats (the gradient was 40) so 12 cm op range was suspended. Conroy's Marsh was not frozen over. Hard to assess the impact. Water was released at Palmer Rapids Dam. Lower levels are preferable for the muskrats.
- ◆ Don Ferko will send graphs to SAC members

5.3 Ice Conditions

Can OPG do more than current safety ad campaign?

Snowmobiles are allowed across certain facilities rather than on ice.

Can we do joint ads between OPP and OPG in winter? Any campaign will be geared towards snowmobilers and ATVers and the message is “stay away from hydroelectric facilities.”

5.4 Fisheries Update summary (Kirby Punt)

- ◆ Bark Lake Spin (Summer Profundial Index Netting) – responding to concern about Bark Lake lake trout fishery in decline. Report compiled by Chuck Brady of Bancroft. Population has declined due to level fluctuations and other factors. Certain strains of lake trout were stocked and fished. This strain of trout may not be suitable for life in Bark Lake. Density of fish is low for the numbers stocked.

- ◆ In future MNR will use larger fish and stock around 10,000 instead of larger numbers of small fish to see if a larger population can be stimulated. Fall 2008 stocking of a different strain with larger fish will be monitored. As well there is a large population of long-nosed suckers, white fish and other riverine strains of fish. May not see a change for up to 5 years. Fish net testing will be carried out every 5 years.
- ◆ Black Donald/Centennial – FWIN (Fall Walleye Index Netting) in Fall 2008. 20 cm size lower limit on Walleye in Lake Clear has been implemented on other lakes as well with a 2 fish catch limit. Fish populations can be depleted by too many anglers and the angling population waxes and wanes with the fish population. (known as a pulse fishery). Databases will be compared across the province. Results are expected in January 2009. Age, fecundity and many other factors are examined in this type of study.

6 Summary of Public Issues since the last meeting:

6.1 MNR

No public issues recorded

6.2 OPG

- ◆ OPG was contacted by many individuals for additional information, and to express concerns about the high levels in the Spring around Kamaniskeg Lake and about the uses of the full 78 cm range at Stewartville.

6.3 SAC

SR – calls from people in Stewartville Reach including Jahn’s Bay Cottagers’ Association.

LL – Madawaska area trailers with squatters on OPG property – liability being managed to remove people from property.

Does OPG really need all the property we currently own?

7 New Business:

7.1 Property Licensing – meeting on June 7 in Calabogie for interested property owners around Madawaska, particularly Calabogie Lake area. This was a good meeting to explain water licenses and the insurance issue.

There has been an 85% return rate for licences since June 7. Letters have been sent to those who have not taken out licences stating that OPG is giving notice to all those who have not taken advantage of the licence offer, that access is **now prohibited and that the property must be maintained in natural state and all structures removed. Those who use OPG property without licences are trespassing.**

8 Date of next meeting:

The next SAC Meeting will take place on Wednesday January 14, 2009 at OPG’s Renfrew office.

9 Adjournment

On motion proposed by Steve Roy, seconded by Barry Moran, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm, there being no further business.

