

MADAWASKA RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT REVIEW
STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting #4, April 25, 2001 – Renfrew Corporate Centre

Attendees:

SAC – MaryAnn McRae, Steve Roy, Ernie Coulas, Don Beckett for Barry Martin, Brian Wright, Kevin Barclay, Bob Braden

MNR – Ron Spurr

OPG – Jim Whyte, Linda Halliday

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 pm., by Vice Chair Brian Wright

There were no delegations or presentations.

Approval of Minutes of March 28, 01

Move to approve – Steve Roy, seconded Bob Braden.

There was no business arising from the Minutes. Hard copy of John Boos' presentation of March 28, 2001 was distributed at the meeting.

Report on the Madawaska Paddlers' Workshop:

- The objective was to meet with the paddler community to inform them about river operations on the upper Madawaska River, and to find out the issues and concerns from a paddler perspective.
- Weekend white water was requested of OPG
- Special event white water was also requested. A group will be organized to request releases from OPG for defined weekends each season, taking into account fish habitat and other concerns. A cost estimate is being prepared for these.
- An Upper Madawaska River stakeholder meeting will be held annually in late March/early April at the same time as the other stakeholder meetings. It was strongly suggested that OPG advertise this meeting in the local newspaper to make it inclusive.

Report on the Lower Madawaska stakeholder meeting, April 12:

- 50+ people invited, small turnout, no major issues.
- A recommendation was made that this meeting also be advertised in 2002

Selection of MNR Information Needs for the summer of 2001:

- We can't afford to do all of the projects on John Boos' list
- Top five priorities will be chosen at this meeting
- Steve Roy tabled a letter from Jack Threader supporting an in-depth study of the fish population on the Stewartville reach
- Bob Braden mentioned research support for fur bearers

- Ernie Coulas wondered about the purpose of this
- Jim Whyte – furbearers tend to build homes in October/November and drawdowns might adversely affect them
- Ron Spurr asked each SAC member to list the top 5 priorities to see if there is agreement on any of the Needs
- Brian Wright received a call from a concerned resident about erosion and fluctuating water levels in the Stewartville reach of the Madawaska, in the past month
- Kevin Barclay – curiosity about deep spawning lake trout studies at Bark Lake, and further study on the Stewartville Reach
- Ernie Coulas – assessment of walleye populations in Negeek and Kamanisseg Lake
- Brian Wright – Stewartville headpond study would be important
- MaryAnn McRae – Status of walleye and pike fisheries in Bark Lake

Priorities:

1. Further assessment of Walleye, Pike and Muskie population in Stewartville headpond
 2. Information on Walleye Fishery downstream of Palmer Rapids (to Griffith)
 3. Assessment of Walleye populations in Negeek and Kamanisseg Lakes
 4. Status of the Fishery in Bark Lake
 4. Monitoring of the Black Donald/Centennial Lake Fishery
- Don Beckett – the Black Donald/Centennial Lake fishery would be important to Barry Martin. Also mentioned: the Algonquin Park wolf, the consideration of the entire watershed in the study of fish and wildlife. Are these local interests or are people considering the entire picture?
 - Steve Roy mentioned that these were gaps in the original Information Needs Document.
 - Kevin Barclay mentioned that Don raised a very valid point in saying that we should see whether information gathered by any of these projects is relevant to another river reach, or whether findings could be applied elsewhere.
 - Don Beckett – the public should be told that the research undertaken is for common goals, not just for small reaches of the river. This is an integrated river system and what happens in one reach, also affects another.
 - Ron Spurr – Don Beckett raises a very valid point because the previous PAC was trained to consider priorities for the entire river. If anyone has a concern about research studies that need to be done, they should contact an SAC member.
 - These Information Needs were brought to the fore by public consultation during the Madawaska Review process.
 - Ernie Coulas feels strongly that the area from Palmer Rapids to Griffith needs serious consideration because it might well have implications for fisheries upstream and downstream

New Business:

1. Steve Roy – with respect to the Terms of Reference of the Standing Advisory Committee, OPG and MNR will each devise a system of logging public communication on water level and flow issues for review by the SAC.
 - is this happening?
 - When will the SAC see these and at what frequency?
 - We need to devise a plan for this activity.

 - Jim Whyte – OPG collects public communications on water level and flow issues for ISO 14001 process. They are filed on a computerized data base and can be made available for the SAC to see at frequent intervals.

 - Ron Spurr – MNR does not have a comprehensive process for logging public complaints at this time. Some complaints are not realistic. Ron will ask the Madawaska Area Supervisor and the Enforcement Supervisor to see if these can be logged for the committee.

 - Steve Roy – recommendation that public communication information be submitted to the SAC at each meeting. This will give the SAC a chance to see what the public is saying about the Madawaska River, to find out if the communication process works, and to have input into the solution process.

 - Could MNR monitor the Information Counter requests and pick out the ones that refer to the Madawaska River?

 - OPG and MNR could each provide a summary of public issues/concerns for review at each SAC meeting. This would become part of the regular business at each meeting, and would be included on the agenda for each meeting as a formal item.

 - Kevin Barclay – information could also be shared between meetings among SAC members, OPG and MNR

2. Jim Whyte - Bark Lake is currently at approx. 310.36 m. Target elevation is 313.74 metres on the May long weekend. The sill is at 307.8m. Current outflow is at 15 cms for pickerel spawn period. Outflow will revert to 5 cms. after spawn completion. The assessment is that we will be able to fill the lake, with average April/May rainfall. Current inflows are 65 cms.
Palmer Rapids current discharge is 134 cms, reduced from 160 cms.
Centennial Lake is currently at summer minimum and will be held at 247.74 m for at least another week, then raised slightly after spawning period. Pike spawn is almost over in this sector, but muskie spawn will likely last another week or so. Pickerel spawn enhancement flow has been instituted all along the system to assist the spawn.

3. Algonquin Park staff has been cooperating closely with OPG since the process of the Review began. Water levels peaked over Easter weekend and the lakes are at

summer levels with surplus water being let out downstream. Some lakes are still frozen.

4. Current conditions on the Madawaska River could be included as a regular agenda item.
5. Bob Braden asked whether conditions were normal on the Stewartville forebay to inform a neighbour who has consistent concerns about docking facilities due to river flows.
6. Ernie Coulas – is there a walleye watch at Palmer Rapids? It started at Quadeville in 1995 and Gilbert Kaufeldt would be the person to speak to.
7. Steve Roy complimented Kevin Barclay for getting an agenda out, but asked that it be out a week or two before the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

Next meeting will be Wednesday, June 13, 2001
Ottawa/St. Lawrence Plant Group Board Room
2 Innovation Drive, Renfrew
Dinner at 6:00 pm and meeting at 6:30 pm