

Minutes of Meeting
Vermilion River Stewardship
Tuesday March 8, 2011
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Beaver Lake Sports and Cultural Club

Chair: Linda Heron
Vice Chair: John Reid
Secretary: Sheri Johnson Purdon
Attendance: 22 Community Members

1. **Presentation by Carolyn Hunt, Environment Group, Vale**
2. **Agenda**
Additions – No additions Moved by Mike Ross
Adopted
3. **Adoption of Previous Minutes** Moved by Betsy Little
Seconded by Aaron Basso
Adopted
4. **Reports**
 1. **Executive**
 - a) Xeneca Power Damns
 - Environmental Assessment still needs to be completed
 - No site release as of yet for the damns
 - No project description available
 - Notice of commencement was July 2010 reposted by MOE in Nov. 2010
 - Still trying to obtain access to the minutes with the Greater City of Sudbury meeting – Mark Simeoni
 - Process is slow due to mine claims at the proposed sites
 - Bob Robinson and Erik Cobb from the MNR state that the damns cannot be stopped at this point.
 2. **Finance**
 - a) Finance Volunteer – Brenda Salo – to be discussed at the next meeting
 - b) City of Sudbury Funding – Steven Monet
 - o Funding available once Lakes Advisory Panel is in place
 - o Ideas or Plans for the use of this money should be forwarded to Linda
 3. **Website**
 - a) Domain name and website in the works at www.vermillionriverstewards.ca
 4. **Correspondence**

Walden-CAN – Linda presented to the group and was well received

Jacques Barbeau – very busy and stated that he supports the health of the city's lakes and rivers and will meet with Linda in the future.
5. **Business Arising from Previous Meeting**
 1. **Wabagishik Rapids**
 - Letters to Snowmobile Clubs
 - Dennis Lendrum responded - Lloyd Myllynen, Governor
 - Response received on Friday March 4, 2011
 - Xeneca wants to meet Dennis prior to the Public Information session on March 22, 2011
 - Holmes says there will be no impact on the bridge

- There was no answer to the other questions related to the road
2. **Ontario Rivers Alliance**
 - Linda is the intern chair
 - Next meeting April 2, 2011 in North Bay
 - Press Release previously circulated
 - Interview on CBC Morning North
 3. **Phosphorus Testing**
 - Link sent to Linda
 - MOE performs the testing
 - challenge is accessing the reports
 - Bob Little to call
 - Leslie Flowers to forward information on volunteer sampling to Bob
 - City has reports for testing on Grassy Lake and Kusk Lake 2006.
 - Vale intake - contact Nick Benkovich about what testing they perform
 4. **Spanish-Vermilion Water Management Plan**
 - Steve Cobb provided a draft of the Water Management plan.
 - It contains information about the water flows in the city, which is very helpful.
 5. **Leslie Flowers**, Simon Lake Community Stewardship Group explained the letter that was originally to come from both Stewardships was sent only by their group to:
 - request MOE and City pay for a phosphorus study to determine source of pollution
6. **New Business**
 1. **RBC Funding**
 - Blue Water Project has funding available, we will have to wait until next year. Application date has passed.
 - They do have separate resources available that we may apply for that is for a smaller amount \$5000, available anytime during the year. Requires a not for profit status to qualify.
 2. **Environmental Study of Vermilion River & Wanapitei River Watersheds**
 - With the dams going forward it is important for us to monitor the state of the rivers. We need to start our own study so we have a baseline to monitor any changes in water quality after dams are built.
 3. **Not for Profit Designation**
 - Committee set up with Sheri Johnson Purdon as Chair and Mike and Lloyd as committee members.
 4. **Biodiversity Committee**
 - Helps identify the different species in the watershed that may be affected by the dams.
 - Have a volunteer to help but cannot chair the committee.
 - There were no volunteers at this time.
 5. **Xeneca's Stakeholders' Advisory Committee**
 - Linda has again been invited to sit on this committee. She has asked for a Terms of Reference prior to giving her response.
 - Linda will forward to the membership once it is received
 7. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday April 12, 2011, 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the Beaver Lake Sports and Cultural Club
 8. **Adjournment**

EXECUTIVE REPORT

8 MARCH 2011

Talked to Mark Holmes, Xeneca – Thursday, 3 March at 9:00 am:

1. He will send me water control structure map by mail – 19 control structures
2. Hasn't answered any of our questions yet
3. Holmes told me that their funding comes from OPSEU
4. Asked me who I would like to see as Chair on a Stakeholders' Committee – I told him Dr. John Gunn or Dr. Ramcharan
5. He asked me if I would sit on this Stakeholder's Committee and I said yes, but only if I didn't have to sign a "Confidentiality Agreement" & could report back to my Stewardship and Community
6. He said I would have to sign a Confidentiality Agreement – now changed to Terms of Reference
7. I asked him for a copy of the Agreement and told him I would take it before our Stewardship Members for their decision
8. In hindsight I wrote a message to Dr. Gunn and Dr. Ramcharan to request they not accept the position as I believe Xeneca will use their appointment on the Stakeholders' Committee as something I suggested and consider me as agreeing to this EA Process
9. Dr. Ramcharan said he would not sign any Confidentiality Agreement either – wants to talk to me

MNR Contact

1. "With all due respect, you are not going to stop these dams through the EA process."
2. "How can we stop them then?" He said, "It's a free world. Conditions aren't there for them to be stopped. You need a very good reason for it not to proceed."
3. EA process is designed to find mitigation.
4. Xeneca has not provided an Applicant of Record for any of their projects in the north, so there is no site release for any of our 4 proposed projects.
5. 2 other applications in the site release process right now – 1 on the Wanapitei and one on Birch Creek, near Webwood
6. MNR is not driving the process, the MOE is
7. Xeneca will have to mitigate concerns about water levels, flow, etc.
8. Use the window of opportunity when the EA process is complete and the Notice of Completion is issued to bump up to an Individual Class EA – but need a good reason
9. When the **Environmental Assessment Act** came into effect it became an EA enabling process
10. Process is as follows:
 - a. Application of Record – Xeneca has not submitted on any of our projects or Wanapitei
 - b. Site Release
 - c. Project Description
 - d. EA Process – Xeneca has chosen to proceed with the EA without an Application of Record – a technical question for MOE
 - i. EA process is there to address environmental concerns in a broad sense
 - ii. Concerns are to be properly documented and then provide a suggested approach – concerns are to be mitigated
 - e. Notice of Commencement – July 2010
 - f. MOE told them to repost our NofC in November 2010
 - i. MOE won't intervene in the Class EA process
11. Will try to get a copy of the minutes of the EA meeting when they're ready – can't promise anything
12. He didn't even know about the Vale Public Drinking Water intake at the base of Cascade Falls.
13. Said 3 upper Vermilion sites are a little behind in the site release process – waiting for ownership details to be sorted out - patented land, Vale & City – it could have something to do with Vale having to release interests on the Vermilion River Water Management Plan

14. Lake Sturgeon – very little information about them in the Lower Wabagishik
15. Xeneca holding a public information meeting on 22 March, Espanola, for Wabagishik
16. I just found 2 more possible Vermilion River sites in the Hatch Acres Report – at Island Rapids & CPR bridge

Spanish-Vermilion River Water Management Plan

1. There is an existing Spanish-Vermilion Water Management Plan, and apparently Xeneca will have to apply for an amendment to this plan – this will take time – Vale and possibly Domtar would have to allow
2. Eric Cobb, Sudbury MNR was working on this WMP – 705 564-7857 – left message
3. Bob Robinson – left message
4. Carolyn Hunt, Vale, said there is an in-place Water Management Plan from 1993-2012 which covers the Spanish River main branch structures only. The updated plan, which incorporates structures in the Vermilion River branch, is currently being finalized (comments from MNR are being addressed) and will be available for public distribution after it is approved by the MNR.
5. Picked up the 2006 Draft Water Management Plan – an updated one is in the works

OFSC

- Dennis Lendrum, Espanola OFSC contacted me on follow-up from letter
 - Very concerned about their snowmobile bridge which they constructed very close to where the dam is proposed
 - Gave me the name of the District 12 OFSC, Lloyd Myllynen
 - Contacted Lloyd and they are very concerned
 - I sent them an information package
 - Dennis Lendrum talked to Mark Holmes and found out Espanola Public Meeting would be held on 22 March – location to be determined
- Lloyd Myllynen – Governor of Regional OFSC
 - Is concerned and gave me contact information for head office
 - I followed up by contacting head office of our concerns

RBC Blue Water

1. Funding available – very interested in helping us – need water project in this area
2. Deadline was 4 March – not enough time to apply this year
3. Recommended we go for a general grant – no deadline –from \$1,000 to \$5,000
4. Must have Not-for-Profit status in order to apply, or partner with someone who does
5. Need to start the NforP process
6. Spoke to an Brad Bowman, Environmental Scientist/Consultant about
 - what type of study we should undertake
 - suggested gathering information from the numerous sources that have already been testing over the years
 - create a database of information that would be useful to everyone
 - Phase I - \$5,000 for the first year to create an outline of what is available and where
 - Phase II – 2012 - we would then have our NforP status and could go ahead
 - This would give us a benchmark and help pinpoint sources of pollution

Walden-CAN

- 7 March – Invited by Neeltje Van-Roon to give a presentation to their members
- Re: Vermilion River proposed dams and other challenges we are addressing
- Full house – my slide presentation is posted on the Walden-CAN website

Jacques Barbeau

Jacques sent me a message and said he will meet with me within the next few weeks. He has been just swamped. I am relieved he has answered my plea!

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1 March 2011

TO SUDBURY & ESPANOLA DISTRICT SNOWMOBILE CLUBS

RE: 4 PROPOSED HYDROELECTRIC RUN-OF-RIVER DAMS

Please be aware that Xeneca Power Development Inc., have filed a Notice of Commencement for 4 Run-of-River hydroelectric dams with "Modified Peaking" on the Vermilion River as follows:

- ***MCPHERSON FALLS – 100m HEAD POND***
- ***CASCADE FALLS – 3.5km HEAD POND***
- ***SOO CROSSING – 4.5km HEAD POND***
- ***WABAGISHIK RAPIDS – 600m HEAD POND***

The Vermilion River Stewardship (VRS) is very concerned about all 4 of these dams, and the proposed Wabagishik Dam would be very close to the bridge constructed across the Wabagishik Rapids for snowmobilers.

The impact to the trails is unknown but the VRS is confident that the clubs will only be notified at the last possible moment with little time to effectively respond. For example, the Espanola club has likely not been contacted by Xeneca regarding the new power transmission grid planned to run along the existing snowmobile trail.

If you also have concerns about any or all of these dams please contact me, or come to our next meeting on Tuesday, 8 March 2011, at the Beaver Lake Sports and Cultural Club, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.

Sincerely,

Linda Heron, Chair
Vermilion River Stewardship