

# Minutes

## Vermilion River Stewardship

Wednesday, April 11, 2012

7:00-9:00 pm

Beaver Lake Sports & Cultural Centre

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Present: Linda Heron, Lesley Flowers, Terry Little, Ron Basso, Al Stanley, Dale Kilbey, Neeltje VanRoon, Betsy Little, Bob Little, John Healey, Aaron Basso, Marilyn Shames, Ken Shames, Owen Basso, Eija Hietaharju

**1. Adoption of Agenda:**

Moved by Leslie Flowers

Seconded by Ron Basso

**Adopted**

**2. Adoption of Minutes of 11 January 2012**

Moved by Dale Kilbey

Seconded by Bob Little

**Adopted**

**3. Strategic Planning Committee Presentation on [the Lower Vermilion Source Water Quality Monitoring Project](#) presented by Dale Kilbey and Leslie Flowers - PowerPoint presentation attached – Highlights Below**

- a. Historical water quality data from provincial ministries and other sources is inconsistent and sampling procedures not standardized therefore the data is not sufficient to draw any conclusions to affect change.
- b. Moving forward the committee will create a model for the Lower Vermilion listing all the water inputs and outputs. Testing sites along the river will be used to quantify the water quality changes going downstream. These will be compared to a baseline sample taken from the river at Milnet; above which point there is very little human activity.
- c. Sampling will be done five times the first year (June through October) at these sites as well as duplicating the proposed sampling by the City in Kusk, Grassy and Ella lakes. Analyses will cover the full range of pollutants from phosphates and coliform to heavy metals.
- d. Following MOE sampling and preparation procedures are critical to the credibility of the data. Several years worth of data are necessary to move the concerns of water quality degradation from an emotional discussion to one that affects change.
- e. Next step is to develop a budget (June Meeting) and secure funding. A preliminary list of funding sources has been researched.

**4. Jacques Barbeau Q&A – Jacques was unable to attend – vehicle breakdown.**

## 5. Reports

- **Executive Report – Attached as Addendum 1 – Highlights below**
  - a) NDCA (renamed Conservation Sudbury) presentation on Jan 19<sup>th</sup> by Linda was well received.
    - (i) Verbal assurance was given that the NDCA has the authority to stop the McPherson and Cascade Falls dam projects if it threatens the public water intake, however, more information is required on the proposals.
    - (ii) They expressed a desire to work with VRS and GSWA to develop a consortium around water quality.
  - b) GSWA has been revitalized with a full board (new chair is Lesley Flowers) and has the support of most stewardship groups in Greater Sudbury. A general meeting will be held on May 28<sup>th</sup> to review the constitution, mission, values and goals.
  - c) Linda attended the Gateway workshop on Feb 21<sup>st</sup> intended to develop a community climate change adaptation plan. This was a good opportunity for networking.
  - d) City Council presentation for the Official Plan given by Linda. She talked about the heritage of the VR and its inclusion as a green space.
  - e) Presentation given to Aboriginal Studies Class, Laurentian University, by Linda - was well received. Offers were given to help with our Facebook page.
  - f) A presentation to the Sudbury Game and Fish Association on March 21<sup>st</sup> was given by Linda to raise an awareness of the dam proposals.
  - g) Linda attended her first Xeneca Stakeholder's Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting. Mark Holme's gave a presentation to the Committee – it was very general, with no current details. Linda will give a presentation at the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting in order to allay any misconceptions about the "Green" nature of the dams. Xeneca stated that they are putting the At Soo Crossing, Cascade and McPherson proposals on hold for now and concentrating on Wabagishik.
  - h) Linda attended a public input session on the Fielding road water/wastewater project. One more meeting will be scheduled to present the final plan.
  - i) Meeting with Mark Simeoni and Jacques Barbeau on March 5<sup>th</sup> regarding the City's ownership of land surrounding At Soo Crossing. Xeneca has not approached the City about this site yet.
  - j) Sheri attended Our Community, Our Planet event at Science North. Contacted Sudbury Horticultural Society and encouraged them to visit dam sites to assess for species at risk.
- **Correspondence - Links below:**
  - a. [Response from Bob Rogers, Chair, NDCA](#) (Conservation Sudbury), to VRS's letter dated 28 February 2012 (see Jan. Minutes) was received.

- i. Conservation Sudbury extended an invitation to VRS to collaborate with them for the betterment of the Vermilion River Watershed.
    - ii. Further response to Linda's questions on a warning system to VR residents in the event of a wastewater bypass is forthcoming.
  - b. Linda made application to represent Ward 2 on the Green Space Advisory Panel at Franco Mariotti's suggestion. Linda will use this opportunity to advance the inclusion of the VR as a green space.
- **Finance:** Balance of \$645.14

## 6. **Business Arising from Previous Meeting**

1. Treasurer's position has been formalized with the BMO and provincial government's incorporation paperwork.
2. Dam Proposals
  - a. Chief Operating officer for Xeneca, Patrick Gillette, has been fired. The Ministry of Environment's office rejected Xeneca's first Environmental Assessment (EA) Report for the Ivanhoe River. The next two ERs for the Serpent and Fredrick House Rivers may be withdrawn by Xeneca.
  - b. Vale is initiating an assessment of the Sturgeon population in the Wabagishik Rapids site area.
3. Linda, working through the ORA, has sent letters to the MOE, MNR and Energy ministers to request:
  - a. Dam decommissioning provisions are included in every dam project agreement.
  - b. Modified Peaking and Cycling hydroelectric operating strategies be removed from the Green Energy Act.

## 7. **New Business**

- a. Film Committee struck - headed by John Healy. Ron, Aaron and Marilyn volunteered to assist. The purpose is to create a video of the Wabagishik site.
- b. Changes to the Fisheries and Environmental Assessment Acts (federal Omnibus Bill C-38) are proposed that significantly weaken environmental, fisheries and habitat protection. The entire CEAA was repealed. Go to [Ecojustice.ca](http://Ecojustice.ca) to learn more and what you can do to help.
- c. Provincial Budget Bill-55 has included amendments to the several acts administered under the Environmental Bill of Rights and the MNR. The changes would allow the Ministers to delegate their authority outside the ministry without any liability to the ministry. This is proceeding without public input because it has been bundled with the budget bill. The ORA has drafted a letter to the NDP to encourage

them to vote against Bill-55 until these changes are removed. **Call the NDP hotline at 1-855-ONT-BDGT to let them know your opinion.**

**8. Action Items:**

1. Review the City's storm water study
2. Presentation to Nairn Town Council
3. Create a phone tree to alert VR residents to blue green algae sightings at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting** – Wednesday, June 13th, 2012, 7 pm - Beaver Lake Sports & Cultural Centre.

# Addendum 1

## Vermilion River Stewardship

### EXECUTIVE REPORT

April 2012

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#### Report from Chair

#### Presentations:

- **19 January 2012 – Presentation to NDCA Board** - Lesley Flowers attended with me. The Board made comments as follows:
  - Looking forward to working with VRS to help improve water quality
  - **“With reference to drinking water sources, the Clean Water Act and the Regulations of the Act are clear; the Greater Sudbury Source Protection Committee, the Source Protection Authority and our staff are bound by the Act and its Regulations. Notwithstanding this I know that all of us, staff, Source Protection Committee, Chair Nels Conroy and the Source Protection Authority, which I Chair, recognize the need to address the drinking water sources of all residents of the Greater Sudbury Source Protection Area and have and will continue to advocate that this issue be addressed. In collaboration with your organization and like-minded citizens and partners a solution will be found. We look forward to your continued support, collaboration and advocacy in this regard.”**
  - Regarding Vale Public Water Intake at Cascade Falls - NDCA does have authority under Section 28(1) of the Conservation Authorities Act: “cannot restrict, regulate or interfere with the use of drinking water”. NDCA will address the issue when the developer has provided more information.
  - Xeneca will at some point have to gain approval from NDCA
  - NDCA will provide a detailed response to our letter dated 4 January 2012 as soon as they have consulted with the City Waste Water staff
- **23 January 2012 – [Presentation to City Council, re Official Plan](#) – Recognizing Vermilion River as a Natural Heritage Feature**
- **13 February 2012 – Presentation to Aboriginal Studies Class, at Laurentian University**
- **21 March 2012 – Presentation to Sudbury Game & Fish Protective Assoc., Loughheed Centre**

#### Meetings:

- 12 January 2012 – Attended Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
- 18 January 2012 - Attended Lake Advisory Panel Meeting – **Toured Kelly Lake WWTF**
- 9 February 2012 – Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
- 16 February 2012 – Attended Lake Advisory Planning Committee
- **21 February 2012 – Gateway Project – Knowledge Mobilization Workshop**
  - Lesley, Al Stanley and I attended
  - Well attended by organizations interested in finding local solutions to Climate Change
  - Developing a Community Climate Change Adaptation Plan and potential next steps

- A good opportunity to talk about our issues and connect with others
- 22 February 2012 – Attended Stakeholder Consultation Meeting on Early Engagement on the Protection and Recovery of Lake Sturgeon and Polar Bear
- **22 February 2012 – VRS Stakeholders’ Advisory Committee Meeting**
  - Attended first meeting – largely consisted of a presentation by Mark Holmes, Xeneca.
  - Nothing new – displayed outdated dam location with no site specific details
  - Focusing on Wabagishik Rapids – upper three proposals are on a back burner for now
- **1 March 2012 – Fielding Road Industrial Park (FRIP) Water & Wastewater – Municipal Class EA**
  - FRIP is important for business development in City of Sudbury – allows for growth
  - 5 Options offered
  - Project in initial stages – no construction dates forecasted
  - Information from PIC will be used to determine final plan.
  - Another PIC will be held, then a 30 day review & comment period.
  - Good planning for future growth – most environmentally friendly option is preferred
- **5 March 2012 – Meeting with Jacques Barbeau & Mark Simioni**
  - Reported on status of Hydroelectric Proposals
  - Confirmed City ownership of land surrounding proposed dam site At Soo Crossing
  - City has not given permission for use of this site
- **9 March 2012 – Strategic Planning Committee Meeting**
- **14 March 2012 – Strategic Planning Committee Meeting**
- **19 March 2012 – GSWA AGM – helped organize and run – full GSWA Board elected.**
- **28 March 2012 - Our Community, Our Climate**, Science North - an evening of discussion about our changing climate, from a Sudbury perspective. Sheri attended on behalf of VRS & made the following report:
  - Brought some attention to some of the issues with regards to Waste Water Treatment, the hydroelectric dams, and reducing the impact of development in the watershed.
  - Only 3 groups representing the water
  - Made contacts to help us out with our project:
    - Sustainable Earth Club for the possibility of finding a student; and
    - Sudbury Horticultural Society for finding species at risk at proposed dam sites
  - Spoke with Nick Benkovich –
    - No new information with regards to tertiary treatment
    - Will be going forward with it and probably be using a filtering system
    - They have hired on another bylaw officer, but didn't sound like they would be working on disconnecting the down spouts
    - Nick’s priorities are infractions relating to the disposing of oil, antifreeze and such into the storm sewers.
    - They are working on publicizing the new septic tank by law.

#### **Correspondence:**

- 19 January 2012 - VRS to Ministry of Government Services – Not-for-Profit status corrected
- 19 January – Walden-Can to Linda Heron, VRS – Invitation to be a speaker at the April 21, 2012, Environmental Conference, Lively
- 15 February 2012 – Fielding Road Industrial Area Water & Wastewater – Notice of PIC, 1 March 2012, TM Davies Community Centre, Lively
- **22 February 2012 – VRS to Green Space Advisory Committee – Citizen Appointment Application**

- Franco Mariotti invited my application
- **24 February – [NDCA to VRS – Watershed Stewardship Collaboration Opportunities](#):**
  - Thank you for the presentation
  - Invitation to collaborate on water quality issues
  - Collaborate to resolve issues set out in January 2012 VRS letter & presentation
  - Plan a water group consortium to discuss challenges & solutions to water quality issues
- **1 March 2012 – [VRS to Neil Hutchinson, Hutchinson Environmental Sciences Ltd.](#)**
  - Requested northern arm of Vermilion River at Cascade Falls, Grassy Lake & Ella Lake all be included in Spring Lake Water Quality Model sampling
  - This study is extensive in scope and takes place once every 5 years
  - Vermilion has historically been left out – Vermilion & Kusk Lakes have been included
  - Rivers are only corridors & not normally considered in this Model
  - It appears that Grassy & Ella Lakes will be included – not confirmed yet
- **22 March 2012 – [Sudbury Game & Fish Protective Association – Thank you letter.](#)**