

Minutes

Vermilion River Stewardship

Tuesday, March 26, 2013

7:00-9:30 pm

379 Ronka Road

Present: Linda Heron, Terry Little, Ron Basso, Marc Samson, John Healy, Dan Whalen, Richard Austin, Jim Pomerleau, Ann Pomerleau

1. Adoption of Agenda:

Moved by Ron basso

Seconded by Marc Samson

Adopted

2. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting

• **January 9, 2013**

Moved by Terry Little

Seconded by Dan Whalen

Adopted

• **December 11, 2012**

Moved by Marc Samson

Seconded by Ron Basso

Adopted

3. Reports

• **Executive Report – Attached as Addendum 1 – Highlights below**

- a) Linda met with Jacques Barbeau on Feb. 21st. Jacques stated that he is close to bringing a motion before council to oppose hydroelectric development on the Vermilion - similar to that passed by Nairn (see June/12 minutes)
- b) Linda attended an information presentation for the Cedar Rapids run of river dam project (700KW) on the Vermilion near Caprol. It is in the very early stages (no FIT contract) and in the hands of a responsible developer (Waterpower Group)
- c) Met with SHE group opposed to Cliff's development who have missed deadlines to comment on the EA
- d) On March 18th Linda and Jim Rook of the ORA met with Paul Norris of the Ontario Waterpower Association which represents waterpower developers. ORA is working on a letter requesting amendments to the class EA for waterpower to address sustainability, cumulative effects, precautionary principal, definitions for modified run of river dams and dam decommissioning. The amendment would also allow better opportunities for public and First Nation consultation plus increased time for comments and document availability. Ecojustice is reviewing the letter. ORA must first consult with Paul Norris and if he is not on board, the next step would be to make the request directly to the Minister of the Environment.

- **Correspondence:**
 - a) GSAP sent a letter to the city requesting that the island opposite Centennial Park be protected from development. The island is currently proposed to be the site of the generating station for the At Soo Crossing Xeneca hydroelectric dam. The island is currently owned by Vale.
 - b) ORA commented disapproving of the plans to move the MNR's approvals process (ERB #011-7669) from a local perspective to a regional thus weakening MNR's effectiveness.
 - c) Cliff's responded to VRS comments

- **Finance**

The general account has \$403 after paying \$300 for the hall rental and food for the Trillium announcement plus \$150 for the Wabagishik film and \$100 for our ORA membership. The Trillium account is on track with \$26,485 remaining after spending \$2898 on office equipment (mainly computing) and \$918 on insurance.

- **Lower Vermilion Source Water Quality Monitoring Project**

Conservation Sudbury will be sampling 7 sites (42 samples) that VRS was planning to sample. As well Dr Kirkwood has offered to do the phytoplankton analysis – free of charge (except for shipping and a small amount for chemicals to process sample). As a result there are fewer analyses required for the project and money (\$4000) may be available for the silt sampling that was originally requested to be done by Xeneca.

Linda acquired the 1989 MOE silt sample result from Brad Bowman and Jan Linqvist. A series of three samples had been taken from a deep water site on Wabagishik Lake. Several heavy metals were way over the provincial sediment quality guidelines, into the Severe Effect Level (SEL) - nickel 20X, arsenic 2X, copper 5X, lead, cadmium, iron, manganese and zinc. The SEL is defined as: *At this level, the sediment is considered heavily polluted and likely to affect the health of sediment-dwelling organisms. If the level of contamination exceeds the SEL then testing is required to determine whether or not the sediment is acutely toxic. At the SEL, a management plan may be required. The plan may include controlling the source of the contamination and removing the sediment.*

Sampling will begin in mid-May and there will be another meeting with Conservation Sudbury and the Strategic Committee on April 9th, when Al Stanley returns.

John Healy moved that if there is funding available from the Trillium grant, that three silt samples be taken - one at Wabagishik Lake, one below Cascade Falls and one at Simon Lake. Seconded by Ron Basso.

Motion Adopted

- **Film Committee**

Laurier Falldien, Mayor of Nairn Centre, worked with John Hartman of Icedrum Media to condense the Wabagishik video down to 13 minutes. The film is very to the point and faster paced. It will be put on YouTube shortly.

4. **New Business**

- Membership – Linda will send out an email detailing the amount, methods and due date for paying membership dues.

Action Item

- Blue-green Algae on Ella Lake. Dan Whalen reported that water levels on Ella Lake have been high in the past few years possibly due to lowering of the amount of power being generated at Lorne Falls or work on the dam. This has resulted in weed growth in the channel connecting the Vermilion to Ella Lake. This year blue-green algae was confirmed in ice fishing holes in February, and on trapped beaver fur. The blue-green algae was first detected in November of 2012, and still persists today. Dan brought two bottles of lake water that were full of green algae for Linda.

Linda will send the samples to Dr. Kirkwood for species identification.

Action Item

- Lloyd Rowe, a fisheries biologist with Manitoba MNR contacted Linda and had a look at Xeneca's draft ER for Wabagishik. He said that the proposed relocation (compensating) of the Walleye spawning bed (fishery) below the proposed dam to a spot on the Spanish River is within guidelines.
- Dan Whalen reported that there may be problems with connecting the Wabagishik dam project to the grid.
- Jim Pomerleau takes a water sample every year for the provincial water quality monitoring project in front of his camp on Ella Lake. He will give the address to Linda.

Action Item

- Signage on Ella and Wabagishik Lakes for Blue-green Algae. Letters have been written to the Medical Officer of Health to request three signs to be installed at the public access points.
- Fundraising. Marc Samson moved that Linda design and Terry print a card that could be handed out in order to solicit membership in the VRS. Seconded by John Healy.

Motion Adopted

- On April 13th a Zone 10 fisheries meeting will be attended by Linda and John where Xeneca will be outlining plans for relocating the fishery affected by the Wabagishik dam.

Action Item

- Motion to adjourn by John Healy

Next Meeting: Wednesday May 8th, at the Beaver Lake Sports & Cultural Centre

Vermilion River Stewardship

EXECUTIVE REPORT

26 March 2013

Report from Chair

Meetings:

- **18 December 2012 – Ken Cain, Renewable Energy Policy Manager**
- **7 January 2013 – Brad Bowman & Jan Lenquist**
 - Offered advice on Lower Vermilion Water Quality Study
 - Has results of silt sampling on Wabagishik
 - Samples need to be “interpreted”
- **9 January 2013 – VRS Trillium Announcement**
- **14 January 2013 – Strategic Planning Committee & Conservation Sudbury**
- **15 January 2013 – Met with Peter Tabuns, NDP Energy Critic & Mike Schreiner, Green Party Leader, in Toronto**
 - Peter Tabuns made no promises, but was supportive
 - Is determined to get rid of nuclear, so unfortunately hydro will be even more important in the energy mix
 - Mike Schreiner offered to introduce us to an influential circle of environmental groups in Toronto – will take him up on that when time permits
- **17 January 2013 – GSAP – At Soo Crossing letter approved in principal – few minor changes**
- **21 January 2013 – GSWA Board Meeting**
- **28 January 2013 – Strategic Planning Committee & Conservation Sudbury**
- **6 February 2013 – Waterpower Group – Presentation of proposed hydroelectric generation station, Cedar Rapids, Vermilion River – Capreol**
 - No FIT Contract yet, and won't until it opens to over 500 kwh
 - Councillor Dave Kilgour is very much behind this project
 - Most likely true run-of-river
- **13 February 2013 – Strategic Planning Committee & Conservation Sudbury**
- **20 February 2013 – Strategic Planning Committee & Conservation Sudbury**
- **20 February 2013 – GSAP – Letter regarding At Soo Crossing has gone out to City**
- **21 February 2013 – Jacques Barbeau**
 - Working on Motion – very close
 - Will follow-up on GSAP letter to City
- **26 February 2013 – Rethink Green – Planning for Spring Gathering**
- **27 February 2013 – Met with SHE Group, Re: Cliffs**

- 8 March 2013 – Science Unmuzzled, Living with Lakes Centre
- 18 March 2013 – Paul Norris, Ontario Waterpower Association
- 22 March 2013 – Conservation Sudbury – Clean Water Act (CWA)
 - Discussed protection for private intakes under the CWA

Correspondence:

- 4 December 2012 – ORA Comments – EBR #011-7540, [Framework for Modernizing MNRs Approach to Natural Resources Management](#)
- 21 January 2013 – ORA Comments – EBR #011-7669, [MNR's Modernization of Approvals Initiative – Public Lands Act](#)
- 29 January 2013 – Cliffs Natural Resources to VRS, Re: [Response to VRS Comments on Amended Terms of Reference for Cliffs Chromite Project](#)
- 7 February 2013 – ORA to Premier-Designate, Kathleen Wynne, Re: [Arnold Chan's Appointment to Wynne's Transition Team](#)
- 25 February 2013 – ORA Comments – EBR 011-7696, [Proposed Amendment to Endangered Species Act](#)
- 16 March 2013 – VRS to Dr. Arlene King, Re: [Signage Warning of Toxic Blue-green Algae](#)

Media Coverage:

- 25 February 2013 – Points North, CBC Radio – [Blue-green Algae spotted in Sudbury Lake](#)
- 25 February 2013 – Northern Life – [Blue-green Algae bloom reported on Ella Lake](#)
- 26 February 2013 – Sudbury Star – [Blue-green Algae befouls Ella Lake](#)
- 9 March 2013 – [CBC Radio-Canada, News](#)
- 19 March 2013 – Sault This Week – [Wintertime blue-green algae raise alarm](#)

Linda Heron