

PIAG CONFERENCE CALL - MINUTES

12/3/10

1. Welcome and roll call.

Present from PIAG: Dave Powers, Jim Bruce, Jeff Vito, David Irish, Kay Felt, Bill Hryb, Roger Smithe, Ken Higgs, Dick Hibma, Doug Cuddy, Jim Anderson, Frank Ettawageshik, John Jackson

Present from Study: Syed Moin, Gene Stakhiv, John Nevin, Tara Buchanan

2. Comments regarding Minutes from 10-27-10 meeting in Thunder Bay, ON.

The minutes were circulated to PIAG members on November 16, and members were asked to respond by November 19. No comments were received and they were posted on the website the following week. Members were asked again if there were any comments and there were none. Bill Hryb asked whether the minutes from Muskegon were available and John Nevin said that they will be available soon. **Action: John Nevin to complete the Muskegon minutes and circulate to the group.**

3. Status of restoration options.

The Study Board will be producing a technical report on restoration options for the upper Great Lakes at the request of the Commission. The depth of the report is to be at the 'exploratory level' as the Board has limited resources to do this, and it was not in the original mandate. Producing the report is cost effective as most of the data used for the report will be taken from previous data and reports. The technical report will consist of long and short term impacts of lake level restoration with various possible scenarios. Jacob Bruxer is producing a report focusing on structures and Bill Werick is conducting an analysis looking at the impacts of various scenarios both of which will be incorporated into the final technical report.

The Board is considering various options for public consultation concerning this report. For example, the Board was concerned that Restoration would become the public's sole focus if the discussion of the Restoration and Superior Regulation were combined at public meetings taking place in July-August 2011. The Board has discussed other methods of getting public feedback efficiently without overshadowing the Lake Superior Regulation public meetings (i.e.- de-coupling the two topics). In response to the question "How can we have public consultation on the Restoration report in a way that provides timely feedback to the Commission with the public's opinion, without overshadowing the Lake Superior Regulation report?", the Board proposed to have PIAG members reach out to their respective organizations and stakeholders for distribution and internal discussions, instead of undertaking formal public meetings on the report. PIAG would receive a summary Restoration report from the Board in April-May 2011, then they would have May and June 2011 to discuss these results with their respective organizations in the form of meetings or workshops. Although this was the proposal to PIAG, the co-chairs have only committed PIAG to provide their own feedback to the Commission on the Restoration report.

There was much concern about this proposed plan among PIAG members. Comments included:

-it's unfair to put such a burden on PIAG without providing additional resources so it can be done well;
-it would be helpful if we didn't have to do them both in the same time frame, i.e. could we potentially get public input regarding restoration after the Lake Superior Regulation consultation?
-if we come out with restoration first, it will dominate the Superior Regulation public meetings
-people will want to talk about restoration, not regulation and this could create some confusion
-the public is becoming aware so it may be hard to do the Superior Regulation public meetings without the public asking the status of Restoration report
-need to understand it better
-some members aren't affiliated with groups so it would be difficult to use this strategy
-call it 'input' or 'comments' from PIAG, don't call it 'consultations' or 'communication'

Some PIAG members had questions regarding this potential strategy. The questions and answers are as follows:

Would we have the resources to do this?

There would be no new budgets allocated for this.

If the water is not there then what is the point in developing this report? The water supply will determine what we can or cannot do.

These restoration studies will reveal the answer on restoration for both high and low water level scenarios using the indicators that most TWGs have already developed.

Could we do the Restoration public outreach after the Superior Regulation public meetings?

This could be proposed to the Commission as an option, however the Study Directors don't believe that the Study funding timeframe would allow for this.

Is the Commission expecting PIAG to promote restoration options?

No.

Could the Commission hold Restoration meetings?

The Commission will be holding public hearings when the Study is complete.

What is meant by an 'exploratory level'?

Less time and resources are being used for this piece than the Lake Superior Regulation report. Much of the data used for this report was obtained through previous work and reports already produced by the board or previous studies. We are doing a technical review and analysis, looking at structures already proposed and studied under earlier References and assessing potential impacts. We're doing 1st order simulation. This gives a good picture but with less detail than hydraulic models. It is a solid piece of work from a technical point of view.

How far ahead will the analysis be by the PIAG meeting February?

The analysis will be further along than it is now however some models are still being refined and may not be ready.

Conclusion:

- I. PIAG agreed to provide their feedback to the Commission on the Restoration report and to re-visit the public input issue at the PIAG meeting in February.
- II. **Action:** PIAG recommended that John Nevin and Jeff Kart prepare a report consisting of various public input/consultation options to be distributed to PIAG a week in advance of the February meeting. At this point, PIAG will re-visit the original proposal and other potential options.

III. **Action:** Jim Bruce and Dave Powers will provide a note to the Commission with the highlights from this discussion.

4. Upcoming meetings:

Windsor, Feb 24-25, 2011

PIAG will hold their next meeting in Windsor at the Hilton Windsor, Feb 24-25, 2011. February 24 will be a full day meeting with the Study Board, and February 25 will be PIAG only meeting, expecting to adjourn between 2:30-3pm.

Washington, Apr 13-14, 2011

PIAG's second meeting in 2011 will be held at the Embassy Suites in Washington DC, April 13 (beginning at noon)- April 14 (concluding at noon), 2011. PIAG will be invited to the IJC's Semi-Annual Reception at the State Department on the evening of April 13.

Passport numbers will be requested in order to get clearance to attend the Reception.

5. Other issues

US travel

US security has recently been increased and so US travelers will have to take a 1 hour web based travel course to be able to submit their claims. A link will be sent out to all US travelers. The security number received when the course is complete must be provided to Gene's office.

Other business

Ted has 4 month assignment as Secretary of the IJC. Syed will be the Acting Director for at least 4 months. Wendy Leger is expected to fill in for Syed, pending Commission approval.