

Meeting Minutes

Saskatchewan River Sturgeon Management Board

April 7, 2016

Lathlin Room, Kikiwak Inn – The Pas, MB

11.00 – 4.00

Attendees:

Omar Constant, Opaskwayak Cree Nation

Marcy Bast, SaskPower

Stephanie Backhouse, Manitoba Hydro

Ron Campbell, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship

William Chaboyer, Cumberland House Fishermen's Co-Op

Gary Carriere, Cumberland House Fishermen's Co-Op

1. Opening prayer - Gary
2. Introductions of members
3. Discussion of adult index fishing for 2016

There is recognition of the need to standardize the methods used by MB and SK by all parties on the board, but there are logistical issues in CH, as the fisherman are not happy with limiting the number of people that have the opportunity, and it is difficult to provide employment to as many people and still maintain a standardized approach.

MB – Ron indicated the approach will be the same as in previous years. OCN requested implementing a more structured process in hiring the people doing the index netting, including preparation of a job description/required qualifications that can be circulated. This is important, in order to establish a transparent process to make opportunities fair between people and demonstrate accountability. This also provides an opportunity for youth to express interest and become involved.

ACTION: Ron C. to develop job description with criteria (soon!), and circulate by email prior to hiring this spring. Omar will post the job description within OCN, and people hired to do the work will be selected from those that express interest (based on qualifications).

SK – CH discussed the issues with using standardized methodology that doesn't provide employment opportunities to all the fishermen, and suggested potential ways to involve more people (tagging, split the catch between \$/lb and salaried individuals fishing in specific areas). Discussion about the differences between the SK and MB approach, makes the data non-comparable. Omar emphasized the need to have similar data between both provinces (requires standardized approach). Recognizes the pressure of fisherman, but need to act together as SRSMB. Upcoming year sampling in CH will continue using the \$/lb approach, but Gary and William will continue to discuss the need for standardized sampling, and SRSMB will aim to implement during the next (after 2016) sampling period. Weigh masters within the community will keep track of the fish, stop the fishery when quota is reached, and send invoices to Marcy. Also discussed what net

sizes were being used – SK uses 10-12” nets as regulated by the province, while MB uses index nets with 5,8,10,12” mesh panels to target fish across a wide size range.

ACTION: Marcy will put together a “job description”, and Gary will provide a list of names of people who will be involved in the spring sampling

ACTION: Marcy to look into obtaining a scientific permit and index nets for CH to use in the 2018 adult index netting (assuming 2017 is juvenile netting).

ACTION: Gary to discuss with CH the need to use standardized methods for index netting, and that these will be introduced in the 2018 adult index netting (assuming 2017 is juvenile netting). Gary to invite Ron to come and speak to CH about the importance of the standardized methodology (Omar indicated he is interested in participating in discussion as well).

Discussion of additional sources of funding, perhaps from CEAR, SARA HSP program or AFSAR?
Discuss further at next meeting.

Discussion on ways to implement our management plan – decided that our November meeting would be extended to 2 days, to allow a fulsome discussion on the management plan, ways to implement the strategies identified in the plan, and next steps moving forward.

Marcy – need to define objectives of SRSB work – doing juvenile work caused problems because community members were not paid to do index netting. There was recognition of the limited funds currently available to the board, and that doing some of the other strategies identified in the management plan would reduce the amount available for the adult index netting.

Omar suggested that OCN (Mary Head) may be able to provide support in grant writing. Additional discussion around managing the workload of people on the board if we start taking on many more active projects, as well as familiarizing new provincial staff with the work when Ron C. retires. Ron C. and OCN expressed a wish for OCN to eventually take ownership of the index netting program.

ACTION – November meeting will be a 2 day meeting to re-visit the management plan and develop a plan of action. Everyone to come to the meeting prepared to discuss the management plan moving forward.

4. Invasive aquatic species – zebra mussels update (Ron C.)

Zebra Mussel containment program’s top priority is to sever the vectors of movement from infested waters to other water bodies in Manitoba. Currently, known zebra mussel infested waters include the Red River, Lake Winnipeg, and Cedar Lake. The containment program has approval for 25 FT staff to run 5 control stations with decontamination units (located at The Pas, Grand Rapids, Eriksdale, Hwy 59, Headingly), and 5 control stations without decontamination units (move around between Fairford, , Hwy 44, Wabowden, Hwy 1 Est @ Deacon’s Corner, Pine Falls, Ontario , border, Swan River). Control stations will inspect and educate people travelling with watercraft, and will disinfect with hot water at locations with decontamination units.

5. Management Plan – what other areas should we be working on? – tabled for discussion at November meeting.

6. Discussion of interest from other groups to join or observe the SRSMB (Grand Rapids etc.)

In January, Heidi Cook, a councilor with Misipawistik Cree Nation (Grand Rapids) emailed Ron Campbell to ask about observing a SRSMB meeting, as well as considering joining the board in the future. The possibility of inviting MCN to observe a meeting was discussed, and it was decided that, while the SRSMB meetings still contain a lot of discussion and we aren't always on a smooth path, it was healthy discussion, and would be useful for other groups to be aware of. Communication and education is also a strategy included in our management plan. The discussion ended by deciding that we would try to find out the interests of MCN, and may follow up with an invitation to the business part of our November meeting (day 1). There was some discussion as to whether the group would be open to MCN joining the board, and the initial thoughts seemed to be that MCN was outside of the study area and don't fish on the SK river.

ACTION: Ron C. to get in touch with Heidi Cook, and circulate her reply to the group via email.

7. Other business

- a) Update on Kischi Sipi Namao Committee (finalizing stewardship plan and workplan, with an emphasis on education, outreach and youth involvement); Nelson River Sturgeon Board (continuing to run a spawn camp at Landing River, stock at Sea Falls, Nelson House, research at Sea Falls demonstrating great success of stocked yearlings)
- b) Gary has been in touch with a researcher from the University of Saskatchewan (Tim), who is taking sturgeon tissue samples for mercury analysis in the SK side of the river, and is willing to sample on the MB side as well

ACTION: Gary will coordinate with Tim, and pass details onto Ron to coordinate sampling in MB.

- c) Gary recommended all board members watch the Movie "DamNation" prior to the next board meeting.

<http://damnationfilm.com/>

8. Next meeting – fall in Prince Albert, SK

November 1-2, 2016. First day to cover normal business, 2nd day to review Mgmt plan.

9. Closing prayer

10. Adjourn ~2:30