

Saskatchewan River Sturgeon Management Board

November 17, 2015 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

McIntosh Building – Prince Albert, SK

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Omar Constant, Opaskwayak Cree Nation

Diane Ballantyne, Opaskwayak Cree Nation Resource Council

Stephanie Backhouse, Manitoba Hydro

Ron Hlasny, Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment

Marcy Bast, SaskPower

Ron Campbell, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship (by phone)

1. Opening prayer - Diane
2. Introductions
3. Juvenile assessment program 2015

More fish on the SK side, and about 149 fish caught. On the MB side, (Malcolm) they were good with the work being done, worked with Henry for a week, and they were happy with how things went. Good representation of sizes and no big ages missing. Stan Turner also commented on the week he worked with Travis. Travis had a chance to learn from the work and gain experience. There are photos that will be included in the final report. The NSC consultant was happy to be catching fish, and the assistants were glad to see that. Why income tax taken from their fees and payment?

ACTION: Marcy to find out and get back to Diane.

Some discussion about getting students and the interested public out to observe. Need funds made available for gas to get them involved.

ACTION: the budget for the juvenile work in 2017 will include that, and also accommodation of some discussion on-site with students about the netting work while they are on the river.

Do an alternation of experienced elders. Omar notes that there is concern from OCN about some members. OCN has red flags on some people who aren't sustainable and ethical with their fishing. Diane requested a listing of the existing commercial fishers within OCN.

Some discussion about the adult fishing, each fisher gets 50 km each of the 250 km area between Cedar Lake and Barrier.

ACTION: clarify with NSC, there appears to be 10 fish reported to be caught in MB, but if the gillnet locations are correct for 16, 17, and 19, those are actually in SK. Double check 14, 15, 17 and 18 and ensure that they are mapped correctly and reported in the correct province (Figure 3).

Additional discussion regarding the adult and juvenile programs, can MB also be catching some smaller fish in the MB side, but may not be useful collecting juveniles in the spring. There is difficulty in getting the protocols the same for adult surveys. Need to standardize our methods between provinces.

Ron comments that only 1 YOY was caught in MB.

Diane noted that OCN fishers thought it was too late to be catching the fish that were targeted. For 2017 fishing should be 2nd week of September.

Spring meeting will need to start looking at other priorities of the board and other activities.

ACTION: Marcy will draft a letter for people to review. The letter will request regular involvement and attendance by CHouse and stress the importance of their involvement. Marcy and Ron H. will work on getting the protocol ready for next year.

ACTION: Ron H. will get a list of active fishermen from CHouse to Diane.

4. Invasive aquatic species – Ron C. update

ACTION: Ron will send a copy of his ZM presentation to Marcy to forward to everyone. ZM live up to 5 years and reproduce every year up to a million eggs per year. Free swimming larvae (veligers) are transported by water current, and they settle in 2 weeks to substrate where they develop into adults. ZM have been found in Lake Winnipeg, and are moving north towards Grand Rapids. 4000 inspections and surveys have been done in MB this year, 250 decontaminations as of September. 10 lakes in the Pas area have been sampled, but results are not in. Includes, Clearwater, Rocky, Athapap, Cranberry, Reed, Iskwasum, Cedar Lake. The veliger found in Cedar was likely transported by boat from Lake Winnipeg. ZM habitat is limited by calcium, and most lakes in MB are conducive to their growth and infestation. ZM impact the habitat, increasing water clarity, increase in aquatic vegetation and toxic levels of algae blooms. Shifts food web, decline in Lake Whitefish and Walleye populations. Kills native mussel populations, and declined recreational potential by fouling of dead mussels. They clog intake structures and foul rocky substrates and spawning habitats for walleye and other species.

5. Adult population assessment program 2016 – noted above, actions etc.

6. Other business

Website - **ACTION:** Stephanie will get ZM presentation posted on website.

Grand Rapids hatchery has renovated the visitor centre, and wants information on all the sturgeon boards to insert pictures and information. Stephanie will compile information from the website and incorporate it at the visitor centre in Grand Rapids. Diane has notified the board that Raymond is not well, and will not be able to participate in the board any longer. The group will compile a card and gift for him in appreciation of his involvement.

7. Next meeting - spring in the Pas, MB – **April 7, 2016.**

8. Closing prayer – Omar

9. Adjourn