

## Saskatchewan River Sturgeon Management Board Meeting

April 5, 2018

10:00 AM – 4:00 AM

Victoria Inn, Flin Flon, Manitoba

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

### In attendance

Ian Kitch, Manitoba Sustainable Development

Ron Campbell, Manitoba Sustainable Development

Gary Carriere, Cumberland House Fishermen's Co op

Irvin Constant, Opaskwayak Commercial Fishermen's Co op

Diane Ballantyne, Opaskwayak Cree Nation

Marcy Bast, SaskPower

Marilynn Kullman, Manitoba Hydro

1. Opening Prayer – Irvin Constant
2. Introductions
3. Reviewed and accepted the minutes from the last meeting
4. Reviewed the agenda
5. Membership: changes and updates
  - Manitoba – Ron C
    - Irvin Constant from the Opaskwayak Commercial Fishermen's Co op in attendance, and he would be a good addition to the board.
    - This will be Marilyn's last meeting, Stephanie Backhouse will be the new representative from Manitoba Hydro
  - Saskatchewan – Marcy B
    - The board would like to have consistent representation from Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
    - Gary Carriere suggested that we should try to invite someone from CHCN leadership, but if not then continue to have William Chaboyer represent CHCN
6. Review of action items and minutes from the Nov 2, 2017 meeting
  - Item 6 – Marilyn/Diane Youth Activities & Poster
    - Marilyn shared the poster that she put together with Diane
    - Marilyn shared the youth activity "Be a Sturgeon Biologist" with the group; the activity will be left with Diane to use at events where she can set up a SRSMB booth to discuss sturgeon with community members and the public
    - ACTION: Marilyn will send the poster file to Ian with and without the OCN logo; Ian will put up in different communities
    - ACTION: Diane will work on having the English translated into Cree; Diane will send the Cree translation to Marilyn to include in the poster.

## 7. Discussion of proposed sturgeon work for 2018

- Saskatchewan
  - Saskatchewan will complete adult index netting this year (in June), continuing with the methods used in the past (which is not consistent with how Manitoba completes the index netting)
  - We will need to consider when we would want to analyze the data again
  - ACTION: Discuss analysis of data at the fall meeting.
  - Gary noted that they have an AFSAR proposal in with DFO. The project is with Dr. Tim Jardine (U of S) and will restore three river mouths. They are anticipating that the proposal will be approved and the work would be completed over two years; including removing debris from the river mouths (year 1) and monitoring Lake Sturgeon abundance (year 1 and year 2).
- Manitoba
  - Manitoba Sustainable Development is planning on completing adult index netting
    - Hoping to hire four individuals to help with the netting
    - ACTION: Diane will send Ron names of a few people that would be able to do the work
    - ACTION: Ron to send Marilyn a proposed budget for the adult index netting work
  - Manitoba Sustainable Development is hoping to complete a telemetry study this year through the MOU with Manitoba Hydro
    - Ian was hoping to combine the field work for the telemetry study with the adult index netting program, which would bring the total telemetry project cost to \$15,000
    - Telemetry study proposal includes tagging approximately 20 sturgeon from The Pas upstream towards the border and will install 5 receivers over 200 km
    - There hasn't been telemetry work done since 1990s, an update would be helpful since the population is different now than it was back then
    - Diane asked whether there would be an opportunity to involve youth (grade 11/12 students)

## 8. Other 2018 activities

- Ian and Diane have been working on completing an application for funds thru the Fisheries and Wildlife Enhancement Fund (FWEF) to employ a student to work with Ron on sturgeon, CAMP, index netting, and education projects. Ian and Ron also partnered with UCN out of The Pas to have a second student for the summer.
- A researcher from Nova Scotia that has been doing work in the Delta area contacted Gary to express concern over the potential for saltwater intrusion. The researcher explained that there is a thick layer of salt under the Pasquia Hills and there is potential for this to be released into the Delta. Gary passed on the information to the University

of Saskatchewan and they are planning on doing some water sampling on the south side of the Delta this summer to monitor the concentration of salt.

- AIS update – Ian Kitch
  - MSD will be sampling waterbodies again this year in the northwest region; they will be setting out substrate samplers and will be doing veliger sampling; will be able to get a student involved with this as well.
  - In the process of a competition to hire watercraft inspectors that will be stationed at Grand Rapids, Swan River, and The Pas in the northwest region. The decontamination stations will be operational from early May to early October. It has been challenging to hire people for the work. Ron will send the job advertisement to Diane to circulate further within OCN.
- Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment is planning to continue sample for AIS; to this point they have had no samples showing the presence of Zebra Mussels
- For 2019, we would potentially be completing another year of juvenile inventories. The plan was to pass on the field work to the communities and not hire a consultant to lead the field work. This may work well with OCN in 2019 since there has been good consistency in field workers over the past two juvenile studies (2015 & 2017) but it may take another season (2019) before the field workers from CHCN would be able to complete the field work without the help of a consultant. There may be value in continuing to engage a consultant to complete aging, data analysis and reporting.

#### 9. Budgets

- SaskPower: \$20,000 for this year
- Manitoba Hydro: \$20,000 for this year for index netting, plus meeting costs. There may be additional budget available for public outreach type activities but we can discuss these projects/budgets as they come up.

#### 10. Other Issues

- Irvin stated that the sturgeon needs to be protected because it's a major consumption fish that is very interesting to many band members. Commercial fishers are reporting that they are catching sturgeon daily in Cedar Lake.
- Gary stated that we have no information on Tobin Lake reservoir and that the sturgeon are not as big as they used to be. SaskPower hasn't done any adult netting there but they have done some sturgeon spawning work, and there are juvenile sturgeon present. There hasn't been anything done to look at the health of the fishery. It may be possible that there are larger fish up there because they are not getting the same fishing pressure; Marcy can ask Ron Hlasny if they are including sturgeon in their netting program this year.

#### 11. Next Meeting

- Thursday December 6, 2018 in Prince Albert chaired by Gary Carriere

12. Closing Prayer

13. Meeting Adjourned