

# INTERNATIONAL LAKE SUPERIOR BOARD OF CONTROL

## Minutes of the March 19, 2008 meeting

The International Lake Superior Board of Control met on March 19, 2008 in the Radisson Hotel, Rochester New York. Colonel Drolet convened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. The attendees were:

### United States

COL J. Drolet, Alt. Member

Mr. J. Kangas

LTC W. Leady

Mr. S. Thieme, Alt.

Mr. D. Sawruk

Ms. M. Kropfreiter

### Board Members

### Secretaries

### Regulation Representatives

### Associates

### Canada

Mr. D. Fay

Mr. R. Caldwell

Mr. R. Caldwell

Mr. J. DeLuzio

Mr. R. Stefano

#### Item 1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as issued (encl 1).

#### Item 2. Update on Hydrologic Conditions and Regulation

LTC Leady updated the Board on hydrologic conditions for lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron, and Erie, and provided slides of recent net basin water supplies, levels (observed and forecasted), and Lakes Superior/Michigan-Huron water balance parameters.

- Water supplies to the Lake Superior basin in the past 6 months were above average; with October supplies setting a new record high. Apparent new record high amounts of precipitation were received in September and October on the Lake Superior basin. Evaporation is estimated to have been slightly below average the past 6 months. Water supplies to the Lakes Michigan-Huron basin in the past six months were extremely variable. Provisional supplies in November were slightly less than the previous record low amount, while provisional supplies in January set a new record high. Evaporation is estimated to have been slightly below average the past 6 months.
- Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron levels are well below average, with Lake Superior continuing in its longest period of below-average levels (since April 1998) and Michigan-Huron in its second-longest period of below-average levels (since January 1999). Lake Superior is about 18 cm (7 in.) higher than last year at this time, while Michigan-Huron levels are about 16 cm (6 in.) lower than last year. Lake Superior monthly mean levels set new record lows in August and September 2007. Lakes Michigan-Huron were 32 to 49 cm (12½ to 19 in.) lower than average.
- Lake Superior outflows were below average from September through March, with Criterion (c) limiting outflows in January, February, and March. Outflows were as

specified by Regulation Plan 1977-A, and the gate setting at the Compensating Works remained equivalent to ½ gate open.

- The Board was presented a range of projected levels for the next 6 months, along with slides showing how levels compare to the previous two years. With average supplies, Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron levels are expected to remain well below average. Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron are not expected to rise above chart datum until early summer with average supplies.
- The 1900-1986 “standardized departure” data as used in Plan 1977-A show that Lakes Superior and Lakes Michigan-Huron are in close balance due to the recent sharp rise in Lake Superior levels.
- Ice covers were more extensive on the Great Lakes this past winter than in the past several years.
- Early- to mid-March snow water equivalent on the Lake Superior basin appears to be significantly above last year.

### Item 3. Update on Long Lac and Ogoki Diversions

Mr. Caldwell reported that Ontario Power Generation (OPG) provided the Board with an update on the discharges of the Long Lac and Ogoki Diversions. The Ogoki Diversion into Lake Nipigon (which flows into Lake Superior) averaged 110.4 m<sup>3</sup>/s (3,900 cfs) during September 2007 - February 2008. The Long Lac Diversion averaged 59.4 m<sup>3</sup>/s (2,100 cfs) for the same period. The total diversion was reported to be 122% of average for September to February. Heavy rains resulted in water being spilled north into the Ogoki River from October through December.

### Item 4. Flow Measurements

4a) Hydropower plants. No measurements were conducted during the reporting period. Mr. Thieme reported that Hatch Acres had been contracted in December to look at the U.S. Government Plant flow reporting issue. The contract is expected to be completed in March 2008. The system operating and flow computing software may need to be reprogrammed. If so, flow measurements may be required in 2008; otherwise, the next flow measurements are scheduled for 2010.

4b). Compensating Works. No flow measurements were conducted during the reporting period and none are expected for the Compensating Works until at least after the completion of the Canadian gate rehabilitation project in 2010.

### Item 5. Hydropower Plant Maintenance

Mr. Sawruk noted that there are no significant maintenance items this year at ESELCO. There will be work in the canal and powerhouse over the next 3 years, but this will not impact their ability to discharge their flow allotment.

LTC Leady reported that Unit 10 of the U.S. Government Plant had a temporary repair to Unit 10's impeller. A contract for a new impeller is expected to be let later this year.

Other routine maintenance was performed during the reporting period, and is expected over the next 6 months, for these two plants, as well as at the Brookfield Power plant. Mr. Stefano reported that Brookfield's 3 units would be taken out of service for maintenance, one at a time during April and May. This is not expected to affect their ability to pass their monthly water allocation since they still have sufficient capacity with the remaining units.

#### Item 6. Compensating Works

6a). Inspections. Routine inspections were conducted over the past 6 months; no major items were found.

6b). Maintenance. New warning signs were installed on the U.S. portion and clearing of the dike was completed. Brookfield Power dewatered, repainted, and repaired 2 of its 8 gates (Gates 3 and 5) of the Compensating Works last summer and fall. Similar work will be done to Gates 4 and 7 in 2008. The nose cones to some of the gates will be repaired while the gates are dewatered.

#### Item 7. Peaking and Ponding Update

The Board noted that the IJC had lowered the threshold level as of October 17, 2007. However, this had no impact on ponding status through the close of the navigation season as ponding would have been restricted on weekends with either threshold level. Mr. Fay reported that the "Bain Report" had been forwarded to the IJC's International Upper Great Lakes Study. Ponding restrictions were lifted after the close of navigation on January 25, 2008.

#### Item 8. 2008 Meeting With the Public

The Board made preliminary plans for its next meeting with the public. It agreed to utilize a telephone call-in method for public participation. The Board briefing will be posted to the web page to allow those calling in to follow the presentation. The meeting was scheduled for June 12 at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

#### Item 9. Review semi-annual progress report

Mr. Kangas led a review of the revised progress report. The Board had several comments and revisions to be incorporated prior to sending the final report to the IJC.

#### Item 10. Other Business

10a). International Upper Great Lakes Study. Mr. Fay and Mr. Thieme reported on the International Upper Great Lakes Study. The initial efforts are concentrated on looking at the St. Clair River issues, with Lake Superior regulation issues to be emphasized later. The St. Clair report is scheduled to be completed in 2009. Public meetings have been scheduled but details have not been released yet.

10b). Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway Study LTC Leady reported that the Supplemental Report is expected to be finalized by the end of FY2008. The St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation has some funds to begin work this fiscal year at the Snell and Eisenhower Locks on the St. Lawrence River.

10c). Status of Lock Replacement. LTC Leady reported that the latest Water Resources Development Act had authorized this project to be at full federal expense. Limited funding this fiscal year will allow some cofferdam design work and completion of the National Environmental Policy Act documentation. Construction could begin in FY2009. The Corps is also planning to spend about \$55 million over the next 6 years to assure the long-term operation of the powerhouses, remaining locks and other facilities.

10d) Board Membership changes. Colonel Drolet noted that he would be sent to Iraq this summer, thereby shortening his association with the Board by one year. BG Berwick will be retiring at the beginning of May. Replacements have not been named for either COL Drolet or BG Berwick.

#### 11. Next Meeting and IJC Appearance

The IJC Appearance is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on April 16. The fall Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 15 in the Buffalo area.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:22 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL LAKE SUPERIOR BOARD OF CONTROL  
MEETING OF MARCH 19, 2008

Approved Agenda

1. Approval of agenda
2. Update on Hydrologic Conditions and Regulation
3. Update on Long Lac and Ogoki Diversions
4. Flow Measurements
  - a. Hydropower Plants
  - b. Compensating Works
5. Hydropower Plant Maintenance
6. Compensating Works
  - a. Inspections
  - b. Maintenance: Recent and Planned
7. Peaking and Ponding Update
8. 2007 Meeting With the Public
9. Review semi-annual progress report
10. Other Business
  - a. Status of Upper Great Lakes Study
  - b. Status of Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway Study
  - c. Status of Lock Replacement
  - d. Board Membership Changes
11. Next Meeting and IJC Appearances