

Rideau Lakes Watershed Plan – Technical Advisory Committee Meeting 2
Thursday Dec. 8, 2005 – 9:30 a.m., Smiths Falls

Minutes

Present: Lynn Preston, RVCA Acting as Chair
Scott Bryce, Town of Westport
Valerie Blazeski, Parks Canada
Kerry McGonegal, Parks Canada
Bond Strand, RVCA
Patrick Larson, RVCA
Martin Czarski, RVCA
Matt Craig, RVCA
Sheanna Tinlin, RVCA

Regrets: Andy Smith, DFO
Bruce Reid, RVCA
Ferdous Ahmed, RVCA
Asher Rizvi, RVCA
Mark Scott, RVCA
Sheldon Laidman, Township of Rideau Lakes
Chris Burns, Ministry of Natural Resources, Kemptville

1. Introduction and Welcome

Lynn Preston welcomed all to the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves. Lynn reported on the progress made on the RLWP since the last TAC meeting (February 2005), specifically:

- Background information has been collected (a short Power Point presentation was delivered later in the meeting)
- Public meetings were held over the summer with stakeholders (lake associations, businesses and the general public) to determine their vision for the watershed as well as their concerns and issues
- A Public Advisory Committee was formed in response to public demand, the first meeting was held November 7, 2005

2. Draft Terms of Reference

Lynn provided an updated draft of the ToR, revised based on feedback from both TAC and PAC members. Minor changes included:

- “Endorse and implement the plan and its recommendations” added to goals
- New issues include lake carrying capacity, climate change, apathy and lack of respect for environment, lack of government communication and cooperation
- P.3 of Establish ToR, 2nd sentence, “for approval” removed (funding agency will approve)

Lynn pointed out that we are now at Step 5 in the schedule, that the goals and objectives will be finalized over the winter with the aim of having a draft plan ready for distribution to stakeholders in summer 2006 (AGMs, seasonal visitors). Lynn then opened the floor for feedback.

- Concern about species at risk (SAR) as an issue was raised. Valerie stated that SAR are Parks Canada's responsibility on crown land and they are currently getting funding to do an inventory of SAR. Everyone agreed SAR should be an issue and Martin suggested area of interest include private land
- Martin raised issue of lack of knowledge of all species in watershed, not just SAR, the need to prioritize the issues

3. Vision Statement

Lynn read the vision statement and opened the floor to concerns. The following was heard:

- Concern over need to define the words used
- The difference between "healthy" and "clean"
- Vision is flexible therefore good
- Was there enough representation from businesses? (concern that vision sounds like it came from cottagers only). Lynn responded that businesses were invited to provide input and although turnout was lower than expected, the concerns of businesses are represented in the vision statement.
- Does knowledge component of vision encompass education? Consensus was that it does.

Concerns were discussed and vision statement accepted without change.

4. Update on Public Advisory Committee

Lynn updated the TAC about the roles, responsibilities and activities of the PAC, including:

- That the PAC is open to anyone that is interested.
- PAC will have input at the same key points as the TAC
- The PAC has published their contact information to encourage questions and interest from the public
- A press release will be issued after every PAC meeting
- The next PAC meeting will be on goals and objectives

The following concerns and suggestions were raised:

- Should a TAC member sitting on the PAC and vice-versa
 - Lynn agreed it was a good idea and had been suggested by PAC as well
- Will the local councils be kept informed and if so, how?
 - Lynn said she will go to councils to keep them informed and engaged and that the PAC will be encouraged to talk with their council
- Will other government agencies recognize the watershed plan in their decision making and is there a mechanism to ensure they do?
 - It was agreed that government agencies appear supportive of plan and its adoption although there is not current mechanism to ensure they do.

5. Goals and Objectives

Lynn stated that through consultation with all stakeholders we have a good idea of what the issues are and where people want to go (vision). The TAC now needs to discuss how we will get there. Valerie would like to see the objectives stated as being measurable so that we know when it has been met. Lynn responded that targets will also be set but that since there is not a lot of information available about the watershed, it is difficult to be specific. Stating a desired increase or decrease would be a start. Lynn shared the presentation given at the public meetings as a prelude to discussing the Goals and Objectives. As a result of the presentation, the following information was brought forward:

- 2 SAR have been recently sighted (but not confirmed) in Big Rideau Lake
- Parks Canada is currently working on something that may help shoreline GIS information for Big Rideau Lake
- Work is planned that will help assess the significant forest within the watershed
- Westports of the World event in 2006
- The Westport Chamber of Commerce conducted a survey of visitors in summer 2005

Upon reviewing the Goals and Objectives, it was agreed, that the “Issues” listed would be better categorized as “Topic Areas” with more specific issues listed under each topic area.

The issues for each topic area were added and objectives were established for each issue. Both fisheries and groundwater issues were skipped over as there was no technical expertise in those areas represented at the meeting although feedback was given by other means prior to the meeting. See modified Goals and Objectives table (attached).

6. Next Steps and Next Meeting

Lynn will meet with the PAC in January to discuss the goals and objectives. The next TAC meeting will be to determine the actions needed to meet the objectives and will be at the call of the chair.

The meeting ended at 2:30 pm.
Merry Christmas.