



The Board's Vision: A healthy and diverse aquatic ecosystem for the benefit of present and future generations.

Mackenzie River Basin Board Secretariat

Mackenzie River Basin Board Meeting No. 77 Summary

Day 1: September 26 2023

8:00 am to 3:00 pm Pacific; 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Mountain; 10:00 am to 5:00 pm Central

Note: Fort St. John is on Mountain Time but does not observe daylight savings time

Attendees

Amelie Janin	Alternate Member	Yukon
Laurie Wein	Alternate Member	Parks Canada
Meghan Beveridge	Alternate Member	Northwest Territories
Morna Hussey	Government Member	Alberta
Nadine Stiller	Government Member	ECCC
Nicholas Mitchell	Alternate Member	CIRNAC
Sean Moore	Alternate Member	British Columbia
Stan Njootli Sr.	Indigenous Member	Yukon
Ted Zimmerman	Government Member	British Columbia
Thon Phommavong	Government Member	Saskatchewan
Vice Chief Joseph Tsannie	Indigenous Member	Saskatchewan
Leon Andrew (virtual; day 1)	Indigenous Member	Northwest Territories
Patrick Cherneski (virtual)	Alternate Member	ECCC

MRBB Secretariat

Paula Siwik	MRBB Executive Director	ECCC
-------------	-------------------------	------

Guests

James Mack	Assistant Deputy Minister Water, Fisheries and Coastal Policy and Planning, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, Government of BC
Alex Hall	ESSA Technologies Ltd.
Caitlin Semmens	ESSA Technologies Ltd.
Meghan McKee	Government of BC guest

77.1 Welcome and Agenda

- N. Stiller began by welcoming those in attendance and welcome everyone acknowledging that MRBB members are fortunate to be able to gather in Fort St John on the traditional territory of Treaty 8 and Dane-zaa (Beaver) speaking peoples.

- Pleased to welcome, Stan Njootli Sr. as the new MRBB Indigenous member for the Yukon.
- S. Njootli: Currently very involved in water and fishery work. The community is doing a lot of work on water quality and quantity. The river does not have stable flows but the salmon do spawn there. Interested in better understanding what the MRBB is interested in looking at.
- MRBB members introduced themselves to S. Njootli Sr. and the guests.
- L. Andrew: Good to hear your voices. Working hard to achieve things that can help us. Calling in from Norman Wells but was born and raised in Tulita and the Mackenzie Mountain range. Would like to touch base on water and watersheds. The Mackenzie River was very low by early July. Flows are typically high in July but not this year. Elders are concerned about permafrost and what is happening on the land.
- Just came back from the Keele River. There has been a lot of change and erosion. The fire did a lot of damage to the land. Everything is just charred. There is a coal seam burning 50 kilometers outside Tulita and we have never seen that before. Erosion has exposed new seams and the whole hill is smoldering. There is also a shift in wildlife, especially a drop in moose numbers. Colleagues have reported moose further up the mountain. Aquatic life the very heart of the people in the Sahtu. We have work to do because things do not look very good. Had a good look at the islands in the Mackenzie River. The sandbars are exposed and there is a lot of dry land. A lot of concern. Good news lately is that the fires have died down. Need to be aware of what we are facing.

77.2 Membership

- G. Cheezie reached the end of his 3-year term as MRBB Indigenous member for Alberta. Paula will send him a thank you note and MRBB glass in the upcoming days.
- S. Njootli Sr is the new Indigenous member for Yukon.
- L. Lowe sends her regrets. She has asked Jordan Turcotte to be her alternate. Jordan is a member of the Fort Nelson First Nation and until recently worked for the Lands Division. Jordan started a program at the University of Alberta in September and is not likely to attend today.
- Nolan Rainville from the Gwich'in Tribal Council in Inuvik is the new Indigenous alternate member for NWT. P. Siwik, L. Andrew and M. Beveridge will orient Nolan in the coming weeks.
- Meghan Beveridge has been appointed as alternate government member for the Northwest Territories and replaces Nathen Richea. Meghan has supported NWT participation on the MRBB and MRBB committees over the years and I am pleased to welcome her to her new role as alternate.

77.3 Approval of Minutes

- i. Meeting #75
 - Minutes were approved.

77.4 Action Items not Addressed Elsewhere in Meeting 76

- N. Stiller reviewed the activity table and noted that there are a number of items that will be revisited after the MRBB completes work on a new Strategic Plan.

77.5 Collaborative Leadership Initiative

- Meeting 76 included a presentation from Merrell-Ann Phare (Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources; CIER) on the Collaborative Leadership Initiative (CLI) which was a process focussed on supporting collaboration and good working relationships between municipal and Indigenous governments in Manitoba.
- MRBB members responded positively to the work and indicated that there was interest in exploring whether CLI could be adapted for the MRBB context.

77.6 Alberta Climate Change Projection Modelling Highlights

- M. Hussey shared a presentation on a model that the Government of Alberta has developed that includes algorithms for predictive climate modelling.
- Environment and Protected Areas has developed a comprehensive framework for climate change impact assessments under global warming, which, consists of following elements:
 - Selection of appropriate GCM projections to ensure incorporation of full range of climate variability - A geometric algorithm (Quick Hull-Ramper Douglas Peucker, QH-RDP) has been developed for systematically selecting a sub-set of representative climate projections for Alberta.
 - Multivariate statistical downscaling: A Multivariate Bias Correction with Distribution-free Shuffle approach (MBCDS) has been developed and applied for downscaling.
 - Trend analysis - trends in historical and projected climate data and
 - Understanding of potential changes under projected global warming (i.e., Global Mean temperature, GMT).
- The work will be shared as open source and available to anyone who wants to use it soon. The model includes an emphasis on transboundary basins. Working to shift the discussion on climate change prediction to include a Mackenzie River Basin lens. The intent is to not duplicate what exists but encourage technical experts to come together and explore the MRB transboundary areas. The place to have those discussions are the BMCs and BWMA.

77.7 Climate change and surface water quality

- The governments of Alberta and Northwest Territories meet once a year to approve work plan and budget. One item is tasked to the WQTT.
- WQTT was revitalized in 2019 following a joint request from the governments of Alberta and Northwest Territories. Meets monthly to discuss common jurisdictional water quality related themes.
- WQTT contributes to the MRBB to help implement the Master Agreement and the BWMA by:
 - 1) providing a forum to communicate and share information on water quality,
 - 2) recommending basin-wide agreed-to approaches to assess water quality, and
 - 3) developing reporting tools that support the SOAER and BWMA annual reporting requirements.
- To date, the WQTT has 1. Developed of a workplan: Workplan Options for MRBB Water Quality Subcommittee (by contract; June 2020; funded solely by the Government of NWT); 2. Production of a report: Methods to Assess Trends in Water Quality
 - (by contract; April 2022; funded jointly by the governments of Northwest Territories and Alberta)

- In-kind support (expert advice and review from SK, YT, BC and ECCC) - proven important to the success of these contracts.
- Next task for this group, as per the AB-NWT BWMA Work Plan, is to assess water quality trends in transboundary rivers. This would be a contract and anticipate costs to be approximately \$100,000.00.
- Results from this contract will:
 - 1) feed into bilateral reporting,
 - 2) contribute to the next MRB SOAER,
 - 3) inform the development of objectives, and
 - 4) assist with the braiding of Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science for water quality reporting (TKSP).
- Propose jurisdictions consider a joint funding approach for this work and discuss how to fund future WQTT work that it is of benefit to the entire basin.
- Will ask the task team to think through the inter-operability and applicability for all the jurisdictions in the basin.

77.8 Strategic Planning Session – Alex Hall and Caitlin Seemens from ESSA Environmental Consulting

- The rest of September 25 and all of September 26 was spent laying the foundation for the next Strategic Plan. Facilitators led MRBB members through a number of exercises and facilitated discussions. The work is summarized in a stand alone report that can be shared upon request. Agendas for the Strategic Planning workshop are below.

September 25 Topic	Approx. Time
MORNING (>1.5 hr)	10:30 am – 12:00 pm
1. Workshop overview	15 min
2. Context / background	10 min
3. Board member perspectives	20 min
4. MRBB activities – What does and/or should the Board do?	45 min
LUNCH (1 hr)	12:00 pm – 1:00 pm
AFTERNOON (3hr, incl. 10 min break)	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
5. Attributes of a successful draft Strategic Plan	40 min
6. Areas of focus for the Strategic Plan	80 min
7. Setting up discussions for Day 2	40 min
8. Recap & Day 2 overview	10 min
Adjourn	4:00 pm

Draft Agenda, Mackenzie River Basin Board Meeting No. 77 Day 2: September 27 2023

9:00 am to 4:00 pm Pacific; 10:00 am to 5:00 pm Mountain; 11:00 am to 6:00 pm Central

77.9 Welcome

77.10 Recap of Day 1 Strategic Planning session and outline of Day 2

September 26 Topic	Approx. Time
MORNING (3 hr, incl. 10 min break)	9:00 am
1. Recap & overview	5-10 min
2. Explore and discuss actions for Strategic Plan (within each Area of Focus)	2 hr 40 min
LUNCH (1 hr)	12:00 pm
AFTERNOON (3 hr, incl. 10 min break)	
(cont'd #2)	45 min
3. Review consolidated draft list of actions for Strategic Plan	75 min
4. Participant reflections/feedback	30 min
5. Next steps	15 min

77.11 Roundtable

77.12 Next Meeting

Goal 1: Evaluate the health of the whole basin.

Goal 2: Investigate matters concerning the ecological health of the whole basin.

Goal 3: Advocate for the maintenance and improvement of the ecological health of the whole basin.

Goal 4. Educate the public, share information, and learn from others about matters concerning the ecological health of the whole basin.

Goal 5. Support and facilitate the increased participation of Aboriginal Peoples in MRBB activities.

Goal 6. Encourage the development and implementation of bilateral water management agreements

Goal 7. Ministers, Aboriginal leaders and appropriate staff of jurisdictions are informed of and engaged in MRBB activities.

Goal 8. Information, knowledge and research are shared among jurisdictions – written reports.

Goal 9. MRBB affairs are administered effectively.