May Boardman River Dams Implementation Team Meeting

APPROVED Meeting Notes

Date: Thursday, May 21, 2015 at 1:30 pm
Facilitator: Frank Dituri, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Notes: Kimberly Balke, Conservation Resource Alliance
Location: Traverse City Governmental Center, Commission Chambers

Implementation Team

Grand Traverse County 
Traverse City Light and Power Department 
Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition 
Michigan Department of Natural Resources 
Grand Traverse Conservation District (Ex officio) 
Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay (Ex officio) 
Grand Traverse County Road Commission (Ex officio) 

City of Traverse City 
Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians 
US Fish and Wildlife Service 
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality 
Conservation Resource Alliance (Ex officio) 
Charter Township of Garfield (Ex officio)

IT Members Present:
Amy Beyer, Kim Balke (Conservation Resource Alliance)
Brett Fessell, Frank Dituri (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians)
Dean Bott (Grand Traverse County)
Penny Hill (City of Traverse City)
Rick Westerhof (US Fish and Wildlife Service)
Christine Crissman (Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay)
Jim Schramm (Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition)
Heather Hettinger (Michigan Department of Natural Resources)

IT Members Not in Attendance:
Charter Township of Garfield
Grand Traverse Conservation District
Traverse City Light and Power Department
Grand Traverse County Road Commission
1. **Introductions** – Introductions were made by those in attendance.

2. **Public comment** – None.

3. **Miscellaneous**

   **Agenda deletions/additions** – None.

   **Review and potential approval of the April IT meeting minutes** – Approved.

   **Action items from April IT meeting** – Reviewed by Kim B.; those not complete were noted as owing and placed back on the action items list (at end of these notes) unless determined by the group to no longer be relevant. Any elaboration and/or discussion of any items were noted in the “Accomplished and/or Discussion” action item column.

4. **AECOM (URS) update: report and discussion (Dan DeVaun)** – DeVaun presented the following updates on the local and federal (including Army Corps) efforts:

   **Federal effort**
   - All of the USACE internal comments on the EA and DPR have been submitted to USACE and responded to; final approval with the FONSI signed is imminent. USACE is working on the Project Partners Agreement (PPA) and Integral Determination Report (IDR). The EA being signed is a requirement of the PPA and IDR.

   **Local effort**
   - **Cass Road Bridge**
     - MDOT has the complete design packet and development of the obligation paperwork is underway. Once the obligation is confirmed by the GT Road Commission the project goes before the Ad Board and is typically bid out 1-2 months following.

   **Boardman and Sabin Dams**
   - The 60% level of design is anticipated to be ready for distribution June 3, 2015, including updated design plans and cost estimate, revised specifications, draft version of detailed design report with appendices of the wealth of design calculations compiled to date.
   - There is a different level of bid specifications required by local and USACE options. The front end specifications (divisions #0, #1 comprise requirements of
the contractor) including payment terms and insurance requirements are most notably different.

- Dan D. will discuss with Dean B. about legal review time needed by the County for contract review and figure this in to when the determination of bid specifications is indeed needed. This will coalesce likely with the upcoming USACE IDR and DPR proposals to the dam owners, as well.

- Detailed design consideration has involved a closer look at fish passage fish through the proposed siphons for dewatering the pond. A study was found that showed siphons can have a 20-30% mortality fish mortality with fish passage over spillways typically 0-2%, and free fall mortality varies between 10-40% depending on height and depth of stilling pool. With the current proposed siphon set-up the free fall would be 8’ in to a stilling pool with an articulate block bottom. It would cost $100,000 to $400,000 to apply screens at the intakes. Siphons would not be set on the pond bottom but a few feet below the water surface. Discussion followed including what types of fish species would be at risk (likely primarily warm water), public communications, and possible fish rescue option. Heather H. will follow up with Scott Heintzelman (MDNR) and Brett Fessell (GTBOCI) and AECOM on fish rescue options and public communications.

- Dan D. reported that there will be two notable trail access impacts by restoring the natural river sinuosity; one at Lone Pine and an access road near the future Cass Road Bridge. Dean B. recommended seeking Grand Traverse Conservation District input since they manage the nature reserve for the GT County. Kim B. will contact Steve Largent.

- Dan D. reported that he, Kim B., Dave Benda met with the Alpers in early May and discussed access for the river restoration component of the project and the legally agreed upon accessible trail to the Alpers’ property from the river. If the Alper’s property is used for equipment access for the project the driveway would need to be repaved upon completion. A tentative location for the accessible trail was discussed on-site. Initial inquiries with the landowner upstream of and adjacent to the Alpers for project access hasn’t been successful thus far.

- AECOM continues to look at tributary impacts around the impoundment with GTBOCI and InterFluve.

- Possible sediment management in the beaver pond area is being considered by InterFluve. This would involve excavating a pilot channel (not floodplain) in the beaver pond area to promote sediment movement after the dam removal from the former Boardman pond area into the Sabin area. Sediment trap cleaning would last a year with the spoils being deposited in the abandoned spillway location. GT County nor the GT Conservation District have the abilities to do.
this, thus this task if confirmed necessary would have to be contracted out as part of the dam removal effort. Without sediment management, the concern is that sediment would build up at the current “log jam” area and then migrate upstream to where it could not be reached by equipment and would have negative impacts on the new channel under the new bridge.

- Final soil borings from the Boardman Pond to be acquired by Great Lakes Environmental Center in June 2015 could be completed under approval of a work authorization #3 with GTBOCI at their June 26, 2015 Tribal Council meeting. Frank D. will send Dan D. the appropriate change order documentation.
- AECOM is finalizing the sediment transport modeling (Sabin Dam to South Airport Road); this report is more critical to the Sabin Dam removal phase.
- AECOM is revising the April 27, 2015 invoice at GT County Commissioners’ request to parallel the billing codes of staff with the progress report task numbers. This is requiring a corporate accounting system procedure and the revised invoice will be ready for approval in June 2015.

5. Bottomlands update: report (Frank Dituri) – Frank D. provided the following updates since Steve Largent was attending a MDNR Grant meeting today:

- Tree planting workbees at Brown Bridge on April 29 and May 2 resulted in 3500 seedlings planted including 300 white cedars planted by GTBOCI.
- The invasive species network crews are out treating the Brown Bridge area for the top 20 invasive plant species of concern.
- Native grass plantings at spoil area #4 are planned.

6. Communications update: report (CRA/IT) – Items of note include:

- Brett F. noted that GTBOCI is embarking on a more intensive (above and beyond), broad scale outreach effort intended to work in tandem with existing communications efforts and is releasing an RFP for such with proposals due June 15, 2015 with a contractor selected and a 2-year contract in place ideally by July 1, 2015. The goal is to create a communications, outreach and education plan that produces documentable changed behaviors that will lead to the long-term viability of the River. The desired outcomes include: a common vision for the restored and healthy Boardman River that is embraced by disparate communities, and the history of the project and its subject (the river) is brought to life and all partners of the Implementation Team are appropriately recognized for their individual and shared roles in this project.

- Dan D. submitted an abstract on the project which was accepted by the Water and Environment Federation (“WEF”), subsequently will be presenting at the WEF conference in Chicago on September 30 (2015). The link below is for the
conference we will be presenting the Boardman Dam project. It will be restricted to 30 minutes, http://www.weftec.org/

- Steve Largent presented at the Grand Traverse Leadership and Alumni gatherings this month.
- Kim B. attended the joint GT County Road Commission and GT County meeting on May 19. Dean B noted the meeting went well and an agreed upon amendment to the existing agreement for the new Cass Road Bridge is in the works; signed approval by both entities is anticipated in June.
- Chuck Lombardo facilitated a tour with Commissioner Lathrop, Kim B., Frank D. and Dan D. on May 15 of all the dam sites except Union Street; the tour was well received.
- Frank D. and Brett F. presented at the Central Methodist Church this month.
- Frank D. and Brett F. toured Brown Bridge with NMC extended education classes this month.
- Dan D., Troy Naperala, Andy Selle and Frank D. will be presenting at the upcoming Michigan Aquatic Resources conference October 21-23, 2015 at the Kettunen Center.
- Frank D. and Kim B. will present at the Rotary luncheon on June 16.
- Kim B. will follow up with Penny Hill on scheduling an update for City Commissioners in the near future.

7. **Monitoring and Evaluation Team update: report (CRA)** – Hettinger had forwarded CRA fish data from prior years’ surveys.

8. **Funding update: report (CRA/IT)** – The following updates were given:
   - Amy B. submitted a Sustain Our Great Lakes proposal April 28 for Boardman Dam removal.
   - Amy B. distributed the updated funding plan.
   - Frank D. and Brett F. noted that they received their proposal score sheet from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (“MDNR”) Aquatic Habitat proposal and a discussion with MDNR staff on why the proposal was denied is pending.

9. **Open forum: (IT)** – The following items were offered:
   - The City of Traverse City’s whitewater conceptual plan includes a technical memo and three conceptual renderings of 3 options for whitewater recreation on 400’ of either side of Union Street Dam between the existing Union and Cass Bridges. The City’s contractor is relying on USACE EA design for invasive species management. Rick W. noted that sea lamprey can get through Union Street Dam during high water events.
• Nate W. will draft a thank you letter to Dave Benda for his service on the IT and participation in the river project for signature by Frank D.
• Jim S. noted that a bill is in the works that would amend the hydropower act and take away the power of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.
• Frank D. will check on a couple of float trip dates for City and County Commissioners.

10. Meeting closing:
• IT agenda and action item review for June 2015 IT meeting
• Public comment – None.
• Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.
**Action Items**

**New:**

- **Winkler** to approved May IT meeting notes to the IT
- **Winkler** to circulate the draft letter of thank you to Dave Benda for his service in support of the Boardman Dams project
- **Kim B.** to set a City Commissioner update on the project
- **Kim B.** to follow up with Steve Largent on 2 identified impacts to Nature Reserve trails
- **Heather H.** to follow up with Scott Heintzelman, Brett F. and AECOM on fish management options in regards to the proposed siphons during drawdown
- **Frank D.** will check on a couple of float trip dates to offer City and County Commissioners (late June and sometime in August?)
- **GTBOCI** to meet with MDNR regarding feedback on Aquatic Habitat Program proposal
- **AECOM** to finalize revision of billing codes/task numbers on April 27, 2015 invoice and resend to CRA/GT County for approval
- **AECOM/GTBOCI** to develop work authorization #3 and related change order and seek approval of Tribal Council at June 26, 2015 meeting
- **InterFluve/AECOM** to further explore need of post dam removal sediment management in beaver pond area
- **Dan D.** to follow up with Dean B. on legal review time needed by GT County for dam removal contract paperwork

**Pending:**

- **City/Hill** to follow up on release of claims question and forward response to **Winkler** for distribution to the IT
- **IT** to collaborate on exploring options to fund a multi-year aquatic macroinvertebrate monitoring program
- **Largent** to forward water temperature data to **Dituri** and **Winkler**
- **Largent** to provide Bottomlands team meeting notes to **Winkler** for inclusion in the project file