June Boardman River Dams Implementation Team Meeting

Approved Meeting Notes

**Date:** Thursday, June 15, 2017 at 1:30 pm  
**Facilitator:** Frank Dituri, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians  
**Notes:** Nate Winkler, 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:**  
Frank Dituri (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians)  
Nate Winkler, Kim Balke, Casey Ressl, Amy Beyer (Conservation Resource Alliance)  
Rick Westerhof (US Fish and Wildlife Service)  
Bob Stuber (Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition)  
Jim Cook (Grand Traverse County Road Commission)  
Christine Crissman (Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay)  
Jen DeHaan (Grand Traverse County)  
Marty Colburn (City of Traverse City)

**IT Members Absent:**  
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality  
Traverse City Light and Power Department  
Charter Township of Garfield  
Grand Traverse Conservation District  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

**Non-IT Members Present:**  
Dan DeVau (AECOM)  
*Dan Zielinski (Great Lakes Fishery Commission)  
*Carl Platz (US Army Corps of Engineers)  
Max (?) (Interlochen Public Radio)

* attendance via conference line
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 May IT meeting minutes** – Approved with the following corrections:
   - Correction of date for premier of GTB documentary (June 16) (Dituri)
   - Correction of SEP acronym (“Supplemental Environmental Project”) (Dituri)
   - AECOM not DeVaun to develop tributary crossing designs for dewatered Boardman Pond area (DeVaun)
   - Wording regarding Frey Foundation grant awards (Beyer)

   **Action item review from the May IT meeting** – Reviewed by Winkler; those not complete were noted as owing and placed on the “Pending Action Items” list (at end of these notes) unless determined to no longer be relevant.

4. **AECOM update: report and discussion (Dan DeVaun)** – DeVaun presented the following updates on the local effort:

   **Sabin Dam**
   - Design work is complete and is under review by the Army Corps
   - MDEQ permitting process continues for which there was a public hearing and open house on May 30 (2017) at the District nature center. There was an open house from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. and a public hearing from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in which the MDEQ took public comment on the proposed project. Display boards were produced and set up at information stations staffed by project partners
   - Timeframe for bid-letting and contracting is proposed to be similar to Boardman Dam removal: sometime in November (2017) the project will be let for bids with an award contract sometime in February (2018)

   **Boardman Dam**
   - AECOM will provide design of tributary trail-crossings through a contract modification with the Corps
   - The Alpers access construction project was let for bids with three firms (Michels, Elmers, Molon) vying for the work. Bids are due July 1 (2017)
   - Once Boardman Dam removal project monitoring plan is accepted by MDEQ, it will be used as a template for the Sabin Dam removal project monitoring plan
4. **AECOM update: report and discussion (cont.)**

**Boardman Dam**

- Construction continues of the crib wall and meander bend at the location of the inlet to the relic channel (proximal to Lone Pine canoe landing)
- Access route on west side of impoundment has been constructed
- A postponement in log delivery has resulted in sediment management preparation
- Construction of the syphon system header is taking place, syphon activation is anticipated for June 22 (2017). Related to the syphon system is the construction of the stilling basin at the syphon system outlet in which the fourteen separate 30” tubes will discharge vertically (upward) which assists in dissipation of energy
- Articulated concrete mats will be installed in the outlet channel of the dam cut
- Given the level of activity anticipated within the next two weeks, it will be important to develop a press release announcing the achievement of milestones that in turn are going to result in increased turbidity in the river downstream of the project. To that end, the partners especially the Army Corps should convene to produce a draft press release that may be vetted through the Army Corps’ communications office (a process which is already underway). Per a question by Colburn, DeVaun indicated turbidity could be seen as far as the mouth of the river given the right conditions (i.e. heavy precipitation). Beyer noted that during the project partners meeting, Platz recognized the need of the local team members for their own communications outlet

5. **Army Corps update: report (Carl Platz)**

Platz provided the following Boardman Dam project updates on behalf of the Army Corps:

- A funds transfer was completed by GTB to the Army Corps
- On July 11 (2017), Army Corps top brass will be in Traverse City to both tour the project as well as host a public meeting with members of the Army Corps’ “Environmental Advisory Board” the following day. Army Corps officials will include the Detroit District Commander, the Cincinnati Regional Commander, and the Chief of the Army Corps out of Washington, DC. Discussions will focus on general environmental matters and will be held at the Park Place. Per a question from Dituri, Platz indicated that since this tour and meeting were just recently announced, he was not sure if the Corps would reach out to the local team to assist in facilitating the tour
- Per a question from Beyer, Platz was unsure whether or not the PPA for Sabin Dam was at District headquarters but will check and report back

6. **Monitoring and evaluation update: report (Winkler)** – Winkler reported on the following items:

- Winkler had been in the field with both GLEC and Au Sable Institute on May 26 (2017) for the initial macroinvertebrate sampling event to observe sampling methodology and discuss any differences between the two outfits (to try to explain discrepancies in total organisms sampled in prior year). The following were potential reasons for discrepancies in sampled organism numbers:
6. Monitoring and evaluation update: report (cont.)
   - GLEC strictly adhered to the protocol for Surber sampler use including sampling only gravel substrates and only in depths at which flow was not overtopping the sampler
   - Au Sable Institute sampled representative substrates at each cross-section even if it included sand and at depths exceeding the height of the of the sampler
   - The net length on the GLEC sampler was 3’ as opposed to 2’ used by Au Sable Institute
   - Sorting techniques were similar between outfits however GLEC closely adhered to EPA standard protocol (with both outfits using a 10X power magnifier)
   - Staff from HRM were in town the week of May 29 (2017) to sample for herpetofauna between Sabin Dam and South Airport Road. The Conservation District assisted in the effort by providing canoes for the HRM survey team to access the river which will save the project approximately $800

7. Bi-directional fish passage project (“FishPass”) update: report (Dan Zielinski) – Zielinski provided the following updates on the FishPass project:
   - The second FishPass workshop was held in Traverse City from May 31 – June 2 and included:
     - ~50 scientists, engineers, agency representatives, and local representatives
       - Primary goal of the workshop was to evaluate four alternative concept designs and select a preferred design to move forward for public comment and engineering design. The preferred concept resulting from the evaluation held during the FishPass meeting includes an “arched labyrinth” weir
     - Other objectives included: developing an outreach and education plan and timeline, establish an advisory board, develop a plan of research, update funding strategies, develop 2017-18 assessment plans, and establish plans for an assessment database.
     - Day 1 of the workshop entailed a Boardman River tour and unveiling of the alternative design concepts
     - Day 2 was a full day of discussion in plenary and task team meetings and reception with local government officials and heads of stakeholder groups
     - Day 3 included discussions and selection of the preferred design and plan for Workshop III (which will be held in Traverse City in late 2017 / early 2018)
   - In addition to the above, operational issues, assessment database, outreach and education were discussed
   - The following are the next steps in the FishPass development process:
     - Ramp up public engagement
     - Hire a landscape architecture/engineering firm to develop a rendering of the preferred alternative design
     - Engage the City in discussions relating to amenities to the preferred design
     - Signing of contract subsequent to award of GLRI funds
7. Bi-directional fish passage project ("FishPass") update: report (cont.)
   - Establish a date sometime in February 2018 for the third and final meeting
   - Per a question by Ressl, the word “experimental” has been taken off the FishPass website when referencing the facility
   - Zelinski will be attending a fish passage symposium (2017 International Conference on Engineering & Ecohydrology) in Corvallis, OR to present on the project

8. Bottomlands update: report (Largent) – Largent provided the following updates:
   - Dave Downer, riverfront property owner and Boardman River advocate, passed away recently
   - A ribbon cutting ceremony will take place later that day at the new pedestrian bridge just upstream of Grasshopper Creek with a BBQAAC potluck to follow
   - Seedling plantings at Brown Bridge were recently completed by the District and the GTB
   - The District recently removed the silt fence associated with the log jam structures installed over the winter and early spring (2017) at Brown Bridge

Colburn followed up with a comment regarding the City’s review of current parkland policy on allowable uses in an effort to develop updated policy in advance of increased or new uses. Beyer referred Colburn to “character zones” delineated in the Prosperity Plan(?) with Crissman following up with a recommendation to contact Rotary regarding character zones. Dituri concluded the conversation by noting LIAA had done a bit of work involving the public in discussions regarding access.

9. Communications update: report (CRA) – Ressl reported that the time-lapse photography to date from Lone Pine and the Boardman Dam site is nearly available for review and posting to the project website.

   Dituri reported on the following items:
   - The GTB documentary on the project will premiere publically on June 26 (2017) at the State Theatre in Traverse City at 6:00 p.m. The documentary will be broken out into four, eight-minute lesson segments for Junior High aged students. Additionally, the documentary will be broadcast on PBS stations in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota
   - The GTB NRD is also publicizing various environmental issues (Boardman dams project, Line 5) via videos on Facebook

10. Funding updates: report (CRA/IT): Beyer reported that Boardman and Sabin dams agreements were under construction and offered kudos to the GTB for stepping up each time a need arose, especially when concerning the PPA.

Other items reported by the group include:
   - Beyer discussed the funding update in the meeting packet and noted the upcoming philanthropy team meeting which will be hosted by Rotary
10. **Funding updates** (cont.)
   - Dituri reported that the recent GLFT funding award was officially announced.
   - Colburn requested that the same process used in passing surplus funds between Boardman and Sabin Dams be considered for the Union Street Dam phase of the project.
   - Balke inquired of DeVaun that when bid packages are being constructed for Sabin Dam removal, are options being considered based on the new construction update plus $250,000 and the $240,000 shortfall? DeVaun responded that the bid package is complete but it would be timely to have a meeting between the Corps, the owners, and members of the IT.

11. **Open forum (IT):** The following items were offered by members of the IT:
   - Winkler offered kudos to DeVaun for doing such a good job and keeping on top of the project.
   - Dituri thanked everyone that helped by providing information for the MDNR “Dams Management” grant application.

12. **Meeting closing:**
   IT meeting agenda and action items were reviewed for June by Winkler.

   Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.
Action Items

New:
- **Winkler** to distribute draft June IT meeting notes for review
- **Winkler** to have approved May IT meeting notes posted to the project website
- **Dituri or Largent** to acquire MC access plan from LIAA
- **Ressl** to follow up with **Schropp** regarding press release related to turbidity
- **IT** to forward bulleted list of suggestions to **Ressl** by the following day (COB) for inclusion in press release
- **Platz** to ascertain the whereabouts of the PPA and relay to **Beyer**
- **DeVaun** to initiate a meeting via Doodle poll between the Corps and the IT regarding options for Sabin Dam removal—those interested in participating include the **Corps**, **Westerhof**, **DeHaan**, **CRA**, **GTB**, and **Colburn**

Pending:
- **Dituri** to provide SEP final report to CRA for IT distribution
- **AECOM (DeVaun)** and **InterFluve** to develop a proposal for design/engineer work for eroding banks upstream of Boardman Pond
- **DeVaun** to request monitoring plan status from the MDEQ
- **Shook** to distribute to **IT** (via **Winkler**) Brown Bridge large wood installation report once complete

Discussion: None
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