

COASTAL HABITAT RESEARCH PROGRAM
STEERING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 51
HELD BY VIDEOCONFERENCE ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

PRESENT:	Réal Courcelles	Hydro-Québec
	Félix Boulanger	EMRWB representative
	Marc Dunn	Niskamoon Corporation
	Carine Durocher	Hydro-Québec
	Jean-Philippe Gilbert	Hydro-Québec (in part)
	John Lameboy	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
	Josée Lefebvre	Canadian Wildlife Service
	Geraldine Mark	Cree Nation of Wemindji
	Gregory Mayappo	Cree Nation of Eastmain
	Ernest Moses	Cree Nation of Waskaganish
	Ernie Rabbitskin	Niskamoon Corporation
	Robbie Tapiatic	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
ABSENT:	Norman Cheezo	Cree Nation of Eastmain
	James Bobbish	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
	Louie Kanatewat	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
	Kelly Leblanc	Cree Nation Government
	Roderick Pachano	Cree Nation of Chisasibi
	Emily Sinave	Cree Nation Government
	Alain Tremblay	Hydro-Québec
GUESTS:	Shirley Chiskamish	Niskamoon
	Kaleigh Davis	University of British Columbia
	Julian Idrobo	TEK researcher
	Zou Zou Kuzyk	University of Manitoba
	Urs Neumeier	Université de Rimouski
	Mary O'Connor	University of British Columbia

PROPOSED AGENDA

- 1) Approval of the agenda
- 2) Finalizing symposium logistic

3) Next meeting

CHAIR AND SECRETARY

Marc Dunn chaired the meeting. Mhaly Bois-Charlebois acted as Secretary. The meeting began at 1:10 p.m. on Wednesday, September 31, 2022.

1) APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Dunn reviewed the agenda. The agenda was approved.

[Secretary's note: The minutes reflect the order in which items were addressed.]

2) FINALIZING SYMPOSIUM LOGISTICS

Mr. Dunn asked if everybody had found accommodation. He said that Gregory had sent a list of land users and he asked Gregory to also send it to Shirley Chiskamish. He asked Ernie Moses and Geraldine Mark if they had sent their list.

Ms. Chiskamish said they had.

Mr. Dunn said that Niskamoon will pay the travel costs, fees and expenses for the land users. He said to invoice the bands and then they will send the invoice to Niskamoon.

Ms. Chiskamish asked if the fees are paid per day or per hour.

Mr. Dunn said that normally it is about \$330 a day for three days. He asked if the land users will share rooms.

Ms. Chiskamish said they would.

John Lameboy asked about Chisasibi users.

Mr. Dunn replied that it would be the same. He said that James Bobbish had agreed to chair the symposium and the only thing he asked was that they finalize the documents today. He added that a family from Chisasibi should do the opening and closing prayers.

Ernie Rabbitskin asked if they could send the presentation before the symposium so the interpreter could prepare.

Mr. Dunn replied that he would suggest that the documents be sent to him by the end of the day and that they would be available on Monday to go over them with him.

Mr. Rabbitskin said that he might need an assistant.

Mr. Dunn said that since the work is demanding, it would be a reasonable expense. He asked Mr. Rabbitskin to tell the interpreter that he will not be needed on the third day. He asked if the audio is taken care of by the interpretation company.

Ms. Chiskamish said it was.

Mr. Dunn asked Ms. Chiskamish if they said whether it will be broadcast and recorded.

Ms. Chiskamish said she didn't know.

Mr. Dunn asked Mr. Rabbitskin to check and to also ask if it can be broadcast on Zoom. He said that they could use his camera. He asked Zou Zou Kuzyk to present the last agenda that was circulated.

Ms. Kuzyk showed the agenda on the screen and said she had revised it. She read the agenda.

Mr. Dunn asked Ms. Chiskamish to ask Daisy House and William Macleod to provide some introductory comments.

Ms. Durocher said that they received a presentation from Julian Idrobo with an update of his work. She said that the update only seemed to address waterfowl and she did not believe that the eelgrass section was included.

Ms. Kuzyk said that it was on the same slides in other presentations, so they took it from those presentations.

Mr. Dunn said that he was not sure if they have enough room for a Q&A period for each part of the presentation. He suggested placing it at the end. He asked if they have a recording from land users to present.

Mr. Rabbitskin replied that they do not have anything right now.

Mr. Dunn said that they will remove this from the agenda, which will leave time for questions.

Réal Courcelles said that 15 minutes for questions is short.

Mr. Dunn said that at the end of the day, they will allow one hour for questions.

Robbie Tapiatic said that they have to take control of the Q&A periods, because otherwise, people will go on and on with their storytelling. He said that Mr. Bobbish will have to control that.

Mr. Dunn said that he believed they will have to talk to James about that before the event.

Geraldine Mark said that it could be mentioned that they just want questions and not testimonials.

Mr. Dunn said he will add this information to the Niskamoon presentation.

Ms. Kuzyk said that, on the second day, there will be two presentations and a wrap-up, so there is less material. She said that they could perhaps reserve a bit more time on the second day for stories or testimonials.

Mr. Dunn agreed and said he will mention that. He said that there will be 25 minutes of goose videos played one after the other. He said that they all agree that they have to show them, but they must decide how and when. He added that if they have posters at the same time, people will not look at the posters.

Mr. Tapiatic said that they could present them during lunch while people eat.

The members of the SC agreed and approved the agenda of the symposium.

Mr. Dunn showed the Niskamoon presentation to the members. The members looked at the researchers' presentations.

The meeting paused at 2:50 p.m. and resumed at 3:00 p.m.

With regard to the early decline of eelgrass, Mr. Dunn said that they would have a better understanding of it now if they had done this research 15 years ago.

John Lameboy said that, based on his understanding, the cause of the decline is not well understood.

Mr. Dunn said that he was surprised that they were able to collect that much information. He said between the initial meeting where they had a discussion and the actual meeting, it was hard to know what was happening.

Ms. O'Connor said that they did understand a little more about the decline of the eelgrass, but it does not change the fact that they cannot go back in time to see what really happened.

Mr. Lameboy said that the disappearance of eelgrass started in Chisasibi, and two or three years later, it began in Wemindji. He said that if it was due to climate change, he wondered why it did not affect all the eelgrass at the same time.

Ms. Kuzyk said that the effects of climate change are happening at the same time as other impacts. She said that the difference in Chisasibi is that 185 beds were thinning before the climate change effects were observed.

Jean-Philippe Gilbert said he did not disagree, but although it was not part of the two main questions and they don't have the complete picture, the fact that they were able to reconstruct what happened to a certain degree is good to see.

Mr. Dunn said that Ms. O'Connor had just enough time to give her presentation quickly.

Ms. O'Connor did the presentation.

The SC members commented on the presentation.

Mr. Courcelles said that restoration is a priority for the Niskamoon Corporation. She said that what they need is to come up with projects to restore eelgrass. He added that, hopefully, they will have some suggestions at the workshop. He said that he would recommend including all the ideas of the researchers and land users in order to come up with recommendations.

Mr. Gilbert said that, at the last meeting, Ms. O'Connor presented information showing that eelgrass in the St. Lawrence River was more resistant than in James Bay. He asked if she believed that it would be adaptable enough to be planted in James Bay.

Ms. O'Connor replied that she was not sure but that it was worth looking into.

Mr. Dunn said that they do not know to what extent the results would be the same or different with the three missing traplines. He said that they know that some of the eelgrass seem to do well, but they do not know why, since the tallymen told them not to go there. He added that these sites would have been important in determining the causes of the decline, but not going on those traplines was an administrative decision.

Mr. Lameboy said he did not think they could talk about restoration until they know the real causes of the decline, because the eelgrass will just keep disappearing if a solution is not put in place.

Ms. O'Connor said she believed that it would be worthwhile having a workshop or symposium where they bring people together to discuss the issue. She said she cannot say much more about restoration, but she believed that they need to hear from people about what they need to restore.

Mr. Lameboy said that the problem is not only about the sediment and turbidity, but he believed it also has to do with salinity. He said that there is a lot of eelgrass inside the lakes and rivers.

Ms. Kuzyk said that, based on the information available for the 1980s and early 1990s, there were big disturbances. She said that the environment changed a lot. She said that they believed 1978 was unusual with changes in the flows and bigger swings related to the rivers. She added that they had to remember what was different from one year to another. said that she had taken those erosion events into consideration and that they are very likely what initiated the decline in Chisasibi, but they cannot add any more data to prove it.

Mr. Lameboy said that the land users knew that. He said that they saw eelgrass moving on the maps with Melanie Leblanc and this is exactly what the elders had said.

Mr. Dunn said that there was another presentation that would not be discussed that day due to time constraints but that since people were flying to Chisasibi on Monday, they could continue the presentation at the Niskamoon office in Chisasibi.

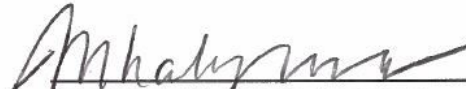
3) NEXT MEETING

This item was deferred.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.



Marc Dunn, Chair of the meeting



Mhaly Bois-Charlebois, Secretary