

RCEN Water, Fisheries and Oceans Caucus 2009-10 Work Plan

2009-10 RCEN Water, Fisheries and Oceans Caucus Steering Committee:

[Olga Schwartzkopf](#), Co-Chair, Soil and Water Conservation Society, BC Chapter

[John Werring](#), Co-Chair, David Suzuki Foundation, BC

[Lisa Fox](#), Cochrane Environmental Action Committee, AB

[Peter Karwacki](#), Les Amis de la rivière Kipawa, ON

[Bruno Marcocchio](#), Sierra Club of Canada, NS

[Isabel Muzichuk](#), Concerned Citizens for a Safe and Healthy Environment, SK

[Larry Bell](#), Sackville Rivers Association, NS

Mission Statement

The scope of the Water Caucus is broad and includes issues related to water quality and quantity, oceans and fisheries. The main objectives of the Water Caucus are: to share information; to develop joint strategies; to help each other; and to provide advice to the government.

Work Plan Vision

In 2009, the NFHCC will be contributing to the organization of an Atlantic Regional Fish Habitat Management Workshop; contracting a threats and risks to fish habitat research paper and participating in other activities with the goal of improving communication and collaboration between DFO and ENGOs for the benefit of fish habitat. The caucus will continue to collaborate with the mining caucus on Schedule II amendments of the MMER. With the passing of Finance Bill C-10 and, along with it, the amendments to the NWPA, the caucus will be keeping a watchful eye on how these changes to the NWPA get expressed on the ground and impact other policies that protect water and fish habitat.

Steering Committee

- April – May 09 : Coordinate steering committee elections
- May – June 09: Develop caucus work plan
- Steering Committee will meet quarterly via teleconference (or more often as needed)

Caucus Activities

1. ENGO-DFO National Fish Habitat Coordinating Committee:

- Produce 3rd year work plan and budget for submission by end of May 09. Anticipating contract with DFO for 20 to 25K for 2009-10
- Main priorities are to complete a contract for a national report on the threats and risks to fish habitat, to continue to facilitate communication between ENGOs and DFO on fish habitat through monthly teleconference calls and 2 face-to-face meetings, and to continue to engage ENGO stakeholders in DFO consultations
- Review Committee Terms of Reference and membership
- Differed priority from last year is to coordinate and host the ENGO-DFO Atlantic Regional Fish Habitat Management Workshop on November 5-6, 2009 at the Tatamagouche Centre in Tatamagouche, NS
- Facilitate bringing together all of DFOs stakeholder “aggregates” to address the recommendations made by the Commissioner for Environment and Sustainable Development
- Facilitate a meeting between NGOs, DFO and EC to address the issue of using natural water bodies as tailings impoundment areas

- From 2008: Also investigating potential contacts at Environment Canada to set up a meeting with DFO and EC re. section 36 of Fisheries Act (deleterious substances)

2. Fisheries Act Renewal

- Monitor developments and act as needed

3. National Water Policy – STATUS?

- Lisa and Leela to revise RCEN proposal into a one-pager to circulate to potential partners
Water Caucus members to reach out to potential partners, engage in discussion re. process to develop a policy (eg. Canadian Water Resources Association conference in Gimli in June 08; also Conservation NGOs, foundations, research institutes)
- Look at Alberta model as example of collaborative process for policy development

4. Navigable Waters Protection Act

- Senate Committee hearings?
- Monitor implementation of the new Act and impact on EA?
- Facilitate alliance building? Facilitate forum for public awareness campaign?

5. Metal Mining Effluent Regulations

- Liaise with RCEN Mining Caucus on [consultations with Environment Canada re. proposed amendments to MMER](#) that would allow lakes to be added to Schedule 2 as tailings impoundment areas
- Continue to participate in public awareness campaign around the larger issue of using natural water bodies as tailings ponds

6. Annual Caucus Meeting

- Host caucus meeting at RCEN AGA in Edmonton June 12 – 14 in Toronto

7. Communications

- Caucus members are invited to join the Google Groups Fisheries Listserv. Members can join by sending an email to [Dan Casselman](#), Caucus Coordinator.
- For other Caucus-related issues, Caucus members can forward information to the Caucus Coordinator for distribution to the Water, Fisheries and Oceans Caucus email list.

8. Other areas of interest: Drainage in Arctic watersheds?

Recognition of the recreational value of water

Multi-use of dams/reservoirs and waterways

Socio-economic value of water

???Possibility for stronger collaboration between recreation-based non-profits and ENGOS

Canadian Water Resources Association (CWRA)

Introductory discussion around joint pressure with the RCEN

Do we want to collaborate with the CWRA on policy?