

Environmental Monitoring Advisory Committee (EMAC)

Progress Report #6 – 4 Feb 2011 Meeting

NOTE: EMAC Progress Reports provide an update on the activities of EMAC but do not include a record of internal discussions at EMAC meetings which are confidential to the Committee and FORCE. The Terms of Reference and a list of EMAC Members are available on the FORCE Website at: www.fundyforce.ca.

The 6th Meeting of EMAC was held on the afternoon of Friday, February 4, 2011 at the Minas Basin Development Center in Hantsport, NS. The following participated:

Attendees:

- Anna Redden – co-chair
- Gordon Beanlands – co-chair
- Michael Brylinsky
- Allyn Clarke
- Donald Gordon
- Andrew Hebda
- Melissa Nevin
- Jean-Marc Nicholas (for Ken Meade)
- Robert Miller
- Michael Stokesbury

- Joe Kozak (Secretariat)
- Steve Sanford, NS Environment (Observer)
- Ted Currie, DFO (Observer)
- Donald Humphrey, DFO (Observer)
- Lisa Isaacman, FERN (Observer)

Meeting Summary/Highlights:

- Gordon Beanlands welcomed the Committee members to the meeting. It was noted that:
 - It was the first meeting of EMAC since May 2010; there had been Dec/Jan meetings as FORCE was waiting on the completion of EEM project reports
 - There had been ongoing updates provided to the Committee via Email since May
 - The OEER/FORCE Tidal Energy Workshop was held in October 2010 in Greenwich, NS

- Gordon Beanlands also welcomed Jean-Marc Nicholas who is replacing Ken Meade as NSPI's representative on EMAC.

- The key objective for this meeting was to discuss how to review the 2010 EEM studies as efficiently as possible and to provide FORCE with EMAC's advice on the 2011 EEM program in a timely manner.

- An update was provided on the NSPI (Open Hydro) turbine which had been retrieved from the Minas Passage on December 16, 2010. Based on the initial observations, there was no evidence of strikes or damage and no bio-fouling on the visible portion of the turbine. However, all the blades were missing; reasons for the blade failure will require further investigation. It is suspected that higher than expected current speeds may have been a factor. The OpenHydro barge/ turbine was transported in Saint John, New Brunswick. Given winter ice hazards, the turbine will over winter in Saint John and be transported to Dartmouth in spring.
- Anna Redden gave an overview of FORCE activities over the last few months, noting that on November 14th the CEF funding announcement (\$20 million) was made at the FORCE facility in Parrsboro, and that the Province will be announcing a 4th berth developer in the near future.
- Gordon Beanlands led a review and discussion on EMAC's mandate and responsibilities, assisted by Donald Gordon, and the process leading to the development of EMAC's first set of recommendations on FORCE's EEMP. It was noted that the EEMP is intended to test the predictions identified in the EA document. There was a discussion on the role of regulators in better defining the criteria to measure EEM program results. It was acknowledged that most of the work conducted to date was mainly baseline data collection in the Minas Passage.
- On behalf of FORCE, Joe Kozak discussed the 2010 project reports distributed to EMAC and noted that the outstanding reports are the fish survey (echo-sounder/mid water trawl netting) final report and the side-scan sonar (scour) survey, which should be available in April. Anna Redden presented progress reports on the fish tagging/tracking project and acoustic detection of marine mammals project, noting that written reports will be provided to EMAC members prior to the next meeting.
- It was noted that the EEM priorities have not significantly changed from previous discussions and reviews. EMAC's role in formulating specific questions to be addressed by monitoring programs was discussed. It was recognized that there are overlaps between the EEM programs and the research priorities identified at the OEEER/FORCE Tidal Energy Workshop, held in October 2010.
- It was agreed that subcommittees should be formed to address specific areas of the EEM program to assist in the development of EMAC's 2011 recommendations as soon as possible. Additional information on this approach will be distributed prior to the next meeting.

Next Meeting

- The next EMAC Meeting was scheduled for the full day on March 4, 2011.