

Environmental Monitoring Advisory Committee (EMAC)

Progress Report #4

NOTE: The objective of this EMAC Progress Report is to provide an update on the activities of EMAC. The meeting summary is based on the Internal Discussions of EMAC which are confidential to the Committee and FORCE. The Terms of Reference and EMAC Members list are available on the FORCE Website at: www.fundyforce.ca.

The 4th Meeting of EMAC was held on the afternoon of Friday, March 19, 2010 at the Minas Basin Development Center, Hantsport, NS. The following participated at the meeting:

Attendees:

- Anna Redden – co-chair
- Gordon Beanlands – co-chair
- Michael Brylinsky
- Ken Meade
- Robert Miller
- Melissa Nevin, KMK (NS Mi'kmaq Observer)
- Michael Stokesbury
- Graham Daborn

- Ted Currie, DFO (Observer)
- Steve Sanford, NS Environment (Observer)
- Doug Keefe, FORCE (Observer)
- Joe Kozak (Secretariat)

Meeting Summary/Highlights:

- Anna Redden welcomed the Committee members to the 4th Meeting and introduced Gordon Beanlands as the new co-chair of EMAC. Gordon Beanlands provided a brief overview of his background and discussed the key priorities facing the Committee.
- With the Spring sampling season fast approaching, the focus of the meeting was on completing the EMAC recommendations on the EEMP and submitting them FORCE before the end of April. This will ensure that key monitoring programs start in April or May.
- The Terms of Reference (ToR) for EMAC were further revised following feedback provided by the FORCE Board. Only one additional change was recommended by EMAC and it related to the timing that FORCE must respond to the Committee's recommendations on the EEMP and when these are to be placed on the FORCE website. The revised EMAC ToR is now complete from a Committee's perspective and will be submitted to FORCE for final approval.
- Updates were provided on several studies and recent reports. It was noted that the "acoustics (hydrophone) report" is in draft form and that the data is undergoing further analysis and review.

- An update was provided by NSPI on the status of the deployed turbine. NSPI has been unable to communicate with the turbine to download performance and monitoring data stored on the unit. Further attempts to restore communication will be attempted April and/or May. If NSPI is unable to re-establish communication, the turbine may be raised. In the meantime, NSPI will undertake fish movement surveys near the turbine. It was noted that NSPI provided a report to DFO in mid-March on their monitoring activities in the vicinity of the turbine.
- Five consultants who had undertaken work in the marine environment on behalf of FORCE joined the EMAC meeting. Each consultant presented a brief overview of monitoring work conducted to date, following which EMAC members had an opportunity to ask questions. The participating consultants were :
 - Norval Collins, CEF (lobster catch study, fisheries)
 - Allen Clay, Femto Electronics (echo-sounder surveys for biomass/fish detection)
 - Gordon Fader, Atlantic Marine Geological Consulting (bathymetry)
 - Simon Melrose, Oceans Ltd (acoustics, currents and tides)
 - Patrick Stewart, EnviroSphere (benthos, seabirds, marine mammals)
- After the consultants left the meeting, the Committee members discussed in detail what they had heard and how gaps in monitoring could be addressed. Specific recommendations for the EEM program for 2010 were proposed and discussed.
- It was agreed that the co-chairs, with the assistance of the secretariat, would use the Committee discussions to prepare draft EMAC Recommendations, for the Committee's review, by the end of March/first week in April, with responses requested within 2 weeks. It was expected that EMAC recommendations would be submitted to the FORCE Board in April 2010.

Next Meeting

- The next EMAC Meeting will be held on the afternoon of Friday, May 7th, 2010 at the Minas Basin Development Centre in Hantsport, NS.