

International Joint Commission

Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Regulation Criteria Review

Public Participation Guidance to the Study Board

- (1) For purposes of the study, the “public” or “publics” will include everyone who is interested in the criteria review, or who could be affected by it, including the following groups:
 - Governments at all levels;
 - Native Americans/Aboriginal Peoples;
 - Commercial navigation;
 - Environment;
 - General public;
 - Hydroelectric power;
 - Domestic water supply and sanitation;
 - Recreational boating;
 - Riparians.
 - Upstream/downstream

- (2) Public participation in the study will be objectives-driven. The principal objectives are to:
 - Make the public aware of the study and provide opportunities to participate;
 - Explain the decision-making process of the study;
 - Insure that the study process is open, inclusive and fair;
 - Identify and consider the publics’ views of the principal issues, questions and study objectives;
 - Identify and consider the publics’ priorities and preferences;
 - Identify and utilize local expertise and information;
 - Enhance public understanding of the causes of problems related to fluctuating water levels and of the consequences of proposed solutions;
 - Broadly disseminate study findings as they become available;
 - Encourage the publics to assist in disseminating study findings.

- (3) In carrying out its public participation activities, the Study Board will be assisted by a Public Interest Advisory Group.
 - The Public Interest Advisory Group will consist of 24 members to be appointed by the International Joint Commission after consultation with the Study Board.
 - The mission of the Public Interest Advisory Group is to
 - Advise the Study Board on the responsiveness of the study process to public concerns;

- Advise the Study Board on public consultation, involvement and information exchange;
 - Serve as a conduit for public input to study process, and for public dissemination of study outcomes;
 - Serve as liaison to and participate in the activities of technical working groups as Public Interest Advisory Group members desire;
 - Provide a public liaison function to the Study Board through Public Interest Advisory Group co-chairs who serve as members of the Study Board.
 - The Public Interest Advisory Group will meet approximately four times per year.
 - Members will receive support for their travel to Public Interest Advisory Group meetings, but will not be compensated for their time.
 - Secretarial support will be provided to Public Interest Advisory Group functions, such as distributing documents and organizing meetings.
- (4) In order to inform and provide context for the technical investigations in the Plan of Study, members of the Study Board, Study Committees/Teams or Public Interest Advisory Group will conduct outreach meetings with the publics at the beginning of the study to identify:
- The publics' views of the principal issues, questions and study objectives;
 - What information they already have that would be helpful, especially their knowledge of additional studies and other historical data and information;
 - How they think they can contribute to the study, how they want to be consulted and when they want to be consulted;
 - Their comments on the public participation directive;
 - Their future plans and activities that could potentially be affected by levels and flows.
- (5) The Study Board, Study Committees/Teams and Public Interest Advisory Group will work with grass-roots organizations throughout the basin and conduct public participation activities at strategic points in the study to:
- Identify and utilize local expertise and information;
 - Consult with the publics on critical or potentially controversial study findings before these study components have been finalized;
 - Disseminate plain language information to enhance public understanding of the causes of problems related to fluctuating water levels and of the consequences of proposed solutions;
 - Identify and consider the publics's priorities and preferences as alternatives are defined and optimized;
 - Consult with the publics on Study Board findings, conclusions and recommendations before they are final.
- (6) Major study products will be made available in English and French.
- (7) Public Interest Advisory Group members may participate in the activities of the Study Committees/Teams Study Committees/Teams may also include other members from the publics.

- (8) During the conduct of the study, findings will be made available to the public via the World Wide Web.
- (9) Study Board, Study Committee/Team and Public Interest Advisory Group meetings will be held at different locations to encourage public consultation and meetings will be announced in advance. Opportunities for public observers to attend the meetings will also be announced in advance. The Study Board, Study Committees/Teams and Public Interest Advisory Group may conduct their business in executive session, when necessary.
- (10) Coordination of public outreach activities under the study with public outreach activities of the International St. Lawrence River Board of Control, the Remedial Action Plans and the Lakewide Management Plan is encouraged to avoid confusion and to better inform the publics.
- (11) Information and findings generated by the study process will be made available to the International St. Lawrence River Board of Control as they become available, but the mandate of the Board will remain unchanged unless amended by the IJC.
- (12) The IJC may conduct its own public participation process related to the review of the Orders of Approval for Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River regulation during the study or after receiving the Study Board's report.

Approved in principle on
September 26, 2000 and
modified on November 9, 2000.