

**Citizens for Protecting our Northern Waterways**  
**General Meeting – October 27, 2024**  
**Wanless, MB 1:10 – 3:45**

**Attendees**

Chris Smith, Richard Gibbons, Craig Asselstine, Jim Lorden, Marilyn Meyer, Tony Brew, Tim Teneycke, Ryland Nowell, Tristan Pilcher, Wayde Roberts, Julianna Cook

Regrets: Debi Hatch, Don MacDonald, Don Gamache, Randy Koshel

**Welcoming remarks – Craig Asselstine**

Craig welcomed everyone to the AGM 2024, followed by introductions of CPONW executive and Regional representatives.

**Approval of Agenda**

No additions or changes, accepted as presented

**Review of October 15, 2023 meeting minutes**

Revise the date on the heading of the minutes from 2022 to 2023.

Motion: To accept the minutes of October 15/23 as revised.

Moved: Richard Gibbons Second: Jim Lowden.

Accepted as passed. 10-0

**Discuss Action Items from 2023 AGM listed in Minutes from 2022 and 2023**

Items from 2022

- Partner with First Nation education programs to provide presentations on awareness, prevention and monitoring of AIS
  - No updates from Diane and have not been able to reach Sheldon.
- Reach out and partner with Guardian Programs to provide presentations on awareness, prevention and monitoring of zebra and other AIS in Grand Rapids, Chemawawin and Oscar Lathlin Collegiate's Land Based Education.
  - Diane contacted Grand Rapids and Chris tried to follow up with them with no success. Randy Koshel, who is a member of CPONW, is involved with Oscar Lathlin Collegiate's Land Based Program

**Further Action:** Wayde and Chris will try to connect with the groups, other than Oscar Lathlin Collegiate, by reaching out through community members they have previously worked with.

- Chris to continue to advocate for improvements to inspection/decontamination hours of operation and function through meetings with AIS Unit, AIS Advisory Committee.
  - Chris has been in contact with the AIS program. The hours of the station operations (i.e. Prospector) have improved but still lacking on some days. Chris also tried to speak to the AIS program prior to the AGM but was unsuccessful. Kayla Peterniak has been on leave, so others have been doing her role for station staffing this summer. The government were having a hard

time getting workers for Prospector again along with Wabowden and Grand Rapids. Wabowden did not open, and Grand Rapids only operated sporadically and even then, mainly was operated by the roaming inspection crew. It was mentioned that Conservation Officers did stop by the Prospector station on occasion when they were supposed to be open (as indicated on the government website), only to find they were not open. It does not help when the Prospector Station is deemed to be a low-risk station by the government. Wayde indicated he knew of four units that were checked at the US border. One was asked to lower their motor and water came out, so they were required to do a full decontamination. In addition to working at Grand Rapids the roaming inspection crew, along with Manitoba Conservation Officers did two inspections with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans on the Trans Canada Highway near the Ontario border. Five vehicles were found to be transporting zebra mussels, and a significant number of vehicles were not practicing Clean-Drain-Dry (CDD). Cranberry people tried to get the roaming inspection station to The Cranberry Trout Festival, but it did not happen.

- Diane suggested reaching out and potential partnering with MKO and Garrison Settee (Grand Chief of MKO), explore possibility of attending the upcoming annual AGM of Tribal Councils of Manitoba
  - Chris and Diane tried to concentrate on getting Grand Rapids involvement first. Chris is trying to connect with MKO representative through Advisory Forum activities.
- Diane noted that OCN has a working relationship with Manitoba Hydro and suggested the committee develop contact/partnership with Manitoba Hydro personnel who are doing similar work around prevention and monitoring.
  - Chris tried to reach out through a previous Hydro employee, but nothing came of this.

#### Items from 2023

- Chris will consult with AIS Unit re: can spiny water flea swim upstream and let members know.
  - Spiny water flea can not swim upstream on their own.
- Replacement for The Pas representative as Marilyn accepting the Secretary position, a new Regional Rep will be needed for The Pas – Marilyn will ask Randy Koshel if he is interested.
  - Randy accepted the position
- Diane will reach out to Sheldon Bourassa (Regional Rep for Chemawawin) to see if he is still willing to be a regional representative. Diane is familiar with an individual from Grand Rapids who would be an asset – she will email him and cc Chris to explore whether he might be interested.  
**Further Action:** Sheldon was not able to be reached and since Grand Rapids and Chemawawin is not responding, Wayde and Chris will attempt to pursue this further
- Chris will contact Lauren to have missing substrate samplers replaced and will also request a few extra to have on hand in case any go missing in the future.
  - Lauren is now retired. We were able to get more samplers from Joey Tonin, who is taking over some of Lauren's responsibilities.

- Chris will reach out to Wayne Roberts to see if he would be interested in filling the Ex-officio position.
  - Wayne has accepted the Ex-officio position

## **Business Report and Overview of CPONW Activities**

### Meet with Travel Manitoba

Wayne and Chris met with Mike Goodyear (Travel Manitoba) regarding getting the message out about AIS spread prevention. Since the meeting, Hunt Fish has put all the AIS videos produced through Manitoba Wildlife Federation online on their webpage.

### Zebra Mussel Discovery and Prevention in the province

Zebra mussels have been found in St. Malo reservoir this summer. The containment curtain placed in Clear Lake failed within a short period of time. Zebra mussels have now been found at the north end of Clear Lake. R.M. of Ninette is currently developing rules regarding boat access to Pelican Lake. They are promoting the One Boat One Lake idea.

### Outreach

Chris provided a summary of CPONW activities April -September 2024

- Trade Shows - Flin Flon, Snow Lake, Thompson, The Pas
- Cranberry Portage Artisan Market – May 25 and Sept. 7
- Assisted in providing information for Flin Flon Trout Festival (“Know Before You Go” information on website)
- Jimmy Jackfish winter ice fishing derby and Cranberry Portage Trout Challenge (“Know Before You Go” information on website and angler package sent to registrants). At the Trout Challenge the Fish Donkey App was used, and a text was sent to registered people about the Challenge including the rules and how to do CDD. People were encouraged to go through inspection stations. Wayne did do some radio spots and included CDD in the messaging and they also did the same messaging at the Conservation Officer fishing derby.

At the Trout derby there were not many people from the south, but it would be nice to see a tie system to the boats to determine if people have gone through inspection stations versus just taking their word on it. It appears that people were not issued inspection receipts this year. There seems to be confusion regarding if the green ties were used this year or not. Use of the green ties (or stickers) would also assist the Conservation Officer Service. Should a sticker be issued for a One Boat One Lake?

**Action:** Chris to follow-up with Jeff Long regarding asking that evidence of inspection be used for the benefit of locals and conservation officers.

There was a brief discussion on what is happening with float planes and AIS prevention. Do they have to put on new paint each year? The RCMP is putting special paint on their boats to prevent mussel attachment.

**Action:** Chris will follow-up with an ask to the AIS program regarding what is happening with floatplanes.

- Website and Facebook Page maintenance continuing.

## Public Survey

All trade show and market events, other than Thompson, involved asking people to do a survey. Note that there were a few responses on the survey put on flinflononline. There were 183 surveys completed, with each survey containing 9 multiple choice questions. The questions were designed to determine:

- type of water-based activities people are engaged in
- general knowledge of zebra mussels and AIS
- knowledge of CDD methods
- views about most effective methods to further inform the public

The highlights were:

- Majority of the water-based activities were anglers then beach goers
- Results of knowledge indicates a stated high knowledge of AIS and CDD but the questions and answer options likely led participants to the correct answer. This still may be a positive action as people are being educated by this line of questioning.
- Surprising number of respondents did not know that you needed to pull the boat plug when leaving a water body
- People did not appear to know the difference between CDD and decontamination or know what needs to be done (CDD or decontamination) after leaving an infected water body prior to going to a waterbody that has not yet been infected.
- Survey results suggested that more decontamination stations are needed and information on AIS should be provided when obtaining an angling licence and when stopping at inspection stations.

Recommendations:

- More information should be provided on decontamination of beach toys and associated equipment.
- More information should be provided on what constitutes CDD, including pulling the boat plug when transporting watercraft.
- Provide information on AIS and prevention directly to people who purchase on-line angling licences.
- Making current AIS handouts available at AIS stations.
- Use of easily accessible videos via social media and various websites, especially what constitutes CDD and when to decontaminate.
- The need of more inspection stations (emphasis on Grand Rapids and Wabowden) and explore gaps including using contract services for inspections.

The full report will be finalised soon and will be distributed and made available on the CPONW website.

## Government Liaison/Advocacy

We still have a positive relationship with AIS staff including excellent support from Joey Tonin regarding lake monitoring. The AIS Advisory Forum has been a positive experience with the next meeting date to be determined. CPONW was involved with input into the AIS Prevention and Response Plan. We particularly emphasized public awareness and outreach, expanded watercraft and decontamination capacity and extended hours.

## Monitoring

We increased the number of substrate samplers for lake monitoring from last year from 12 to 18 substrate samplers. Sites this year included: Burntwood River, Paint Lake, Setting Lake, Snow Lake, Wekusko Lake (2), Tramping Lake, Reed Lake, Iskwassum Landing, Kississing Lake, Naosap Lake, Bakers Narrows, Neso Lake, 1<sup>st</sup> Cranberry Lake, Barbe Lake, Rocky Lake and Clearwater Lake (2). Two samplers could not be retrieved (Naosap and Barbie Lake). Wayne may know where the Barbie Lake sampler has moved to in the lake, so he will check on it.

So far, the samplers from Burntwood River, Paint Lake, Setting Lake, Reed Lake, Iskwassum Landing, Kississing Lake, and Rocky Lake have been examined with no zebra mussels found. Other samplers that were brought into day and will be checked soon.

The government AIS team did veliger sampling and assessments for spiny waterflea on 33 lakes/water bodies with 1-4 sites per waterway. There were 1-2 sampling events per location. They also did a “feel test” at the locations. The results of the sampling should be in by December. There was no eDNA sampling done this year as the Federal government usually does this.

## Signs

The installation of the large CPONW AIS sign was finally approved for PTH 6 (south of Ponton) in early June and Tony, with help from others from Snow Lake, installed the sign on June 19. Some small trees should be removed in the highway right-of-way as they are obstructing the sign.

Using the Northern Neighbors Grant funding, AIS prevention rotating ads were run in July (4 slides) and August (2 slides) on a digital billboard in Flin Flon (Main Street). The plan is to have ads run on the sign again for two summer months in 2025 to use the balance of the grant.

The RM of Kelsey contacted Chris earlier this summer regarding doing some additional activities to prevent the spread of zebra mussels. The RM supplied funds to install CDD messaging signs at boat launches at Rocky Lake (2 signs) and in the Cranberry Portage area (2 signs).

Craig commented that a few of our original signs sponsored by the Rotary Club that face south are starting to fade and should possibly be replaced.

Additional signage was discussed for Snow Lake. Tim, who is a councillor for Snow Lake, will check to see if the town would support this signage.

Additional digital billboards in the local area can be found on OCN. Julianna will investigate the possibility of AIS prevention messaging being posted on a billboard.

## Funding

Funding was received this year was from Northern Neighbors (\$2,075), Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Fund – final payment (\$951.02), RM of Kelsey (\$2,500), and Kelsey Watershed District (\$1,000). We were unsuccessful in securing grant money from the Federal AIS Prevention Fund. It took a lot of work to create the Federal submission.

## **Financial Report**

Details of finances including income and expenditures were presented by Treasurer Richard Gibbons.

Motion: That the Treasurer's report as presented be filed for audit.

Moved: Wayde Roberts Second: Jim Lorden

No objections, motion carried 11-0

Richard is working on trying to get our bank charges dropped as we are a non-profit organization.

Motion: That CPONW members be reimbursed for travel expenditures incurred for CPONW activities

Moved: Craig Asselstine Second: Tony Brew

No objections, motion carried 11-0

Manitoba government expense rates are used for reimbursement purposes.

## **Appointment/Election of Directors and Regional Reps**

The positions of Vice-President and Treasurer are due for election.

Craig Asselstine and Richard Gibbons both agreed to let their names stand for their current positions. As no other identified candidates, motion by Wayde Roberts, seconded by Tony Brew to acclaim Craig Asselstine as Vice-President and Richard Gibbons as Treasurer for another term. Motion carried 11-0

## **Executive moving into 2025**

- President – Chris Smith
- Vice President – Craig Asselstine
- Secretary – Marilyn Meyer
- Treasurer – Richard Gibbons
- Ex-Officio – Wayde Roberts

## **Regional Representatives**

- Thompson - Don Macdonald
- Snow Lake/Wekusko - Tony Brew
- Sherridon – Debi Hatch
- Rocky Lake – Don Gamache
- Clearwater Lake - Jim Lorden
- The Pas – Randy Koshel
- OCN - Diane Ballantyne
- Chemawawin - vacant

## **New Business**

### Grant Opportunities

Grants could be possibility be obtained from:

- The Pas Tri-Community Foundation

- Re UZ It Flin Flon
- Northern Neighbors
- Rotary Club if we have a small activity

#### Future Activities

Future activities could involve more signage involving CDD messaging. Replacement signage would likely be needed at Clearwater Lake and Landry Lake.

We could install an additional substrate sampler at Hugo Bay. We may want to go back to the plate samplers as the pipes are difficult to examine for mussel presence.

We could also reexamine contacting a YouTube Influencer for AIS messaging. Mack Mulligan who works with Viking Lodge may be open to assist with this.

We did not do boat launch events this year, so we may want to conduct some next year. Chris noted that a government person doing fisheries checks at a boat launch could provide AIS information. Tristan said he could possibly get the seasonal people involved and provide handout information. Conservation Officers have been doing more roadside checks with AIS related infractions being found. Tristan would also mention to his superiors the need to have stickers or ties used at inspection stations to assist officers with their work.

It was agreed that it was important to get the message out about lowering your boat motor to get excess water out on land after leaving a waterbody.

There was a brief discussion on how to drain wake boat ballast tanks. There is apparently a plug in the middle of the boat.

Chris thanked everyone and especially the Conservation Officers for attending the meeting.

#### **Meeting Adjourned**

Motion: meeting to adjourn at 3:45.

Moved: Tony Brew Second: Jim Lorden

Motion carried 11-0.

Submitted by: Marilyn Meyer

Addendum: On October 28 Randy Koshel submitted his resignation as The Pas representative effective immediately, so the position is currently vacant.

Action items:

- Diane previously recommended partnering with First Nation Land Based education programs and Guardian Programs to provide presentations on awareness, prevention and monitoring of AIS in 2022. **Action:** Wayde and Chris to have a future discussion on contacts to reach out to in the various communities.
- Additional signage – Tim will check to see if Snow Lake Town Council would support signage, and Julianna will check if digital messages could be put up on OCN billboards
- Chris to follow-up with Jeff Long regarding asking that evidence of inspection of boats, including the use of ties, be used which would benefit local groups and conservation officers.
- Chris will follow-up with an ask to the AIS program regarding an update on what is currently happening with floatplanes and AIS spread prevention.

DRAFT