



**St. Lawrence County Environmental Management Council**

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*Approved*

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 19, 2011 7:00 PM**

**Room 226, County Courthouse, 48 Court Street**

**Canton, New York**

*Action items in bold italics*

- 1. Call to Order:** David Katz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.
- 2. Roll Call, Determination of Quorum:** A quorum was present.  
Members present included: David Doe, B. Flavin, A. Heidenreich, R. Horst, D. Howard, D. Katz, J. Rosales, L. Rudiger, P. Skomsky, A. Soutar.  
Members absent included: T. Arquiatt, T. Cutter, G. Hart, G. Johnson, D. O'Shea, B. Zimmerman. Staff: J. Montan, J. Tenbusch. Guests: Lewis Shepherd. Press: None.
- 3. Hearings, Comments from the Public:** D. Katz introduced Jon Rosales, EMC member and Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Studies at St. Lawrence University. Rosales reported on developments from the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change 16<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties (COP) in Cancun, Mexico, which was held in December 2010. Rosales noted that the objective of the U.N. process is to "stabilize greenhouse gas emissions ... at a level to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with climate".

Rosales reported on several outcomes from the Cancun COP, including:

- Help for national plans for adaptation to climate change
- Commitments for a Green Climate Fund
- Establishment of a Technical Centre and Network
- The goal to reduce emissions from forest carbon loss
- A target set to hold temperature increase to less than 2°C since 1850

Rosales listed reasons to be concerned about the 2°C target, including:

- Risks to unique ecosystems
- Risks of extreme weather
- An uneven distribution of impacts of climate change

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- Aggregate costs of climate change impacts (financial risks and life-hazards)
- Risks of large-scale discontinuities (e.g., loss of ice sheets; change in ocean currents; etc.)

Per Rosales, recent scientific opinion is that a temperature increase of 2°C would expose the globe to dangerous levels of risk in all five of the above factors.

Rosales noted that more experts are calling for geo-engineering as a primary component of staying below the 2°C increase level.

**4. Acceptance of Order of Business, Items for New Business, Items for Unfinished Business:** The Order of Business was accepted by consensus.

**5. Approval of the Minutes of the December 2010 Meeting:** The minutes of the December meeting were unanimously approved (A. Heidenreich, B. Flavin).

**6. Report by the Representative of the Board of Legislators (BOL):** No report.

**7. Reports by EMC Members on Conversations with County Legislators:**

- D. Howard reported speaking with Don Peck.
- R. Horst reported speaking with Jim Bunstone.

J. Tenbusch noted that all EMC members have now been assigned to communicate with a member of the Board of Legislators. These assignments are listed in the EMC Status Sheets, which are updated and distributed to EMC members monthly.

**8. Report of the Committees:**

a. **Executive** – D. Katz. No report.

b. **Education** – J. Tenbusch reported that the Committee had discussed the following:

- Revised draft EMC comments to the BOL regarding the NYS Climate Action Interim Report.
- The recent proposal to site a nuclear power plant in the Massena area. The Committee had some discussion about security issues, the carbon footprint of such a facility, and the infrastructure required for such a facility. Rosales distributed a preliminary draft memo that might be sent to the Mayor and Supervisor of Massena; the memo could list reasons why the EMC would not favor such a facility. Another idea proposed was to invite the Mayor and Supervisor to speak to the EMC about their proposal – and request the courtesy of a subsequent EMC presentation to the Massena Board concerning risks of nuclear facilities.
- A potential speaker might be Bill Kappel of the U.S.G.S. on hydrofracking.

- An opportunity for the EMC to co-sponsor a conference on climate change at SLU (March 24-26).
  - Development of an education program concerning the Emerald Ash Borer.
- c. **Natural Resources** – J. Montan reported that the Committee had discussed:
- Ramping up educational efforts related to Emerald Ash Borers.
  - The nuclear power proposal in Massena. It was the opinion of the committee that it would be premature for the EMC to address this issue at this time.
- d. **NYSAEMC** – No report.

**9. Report of the Staff:**

- J. Montan reported that the County will hold two Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days (including pharmaceutical collection programs) on May 14<sup>th</sup> in Gouverneur and August 6<sup>th</sup> in Massena. No electronics will be collected – DANC will conduct separate collection efforts for electronics.
- Montan reported that he is working on an application to fund energy audits at County-owned buildings and at St. Lawrence University.
- J. Tenbusch reported on the upcoming EMC Winter Retreat at Camp Huntington in Raquette Lake NY.
- Tenbusch also reported on the Planning Office efforts to write three CDBG applications.

**10. Unfinished Business:**

- 2011 EMC Work Program. After some discussion, it was proposed to strike Item #10 on the “Natural Resources Committee Items”, namely to “Investigate noise and pollution limits for ATVs and snowmobiles”. The EMC approved the amended Work Program for 2011 (B. Flavin, R. Horst).
- Revised comments concerning the NYS Climate Action Interim Report. After some discussion it was agreed by consensus that J. Montan would present these comments to the Board of Legislators for their consideration and adoption.

**11. New Business:**

- J. Montan reported on a proposed bill that would make it easier to collect controlled substances. However, there is not time to prepare comments before the deadline for comment.
- Regarding the EMC serving as a co-sponsor for the upcoming Climate Change conference at SLU, L. Rudiger asked if the EMC should ask the BOL if such sponsorship was appropriate; J. Montan will check with Sallie Brothers and Karen St. Hilaire. A motion to approve sponsorship (A. Heidenreich, D. Howard) was approved [9 ayes; 1 abstention (Rudiger)].
- Regarding development of nuclear power generation in Massena, the EMC decided by

consensus to table the topic until its February meeting.

**12. Announcements:**

- The Save the River! Winter Weekend Conference will be held Saturday February 5<sup>th</sup> at the Clayton Opera House.
- The SLC Soil & Water Conservation District annual tree sale has started.
- J. Rosales will be making a presentation on the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change 16<sup>th</sup> COP at St. Lawrence University on January 27<sup>th</sup>.

**13. Message to Board of Legislators:** EMC members were asked to discuss with their assigned legislators the draft comments on the NYS Climate Action Interim Report. EMC members were also asked to discuss the proposal for a nuclear generation facility in Massena.

**14. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Minutes prepared by J. Tenbusch, J. Montan.

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