The Current October 2019

The Public Advisory Group publishes this bimonthly newsletter to keep you informed about the Lake Champlain Richelieu River (LCRR) flooding study.

Letter from the Public Advisory Group Co-Chairs

As fall is in full swing, the Study Board continues to move forward on the Lake Champlain-Richelieu River flooding study. As you will read below, there is a survey out now to residents in the Lake Champlain basin, from Quebec to Vermont to New York soliciting feedback on risk perceptions related to flooding. If you receive an invitation in the mail, we urge you to fill out the survey and mail it back. Your participation will help inform the Study Board's work.

In addition, a new US co-chair has been named for the study, following the retirement of Keith Robinson. Please join us in welcoming Ms. Deborah H. Lee as the head of the US-based study team. You can read more about Ms. Lee in the "People" section below.

Looking ahead, the next steps in the process will be the release of the Causes and Impacts of Past Floods in the Lake Champlain – Richelieu River Basin report later this fall, and formal public meetings in 2020 (dates to be determined). The Public Advisory Group met in October and continues to work diligently to keep the public informed of the Study Board's work. We invite interested groups and individuals to stay informed via the study website, or by reaching out to request a meeting.

Madeleine Papineau, Canadian Co-Chair Kristine Stepenuck, US Co-Chair

Study News

Evaluating The Public's Mindset on Risk

Residents along Lake Champlain — in Vermont, New York and Quebec — are being invited by mail to participate in a Risk Perception Survey as part of the Study Board's work.

The Social, Political and Economic analysis group developed the survey to gauge public opinion about risk (specifically related to flooding), and what the priorities are for mitigating risks. As an example, a property owner may feel comfortable taking on some risk of flooding if the damage and disruption is expected to be minimal compared to the cost and effort of preventing that potential flood risk.

The survey also asks respondents to consider the various types of risk — financial or ecological risks, or a threat to community and quality of life, for instance.

Approximately 5,000 households were randomly selected to receive the survey. If you received it, you're encouraged to complete the questionnaire and return it to the study team by December 1, 2019. The results of the survey will be tallied in 2020.

If you have any questions about the Risk Perception Survey, you can contact Emma Spett in the United States at emma.spett@uvm.edu, or Joris Arnaud in Canada, at joris.arnaud@enap.ca.

37. For each flood mitigation criteria, please check the box for your sense of the importance of the issue:

Criteria	Unsure	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important
Reduce the financial cost of flood damages	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Reduce harm to economic activity due to flooding	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Reduce the number of homes that are impacted by flooding	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Reduce street closures due to flooding	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Reduce potential injury, stress, or loss of life due to flooding	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Reduce harm to vulnerable people due to flooding	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Maintain healthy ecosystems, including clean water and thriving biodiversity	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Reduce harm to historical and culturally sensitive sites due to flooding	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

38. Would you rather have a flood mitigation measure in place that:
- o Prioritizes the economic wellbeing of

42. Would you rather have a flood mitigation measure in place that:
- o Prioritizes the environmental health of

Critères	Incertain	Pas Important	Un peu Important	Moyennement Important	Très Important
Réduire le coût financier des dommages causés par les inondations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Réduire les dommages sur l'activité économique causés par les inondations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Réduire le nombre de maisons touchées par les inondations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Réduire le nombre de fermeture de rues causé par les inondations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Réduire les blessures, les pertes humaines et le stress dûs aux inondations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Réduire les dommages sur les personnes vulnérables causés par les inondations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5
Maintenir les écosystèmes en santé (y compris la qualité de l'eau et une biodiversité	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	☐ 5

A segment of the risk perception survey mailed to a randomly selected subset of residents in the Lake Champlain basin.

People

The International Joint Commission appointed Ms. Deborah H. Lee as the new US co-chair of the study, effective September 24, 2019 upon the retirement of former US co-chair Keith Robinson. Ms. Lee is the director of NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory and has more than 30 years of experience in water resources engineering and management. She also serves as the US Co-Chair of the IJC's Research Coordination Committee and is the President-Elect of the American Society of Civil Engineering's Environmental Water Resources Institute. The Commission and the Study Board members thank Keith for his service to the study and wish him well in his retirement.

On the Web

Stay updated on the Study Board's work and upcoming public meetings and publications by signing up to receive electronic updates via our email distribution. Click on our home page (https://www.ijc.org/en/lcrr) and scroll to the bottom to join.

Public participation is an important part of the study process. Want to know how you can be part of the conversation? Send us an email at lcrr@ottawa.ijc.org.