



Sudbury | **Étude**
Soils | **des sols**
Study | **sudburois**

metals • health • environment
métaux • santé • environnement

**INDEPENDENT
PROCESS OBSERVER'S
Quarterly Report
Vol. 2, No. 5**

Summer 2003

The Process Observer, independent of any organization or group involved in the Sudbury Soils Study, is impartial, and advises on matters related to the Human Health Risk Assessment and the Ecological Risk Assessment, as managed by the Study's Technical Committee with input from the Public Advisory Committee.

*As the Observer, **Franco Mariotti** is required to report to the public four times a year on the Study process. This is his fifth report. For information about the Sudbury Soils Study, please go to the last page.*

Table of Contents

Preface	3
Update	4
1. Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Meetings	4
2. Lead Added to the Sudbury Soils Study as a Chemical of Concern	4
3. Peer Review/Scientific Advisor Position	4
4. Communication to the Public.....	5
5. Status of the Environmental Data Bank.....	6
6. Results of June Open House.....	6
7. Criticism in the Media Regarding the Sudbury Soils Study Process.....	6
8. Proposed Project Timetable	8
Members of the Technical Committee.....	9
Members of the Public Advisory Committee	10
Contact Information	10

Preface

It has been one year and six months since I was appointed as the Independent Process Observer for the Sudbury Soils Study (SSS). My impressions of this process continue to evolve as this Study gains significance in the Sudbury community. The consultants, known as the SARA Group, have begun the important research and data collection for the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) and the Ecological Risk Assessment (ERA). Please refer to the Sudbury Soils Study website at www.sudburysoilsstudy.com for updates.

In June of this year, a few Sudburians criticized the SSS in the media. I will respond to some of those comments later in this report.

Update

1. Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Meetings

The role of the PAC in the SSS is crucial. One of its key roles is to provide advice to the Technical Committee (TC) and comment on its decisions. The PAC also ensures that the SSS is an open and transparent process.

In the last Process Observer's Report (No. 4), I stated my concern regarding the timing of PAC meetings. The PAC was meeting every three months while the TC meets monthly. I felt that PAC meetings were not frequent enough to respond to decisions made by the TC. Shortly after my report was published, at their next meeting, the PAC decided to increase the frequency of their meetings.

Accordingly, their next meeting is scheduled for September 16th at Cambrian College and they will meet every two months, on the third Tuesday of the month, at 6:30 p.m. thereafter.

My compliments to the members of the PAC; this positive response will be an asset to the process.

I want to emphasize that my criticism identified one shortcoming in an extremely important role PAC members play in the SSS. It is important to note that all twelve PAC members (one position is currently vacant) are **VOLUNTEERS**, as is the Chair, Ivan Filion. Their commitment and responsibility to this process cannot be overestimated.

2. Lead Added to the Sudbury Soils Study as a Chemical of Concern

It was announced at the July 15th TC meeting that lead would be addressed as a Chemical of Concern (CoC) in the Sudbury Soils Study. Lead is the fifth metal to be researched in the SSS along with nickel, copper, cobalt and arsenic. In August, the SSS web site will provide information on lead, including the reasons why it is considered a CoC.

3. Peer Review/Scientific Advisor Position

In my last report, I referred to the peer reviewer as a Risk Assessment Advisor. Upon recommendation from the PAC, the official title for this position has been changed to "Scientific Advisor". His/her role will be to provide independent input to the Technical Committee on the science of the HHRA and ERA Studies for the

duration of the Study. To date no one has been chosen for this position, but hiring of a candidate is imminent.

4. Communication to the Public

In June, a few Sudburians criticized the SSS in the media. This is an indication that many people are still naïve regarding the details and significance of the SSS. It also emphasizes the importance and need for continuous and frequent updates to Sudburians regarding the progress of the Study.

The SSS has entered a new phase with new challenges. A crucial challenge is the role of disseminating and articulating scientific information. My belief is that updates to the public should happen frequently and regularly. This can be achieved by:

- Open Houses, although not hugely attended, provide a face-to-face opportunity for members of the public to receive updates and process details from the people involved in the Study. Another Open House will be held this fall, however, a date has yet to be determined.
- Issue No. 2 of the quarterly SSS newsletter, "**Update**", will be published shortly after this report.
- The Process Observer's Report continues to serve as another vehicle to update and disseminate information.
- The bi-monthly PAC meetings are open to the public. These meetings often provide insight into the key issues of this Study and its complexities. Individuals are encouraged to ask questions of PAC members or attending TC members at the conclusion of the official meeting.

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for September 16th at 6:30 p.m. at Cambrian College in the Koski Centre. Subsequent meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of every other month thereafter.

- The SSS website is updated on a monthly basis. I have noticed that some reports from the website are difficult to download. The TC has been notified of this issue and the communications arm of the SARA Group will be correcting this flaw by providing reports in both html and pdf formats.

I encourage anyone who has questions regarding the Sudbury Soils Study, whether general or specific, to contact the TC through this website or at the toll free phone number which is 1-866-315-0228.

5. Status of the Environmental Data Bank

The public, TC members, PAC members and myself were notified last September that the Environmental Data Bank at Laurentian University might serve as a possible repository for all SSS data. Members of the TC report that there is no new information forthcoming with respect to the status of this endeavour. Discussions with Laurentian University are ongoing and because there are other priorities occupying the TC, this issue has been postponed to a later date.

6. Results of June Open House

On behalf of the TC, the SARA Group held a public Open House in the INCO Cavern at Science North on June 11th of this year. Over 60 members of the public attended and 16 detailed responses to a questionnaire prepared for the event were submitted to the SARA Group. Please refer to the SSS website where a Summary Report of the Open House can be viewed and downloaded.

During the Open House, information was delivered through large maps, information boards and one-on-one discussions with SARA Group staff members. Although the evening proceeded relatively well, I share some of the attendees' concerns that a formal presentation followed by a question and answer session might have facilitated further clarity of the SSS. This last point, I believe, is valid for the format of future Open Houses.

7. Criticism in the Media Regarding the Sudbury Soils Study Process

Recently two key criticisms have been made about certain aspects of the Study.

The first criticism relates to my position as Process Observer. Unlike PAC members, my position is not a volunteer position. I receive an annual wage to attend TC meetings, PAC meetings, Open Houses and public workshops. In addition, I am responsible for reading relevant material and writing the quarterly report. From the beginning, INCO and Falconbridge have supported this wage. For this reason it was reported that I could be influenced and biased in my advice to the TC. In other words I am perceived as possibly being influenced by INCO and Falconbridge.

Comments I make in my reports and in public are not directed nor are they edited by members of the TC or PAC and are made irrespective of where my wage originates. ***I provide comments and suggestions as a result of my independent observations of the process at TC and PAC meetings and have always been supported by the members of the TC.***

I do appreciate, however, that no matter what I might say, a perception of bias exists since INCO and Falconbridge provide payment for my position. To remove this perceived bias, I recommended to the TC that in future my payment be equally dispersed from all TC agencies and companies. I am very pleased to report that at the July 15th TC meeting, all decision-making members present, including the Ministry of the Environment, the Sudbury & District Health Unit, INCO, Falconbridge and the City of Greater Sudbury voted unanimously to contribute equally to my annual wage. Therefore, any perceived, undue influence on my position by any member of the TC has been removed.

Another criticism is that the Sudbury Soils Study is flawed because representatives from INCO and Falconbridge are members of the TC. It has been suggested that they should not be in a decision-making position, even though these companies pay millions of dollars for this Study

Let me say that INCO and Falconbridge are not directing the Study. The SSS process is set up so that **the members of the TC are directing the Study**. INCO and Falconbridge are two of six agency/company participants or TC members. The other four members are all institutions that represent the public and include the Ministry of the Environment, the City of Greater Sudbury, the Sudbury & District Health Unit and Health Canada.

The PAC's chair, Ivan Filion, and myself as Process Observer would, at the very least, note any undue influence or "arm twisting". We live in a democratic society. INCO and Falconbridge are a part of this community. They have a right to be a part of a consensus agreement in this Study.

I have attended all but one monthly TC meeting during the past one and a half years. Experience has shown me that decisions made by consensus, (sometimes through lengthy discussions) do work! In my opinion, the Sudbury Soils Study works.

**8. Proposed Project Timetable
July to December, 2003**

Monthly Technical Committee Meetings (TC)	July, August, September, October, November, December
Monthly Progress Reports	July, August, September, October, November, December
Meetings with the Public Advisory Committee (PAC)	September, November
Meetings with the Communications Sub-Committee (CSC)	July, August, September, October, November, December (and as required)
Vegetable Garden Survey	June-September
June 11 Open House report mailed to participants	July
Field surveys for Ecological Risk Assessment	August
<i>Have Your Say Workshops</i> with the PAC, and Whitefish Lake First Nation	Early September
Air Monitoring Survey	September 2003-September 2004
Update Newsletter published	October
Public Open House	Early November
Market Basket Survey	December
Meetings with Interested Stakeholders	As required
Communication of Findings to the Public Through Newspapers, Website and Mailings	As required

Members of the Technical Committee

City of Greater Sudbury

Bill Lautenbach, Director, Planning Services
Dr. Stephen Monet, Coordinator of Environmental Initiatives

Falconbridge Limited

Marc Butler, Environmental Coordinator
Dr. Gord Hall, Director of Occupational Health and Hygiene
Denis Kemp, Director, Environmental Development

Health Canada First Nations & Inuit Health Branch

Ray Alatalo, Environmental Health Officer

INCO Limited

Glen Watson, Environmental Biologist
Dr. Bruce Conard, Vice President, Environmental & Health Sciences
Dr. R.W. (Bob) Francis, Medical Director

Ministry of the Environment

Brian McMahan, Sudbury Soils and SO₂ Assessment Program
Dale Henry, Manager, Human Toxicology and Air Standards
Mary Ellen Starodub, Senior Advisor, Risk Management

Sudbury & District Health Unit

Bruce Fortin, Director, Health Protection Division
Ido Vettoretti, Community Environmental Health Specialist
Ed Wierzbicki, Environmental Support Officer

Chair, PAC

Ivan Filion, (non-voting), Academic Vice-president, Cambrian College

Communications Sub-Committee Chair

Cory McPhee, (non-voting), Manager, Communications, INCO Ltd.

Process Observer

Franco Mariotti (non-voting)

TC Facilitator

Dick DeStefano (non-voting)

Administrative Support

Julie Sabourin (non-voting)

Members of the Public Advisory Committee

Darrel Alston
Joe Cimino
Ronda Gougeon
Gary Hrytsak
Dino Masiero
Paul St. Jean

Norris Artuso
Ivan Fillion (Chair)
John Hogenbirk (Vice Chair)
Aino Laamanen
Rubina Nebenionquit
Vacant Position

Franco Mariotti (Process Observer)
Julie Sabourin (Recorder)

Contact Information

For any comments or questions regarding this report, the Sudbury Soils Study, the Technical Committee or Public Advisory Committee, please contact us at the following:

Telephone: 1 866 315-0228
or through our web site
at: www.sudburysoilsstudy.com