

Toxics Steering Group (TSG) Meeting Summary
September 28, 2010

In attendance:

Christopher Affeldt – Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE)
Amy Babcock – DNRE
Shannon Briggs – DNRE
John Buchweitz – Department of Agriculture (MDA)
Christina Bush – Department of Community Health (DCH)
Dennis Bush – DNRE
Gary Butterfield – DNRE
Michael Depa – DNRE
Jennifer Gray – DCH
Mary Lee Hultin – DNRE
Deborah Mackenzie-Taylor – DNRE
Lisa Quiggle – DCH
Robert Sills – DNRE
Emily Weingartz – DNRE

1. Update from the Front Office – Jim Sygo

- The Executive Division of the DNRE has been working through a Reduction in Force. The hope is to have it completed by September 30, 2010 or October 1, 2010, in order to proceed with other HR issues.
- The Legislature passed a bill regarding state worker retirement. It is expected to have immediate effect and the impact to the DNRE is unknown. Additional details should be released soon.
- The Legislature also passed the DNRE's budget for FY 2011. The budget includes a 3% cut from each administrative division.
- The Department recently completed the documentation that will be passed on to the incoming gubernatorial administration. Staff is reminded that requests for information from candidates' campaigns should be sent to the front office.
- The final trust agreements with the Motor Liability Corporation are in place. This is the project that will provide approximately \$168 million to partially fund the clean-up of approximately 12 abandoned General Motors sites across the state.
- The issue of urban gardening needs to be reviewed by the TSG; Jim will provide the TSG with a charge. In the meantime, a subcommittee/workgroup is to be formed to begin investigating the concerns surrounding the presence of heavy metals in soils used for gardening and/or farming. The participants are yet to be finalized, but it is expected that John Buchweitz will represent the MDA, and Michael Depa and Eric Wildfang will represent the DNRE. DCH is also asked to assign a representative.
- Regarding the Enbridge oil spill, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) will soon turn over responsibility for Division A (the release site) and Division B (Talmadge Creek) to the DNRE. DNRE staff is beginning to replace USEPA staff at Unified Command and plans are in place to assess

groundwater quality and monitor vegetative restoration in those areas. The USEPA and the United State Coast Guard will remain in command of Divisions C, D, and E at least through the end of the calendar year. Dredging at Ceresco is a possibility, and Enbridge has requested that the DNRE provide an estimate of FTE hours and other resources that will be allocated to the site over the next two years.

2. Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse (IC2) – Christopher Affeldt

- Former Director Chester signed a memorandum of understanding in 2009 to join the IC2; it was expected that the group would be a good fit with Governor Granholm's Green Chemistry Initiative. Nine other states are currently involved and a primary goal is the sharing of resources to deal with various legislation and policies regarding "safer chemical alternatives". Workgroups formed to date include a webinar group, an environmental and biomonitoring data group, and a classification and labeling group. The Northeast Waste Management Officials' Association and the Lowell Center for Sustainability at the University of Massachusetts have taken responsibility to facilitate and administer the IC2 as it becomes a fully functioning organization. The IC2 has a website up and running: <http://www.newmoa.org/prevention/ic2/>. The Executive Division will announce the DNRE liaison soon and Jim Sygo requested comments on the DNRE's participation in the IC2.

3. Metals in Topsoil – Bob Sills

- Remediation Division (RD) will soon begin taking soil samples from some residential properties in Belding. This work is in concert with the ambient air monitoring that began in January 2010 and found an exceedance of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for lead. There is interest in developing a characterization of the tendency for heavy metals to be taken up by commercial and/or residential crops.
- Also see bullet point six (6) under issue one (1), above.

4. Subcommittee Updates – All

- Mary Lee Hultin noted that the proposed redesign of the Part 201 program is of interest to the Children's Environmental Health subcommittee. Child-specific factors currently have a placeholder in the proposed language; the subcommittee will need to review the issue after other provisions of the redesign are in place.

5. Adjourn

Next meeting – Tuesday, November 23, 2010, 9 am – 11 am, Katherine Cushman Conference Room, Constitution Hall