

**Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Meeting
Spring Business Meeting
Lake Superior State University – Sault Ste. Marie
June 27 - 28, 2016**

Attendees:

Clinton River

Anne Vaara, SPAC Vice Chair
Lynne Seymour

Detroit River

Robert Burns, Detroit River Keeper

Kalamazoo River

Jamie McCarthy

Muskegon Lake

Kathy Evans
Cynthia Price

Menominee

Donna Buechler

River Raisin

Richard Micka

Rouge River

Sally Petrella
Bill Craig

Saginaw Bay/River

Dennis Zimmerman

St. Clair River

Patty Troy (on phone)

St. Marys River

Lisa Derickx
Kristina Denison
Greg Zimmerman
Mike Ripley
Aubrey Maccoux-LeDuc
Brian Wesolek
Emily Martin
James Dukes
Mary Rossiter
Ron Prickett

Torch Lake

Horst Schmidt

EPA

Pat Hamblin
John Perrecone (on phone)
Caitlin Nigrelli (on phone)

NOAA Fisheries

Terry Heatlie
John Catena

MDEQ

Rick Hobrla
Sharon Baker
John Riley
Jennifer Tewkesbury
Melanie Foose
Rachel Cromell
Alisa Gonzales-Pennington
Matt Tomlinson
Ginny Berry
Jon Allan
Jon Doyle (on phone)
Nichole Churches (on phone)

National Wildlife Federation

Jordan Lubetkin

MDHHS

Michelle Bruneau

MDNR

Neal Godby

Great Lakes Commission

Matt Doss
Elaine Ferrier
Heather Braun

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND REVIEW OF AGENDA – June 27, 2016

Anne Vaara, SPAC Vice Chair stated no changes to the agenda were proposed. Deferred approval of the March 2016 meeting minutes until the following day to allow more time for review.

Please note these minutes have been reformatted to meet accessibility requirements. The original content has not been changed. 7/2022

OFFICER ELECTIONS

Rick Hobrle pointed out that re-election is due for Chair and Vice Chair positions. Mary Bohling is willing to continue as Chair and Anne Vaara is willing to continue as Vice Chair. No other nominations came from the floor. Kathy Evans seconded, and all were in favor of Mary and Anne continuing.

REPORT FROM THE GREAT LAKES COMMISSION

Matt Doss reported on continued funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The last five years funding has been for about \$300 million a year. Roughly \$100 million per year is going into toxic and Area of Concern (AOC) focus areas, and it's supporting a lot of tremendous work.

Both the House and Senate appropriations committees have passed their funding bills through the EPA for next year, which will be FY17, and they've again put the GLRI at \$300 million. As always, he urges a continuation of the good work being done, and to continue to have kick-off events when starting up projects. He also wanted to recognize Jordan and the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) for supporting the Healing Our Waters (HOW) Coalition. They've been very effective in raising congressional awareness and support for the GLRI. The other group that works with the NWF in supporting the HOW Coalition is the National Parks Conservation Association.

There is legislation introduced in Congress to reauthorize the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act. It supports Fish and Wildlife Restoration projects and has been used as a vehicle for administering GLRI funds for habitat work.

Also an important piece of legislation is moving its way through Congress that would formally authorize GLRI – giving that program a stand-alone authorization, making it easier for Congress to support funding for it if the next administration does not.

The Council of Great Lakes Governors, which is now known as the Conference of Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers, recently released a new maritime strategy for the Great Lakes region looking to bolster commercial navigation on the Great Lakes.

More bills are working their way through Congress –funding for the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund Programs.

Horst Schmidt asked how much money is available for the fish and wildlife preservation funding. Matt thought they've had \$5 or \$6 million.

The Great Lakes Compact Council approved the application from Waukesha, Wisconsin to take water from Lake Michigan and use it. Patty asked if it would be helpful for the Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC) to have a position on this issue. Rick responded that it's too late because the decision has already been made. The SPAC discussed the details of the Waukesha Diversion.

IMPORTANCE OF AN AOC COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Rachel Cromell's presentation was about using a communication plan as a base for what is being worked on, whether it is for a yearly plan or for a new project; your "voice" should be united instead of individual. She spoke of elements, such as who, what, when, and where, as well as what the goal is – what is going to be announced. WHO are you reaching out to? WHAT is going to be said? WHAT is your goal? Which tools should be used; social media, legislator, press release, etc.? When and how should it be done, and possibly having a calendar of who will do what. Afterwards, was it done right? Was the goal accomplished? Did people understand the message?

She also spoke of crisis planning (what challenges your organization will be facing in the future, and what is going on in the world), and of annually listing out strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

AOC REFRESHER TIPS ON MESSAGING

Matt Doss explained social media is a very important communications mechanism, but he doesn't do it. He stresses audience, methods, and message (as Rachel did) the who, what, and how. Good to think strategically about those steps. Knowing your audience, who you're communicating with – messages as to what you're trying to say. What are you trying to get across? Tools that you use to do it. Heather Braun and Sarah Cook have done some work for the Great Lakes Commission. They tried to have a common branding and design theme that runs through their website. Similar color schemes, look and feel, logos, etc. throughout. Having a nice masthead too can really make a big difference. Faxing is the best way, and if you know the staffers, call their office and reach out to that specific staffer. The first paragraph in a letter should be right out there and exactly what you are messaging to them - short, to the point, and mostly not more than a page long. Photos are great, etc. Spoon feed them; give them what they need, keep it concise. Create relationships with those offices and staff. Get them to come out and see a site or project. Take their picture in front of it to put in a newsletter. You want to brand them with what you're working. That's time well spent.

Jordan Lubetkin echoed Matt and Rachel. Do your work ahead of time to have your communications plan. Use one that works, cater to what you can realistically do, and do it well.

USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR AOC

Jordan and several colleagues completed a Great Lakes tour and had twelve workshops. Rick and Rachel attended one and said it was excellent, but needed more on social media.

His main goal was to help use social media to fit your needs and goals.

Outline

1. Demonstrate Social Media's Importance.
2. Explain Terminology and Best Practices.
3. Break Down Barriers to Using It.

Twitter demographics

Twenty-three percent of people are on Twitter, Facebook is seventy-two percent, and Instagram is twenty-eight percent. There are different pros and cons to every social media platform. Tag target audiences on Facebook – tagging means directing a message to their social messaging presence.

Jordan thinks Twitter is best for targeting legislative officials. Eighty percent say less than thirty comments draw attention to an issue. Thirty-five percent say less than ten comments are enough to draw attention. Rachel used an example of the Holiday Inn recycling efforts. She tweeted them about their lack of recycling, and in less than half an hour, she received a response.

Terminology and Best Practices

Twitter:

“**Handle**” is your name on social media preceded by @, as in @healthylakes. Jordan was asked how to look up people’s handles. He said you need to know who your audience is. Media will put it in a lot of times at the end of their story – contact me at - Create a list.

“**Hashtag**” is a word or phrase following #, as in #Greatlakes that is a link to other instances that same phrase has been used. To look them up, use search bar of twitter (like a google search for twitter).

“**Link**” allows users to click on text and be taken to another part of the internet.

“**Photo**” is great to include in all posts, where possible.

Rachel –

Twitter - 140 characters. Short and precise.

Facebook – no text limit. Don’t write a novel.

Instagram – no text limit. Main focus is your picture.

Twitter – shortened links. Use service to shorten links.

Facebook – long form links.

Instagram - no live links. Bothersome to do.

Twitter – post at least once a week; at most several times a minute.

Facebook post at least once a week; at most once a day.

Instagram post at least twice a week; at most once a day.

Twitter – handles easy to link to.

Facebook – extra step required to link to.

Instagram – handles easy to link to.

Twitter – very public, easy to share.

Facebook - less public, easy to share.

Instagram - less public, harder to share.

Direct text alerts used to be the way to get key supporters talking, but we don't do that. He asked - Is Twitter taking the place of that?

Michelle Bruneau - It's very visual and keeps things active and interesting, even if it's just some pictures.

Kathy used an example of having THREE people voluntarily putting the information out there. With all three, they cover much more than just individually.

Best Practices - #NRA will only be a conversation about them whereas @NRA will get back to them so they see what you're saying. Horst Schmidt asked, "Who do we want to be our targets for our tweets?" Jordan said, for your AOC, for the St. Marys event tomorrow, what do we need to do to thank our funding source? Look up their handle. Also, let elected officials know about it. Get their handles. Partners, press, etc.

"See more" is after about 240 characters. **Facebook**

Jamie McCarthy asked how much overlap are the same people on twitter and Facebook? Is she possibly talking to the same group of people? Jordan said she probably has a decent overlap, but he wouldn't guarantee it.

Elaine Ferrier - Tweeting is handy for scheduling. It's powerful as an efficiency tool.

Cynthia Price – (Facebook) Is it advisable to have a separate event? It's good to have an event made up so you can target people. Using Twitter, Link to your event.

Social Media IS for a public space. You DO want everyone to see. If you want something more private, use something different.

Anne asked what the age group is of people using this. It seems to her that the younger generation is not using Facebook at all. They're tweeting and Instagramming. Is that it? Rachel said it's splintering – that makes more reasons to use it. Facebook isn't the only one anymore, but now there are more available. Now there are different media platforms, and different platforms are used for different reasons.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:00.

Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Minutes from previous day – Dennis Zimmerman approved minutes and it was supported. Anne changes under "Clinton River Reporting" – it says we were standing on the banks of the Clinton River. She asked that that change be made. Vote to approve. Approved.

REPORTS FROM THE MICHIGAN OFFICE OF THE GREAT LAKES

Status on Water Strategy

Jon Allan reported that it's been being worked on for the past couple of years. The first part of the strategy was released in Macomb County which was the first two chapters (strategy has nine chapters).

Rather than releasing all chapters at once, we're releasing in four sets of chapters so each section receives attention. First set "Healthy Waters and Stewardship," Forming Backbone of Water Strategy.

Next "Placemaking, Community, Recreation," may be mid-July, then "Economy Side of Equation." A question was asked about what Jon's feeling was about taking water and giving it away. Jon said the governor made the right decision based on many factors.

Waukesha will remove water and put it all back with many stipulations. In the agreement they included many straddling communities (half in and half out of the Great Lakes Region). Also saw approval that the 1.6 million gallons a day are returned. Historically, that water has been lost to the Mississippi River. All of these factors plus others made the decision pretty definitive. Good for the Compact, Great Lakes, and Region.

Capacity grant

Rick reported that we do have our grant from the EPA. It was issued with only two or three days left. The grant was what was expected. We should be able to maintain our current staffing and current level of funding for the PAC support grant. They did issue a three-year grant, but only committed to funding through the first year. This year could not overlap new grant with the old grant so PAC support grants could only be funded for work done through March 31. We shouldn't have that problem next year as we should be able to offer some overlap. It is critical to keep receiving PAC support grants. We could possibly have the same situation of no overlap in three years. We will work with the EPA in advance and try to head it off in the future.

Transition to MDEQ support of the SPAC – We're hoping to get a little ahead of the next meeting so as not to have to scramble like this we did with this one. We're making good progress on it. We were driven by the Little Rapids kick-off celebration too.

The next regional AOC meeting – tentative plan for next AOC conference at campus, March 29, and March 30, at Grand Valley Campus in Grand Rapids. This will most likely be the case. We will talk about coordinating the SPAC meeting with it. That winter is the one where we normally do a legislative briefing. We will decide that as we get closer.

Matt Doss stated that the GLC will help advise EPA on the agenda. They expect to be managing registration like they did this year and administering funding for travel by local AOC representatives to attend the conference. If we do want an SPAC meeting, let him know. He advised reserving the Mackinaw Room in the Anderson House Building soon for the legislative briefing as it gets booked quickly.

PAC SUPPORT, GRANT STATUS, AND QUARTERLY REPORTING

Jon Doyle is the budget liaison for OGL and helps to support the financial grant application and the reimbursements that we all have.

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORMS

If you're not a registered vendor with the state, you'll have to become one to receive travel reimbursement.

The form is online and pretty straight forward. Description can be SPAC meeting – miles – where travelled from. Put in miles and it will automatically calculate the rate for you. For each category, we will need an itemized receipt for each item you have – no credit card receipts. For meals – no reimbursement is allowed for alcohol or miscellaneous items. Toll fees, taxis, parking vouchers, would be expected.

Sharon said she did not mention “itemized” receipt for these folks and they’ve already spent money. What can we do? We can take a credit card invoice or receipt on anything that day. We will accept that from yesterday, but from today on, it must be itemized. On the credit card receipt, please write down what you ate. Even things you don’t normally get a receipt for, like a toll, I-pass has a registered account for you on their website, so you should be able to get a receipt there. You need to get it from there or get a receipt at a toll booth.

Dennis Zimmerman had trouble when he tried to become a vendor – the password he received didn’t work. Nichole told him to call the phone number for the vendor registration office, and they will help him on the phone.

There was much discussion regarding the reimbursement rate for mileage and whether it would be at the federal rate of \$.54 per mile or the state rate of \$.36 per mile. Because the MDEQ has to follow the State of Michigan travel regulations, it is to be \$.36 per mile. There was still disagreement as to why reimbursement could not be made at the federal rate, and it was asked if there was a motion to have someone in OGL look into it further. Nichole Churches agreed to follow up with it. Mike made a motion to look into the mileage as it should be \$.54. Bill Craig supports Mike’s motion. John Riley has volunteered to follow up on it.

Alisa updated the mileage issue – For this SPAC meeting, continue to use the federal rate. As an office, we will develop a policy pertaining to the grants that we administer. That will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Financial Status Report

The first page is a budget page, then staff detail page, and then quarterly reporting page. Alisa explained that we’re hosting a webinar with all grantees in July so an invitation will be sent for that. If you still have questions, Alisa and Jon Doyle will specifically go through it with you. There will be an instruction sheet going into detail of what’s needed for each item. They can submit a no-cost report if there are no expenses.

Jon hopes to have forms out soon. He says there are not a lot of functionality changes, they have more structure and are easier to follow. Anne asked if April – June is the first report? Alisa said some were issued earlier, but are ending at same time. It depends on turn-around time of the contract as to when we can reimburse (how far back). Kathy Evans stated that they always wait until the contract is executed. Details are still being negotiated until the contract is fully executed. Anne would like to see next grant start equally for everybody. John Riley explained some groups are more organized and get it executed earlier. The goal next year is for grant agreements to begin April 1.

Rick stated that a lot of changes are going on, and that all of these new issues are not because the state has taken on the changeover, it’s just related to changes in federal and state rules.

REPORT FROM THE GREAT LAKES NATION PROGRAM OFFICE

John Perrecone is currently working on BUIs and AOCs. The AOC conference in 2017 is on March 29, and 30, in Grand Rapids at the Eberhardt Conference Center on the campus of Grand Valley State University.

Rick stated there is a Great Lakes Public Forum coming up in Toronto the first week of October. It's important, as it only happens once every three years.

The U.S. Federal Government and Canadian Federal Government will tell everyone how they've progressed on the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Also it's being used by the International Joint Commission as an opportunity to take input on how the parties are doing. So there will be a report out from the parties on what's going on and an extensive public input session run by the IJC where they will invite folks to, on the record, submit their comments for the parties to inform them of how they're doing and where they should be going for the next three years. So a progress report will be issued from the parties in advance of this meeting,, and as a follow up to this meeting, the federal governments will put together a priorities list for action for the next three years.

John Perrecone added the Great Lakes Public Forum is on October 4-6, at the Allstream Centre in Toronto. For more information, visit binational.net. It is their official website for the Forum.

Kathy Evans had a question on the Great Lakes Action Plan and goals for BUIs and wondered if Michigan is doing its part in BUI removals. Jon said Michigan is a top performer in the AOC Program. The EPA goal is 55 BUIs for this fiscal year. Michigan has removed 41 BUIs, and the DEQ goal for the end of September is 43. We should hit that in a month or so and probably achieve three to five more this fiscal year. It takes time, but we're doing well.

Rick added Michigan has approximately 40% of the total BUIs for U.S. AOCs, and to date, Michigan is responsible for 60% of BUI removals of U.S. AOC's.

REPORT FROM THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Michelle Bruneau – Clinton, Saginaw, and Kalamazoo stock reports for fish consumption analysis are coming soon. Working with Joe to get out as soon as possible – they will be coming. For the PACS she's been working with, all of the signs have been distributed. They're getting posted by the municipalities - largely by volunteers. There's been discussion of putting up boxes with info inside. Volunteers would be needed to make sure they're filled. She'll supply the boxes. Wherever the signs are posted, they'll go under the signs, but she wouldn't be able to stuff them all, so she wants everyone's consideration. She explained that they look for strategic places to place the signs - - Where signs are already posted, they look for places where there's shoreline fishing, boat launches, access to water, parks, etc., so signs are going up in those locations. Language signs are available too.

IN-DEPTH AOC PRESENTATIONS

(See attached appendices.)

REPORTS FROM SPAC MEMBERS

Jamie McCarthy –Kalamazoo

Two activities are ongoing, one is the dam removal that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has initiated because the state is the owner of the dam, and it's in bad condition and failing. There are PCB contaminated sediments behind the dam.

They put in a temporary structure to hold sediments back, and they're working with the EPA superfund to try to get the responsible parties to remove those sediments. They weren't able to come up with consent agreement, so they decided to issue a clean-up order, and we'll see how that will pan out.

Second is looking at updating Fish Consumption Advisory Signage. They're reaching out to the community to ask people what info they think is useful. It was very insightful, and people had much information to share. They're going to add to that list to connect with city councils and administrators along the river. They don't necessarily know much about the signs, so they're going to do a better job with those communities and updating signs. They want to stress what people CAN do and try to get away from scaring people away with "don't eat the fish."

Dennis Zimmerman – Saginaw

Their group is forming a task force to look at the Beach Closings BUI and possibly developing their own criteria to include "muck." They have a lot of indications that when muck increases in the bay, especially at swimming beaches, the e-coli count goes up.

Saginaw Valley State University is doing a lot of qPCR DNA testing, and they will work with them to some extent to see if there is a direct correlation between the presence of muck on the swimming beaches and an increase in e-coli. Their first meeting for that task force is on July 11, and will hopefully give them an indication as to where they want to go by the end of the summer.

Their group does not have a physical address, only a P.O. Box. Thus, they have never been able to have a DUNS number. They are in the process of coming up with a physical address, so they won't have to use Bay County as their fiduciary anymore.

Elections – For the first time in their history, they've filled all of their board seats, and Bill Wright is Chair.

Still looking at the possibility of rock reef restoration for habitat purposes in the west central part of the Bay area. Dennis was re-appointed to be the SPAC representative for another two years for this group.

Horst Schmidt – Torch Lake

Have new members on PAC and have applied for grant that's in process right now. DEQ has been sampling Torch Lake for three years. Many chemicals are left over and barrels in states are being examined. They're working with the Remediation and Redevelopment Division to decide how to plan rejuvenation of the lake. The EPA says that it will take natural attenuation 850 years for the bottom of the lake to sustain life again.

Kathy Evans – Muskegon Lake

Projects are underway – large scale Habitat Restoration projects and a Legacy Act project are soon to start on Zephyr former Oil Refinery site.

Nine BUIs removed Restrictions on Dredging, Drinking Water, Fish and Wildlife Consumption, and Beach Closings. Local criteria were involved, and they met it as well as statewide criteria.

They're working on the Benthos BUI with the Great Lakes Legacy Act project that has been completed, a current one at the Zephyr site, and they got \$6 million to match that – that money is gone for sediment – worked with the State Senator and got money to go through the DEQ's Remediation Division to leverage the clean-up at the Zephyr site.

They are addressing the Eutrophication BUI by working on a project to remove phosphorus sediment from some celery flats upstream of Bear Lake.

The Aesthetics BUI will be gone as others are completed. They're very close. Fish and wildlife Habitat and Populations - \$12 million worth of work going on currently, and they're about to complete the design in lower Muskegon River above the lake. Anticipating \$7.5 million will be their final management under habitat to delist. They're on track for timing for delisting Muskegon Lake – Management actions should be done by the end of 2017 – possibly to have all paperwork and all done will be more like 2018.

Anne Vaara and Jen Tewkesbury – Clinton River Watershed Council

Clinton Watershed has eight BUIs - none removed yet, but ball is in play to have all removed within next two years. Ten habitat projects are underway, waiting on one to get it accepted by the EPA. The EPA is reviewing sediment data for Dredging. Aesthetics is being worked on by the EPA and Army Corps. The St. Lawrence Cemetery, where there is an exposed left over landfill, is moving towards remediation. The Eutrophication BUI could be removed as early as this fall. Beach closing - it's a heavily utilized park monitored through the health department. That's the trickiest one because of people's perception. Red Run Drain - their biggest issues are the flows, so they're still talking about habitat with federal flow issues and trying to wrap their heads around some of the functional metrics for that sub-watershed, but it's quite a process.

Lynn – with NOAA they have the spillway project, and it should be done by the end of this summer.

Jen Tewkesbury - Rouge

The habitat list has been completed. The EPA funded three projects which are in the works now to get approved. One is Henry Ford Estate Dam Project (key project for the fishery). Another will be in the Oxbow where they are creating fish habitat. The third will be dredging of lakes in the Middle Rouge, which also addresses the Eutrophication BUI. The lakes fill up with tons of sediment, so once we get that dredged out and we can recreate habitat, we'll be getting rid of the Eutrophication issue as well.

Bill Craig

They are developing a water trail on the lower Rouge River led by friends of the Rouge, getting people back to the river. Good PR Program. They also have the lower Rouge River dredging project; hopefully a plan will be out in the spring. It's ongoing.

Dick Micka - River Raisin

The River Raisin is on the brink of delisting. They had nine BUIs, removing one that's still in process. They got rid of BUIs for Habitat, Fish Passage, and the like. There are Deformities, Benthos, and Dredging BUIs remaining.

John Riley –St. Marys River

The Manistique River has two BUIs left – restrictions on Fish Consumption and Restrictions on Dredging. Their dredging contract was just awarded to be in late July/early August to work in two particular zones this year, wrap up in November, and phase two will be next year. That should be the last project. We should get all remaining PCBs and there are no more ongoing sources. They should be finished after next year. It'll just take a little time to see reductions in fish tissue.

Patty Troy – St. Clair River

On September 7, the St. Clair River will celebrate event completion of all habitat management actions, removal of hopefully three of their BUIs on the U.S. side - Benthos, Beach Closing, and Bird and Animal Deformities. On the Canadian side they will be looking at the Beach Closing and Dredging BUIs. The Bird and Animal Deformities BUI removal document is expected soon and will be for consideration at our July meeting.

Successful Sturgeon Festival with 6,000 people. She participated in an exercise that involved over 400 people simulating a spill from the oil pipeline under the St. Clair River.

Bob Burns – Detroit River AOC

Three years ago they got a PAC support grant – gathering information on all existing documents that have been done as far as surveys and information on sediment contamination in the Detroit River. The reason they're doing so is because they have major issues with Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat, as well as Degradation of Benthos. They've been gathering information and formed a technical assessment committee, and the information was reviewed. Rose Ellison from the EPA took that information and got approval from the EPA to do additional sediment sampling throughout the Detroit River. She's currently finishing up the last two areas. Hopefully by the end of the year they'll have all of the data in, and the technical committee can review the data and have a list of potential sites for mediation by the end of this year or first of next year.

Mary Bohling wanted an update on the fish spawning reefs. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the United States Geological Survey continue to monitor activities of fish around the reef areas. At St. Clair, this spring, they were able to gather a lot of eggs and live sturgeon larvae which showed signs of spawning and also hatching in those areas.

In the upstream area of Belle Isle a reef is scheduled to be installed in late summer/fall. They will be having a celebration of that reef construction in September or October on Belle Isle.

They are trying to move forward with a project on Lake Okonoka to connect with the Blue Heron Lagoon too. They have completed the engineering and feasibility phase and are currently putting plans together and need to bring plan specifications back up 95% completion. They'll be applying to NOAA for additional monies to do so, so they can get the specifications for a bridge that needs to be constructed, and also an approval from MDOT for a causeway to connect Lake Okonoka to the Detroit River.

Stoney Island Habitat Project

DNR owns the island. Last fall they applied for money from NOAA to do that project. This will receive a total of \$7.4 million. They chose the contractor, and construction starts at the end of this week.

Additional funding came from NOAA for a partnership agreement around the Detroit River.

Emily Martin – The St. Marys River

The St. Marys River Little Rapids project will be the last management action. It will address Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Degraded Fish and Wildlife Populations BUIs. The BPAC has agreed to submit a letter of support for removing the Eutrophication and Undesirable Algae BUI on the U.S. side.

Donna Buechler - Menominee

There will be an Open House on September 15, for the BUI Removal of Fish Consumption and maybe Dredging, and Benthos, and all management actions will be complete sometime this year.

OTHER ITEMS

Anne Vaara made mention that there will be three different celebrations this fall.

Kathy Evans would like AOC updates earlier in the agenda.

Rick reported that the U.S. Canadian government advises to check the website binational.net regularly. AOC is one annex under Great Lakes Water Agreement.

Rachel Cromell announced that OGL released the State of the Great Lakes Report 2016.

Jon Allan explained that we try to tell stories and are always looking for important pieces to put in. Not just AOC but voices we're really looking for. Any ideas, talk to Rachel Cromell.

PLANS FOR THE NEXT SPAC MEETING

Where and when is the next SPAC meeting? Several mentioned it could be timed with the

September 15, celebration for Menominee. Sharon said the fish elevator would be there, and white fencing. She mentioned the Kalamazoo area.

Rick encourages the AOCs with celebration events or who have an action to be able to coordinate a tour, to volunteer to host the SPAC meetings. The U.S. AOC conference will be looking for opportunities to provide field trips.

Muskegon has an exhibit in the museum right now that is good. It will be there this fall.

Matt prefers after the first week in October for an SPAC meeting.

Anne asked about deferring to a planning committee. Kathy preferred it. Who would like to be a part of it? Kathy Evans, John Riley, Sharon Baker, Rick Hobrla, Mary Bohling, Jamie McCarthy, and Matt Doss would all like to be a part of the planning committee.

There was general support for holding a legislative briefing in Lansing, an SPAC meeting in the Clinton River in spring/summer and at Muskegon Lake in the fall.

A planning committee teleconference will be organized and a decision will be made then. Rick asked about themes for next or future meetings. Please let them be known, or e-mail ideas to Rick and Sharon.

Some suggestions were: Partnerships and how they were formed, How do you sustain partnerships when you don't have money? Restoration round-ups and hearing from those projects, Habitat projects, and Challenges, and how you overcome them.

Bill Craig suggested each AOC present a project. It wouldn't have to be done, but it would give a chance for everyone to highlight one of their projects, the challenges, etc. Rick noted that that discussion is why we had two longer presentations today, in this meeting.

Donna - A more in-depth presentation would be more interesting.

REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

Action items - Sharon will set up a call to plan the next meeting.

LOGISTICS FOR LITTLE RAPIDS PROJECT

John Riley reviewed the logistics for attending the Little Rapids project celebration. Rick congratulated St. Marys' BPAC for reaching this point, and said that it's not just their victory; this is really everyone's shared victory.

Anne thanked Sharon and Matt for a great turn out, and for a great meeting too.

ADJOURN

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:35.

The Lower Menominee River's Story 6-28-16 (36 pages)

June 2016 SPAC Little Rapids Presentation (23 pages)