

S-PAC Meeting Notes
Richard Austin Conference Room
10/10/17

Attendees:

Jon Allan, OGL, MDNR	Rick Hobrla, OGL, MDNR
Mary Bohling, Detroit River AOC	Jamie McCarthy, Kalamazoo River AOC
Sharon Baker	Richard Micka, River Raisin AOC
Dan Ballnik, Rouge River AOC	Amanda Oparka, Clinton River AOC
Anne Brasie, Clinton River AOC	Christina Pastoria, OGL, MDNR
Rachel Coale, OGL, MDNR	John Perrecone, EPA (via phone)
Bill Craig, Rouge River AOC	John Riley, OGL, MDNR
Kelsea Dombrovsky, Guest (UM PhD student)	Horst Schmidt, Torch Lake AOC
Matt Doss, Great Lakes Commission	Paul Seelbach, OGL Senior Visiting Fellow
Jon Doyle, MDEQ	Stephanie Swart, OGL, MDNR
Paulette Duhaime, St. Clair River AOC	Matt Tomlinson, MDEQ
Melanie Foose, OGL, MDNR	Patty Troy, St. Clair River AOC
Kimber Frantz, OGL, MDNR	Dennis Zimmerman, Saginaw River/Bay AOC
Pete Frauson, Saginaw River/Bay AOC	

Meeting commenced at 12:34 p.m.

Attendees introduced themselves.

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Jon Allan introduced Paul Seelbach and shared some of the work he's doing with the Office of the Great Lakes. Paul is a professor of practice with the U of M and OGL has formed an agreement to collaborate with him on projects, including projects with the AOC group. Goal is to dig deeper and put together stories and numbers, facts and figures to show value of the AOC work.

MATT DOSS reported that the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) annual meeting was held in Duluth. The new chair is John Stine. Matt recognized Jon Allan for his leadership as chair of GLC.

Matt also reported that GLC director Tim Eder has left and gone to work for Mott Foundation. The GLC is engaging in a search for a new director. In the meantime, Tom Crane is interim executive director. Advocacy work on Great Lakes priorities continues. GLRI has been long standing priority for Commission. Federal budget proposal for FY18 proposed to eliminate funding for GLRI. GLC is advocating to ensure we retain funding. There is strong bi-partisan support for GLRI. House has put it at full funding. Senate is expected to start work soon. Matt urged all to weigh in with members of congress and senators. He suggested bringing them in for PAC meetings or tours. Upcoming events include working with RAP coordinators to come up with list of GLRI projects. Tom said the list could be used as resource to make pitch to congress for next year's GLRI. He said GLC will share list first. AOC conference will be held next year in May in Cheboygan, Wisconsin. Commission will be giving travel support.

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

Matt discussed Blue Accounting Program. He described it as a program started in partnership with the Nature Conservancy. Paul Seelbach was involved in the early part of the project, which developed new ways to track information and measuring progress regarding environment, economy, and culture. GLC and Nature Conservancy are preparing to launch the website this fall. Blue Accounting pilots will be presented at Governors and Premiers Conference Oct 18-20. More info can be found now at a page on the Commission's website.

JOHN PERRECONE from EPA gave short update regarding AOC programs and budget. He said the GLRI budget allocation is \$30,000,000. As to GLRI, he said we do not know what the next budget is going to be.

John gave FY17 Highlights. The goal was to remove 72 BUIs in all US AOCs. We removed 73. In the category of Management Actions Completed, John reported the target was hit for the first time. The goal was 11, and 11 actions were completed. The eleventh was St. Marys River AOC as the result of completing the Little Rapids Project. Finished River Raisin and Lower Menominee as well. John said Michigan is going to be a target next year. At the end of November, John will be in Michigan. He will focus on what BUIs are coming up next year. Michigan is always a big contributor to BUI removals.

As for Michigan AOCs with BUIs, the Lower Menominee has three left: 1) Restriction on Fish and Wildlife Consumption; 2) Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat; and 3) Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations. Stephanie and Laurel will put together packages and hopefully BUIs will be removed by February 2018. The goal is that by late 2018 or 2019 we can delist lower Menominee River.

Dates for AOC conference – May 16 and 17, 2018 – Cheboygan Blue Harbor Hotel. Matt (GLC) is helping. Hopefully planning committee will meet in November. Pulled together agreement with EPA and Wisconsin DNR.

Next step is a meeting with DEQ and other agencies to discuss which projects to work on. Will be incorporating into packaging for funding – who will be maintaining, who's going to monitor, who will handle issues that come up. How will project be managed long-term? Including long-term management information in project proposals is strongly recommended. Draft approach is in the works.

Mary Bohling said SPAC would be happy to offer feedback on draft document in the works.

Matt Doss stated that the most recent GLRI report FY16 has been offered to the federal administration. He said it has a lot of good information, and he noted it has an introduction from Scott Pruitt who is very laudatory of GLRI.

Rick Hobrla gave brief intro for Paul Seelbach. Paul has begun building a team of faculty and students to study how to support PACs.

PAUL SEELBACH described his role as that of a bridge builder, bridging between University of Michigan and environmental groups. He's also working with OGL to address coastal priorities. Paul will look across the history of the 14 PACs/AOCs for lessons that can be

learned one to another. The goals are collaboration, social networking, community building, and bringing recommendations back to the office on how best to facilitate and support PACs.

Paul is preparing an initial class for U of M students that will start in January re: relationships, community engagement, environmental leaders. Sister classes are now forming around complementary aspects of AOCs, including discussions with English department. The goal is sharing the stories of the PACs and AOCs through the power of narrative. Paul said the urban planning department is interested in zoning and development. The law school is interested in legal issues around urban planning. The business school is interested in economic visions and futures. Paul is also working on sponsoring a couple of theses. Paul introduced Kelsea Dombrovsky, a Ph.D. student observing the meeting.

Question from Dennis Zimmerman on meeting with Paul's group and his PAC. Paul answered it would be best to meet on the phone a few times with the students. A team of 5 or 6 students could meet on phone, and then limited travel for in-person meetings. Paul said they would welcome four or five people from Dennis' PAC for in-person meeting if they came to U of M.

DICK MICKA reported that the River Raisin PAC was appointed commission on the environment for the City of Monroe. He shared that the group would hear from the mayor during the SPAC conference about Monroe's story. Paul Seelbach said he would like to engage with Dick's PAC.

Horst Schmidt asked Paul Seelbach how far along he was in terms of classes and how structured the classes would be. Paul answered that they are not very far along in the process, and that the classes would be formal university classes for students, for credit.

Dennis Zimmerman asked for contact information for Paul Seelbach.

Paulette Duhaime asked what the goal of Paul Seelbach's work project is. Rick answered that we want to learn from past to help decide what to do in the future.

RICK HOBRLA provided a report on Office of the Great Lakes.

Rick said, for the first time ever, OGL has brought some economic expertise into the mix. Christina Pastoria, Economic Analyst, will talk about it during the meeting. Rick announced that Kimber Frantz is a new member of the administrative support team in the office. OGL is planning and implementing a physical move from 6th floor to the first floor of Constitution Hall.

With regard to funding, OGL is in the middle year of three-year grant from GLRI, including staffing and grants. EPA and States negotiated an increased amount of money. OGL is half-way through the middle year. Funding for that year was granted and OGL has moved ahead with PAC support grants.

Additional funding is dedicated to Paul's work, Michigan natural features to work on coastal atlas, and to water resources for sampling on Torch Lake. Additional funding was approx. \$540,000. Have not committed additional funding to final year. If things go as expected in the spring they'll invite OGL to apply for additional funding and they will decide then whether to

grant it. Rick thinks it's highly likely OGL will get the last year of funding. Beyond March 2019, we do not know what will happen. The grant increase was based on a new formula. St. Clair, Detroit, fish testing was part of additional funding.

Program staffing is stable at this point. The next priority is to hire someone who will work on grant support, tracking federal grants, working with Jon Doyle on PAC grants, and would be SPAC liaison. OGL still has Sharon Baker's vacancy and is discussing whether to backfill. OGL hasn't made decisions on that.

Took longer than hoped to get them out, but PAC grants are all out. PAC grants were in the ballpark of what has been given in the past.

Rick talked about meeting with EPA, during which every AOC in the state would be discussed and there would be an opportunity to pitch AOC projects.

Rick said a face-to-face meeting with the Four Agency Management Committees (includes Environment and Climate Change Canada, Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, EPA, and OGL) would take place next Thursday in Sault Ste. Marie. On the agenda is walk through each of the binational AOCs and further discussion of Lake St. Clair conference which will be hosted by US. Working on position papers. The group will visit the Little Rapids project that was completed last year and local people will give presentation.

The four agencies' manager representatives are OGL Rick Hobrla; EPA Mark Tuchman; Environment and Climate Change Canada John Gee; and Ontario Minister of Environment and Climate Change Lee Orphan.

JON DOYLE discussed new Financial Status Report (FSR) form – Summary of all detail of what is submitted for reimbursement. Two changes – 1) mileage rate is not locked down; each quarterly report, the current mileage rate will need to be input; 2) Task / comments has been added so timesheet does not need to be sent.

In hours worked, hours input will be figured by rate and show up in match column. If you don't have match, and/or want all or part to show up under grant, input amount for grant into grant column and the amount will move to proper column.

Jon Doyle would like to get Webinar out to appropriate people in PACs to show new items on FSR form and how SIGMA will change reimbursement for grants.

Anyone who is seeking payment must sign up as a vendor through SIGMA. Goal is to submit FSRs through SIGMA by January. Jon Doyle will send link to everyone for the site.

CHRISTINA PASTORIA introduced herself and said that her background is in international relations and economics.

She described the Mott Project as a grant to look at the economic impact of the GLRI. Looking at the GLRI as if it was an economic stimulus. Full report isn't out yet, but one of the things it shows is that it did act like an economic stimulus. Focused on individual expenditures of projects. Used economic analysis software that shows how many jobs were

created and dollars spent. Case study analysis in four areas: Duluth, Wisconsin; Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Muskegon, Michigan; and Buffalo, New York.

GLRI was a game changer for those areas. How do you place value on services those areas provide? Goal is to show, if you clean up a habitat, what is the value of the ecosystem services you may have created. Provisioning, regulating, wetlands, erosion. OGL wants to look into it further. Christina is developing that project. Challenges: expensive and time consuming. It's important to look at eco-system before you can look at economics. Goal: find a way to collect the information without taking that sort of time and money, but still producing valuable dependable results. In beginning stages. Hoping to create a framework that is inexpensive and can be trained to use the model.

Communication to decision makers, can help OGL prioritize their projects by where they can see the most impact for the resources available.

Supporting services are harder to measure, but we're trying to look at that. For example, habitat, soil retention. Trees hold soil in. What would it cost to hold that soil without the trees.

Want to develop program that can be used by others including those who don't have an economic background.

Provisioning, Regulating, Supporting, Cultural. Focusing on Provisioning, Regulating, and Supporting if we can.

MATT DOSS discussed Remy model and Hedonic pricing index and the economic impact of cleanup and restoration. Would like to look at ways to capture the things the Remy model is not capturing. Discussed how the GLRI is working. Also discussed Brookings Institute report from 2007. Healthy Water, Healthy Economy. Economic models can estimate population differences. If not for GLRI, area would have 8,000 less people because of better quality of life.

MARY BOHLING discussed responsibilities of position of Chair and Vice Chair. What is the length of term of the Chair and Vice Chair? According to bylaws, term is two years with an option to renew, so total of four. Mary Bohling is asking for committee or show of hands of who may be interested in the position of chair or vice chair. Mary would like to be ready for a vote by next meeting. She said one of the changes they made was that if the person serving as vice or chair attending meeting, they would get separate travel funding than a third person.

Motion to establish committee of three to poll members and determine who is interested in position of vice chair. Motion was approved. Bill Craig and Dennis Zimmerman and Patty Troy volunteered to be committee of three.

RICK HOBRLA talked about bylaws. They are from 1995. They are 22 years old. Rick suggested approaches to update bylaws. Could be committee of three. Could be given as duty to SPAC liaison once that person is hired. They would propose revisions and bring back to group for approval.

Melanie will send out bylaws. With all appendices, bylaws are 134 pages. Without appendices, 10 pages.

Patty Troy made motion to form subcommittee to review bylaws and make recommendations. Dennis seconded motion. Motion approved. Volunteers are Dennis Zimmerman, Patty Troy, Bill Craig, Horst Schmidt, and John Riley. Expectation is that the suggested updates to bylaws will be presented at next meeting, or that an update will be given.

UPDATES FROM PACS

KALAMAZOO (Jamie McCarthy) – Kalamazoo River projects are ongoing. Record of decision was signed off by EPA. 80 miles, seven different sections. Good forward progress. Some early plans include that responsible party would be removing large scale dam on river. Estimate of five years to finish that.

Progress regarding dam from last year. On schedule, maybe a little ahead of schedule. Been posting on social media with pictures, and it's been getting a lot of attention.

Working on something with Michelle Bruneau – finalized some Eat Safe Fish signs. Developed two signs: Do not eat and Check before you eat. Going to replace signs at 25 kiosks along eight-mile stretch.

CLINTON – Lynn Seymour stepped down. Anne Vaara stepped down as PAC chair and SPAC vice chair. In September, PAC chair was voted in: Mary Bednar. She works for Clinton Twp Director of Public Services. Habitat projects are underway. Spillway project is just about complete. Will do a little more work in spring on invasives. Eutrophication BUI write up is being written up. Army Corp completed construction on it. Paddling group is excited about the work. Beach closing BUI – there was public hearing last week by Rep. Lucedo. Townhall style meeting. Residents brought up other topics. Macomb Co. Public Works office and staff from DEQ have been talking to Huron Co. Metro Park Authority. They seem open to doing project there on the beach. Red Run – received a letter from EPA that said their final offer was \$1,000,000 for the Red Run subwater shed habitat project. PAC voted to accept and inter-county board is coming up with plan for infrastructure. And new Executive Director, Anne Brasie.

SAGINAW (Dennis Zimmerman) – Sent in suggested criteria for BUI beach closings. Will be doing some work on that. BUI for eutrophication – will set up a task force and work it and set up standard. On 27th state of the bay conference was held in Bay City.

RIVER RAISIN (Dick Micka) – Been appointed by Mayor. Have removed 5 BUIs. Lot of work. Mayor will update at the SPAC Legislative Briefing. Dredging is being monitored.

Worry: flow – water is low. This could be a tough year. Lot of ice. Looking forward to working with Paul Seelbach. Working with Michelle Selzer with harmful algae blooms. Working with federal agency partners. GLRI projects at Sterling State Park and Sterling Island. Surrounded by phragmites. Work with Fish and Wildlife Service to make sure their properties are in shape. Dr. John Hartig is leaving. Going to help Canadian and US Governments clean up the GL as a Fulbright Scholar.

ROUGE RIVER – No BUIs removed yet. Friends of the Rouge continue. Pug Nosed Shiner on endangered list. Working on habitat projects. First set have been revised and are on website. Projects are going out for bid. Army Corps is going to spend 2 million on concrete channel and last four miles of Rouge River. Lower Rouge River old channel around Zug Island. Held up on that project seeking non-federal partner.

TORCH LAKE (Horst Schmidt) – Horst reported a \$24,000 grant to hire Environmental Engineer to study data gathered in the past. DEQ is putting money into Torch Lake, this is year 4. May finish up next year. EPA came in with emergency response team to Lake Linden at the top of the lake. A storm ditch was found that is dumping water in from north and stirring up toxic materials related to C&H, a copper company. Region 5 is coming, looking for community involvement. The PAC meets every month. Goal is to bid for GLRI funding.

ST. CLAIR (Patty Troy) – EPA approval of fish and wildlife BUI and Bird or Animal Deformities BUI leaves two on U.S. side: drinking water and fish consumption. The Canadian side has four BUIs. Removal of contaminated sediments is pending.

(Paulette Duhaime) – Habitat: happy to hear EPA is interested in funding including maintenance because it may encourage local partners to continue maintenance of Krispin Drain Blueway plus Marine City drain. Cottrellville keeps mowing although PAC is asking them not to. Advice was given to get maintenance agreement in writing.

DETROIT. Restoration Tour was in August. Debbie Dingell spoke. Belle Isle and Stony Island construction is ongoing and completion is expected next year. Celeron Island construction will come soon. Lake Okonoka construction will come soon; going out for bid.

Upper Detroit Riverfront—Contract with EPA. Design to be completed in 2018.

Upper Trenton Channel Legacy Act project in planning stages for a couple more years.

Belle Isle Flatwoods to restore habitat and hydrology of the forest.

ST MARYS AND MANISTIQUE (John Riley) – John provided update on the Little Rapids Project. He said we should get data next year and can remove BUI.

St. Marys: fish consumption, tumors, benthos remain.

Manistique: Back in water next fall to start last project in Manistique. Expect dredge completion in 2019. Expect management completion in a couple of years.

MATT DOSS mentioned there is talk about some type of GLRI funding on their side.

MENOMINEE (Stephanie Swart) – Stephanie reported that management actions done. Doing some habitat projects. BUIs should be removed by spring. Delisting doc will be started early next year.

MUSKEGON – Five remaining BUIs in progress. Removal of BUIs and management actions completion likely by 2019.

END OF PAC UPDATES

MARY BOHLING said there is a lot of work going on. She said that GLRI makes it possible.

Mary said Michigan Sea Grant has an open position for an educator in Saginaw Bay area.

BILL CRAIG reported good press from Debbie Stabenow on GLRI successes re: Kalamazoo and Rouge River.

RICK HOBRLA shared information about 10/11 legislative briefing.

MATT DOSS spoke about significant economic impact of GLRI.

MARY BOHLING reported District 103 declined (Stabenow's office), Kelly Green will attend.

PAULETTE DUHAIME reported that a webinar about how to deal with media would be helpful. (Rachel, Stephanie and/or Melanie, Christina). Matt Doss said it could be part of AOC conference in May.

Sea lamprey presentation was suggested as possibility for AOC conference.

Next SPAC meeting is a two-day meeting in March. Perhaps media training at that meeting; will investigate.

For location, perhaps Saginaw at Saginaw Valley State University. John Riley can contact person at college.

Meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.