

Maumee AOC Advisory Committee

August 17, 2017 9:30am – 11:30am

TMACOG, 300 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Toledo OH

Conference Call # 614-387-7405

MINUTES

Attendees: Sandy Bihn (phone), Matt Kovach, Jenny Carter-Cornell, Sally Gladwell, John Kusnier, Paul Hotz, Jim Carter, Melanie Coulter, Tim Schetter, Cherie Blair, Kari Gerwin, Lynn Garrity, Cassie Lovall, Leah Medley, Nick Bohland, Archie Lunsey, Jeff Schaeffer, Henry Streby, Russ Terry, Andrew Haynes, Bryan Hinterberger, Kris Barnswell, Don Schmenk, Scott Butterworth, Deanna Bobak

- **Welcome & Overview:** John Kusnier welcomed everyone and asked those on the phone to announce themselves.
- **Review Agenda/Vote to Approve Minutes:** John briefly reviewed the agenda and drew people's attention to the minutes that were previously distributed & available as hardcopies as well. Sally made a motion to approve the April 25th minutes as written & Jim seconded. Motion passed with no objections.
- **Updates from BUI Sub-Committees:** John invited a representative from each of the BUI Sub-Committee to give an update on what they'd been working on so far.
 - BUI 3a & 14a: Henry explained that this sub-committee had begun collaborating with BUI 6 team because they see a lot of intersection and overlap. The sub-committee has met monthly and spent approximately 10 hours working through 6 steps to dig into the resources and references that help assess these specific BUIs and the data used for the targets. The team plans to bring in more resource people to discuss potential ways to address the problems and improve the BUIs. The team has observed long gaps (geographically) in stream sample locations leaving many miles of streams where it may be challenging to identify specific projects. The team is focusing on streams that aren't being re-sampled soon because the new sampling could alter any assessment they make using old or existing data and this significantly narrows where they are focusing their efforts right now. They are looking for and using other tools and resources, such as a USGS modeling tool for fish communities, to supplement data gaps.
 - BUI 6: Cassie explained that their team has met twice and is planning to collaborate with the BUI3a & 14a team, as Henry said. They've spent time getting familiar with expectations and trying to understand their role and the data available. They will spend time delving into the QHEI scores, which they see as important, in addition to the ICI scores, to better look at the whole picture to see if they can tease out what is at the root of low macroinvertebrate scores in specific stream reaches. Cherie has provided additional data, beyond what was in the DMDS (note: this is now available in the DMDS as well). They also see a strong value in working with the recently developed Non-Point Source Implementation Plans as a resource for defining critical areas and potential project ideas and to provide overlap in the projects identified both in the AOC program and the 319 program, as appropriate.
 - BUI 8 & 11: John briefed the group on their team's work.

- BUI 14b: Tim Schetter provided an update. This team has met extensively in the past and is now re-convening to reach out for updated projects, new projects, and re-evaluate those remaining on the potentials list. Of the 3400 targeted terrestrial acres, approximately 150 additional acres need to be identified, with preference in the Oak Openings and Coastal Wetlands areas (but projects outside those areas could be identified). 1900 acres were previously proposed, approved, funded and some are underway. Additional projects are approved but awaiting funding or on a potentials list but in various stages from engineering to partial restoration. This team plans to have projects identified and ready to propose for a vote at the next MAAC meeting.
- Discuss process, challenges, progress to date and questions or next steps: John asked for feedback from the teams on what challenges they've encountered or other questions or concerns that may have arisen. Cassie asked if the Tetra Tech maps from a previous report could be made available to the teams (in digital format) and compiled as one map, in addition to the assessment unit level maps. Cherie will provide it. The team was also interested in where they could find the NPS-IS plans that have been created. Cherie explained that Ohio EPA has approved plans but not posted them. She should be able to get the plans and share with the teams. Additional plans in the AOC may also be developed. Ohio EPA issued an RFP for Habitat-focused plans, using the NPS-IS template, as a framework.
- **Discussion of future Outreach & Education (Kris)**
 - Kris summarized some ideas for future outreach and education that PCS would help the MAAC undertake, based on informal, ad hoc meeting with some of the committee members. Are there new suggestions? Ad hoc working group met and further explored some ideas. Strong support for continuing outreach activities and modernizing them, such as short videos, engaging classes, go to other programs such as SWW, maybe a contest, but no clear task was defined as high priority or formed into a path forward. The full committee did like the idea of changing the Summit from a meeting format to a tour of some AOC projects, either in the summer or late fall. It could be a bus tour, in addition to the proposed Sandpiper tour(s). It's late this year to pull that together but Kris will work on planning for it over the winter/spring. Kris will work with Jenny (and others) to develop some speaker's bureau material over the winter/spring. The group echoed the idea of getting info about the MAAC & AOC into other venues/audiences of established groups or initiatives. Kris also suggested asking for other partner's videos, until one could be potentially developed specifically for the MAAC/AOC.
 - John also brought up that he has attended many other watershed group (and AOC based) organizations annual meetings, festivals, conferences or receptions and that many are fundraisers or have some event tied in with them. He suggested we consider exploring a gala or fundraising event that would attract corporate donors, Rotary members, other influential leaders. This would broaden the awareness of the MAAC's work and the connection with other organizations (such as Rotary, who seem very interested in water right now) and provide more funding to do work with. Kris reminded the group that PCS does this, to augment the more limited grant funding that is now secured. For instance, Clean Your Streams is only approximately 50% funded by the AOC support grant and often is even less when PCS can secure other grants or corporate donations to supplement it. PCS would need clarification from Ohio EPA if staff time could be spend planning and overseeing an AOC fundraiser. Perhaps the monies could be held in the RAP-SEP fund and used for projects. Kris also suggested that the MAAC committee consider how to tap into existing fundraisers and ask that those go towards water quality (such as being a charity recipient of a corporate fundraiser, event or a run, etc). The MAAC members themselves, could plan and implement any fundraiser on their time and donate the money to PCS (or the SEP account). John asked if PCS could take on more activities, tasks, or projects and Kris replied that more funding

would be needed for capacity or the priority set between tasks so that direction was given on what tasks to re-evaluate and what new one to replace it with. Kris is working on the extension of the Ohio EPA support grant and will consider all these suggestions in revising the tasks and work to be undertaken over the next 6 months. Approximately \$18,000 remained in the grant funding as of the end of June. Kris expects that to be mostly spent down by the end of September.

- **Ohio EPA Report:** Cherie provided a written report and made some brief remarks.
 - Project tours for new US EPA Task Force Leader: Cherie explained that she organized tours of many AOC projects for Leah. Leah said that it helps her fight for project money to support the BUIs here as she can picture the type of projects here and be more familiar. It helps them evaluate applications. She is a good point of contact for anyone wanting to discuss projects as they think about them and evaluate them in sub-committee.
 - Update on Ohio EPA stream sampling: Sampling is almost done for the year. All lacustrine areas were sampled at least once. See her written report for details but one note was that Swan Creek, at Highland Park, had a strong fish community that was diverse and abundant. PCS oversaw an in-stream restoration project there in 2008/2009. Duck and Otter Creeks appear to remain impaired and the Williams/Berger Ditch cutoff, near the UT treatment wetland, seems challenged to support aquatic life. Cherie will let the group know when specific results are available.
 - Status update on MAP/EP list (v1.0): An updated list was circulated electronically.
 - BUI status tracking and removal projections: See her written report for specifics but one item to note is that Ohio EPA tried to collect turtles, to re-evaluate the turtle advisories, on the Ottawa River and at Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. They captured two snapping turtles. Field staff noted that the Ottawa River area was still actively trapped and may be over-trapped. Cherie asked if other agencies had collected sampling turtles recently that they contact her, to see if additional data could be shared. Ohio EPA will proceed with the turtles and try to complete the study.

- **Facilitating Organization's Report (Kris)**
 - DMDS: Kris mentioned that she and Cherie are working with Davey to continue to update & resolve some technical issues. The DMDS is still live and is being used by the teams.
 - Kris quickly summarized a few outreach activities, which have included numerous small cleanups, newsletter, social media, boat tour. The water quality cruise on the Sandpiper (funded by the SEP fund) was successful again this year. The boat was full and people were interested in the various speakers.
 - Support grant status
 - As of June 30, 80% spent, 3 months left (20%)
 - Extension until 3/31/18, including funding at same level
 - Kris informed the committee that Army Corp staff came visit to Miakonda and see the project several years post construction. Kris highlighted some of the new additions that the Scouts have made that were galvanized because of the restoration project. She also showed the Corp some of the challenges, such as maintenance of the habitat restoration areas.
 - Kris reminded voting members about State of Ohio Ethics Training. In response to a question, she clarified that voting members should take the training at least once during their two-year term and others are encouraged to take the training as well.
 - Kris will discuss the process & timeline for applications to join the committee at the next meeting.
 - Kris reminded everyone to sign up for MAAC newsletter and follow on social media @MaumeeAOC



PARTNERING FOR CLEAN STREAMS

- **SEP Fund Update** (Kris)
 - Kris let Kari update the group on the Clear Choices, Clean Water campaign. Kari briefly explained it and showed it on screen, thanked the committee for the financial support, and highlighted that it is underway and encouraged everyone to go in and make a pledge and share the website.

- **Partner Reports**
 - Other Partner Reports: There were many other partner reports. Kris showed a brief video and aerial footage of the Howard Farms project, with Tim & Russ narrating. The project is well underway and should be open to public in the spring of 2018.
 - Don, with ODNR, highlighted the Maumee State Forest project, which is underway.
 - Russ highlighted the Toussaint project. Phase 1 is underway and Phase 2 is partially funded. They plan to capture aerial photography and video on this project as well. Ducks Unlimited is also working with FWS & US EPA to identify and design restoration projects for properties along the Toussaint and Packer Creek.
 - ODNR staff announced that they may need help with moving mussels soon as the Ballville dam gets drawn down in preparation to be notched. Cherie said she would pass along this information, as an FYI to anyone who wants to help (outside of the AOC).

- **Future Meeting Frequency, Dates, Times** (Chair)
 - There won't be a Summit in December but will be a committee meeting. Kris will send a Doodle poll about the next meetings. The sub-committees will keep meeting at their convenience.

- **Public Comments:** None.

- **Adjourn**