

Maumee AOC Advisory Committee

December 8, 2016 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Conference Call # [614-644-4743](tel:614-644-4743)

MINUTES

- **Welcome & Introductions** (John Kusnier, Chair): Participants introduced themselves on the phone. **Attendance:** Cherie Blair, Kris Patterson, Tim Bollin, Daryl Dwyer, Jenny Carter-Cornell, Sally Gladwell, John Kusnier, Bill Buri, Jim Carter, Paul Hotz, Melanie Coulter, Bryan Hinterberger, Cassie Lovall, Joshua Miller, Russ Gibson
- **Review Agenda/Approve Minutes** (John Kusnier, Chair): August and October minutes were both presented for approval. Tim Bollin motioned for the August minutes to be approved. Bill Buri seconded. The motioned passed. Tim Bollin motioned for the October minutes to be approved as written; Sally Gladwell seconded. The motion passed.
- **Updates on Biological Subcommittee:** Melanie Coulter reported that there have been several joint subcommittee meetings. BUI 3b: Sentinel Species Identification – The subcommittees worked from a list of 43 species monitored by ODNR and narrowed it to 9 species and added 7 species based on local conditions. Species were eliminated based on elusive or difficult to track/monitor, present in very small populations in the AOC, indicative of urban or suburban habitat or are generalists, migratory, managed as game, indicative of invasive plant or animal species, dependence on artificial platforms, towers, barns, buildings, etc. The hardest part was getting data or reliable information about their populations here. The most available data set was ODNR for some species. After discussion, the committee narrowed it to 4 species with potential data sets and potential for future monitoring and then chose two species to represent the AOC populations – wild turkey and sandhill crane (bald eagle and trumpeter swan were eliminated). Tetra Tech, Cherie, and ODNR put together population data and looked at some past trends. This was also presented to the committee. The data presented showed populations for both species are generally on an upward trend, although documented numbers of the sandhill crane are still very low (i.e endangered in Ohio). Cherie reminded the group that the target calls for “a steady or improving healthy, reproducing population...for 3 of the last 5 years.” John asked if we could remove this BUI then? Cherie responded no, that it is only half of the target for this BUI and the other part is still impaired.

Daryl asked if there are other known species that are declining, especially due to habitat? Cherie responded that the committee didn't consider that and the target doesn't look at that. Daryl asked if we could use only past data sets even if next year there are no sandhill cranes (for instance if they were wiped out)? Cherie said that is something that would have to be considered at the time of BUI removal, but that the target does allow for 3 of the last 5 years. Melanie wanted clarity on if habitat restoration projects could still move forward even if this data shows these populations meet the target? Cherie said yes, are addressed under other targets. Cherie reminded the group that all targets will be done once this one is accepted. Paul motioned to accept the proposed sentinel species; Daryl seconded. The motion passed. Ohio EPA will now determine if the target is appropriate and acceptable.

BUI 3a, 6, 14a projects – The subcommittee held a work session & open house to review info about each sub-watershed in the Maumee AOC and to brainstorm known or potential projects appropriate for the AOC program. Cherie briefly reviewed some draft maps and Ohio EPA sample data within each watershed. Tetra Tech will still be making corrections and refining the maps but this was a discussion starter. General discussion of types of projects or ones that were already underway (as examples, not priorities) were discussed. If anyone attending knew of specific projects with the potential to move forward quickly, those were noted. Other projects were more conceptual ideas or suggestions based on reviewing a quick snapshot of the data presented. Tetra Tech and Ohio EPA will prepare a report, incorporating this feedback and the maps. Cherie also said that the sub-committee would meet to review the draft list of potential projects in January and the full committee would be presented with them in February.

- **Update BUI 14b Projects:** Cherie updated the group on the recommended projects and timeline. The revised sub-set of projects are at various stages of moving forward on the paperwork with US EPA. The Toussaint East/West project will likely go through US FWS rather than NOAA or Ducks Unlimited. NOAA made note that of all the projects awarded through their GLRI funding, the Maumee AOC had received the most funding overall. The committee discussed acknowledging how quickly US EPA moved to make these projects possible. It was suggested that Ted be sent a letter recognizing his and his agency's efforts.
- **Ohio EPA Report:** Cherie reviewed her written report. See attached written report incorporated as part of the minutes. Russ Gibson asked if we had a sense of what other agencies are doing in the AOC, such as NRCS? Cherie responded that Cheryl is someone she can contact and keep in touch with their big projects. Cherie is also in touch with Black Swamp Conservancy and others who may do work or have potential activities in the AOC. Cherie brought up the example of the recent sub-committee meeting where a log jam removal project for the Toussaint came up. It's not directly related to the AOC program but it is something for the committee and Ohio EPA to be aware of for 2017. The suggestion was made to share this information at the TMACOG watershed's committee meeting. Russ Gibson pointed out that one of the single most important things that you can do to protect water quality is have a healthy riparian coordinator, including trees. He also commended the committee on how pleased he is with the Ohio AOC groups that have moved forward so much in 18 months since the state put forth the Framework.
- **Facilitating Organization's Report:** Kris reported that TMACOG will be submitting a project report & invoice soon on their Junction Ave project. It is expected to be on budget. PCS has organized and held several small stream cleanups, attended numerous subcommittee meetings, helped plan the Summit, worked with a consultant on improvements to the DMDS, and more. Of the AOC support grant, Kris reported that as of November, there was approximately \$60,000 remaining. Kris mentioned that the SEP money could support future boat trips since that was so popular this summer. The Clear Choices, Clean Water campaign that TMACOG is organizing is still getting going. The MAAC, with the SEP funds, previously supporting sponsoring the campaigns and use the campaign to provide general education. Kris will share updates in the future as the campaign gets going. A discussion ensued about the need to seek a higher level of community engagement, beyond the already successful volunteer programs. The committee discussed many different ideas and avenues to broaden the understanding of the AOC program and the overall goals towards "fishable and swimmable." Many members feel it is extremely important to keep the community engaged,



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informed, and excited to provide momentum towards the complex and varied restoration projects in the region, especially given the heightened concerns here about water quality. Some suggestions included reaching out to Rotary, to downtown business groups/associations, to birding and tourism organizations, to talking points for speakers and other organizations who regularly interact with the public (such as Metroparks, Zoo, Sandpiper, etc). The challenges of pursuing additional outreach and educational programs, materials, staff time, audiences, etc were also discussed. The committee supports the ongoing, existing initiatives through PCS and recognizes that there may be more that can and should be done. The committee decided to form an ad hoc committee, if there was enough interest, to brainstorm with Kris and develop a path forward with action steps and active participation from committee members. It will be discussed again at the February meeting.

- **Announcements and/or Updates from Ex Officio & Resource Members** (open floor): Bryan, with the Army Corp, reported that there are five projects in concept or in the works for the Maumee River and that they are ready and willing to move forward with the funding and resources for the additional Maumee River sampling. Bryan mentioned that Mike will be coming to committee meetings in 2017 so that there is an in-person presence from the Corps. Jim, with Wood Co, mentioned that there will likely be other ditch maintenance and/or log jam projects moving forward soon, including Packer Creek. Drennan Ditch will also be dredged, in Lucas Co.
- **Future Meeting Frequency, Dates, Times** (Kris)
 - Bimonthly mtgs at 2pm on the following dates: February 22 (tentative) and then future dates will be set up with the committee at the first meeting.
 - Additional Sub-Committee Meetings will be scheduled as needed
- **Adjourn meeting**