

## Maumee AOC Advisory Committee

April 25, 2017 10:00am – 12:00pm

Conference Call # 614-644-4743

### MINUTES

**Attendees:** Tim Bollin, Matt Kovach, Jenny Carter – Cornell, Sally Gladwell, John Kusnier, Bill Buri, Jim Carter, Melanie Coulter, Tim Schetter, Cherie Blair, Lynn Garrity, Cassie Lovall, Nick Bohland, Archie Lunsey, Joshua Miller, Deborah Millsap, Henry Streby, Russ Terry, Jeff Guerrero, Katie Evans, Kris Patterson

- **Welcome & Overview:** Kris Patterson welcomed everyone.
- **Vote: Elect Committee Vice Chair:** Tim Bollin was nominated at the last meeting but unable to make it so the vote was tabled. John Kusnier asked if Tim is willing to accept a nomination to be Vice Chair again & he accepted. John asked for vote. The motion passed with no objections or abstaining.
- **Review Agenda/Vote to Approve Minutes:** Sally Gladwell motioned to approve the past minutes. Jenny Carter-Cornell seconded and the motion passed with no objections or abstaining.
- **US AOC Conference:** John Kusnier gave a brief overview of the US EPA AOC conference in March. A number of representatives from the Maumee AOC attended and John reflected that it helped him better understand how important it is to keep making progress, while funding is available, and how AOCs are approaching BUIs differently but have a path forward outlined. The Maumee AOC has been making progress and needs to keep working on defining their path forward & share about our accomplishments more.
- **Discussion of Draft MAP/EP vetting metric and Timeline for Revised Lists:** Cherie presented the committee with a draft list of points to keep in mind when considering management action projects (MAP) and evaluation projects (EP) to add to the existing list. This list is not in a ranked order of importance but a set of considerations for discussion. The committee asked some questions, discussed some ideas that they didn't see captured on the list, and provided some additional information on how some criteria should be more importance or emphasis than others. This is not meant to be a "hard & fast" set of criteria but just some guidance.

Some key discussion points included how to capture cumulative benefits of a project (i.e addressing more than one BUI, ecosystem benefit in addition to specific BUI benefit, etc) and the relevance of the project being key so how should enough information be gathered to support evaluating the relevance? Discussion ensued. The question arose, "Are management actions meant to only be GLRI (or even AOC) funded?" Cherie noted that there are projects already on the list, or in the past, that have many different funding sources. The funding sources are noted on our list but some agencies, such as NOAA or US EPA, do expect the MAPs are likely to be GLRI funded. Josh also noted that every BUI is at a different stage of progress so it is hard to evaluate a project if enough isn't known about the BUI metric, status, or how to make progress. This discussion led to setting up BUI-specific teams of experts to delve into the details of the BUI progress, metrics, and to better define what types of projects best "move the needle" for particular BUIs. The teams may also identify specific projects that get proposed for addition to the MAPs/EP lists. BUI teams were formed around BUIs 3, 6, 8, 11, & 14. Some discussion ensued around how to combine teams or split BUIs

up depending on the specific metrics of each BUI that made sense to combine. BUI 4 was also proposed for a team but Cherie put that on hold for now to wait for the new stream sampling data in 2018. Cherie will provide a step-wise analysis of the state-led BUIs and their status and path to removal. John will work with Cherie to produce some guidance documents or charts to help teams proceed through a step-wise process to evaluate the BUIs. BUI teams ended being structured as follows:

- BUI 3a & 14a: Josh Miller leading
  - BUI 6: Cassie Lovall leading
  - BUI 8 & 11: John Kusnier leading
  - BUI 14b: Tim Schetter leading
- 
- **Discussion of future Outreach & Education:** In lieu of another lengthy discussion (and risk running out of time), Kris proposed a small group meeting over lunch to explore ideas further and she had noted some of the suggestions from past meetings on the agenda. Kris suggested that the committee skip to Mr. Lunsey's update.
  
  - **Update on Ottawa River NRDA settlement:** At the last meeting this settlement, and a newspaper article, was brought up by a citizen and there wasn't much additional information known so Kris invited Archie Lunsey, from Ohio EPA, to come update the MAAC. Archie outlined the structure of two distinct settlements related to the Ottawa River NRDA. One was previously settled with Ohio Department of Transportation for cash that is held in a trust account. The more recent one is with other potentially responsible parties and has been in negotiation for many years. The Departments of the Army, Air Force, Navy, and other federal parties, along with a group of businesses collectively called The Ottawa River Group. The ORG et al settlement published a draft restoration plan about a year ago, and about 2 years ago, ORG had moved ahead with purchasing the primary property proposed in their settlement. Comments were accepted on the draft plan and the agreement is now final. The City of Toledo portion of the settlement (proposed work on some small, specific properties and possible some additional monies) is still pending. Some issues still have to be worked out on the settlement, such as where the cash portions of the settlement could or would be spent in the future to benefit the restoration of the area. Discussion and questions from committee members centered around understanding when & where settlement monies might be spent and how to propose additional projects for this pot of money to best benefit the Area of Concern. Archie pointed out that there are a number of legal constraints and several entities who would make decisions, and no firm timeline at this point, but to go ahead and send him & Debra, with Fish & Wildlife Service, proposed project ideas. Creative leveraging or funding is also being explored by the state, such as matching other funds, aligning monies such as bankruptcy settlements, and looking to other programs, such as the AOC program, for projects that would accelerate or be at the top of the list but there is also a number of specific criteria for NRDA project selection.
  
  - **Ohio EPA Report:** Cherie provided a written report and highlighted a few items, such as the extension of the sub-awards through March of 2018 so that the facilitating organizations can continue to support the AOC activities & Tetra Tech's report is final and available by request. Cherie also highlighted that the Do Not Eat fish consumption in the Ottawa River has been reduced. Other updates are included on the written report.
  
  - **Facilitating Organization's Report:** Kris briefly updated the group. The support grant is 50% spent (at end of March), and it currently ends in Sept. Kris will reach out to those interested in working with her on brainstorming outreach activities and actively engaging in broadening outreach, prior to the next application for AOC support funding. She reminded committee members about State of Ohio Ethics Training.

- **SEP Fund Update:** Due to time, Kris referred committee members to review this update on their own. She will highlight it again at future meetings.
- **Partner Reports:** Russ Terry, with Ducks Unlimited, presented an update on a MAP project in the lower Toussaint area. Ducks Unlimited is working to secure several properties. One 50-acre parcel has signed a purchase agreement and two others were appraised and refused the offers. They are modeling other nearby properties to find additional high priority areas. There was also a CNN story aired nationally that included several local restoration projects, including Howard Marsh & Magee Marsh.

Josh Miller, with USGS, also briefly mentioned the progress being made on developing a GIS-based model for the habitat potential in the lower Maumee River. He envisions this model as a way to start conversations with other groups not currently active in the AOC work and to get more partners engaged.

- **Future Meeting Frequency, Dates, Times (Kris)**
  - The group discussed future meetings and decided to focus on the BUI-specific teams over the summer, intending to hold at least one team meeting per BUI team. The full committee will re-group in late summer. Kris will create a poll to find an available time & location.
- **Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
- **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned.