

John O'Meara, P.E.
Executive Director



DRAFT FULL ARC MEETING SUMMARY ALLIANCE OF ROUGE COMMUNITIES

June 1, 2026, 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena; 525 Farmer St, Plymouth, MI

1. Welcome (Charles Markus, Vice Chair)

a. Roll Call /Determination of Quorum - Roll call was taken. The 33 members listed below were in attendance, which was sufficient for a quorum.

ARC Member	Attended Y/N	ARC Member	Attended Y/N
Auburn Hills	Y	Oakland County	Y
Beverly Hills	Y	Oakland County Road Commission	Y
Bingham Farms	Y	Oak Park	Y
Birmingham	Y	Orchard Lake	N
Bloomfield Hills	N	Plymouth	Y
Bloomfield Twp.	Y	Plymouth Twp.	N
Canton Twp.	Y	Redford Twp.	N
Commerce Twp.	Y	Rochester Hills	Y
Dearborn Heights	Y	Romulus	N
Farmington	Y	Schoolcraft College	Y
Farmington Hills	Y	Southfield	Y
Franklin	Y	Troy	Y
Garden City	N	University of Michigan-Dearborn	N
Henry Ford College	N	Van Buren Twp.	Y
Inkster	Y	Walled Lake	Y
Lathrup Village	Y	Washtenaw County	N
Livonia	Y	Wayne	Y
Melvindale	N	Wayne County	Y
Northville	N	Wayne County Airport Authority	Y
Northville Twp.	Y	West Bloomfield Twp.	N
Novi	Y	Westland	N
		Wixom	N

Others in attendance were: Chris O'Meara, Tennille Newsome, John O'Meara, Alice Bailey, Emily Levine, Amy Funck and Noel Mullett – ARC Staff; Ashley Flintoff - Friends of the Rouge (FOTR); Megan McReynolds, Christine Caddick, Jen Tewkesbury – EGLE; Bailee Pasienza – Southeast Michigan Coalition of Governments (SEMCOG); Dan Gold – Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA); John Buskiewicz – Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Fisheries; Kaitlyn Reedy-Arch Env Group Inc.

b. Additions or Changes to the Draft Meeting Agenda

None

c. Approval of June 16, 2025 Meeting Summary

The motion was made by Dearborn Heights to approve the December 3, 2025, Full ARC meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Livonia and passed unanimously.

2. EGLE Presentation (Rouge BUIs)

Jennifer Tewkesbury introduced herself and presented on the beneficial use impairments (BUIs). [EGLE Rouge River AOC June 2026 ARC Presentation](#) Some highlights were:

Auburn Hills
Beverly Hills
Bingham Farms
Birmingham
Bloomfield Hills
Bloomfield Twp.
Canton Twp.
Commerce Twp.
Dearborn Heights
Farmington
Farmington Hills
Franklin
Garden City
Henry Ford College
Inkster
Lathrup Village
Livonia
Melvindale
Northville
Northville Twp.
Novi
Oak Park
Oakland County
Orchard Lake
Plymouth
Plymouth Twp.
Redford Twp.
Rochester Hills
Romulus
Schoolcraft College
Southfield
Troy
University of
Michigan-Dearborn
Van Buren Twp.
Walled Lake
Washtenaw County
Wayne
Wayne County
Wayne County Airport
Authority
West Bloomfield Twp.
Westland
Wixom

Cooperating Partners:

Cranbrook Institute of Science
Friends of the Rouge
Great Lakes Water Authority
Rouge River Advisory Council
SEMCOG
Southeastern Oakland
County Water Authority
The Henry Ford

- The history of Rouge Area of Concern (AOC)
- BUI history and removal criteria
 - The Rouge has 9 BUIs; Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption, Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae, Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations, Beach Closings, Fish Tumors or Other Deformities, Degradation of Aesthetics, Degradation of Benthos, Restriction on Dredging Activities, Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat
 - The history of each BUI and the current status of state level removal criteria was shared
- Rouge is unique as it is one of only a few AOCs where the entire watershed is the AOC. Most are only the river or lake itself.

3. Executive Director Report

a. Grant Report

John O'Meara reviewed the grant project status included in the handouts. Some highlights include:

- Inkster and Merriman Hollow Habitat Restoration have started construction.
- Patton Park Restoration Design is a grant project in the City of Detroit, the City had asked and ARC to act as fiduciary. Hopefully this will lead to the City to becoming an ARC member.
- Erb Family Foundation supports identifying sources of sanitary sewage and helps with municipal staff training regarding MS4 permit requirements.
- Northville has a SEMCOG planning assistance grant for Legacy Park.
- EGLE PAC Support Grant – facilitates RRAC and FOTR monitoring of macroinvertebrates.
- ARC recently reached an agreement with Wayne County Parks to fund vegetation maintenance through the ARC at previous restoration sites.
- Submitted/pending grant applications include:
 - EPA GLRI Wallaceville Restoration
 - EGLE NPS - Watershed Council Support
 - MDNR Fisheries Habitat
 - EPA Environmental Education

b. Curt Wolf, U of M, NbS Solutions in Rouge Flood Control [Rouge Flood Control Presentation](#)

- a. Curt Wolf works at U of M to try to push research into practice. He represented on the Southeast Michigan flood risk management study, a partnership between GLWA and USACE following the catastrophic 2021 floods. The study is attempting to combine models to look at different types of flooding.
- b. The team is looking into and working with NFW for nature-based flood control issues.
- c. There is an open call for projects that could be incorporated into this study, ideally eventually getting away from one-off grants.

c. MS4 update

- a. Noel Mullett reported that some communities have started to receive their draft MS4 permits for public notice. This requires posting the public notice that EGLE provides either visible within a public building or within a local newspaper. The public notice directs interested stakeholder to the MiEnviro portal to access the draft permits for review. Members are requested to share with ARC staff when they receive their draft permit and public notice request. When permit approvals are received, the ARC needs to know when it has been posted on member websites and the ARC will also post it on their website.

d. Call for Projects

- a. John O'Meara called for any ideas that communities are interested in as ARC staff is constantly watching for potential funding.

e. ARC Identified Staffing Update

- a. John and Chris O'Meara will be retiring. As of June 1st, Noel Mullett will be Executive Director. Tennille Newsome will be taking over administrative and financial duties, and Maria Kuenzer will be handling many public education duties. Emily Levine will be MS4 contact.

4. Treasurers/ Finance Committee Report

a. A/P, A/R & Profit/Loss Report

Rebecca Runkel, Treasurer covered that invoices for 2026 have been sent. The A/P, A/R, and Profit/Loss Report are attached to the handouts.

b. 2025 Single Audit

The 2025 Single Audit is underway.

c. Ratify E-Email Votes

Rebecca Runkel reviewed the email votes to be ratified.

- i. 2/13/26-9 yea and 0 nay: Approval of bid award for EPA18 Rouge River AOC Merriman Park Implementation to DMC as the contractor in the amount of \$696,112.56
- ii. 2/13/26-9 yea and 0 nay: Budget adjustment to EPA18 Rouge River AOC Merriman Park Implementation adding \$23,580 to ECT Work Order 2025 HABITAT ECT2
- iii. 2/13/26- 9 yea and 0 nay: Budget adjustment to EPA10- Rouge River AOC Wilcox/Phoenix Implementation adding \$30,055 to ECT Work Order 2022-2 and \$43,500 to Entact Change Order No. 3
- iv. 2/26/26-10 yea and 0 nay: Approval of bid award for EPA15-Rouge River AOC Inkster Park Wetland Implementation to Anglin Civil as the Contractor in the amount of \$2,846,525
- v. 3/27/26-11 yea and 0 nay: Budget amendment adding \$53,250 for EPA16 Rouge River AOC Perrin Park Design to the 2026 budget and corresponding ECT Work Order 2024-HABITAT ECT1 rev1
- vi. 3/27/26-11 yea and 0 nay: Budget amendment adding FC2 WCP1 Vegetation Maintenance \$375,724 to the 2026 budget

The motion to ratify the six email votes was made by Oak Park. The motion was seconded by Farmington Hills, and passed unanimously.

d. Budget Adjustments/ Amendments

Rebecca Runkel reviewed the budget amendments that John had covered under the grant status report.

The motion was made by Dearborn Heights, to approve the FC4-SPAC13 Budget Amendment adding \$115,000. The motion was seconded by City of Wayne, and passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Inkster to approve the FC5-EPA14 Inkster Design Budget Amendment adding an additional \$70,325. The motion was seconded by Dearborn Heights and passed unanimously.

e. Contract Revisions/ Amendments

Rebecca Runkel reviewed the budget amendments that John had covered under the grant status report.

The motion was made by Inkster to approve the WCP1 Vegetation Maintenance adding \$52,339 to ECT Work Order 2026-ECT2 and the Plantwise, LLC. Agreement in the amount of \$323,385 as presented by the finance committee. The motion was seconded by City of Wayne and passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Dearborn Heights to approve the Friends of the Rouge Work Order 2026-2 adding \$64,000 and ECT Work Order 2026-ECT4 adding \$51,000 for the SPAC13 RRAC PAC Support grant as presented by the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Oak Park and passed unanimously.

The motion was made by Inkster to approve the Revision 2 of the ECT Work Order 2024-Habitat ECT1 adding \$70,325 for the EPA 14 Inkster Design Grant. The motion was seconded by Van Buren Township and passed unanimously.

5. Standing Committee Reports

a. Organization Committee

Chris O'Meara explained that some procedures were not well documented, and they have been formalized. The motion was made by Rochester Hills to approve the Annual Budget Preparation & Budget Amendment and Adjustments Procedure as presented by the organization committee. The motion was seconded by Dearborn Heights and passed unanimously.

b. PIE Committee Report

Jacy Garrison reported the following PIE activities:

- The handout includes information on current activities.
 - There is an upcoming septic workshop on June 17; any promotion is helpful.
 - The committee is thinking about a detention pond workshop next year.
 - There is a survey regarding water quality in the Rouge, and has lower participation than past years so far.
 - A realtor mailing is being planned for later in the year.
 - Reminder to order banners, and contact ARC staff if unaware of how to use the website.
 - The ARC now has an Instagram and each community is encouraged to follow the account.

c. Technical Committee Report

Tyler Sonoga reported the following:

- The ARC received the MS4 approval letter from EGLE.
- 1,061 outfalls were sampled, 40 required follow up sampling, and the follow up sampling has been completed.
 - 11 of those required further investigations.
- Initial 2026 outfall screening has been focused in Southfield and Lathrup Village due to EGLE detecting elevated in stream *E. coli* levels in Evans Ditch in 2025.
- An MS4 training and outfall screening class was provided for ARC members.
 - Noel Mullett reported that currently the ARC works with Oakland University for outfall screening sample analysis; sometimes they are not available. A master services agreement was reached with Wayne State last year but they could not be as flexible or price competitive as Oakland University (OU) is so they have not been utilized. The University of Wisconsin (UW-M) Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences reached out about working with them; they are not as flexible as Oakland but more flexible and price competitive than Wayne State. It may make sense to have them as an option. With no ARC member concern raised ARC staff will pursue making the UW-M an option to provide laboratory services including human biomarkers.

d. Nomination Committee Report

All officers have agreed to serve another term, but if somebody is interested in running, please contact Tennille.

6. Report from Cooperating Partners

Friends of the Rouge

Ashley Flintoff reported:

- Spring Bug Hunt was held with 98 volunteers, sampling 29 sites across the watershed. Wayne County Parks sampled additional sites. Fall bug hunt will be held on October 10th.
- Fish sampling has been scheduled to begin on June 10.
- More outreach is planned on GLRI habitat projects; Colonial Park frog and toad listening, Maiden Lake has a frog walk scheduled.

GLWA

- The third annual water quality report was recently published, and a webinar covering the report will be held June 11 from 1-3 pm.

SEMCOG

Current SEMCOG activities include:

- A resilience task force has been formed that members are welcome to join, and there is a solicitation for projects to incorporate into the flooding and resilience plan. This is not a guaranteed source of funding. Please visit [Flooding & Resilience Initiative](#) for more information.

- A Community Green Infrastructure grant project solicitation is open until August 21, with assistance available for every step. \$3.2 Million is available with projects being funded ranging from \$50,000 - \$300,000. Please visit [SEMCOG Community Green Infrastructure Grant Program](#) for more information
- SEMCOG is also encouraging municipalities to upload information on their capital improvement project into the Southeast Michigan Regional Infrastructure Coordination Hub (RICH). Please visit [Southeast Michigan Capital Improvement Projects Data](#) for more information.
- SEMCOG will also be hosting a [Stormwater Management Utility Guidebook webinar](#) on June 30, 2026.

6. Report from Counties

Oakland County

2026 Regional Stormwater Summit will be held on Friday, October 16, 2026

Wayne County

Wayne County reported that they are in the middle of ten year, \$120 million project to eliminate sanitary overflows from the Rouge Valley Sewage Disposal System and that these improvements should lead to water quality improvements.

7. Report from EGLE

Megan McReynolds reiterated that public notice dates for Rouge River watershed MS4 draft permits are being requested by EGLE's Permit staff in Lansing. The majority of Rouge watershed MS4 permits should be issued this calendar year.

8. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

9. Other Business

John O'Meara reported the following:

- If any communities have acreage that is along the river that they want naturalized, please let ARC Staff know for a potential project with the EPA.
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10. Summary of Actions of the Full ARC

- Approved for the Full ARC meeting summary of December 3, 2025.
- Ratified the email votes of 2/13/26/2/26/26 ad 3/27/26.
- Approved the FC4 -SPAC13 Budget Amendment adding \$115,000
- Approved the FC5 EPA 14 Inkster Design Budget Amendment adding an additional \$70,325.
- Approved the WCP1 Vegetation Maintenance adding \$52,339 to ECT Work Order 2026-ECT2 and the Plantwise, LLC. Agreement in the amount of \$323,385.
- Approved the Friends of the Rouge Work Order 2026-2 adding \$64,000 and ECT Work Order 2026-ECT4 adding \$51,000 for the SPAC13 RRAC PAC Support grant.
- Approved the Revision 2 of the ECT Work Order 2024-Habitat ECT1 adding \$70,325 for the EPA 14 Inkster Design Grant.
- Approved the Annual Budget Preparation & Budget Amendment and Adjustments Procedure.

11. Adjourn

The motion was made by Dearborn Heights to adjourn the Full ARC meeting. The motion was seconded by Oak Park and passed unanimously.