

**Michigan State Public Advisory Council (SPAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, February 6, 2023**  
**Via Microsoft Teams**

**In Attendance:**

Brian Egen, River Raisin Area of Concern (AOC) (Chair of the State Public Advisory Council [SPAC])  
Eric Diesing, Clinton River AOC (Vice Chair of SPAC)  
Tricia Blicharski, Detroit River AOC  
Robert Burns, Detroit River AOC  
Erica Clites, Detroit River AOC, Michigan Sea Grant  
Erma Leaphart, Detroit and Rouge River AOCs, Sierra Club  
John O'Meara, Detroit and Rouge River AOCs  
Christine Kosmowski, Kalamazoo River AOC  
Doug McLaughlin, Kalamazoo River AOC  
Corey Barr, Manistique AOC  
Fallon Chabala, Muskegon Lake AOC  
Kathy Evans, Muskegon Lake AOC  
Milward Beaudry, River Raisin AOC  
Barry LaRoy, River Raisin AOC  
Richard Micka, River Raisin AOC  
Bill Craig, Rouge River AOC  
Sally Petrella, Rouge River AOC  
Paulette Duhaime, St. Clair River AOC  
Lynnea McFadden, St. Clair River AOC  
Patty Troy, St. Clair River AOC  
Mike Ripley, St. Marys River AOC  
Dione Price Torch Lake AOC, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community  
Derek Bradway, Torch Lake AOC  
Horst Schmidt, Torch Lake AOC  
Amber Faulkner, United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)  
Mark Loomis, USEPA  
Leah Medley, USEPA  
Mike Alexander, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)  
Andrew Bahrou, EGLE  
Melanie Foose, EGLE  
Rick Hobrla, EGLE  
Sam Noffke, EGLE  
Kimberly Passick, EGLE  
Matt Preisser, EGLE  
John Riley, EGLE  
Dawn Roush, EGLE  
Stephanie Swart, EGLE  
Jennifer Tewkesbury, EGLE

**Welcome** – Brian Egen, Chair – Brian represents the River Raisin AOC and is the newly elected chair. He thanked Horst Schmidt for his service as the previous chair. He also went over some housekeeping items regarding the virtual meeting.

**Roll Call** – Brian went through the AOCs and agencies and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

**Review of Agenda** – motion to approve by Bill Craig – seconded by Patty Troy. Approved unanimously.

**Review and Approve Minutes** – Bill Craig made the motion to approve as presented. Seconded by Eric Diesing. Approved unanimously.

**Review of Action Items** – Melanie Foose went over the previous action items and where those currently stand. All items will be discussed during this meeting as agenda items.

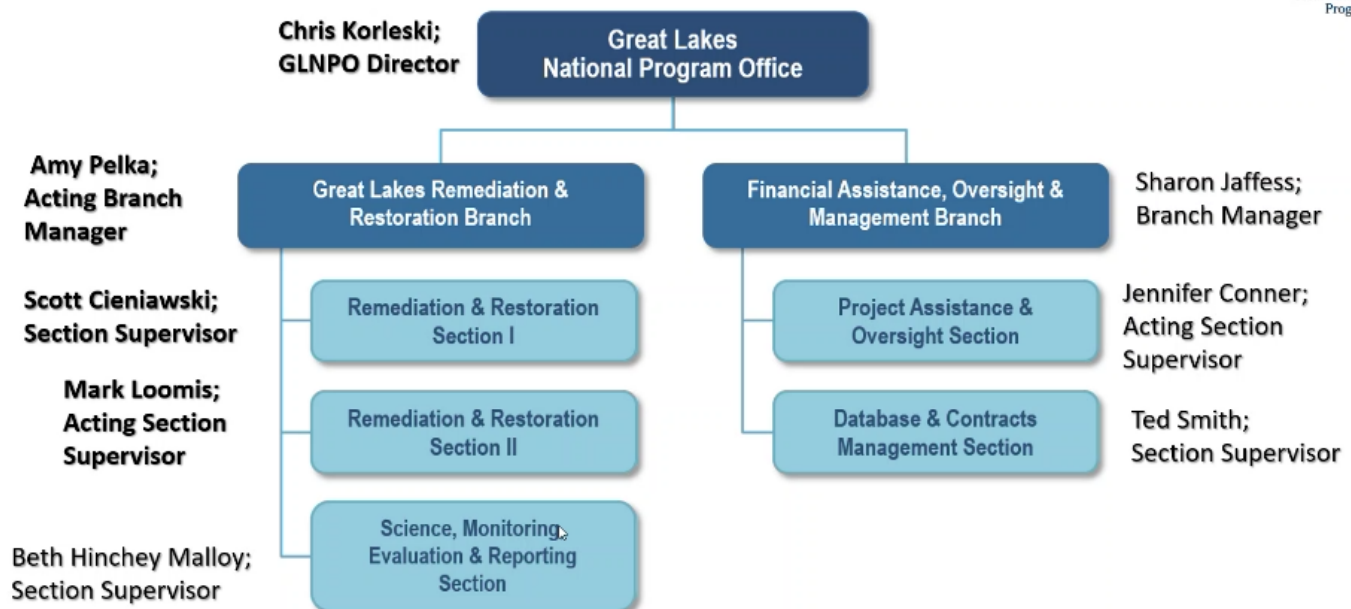
#### **EGLE Update –**

- **EGLE Staffing Update** – Rick Hobla had planned to be retired at this point; however, he had some setbacks in paperwork. It has now been submitted, yet not formally accepted. He is aiming to retire on March 31, 2023. Andrew Bahrou has been hired and started today as the Lake Erie Coordinator. Mike Alexander is currently working on selecting Rick's successor and he will have a few weeks of overlap with the new supervisor. John Riley's AOC Coordinator position had not yet been backfilled but should be in the near future. EGLE also has a new acting director, Daniel Eichinger, previously with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.
- **PAC Support Grants** – we are working on processing these and making them retroactive. It is hopeful that we will be hearing about them in the next week so.
- **Annual AOC Webinar for PAC Members** – this took place last year and there was a good amount of positive feedback. There was support for making it an annual event and if the SPAC would like to pursue that we'd be looking at holding a virtual meeting in April which would be open to all PAC members. The overall theme would be environmental justice. There were several suggestions for topics such as the work of the DEIJ subcommittee, Justice 40, delisting, and topics related to habitat project maintenance and monitoring. Rick encouraged anyone with topic ideas to also think of speakers that may be good to address the topic and pass it along to him or Melanie.
- **Updated Listing of Legislators in AOCs** – Kimberly worked on organizing the AOC state and federal legislators and provided a draft list to everyone. If there are any changes that should be made, please contact her at [PassickK@Michigan.gov](mailto:PassickK@Michigan.gov). Rick encouraged PACs to contact their legislators and maintain relationships with them to support their work in the AOCs. Erma shared Great Lakes Days where they take a group of people to Washington D.C., to talk to members of congress about Great Lakes topics. This year they will be taking eight people and she has tried to select people with knowledge of AOCs. If anyone has any interest in participating in something like this, please let Erma know for future activities.
- **SPAC Travel Reimbursement Policy Update** – rather than reimbursing for the exact amount of meals there is a set meal allowance so there will be a set amount for those meals and receipts will not be required. Receipts will still be required for tolls, parking, lodging, etc. The reimbursement form will be updated and made available prior to any in person SPAC meeting.

- 2023 SPAC Designations – Melanie would like the affected AOCs to know who their designees will be by the summer meeting so they can be installed at the fall meeting. The list of PACs that are up for renewal are Clinton, Detroit, Manistique, Rouge, Saginaw, and St. Marys. Melanie is asking that the PAC chair send something in writing (email is fine) with the names of the new or continued designee and any alternate.

#### **EPA Update – Mark Loomis**

- EPA Management Update – Mark shared the current organizational chart for the Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) which shows several acting positions due to Marc Tuchman's retirement.



- 2023 AOC Conference – Green Bay, Wisconsin – Planning is underway, the agenda is under development, and it is set for September.
- GLRI Action Plan IV Development – this plan is currently in process. They anticipate the process of review and comment will be similar to that of Action Plan III so concerns can be addressed.

There were some questions for Mark about the additional GLRI funding made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and how those funds are being administered. Much of the work needed is through the Great Lakes Legacy Act and requires non-federal match which somewhat limits projects at times.

**SPAC Website** – Melanie asked Kimberly to share the website and highlighted the new photo and showed how to navigate to links to each PAC's individual web pages. There was discussion on adding the subcommittee minutes to the page as well and it was determined that those groups should discuss if they would like to do that. There was also a recommendation that the PAC website links be moved up toward the top of the page and more clearly identified.

**SPAC Logo** – Brian brought back the topic that was discussed at the fall meeting of adopting a logo for use on internal documents or if that idea should be set aside. After discussion, the consensus was that the below design be adopted, however, with a slight adjustment in where the SPAC letters sit as they are covering part of the state image.



**SPAC Habitat Subcommittee Report** – Bill Craig thanked those who shared ideas and comments during the January 19, 2023, meeting. He recommended that folks take a look at the minutes as there is a great deal of context that can be found in them about the discussions they are having. He shared some of the points that were brought up during the meeting and that he feels it is too early in the process to establish any general goals. The group agreed to meet every eight weeks on Wednesdays from 11-Noon with the next meeting set for March 8, 2023.

**SPAC DEIJ Subcommittee Report** – Kathy Evans shared that at the last meeting the group came up with three draft goals and are working on the language for them. Kimberly shared the goals so everyone could see them and they are below. The group has decided to meet monthly from this point on to continue their work. There were some questions and discussion about the goals.

Goal No. 1: By June 30, 2023, the SPAC DEIJ Subcommittee shall have created a set of papers and fact sheets to be used as a tool to recruit and orient new and diverse members to their individual Public Advisory Councils.

Goal No. 2: By March 10, 2023, each PAC shall do a survey and provide a list (4-5 items) of programs, activities, events, restoration work, etc. that can be described as an attempt at Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, or Environmental Justice.

Goal No. 3: PACs shall encourage compliance with the Justice 40 Initiative under President Biden's Executive Order 14008 with the goal to that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution.

## **SPAC By-Laws and Roles & Responsibilities Document – All**

Melanie shared that the bylaws and the Roles and Responsibilities documents had been sent out via email about a month ago with a request for representatives to review and determine if they felt any revisions should be made. Reviewing the by-laws and the Roles and Responsibilities documents on a regular basis had been discussed previously and it was generally agreed that this would be a good practice. The SPAC designees can view the [SPAC By-laws](#) online and they are attached at the end of these minutes along with the Roles and Responsibilities. There was support for a review as the previous update was finalized in the winter of 2019. A small subcommittee can be assembled to review and provide recommendations. There were several volunteers and anyone else interested in working in this group can contact Melanie at [FooseM@Michigan.gov](mailto:FooseM@Michigan.gov).

The morning agenda was completed early and so there was some additional discussion on how the additional \$1 billion dollars in funding made available to the GLRI over five years through the BIL could be utilized.

**Statewide Michigan AOC Outreach Tool** – Brian shared that many PACs are working on these tools and asked if there was any interest in working collectively. Many PACs are working on outreach materials such as digital engagement, videos, story maps, etc. There was open discussion about a collective video or other collaborative outreach materials, such as a statewide story map, an idea shared in the chat. The possible benefits it could provide including being used to assist with both legislative and community outreach. It could highlight work all across the AOCs instead of focusing on an individual area. There was discussion about funding and the best way to promote transparency in the process. Melanie shared that this was placed on the agenda to promote discussion and see if there was interest in pursuing this type of project. After the lunch break, Rick shared while it is important that work is transparent, his feeling is that both EGLE and all of the PACs have been and continue to hold up to this ideal.

## **PAC Report Outs – All**

**Torch Lake** – Horst reported that the PAC is working to put together proposals for projects; one led by the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and another lead by Professor Noel Urban at Michigan Technological University. They are also working on community outreach to make the PAC more visible. There is a Legacy Act project in Lake Linden that is being worked on but it is unknown when that project will be completed. He feels the PAC is working well together as they strive toward completing projects in the AOC. Stephanie shared that the final sampling for the benthos project will occur in May with the final report at the due end of the year. This will inform how they will address the benthos BUI.

**St. Marys River** – Mike Ripley shared that all management actions on the U.S. side have been completed and all of the BUIs except fish tumors have been removed. The state has announced that the criteria for the fish tumor BUI has been revised to be more scientifically based. Sampling will be done over the next couple of years. The BPAC was pleased with the change to the delisting criteria. On the Canadian side they are waiting on a revised contaminated sediment remediation strategy. Sediment is one of the largest challenges on the Canadian side of the AOC. In a bit of good news, Algoma Steel, one of the biggest polluters in the AOC is switching from [coal to electric arc furnaces](#) which will be powered by green power. This will be one of the first steel-making sites in North America to

produce green steel. They anticipate a 70% reduction in carbon emissions. The PAC is also working on ways to include DEIJ into their activities as they reach out to the community.

**St. Clair River** – Paulette Duhaime stated that the last BPAC meeting was November 2022 and the BPAC will be meeting again next week. At the past meeting they reviewed a summary of a spill event that occurred on August 3, 2022. They heard from the managers of Suncor, where the spill originated, and emergency managers from both the U.S. and Canadian sides. Spill events are a major issue for this AOC as there is a heavy industry presence and getting adequate and prompt notification to the drinking water intake facilities is vital. The BPAC was pleased to see that there is good communication between the necessary parties to ensure prompt action. Canada has updated spill notification flow charts for both Ontario and Michigan and are waiting on comment from EGLE. This increase in communication is something they have been working toward for a long time. They submitted their application for a PAC support grant and are waiting on that to go through the approval process. At their next meeting they will have an update on the Great Lakes Ecoregion Network survey that they participated in. There will also be an update on their fish consumption BUI. They are going to be reviewing and updating their PAC bylaws and making any changes to bring them up to date.

**Saginaw** – Jen Tewkesbury reported that they should be applying for their PAC support grant soon. They are looking at putting out a Request for Proposals to bring on a third party to facilitate PAC activities using PAC support funds. The Saginaw Bay monitoring project is continuing. Funding was received from USEPA that will be passed on to SVSU to do monitoring along with the U.S. Geological Survey in the Saginaw Bay watershed. This is a multi-year project to hopefully get a snapshot of what is occurring in the watershed. They are on target to begin purchasing equipment and hopefully get into the field this spring. The Saginaw Bay reef team meets regularly and is looking for another reef project to do so there have been discussions on how to get public input, what should be done, where should it be done, etc. Work will also continue through the Natural Resources Damage Assessment process to address ongoing issues.

**Rouge River** – Bill Craig stated that they recently amended their bylaws which established a process for membership and a process to become a voting member. The recently inducted four new members. During their last meeting in January they received updates on efforts that the SPAC DEIJ subcommittee is working on, a report on over 20 AOC projects in various stages of completion from design to end stage. There was also presentation on a University of Michigan master's thesis comparing electro shocking and seining methods to compare what works best in the Rouge River. Sally reported on an ongoing fish sampling project that is partially funded by their PAC grant which provides useful information on the state of fisheries in the watershed. They will be seeking volunteers to fill SPAC representative and alternate positions. Jen mentioned that there are two sediment projects taking place; one is ongoing and is slated to be back out in the field this year. The other is moving into the feasibility stage so they are looking for non-federal partners. This will be a large project but several BUIs rely on getting it completed.

**Muskegon Lake** – Fallon Chabala shared the removal recommendation documents for the Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitats and the Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations BUIs are with USEPA for review. They are working with Stephanie on the Eutrophication BUI removal documents. Also addressing eutrophication, they have a planned viewing of a documentary about the Harmful Algal



Blooms situation. There will also be a panel to discuss how it relates to conditions in Muskegon. There has been a lot of new development in Muskegon so there is work to ensure that there is still public access to the lake. Recently there have been monthly efforts at the restored sites for maintenance and invasive species best management practices. Sampling for the benthos BUI is ongoing. Kathy added that at their PAC meeting tomorrow they will have a presentation on PFAS with staff from EGLE WRD to discuss impacts in Muskegon. They are drafting a calendar of their volunteer stewardship activities. Kathy shared the Zoom meeting link in the chat and invited anyone who would like to attend. Rick added that when the two BUIs (habitats and populations) receive approval from USEPA they will be the 56<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> BUIs that Michigan has removed across all of their AOCs. These will officially put Michigan over the half way point as there were 111 original BUIs. This is a big milestone for both EGLE staff and the PACs that by at least one measure we have reached the halfway point.

**Manistique River** – John shared that there is one more BUI to remove, the Restrictions on Fish Consumption. EGLE plans to collect fish this year which will provide data to give them an idea of where they are in the process. It is hoped that with the last sediment project completed that there is no longer an impairment so BUI can be removed. They can then begin the delisting process for the AOC.

**Kalamazoo** – Doug McLaughlin reported that the board continues to meet regularly, they have recently brought in three new board members and are working toward bringing new members in. They are working to increase engagement, participation, and representations in all communities up and down the watershed. They have done some outreach to the [Society for History and Racial Equity](#) (SHARE), a local organization in Kalamazoo who put on a racial equity and healing forum in the fall. Attending this event was a great way to make some connections locally in the community which is leading to some new opportunities in 2023. They have spent time looking over their bylaws and updating website information to insure they are correct and up to date. They have regular interaction with state and federal agency regarding the superfund and other work that is being done in the AOC. They have updated their data dashboards to improve usability. They have spent some time looking into some video production ideas for the AOC. John mentioned that the superfund program had embarked on a time critical removal for the Trowbridge Dam and impoundment. There has been back and forth between the responsible parties, various agencies, the PAC, etc. as there were concerns about the design. USEPA has disapproved the responsible party's plan. This is fairly unusual and it is hoped that it results in a better cleanup and restoration. Doug said that there were a lot of voices that presented concerns to USEPA and they were heard.

**Detroit River** – Bob Burns shared that the PAC is forming a committee to review habitat project that had not been funded, a committee to review and possible update their bylaws. They are working with EGLE to select sites from which to sample fish to inform the fish tumor BUI. The PAC is providing transportation to EGLE staff to get out on the river for the Aesthetics BUI. After review of data collected last year it was determined that the river is still aesthetically impaired but improving. The PAC continues to work with EGLE and USEPA to address several million cubic yards of contaminated sediments. PAC members continue to be involved in the SPAC DEIJ and habitat subcommittees. They also continue to monitor their habitat restoration projects at Sugar Island and Hennepin marsh. These should be completed this year. Their next PAC meeting is in March.

**Clinton River** – Eric Diesing reported that they were waiting on their PAC support grant which will be focusing on data collection and analysis at their habitat projects, specifically using the State's Procedures 51 and 22. They will also be doing eutrophication and undesirable algae analysis. They will be collecting samples from around the watershed and are working with EGLE and Oakland University to design that effort. The PAC meets quarterly and the watershed council recently hired a new executive director. He will be leaving the watershed council next week so his role in the PAC will be changing. He hopes to remain on as a member but will not be involved in administration. In his new role he will be working for Oakland County which will afford him the opportunity to hopefully work in the Rouge River AOC as well. Jen shared that they have been working with USACE to figure out how to address the PCB hotspot that was found in the river. The biggest challenge is that there is still a source, but they are having a difficult time determining what it is. The source needs to be identified and addressed before any cleanup efforts take place. There are some staff at GLNPO who have some expertise in PCBs and tracking them who will be working to help locate the source.

**River Raisin** – Brian Egen reported that they are in a monitoring phase to get more data this season. They have been looking over their bylaws and have a draft into the city of Monroe's legal counsel for review before it is submitted to the mayor and city council. This provides clarification between the Commission on the Environment and the PAC. They are working on their PAC grant and have a good list of items to work on. One of those is their master plan process as they work to figure out how to corporate elements for life after delisting, a robust equity tool kit, educational engagement, and more so they have a road map moving forward. The river has a [flowering rush](#) issue that they have been addressing consistently with a fairly aggressive permitted spray program. They are working on other grants and partnerships to get a complete action plan to eradicate this invasive species. Another idea that they are pursuing is working with the watershed council on a rain garden program and finding ways encourage public participation in such a program. They are considering a date for a river cleanup that is always a successful event.



Rick wished to add in a topic that he missed during the EGLE update. He and Melanie have been working with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR). Many of the folks in the meeting participated in the implicit bias training that was offered last spring. The feedback from that session was excellent. MDCR has offered to continue working with the group so conversations are continuing to determine how much capacity they have and what they can offer. They would like to set up a training this spring to on the topic of gatekeeping which can address how people are brought into organizations. That information will be shared as soon as it is available.



## 2023 Summer and Fall Meetings – All

- Call for Topics/Agenda Items – potential topics to discuss could be
  - cooperative video across all AOCs (Rich mentioned that the Wisconsin DNR had put out a video that covered AOCs as a whole called [AOC 101](#) and it is worth watching at 3 minutes).
  - the Justice 40 project
  - review of SPAC bylaws
  - explanation of PFAS and where it's found
  - life after delisting preparation by knowing about available resources and funding sources such as competitive grants

If anyone has additional topic ideas they can be sent to Brian or Melanie. The summer meeting will be virtual meeting in May or June. Along with the topic of life after delisting, Eric Diesing offered to be a resource for others and share what he has learned in leveraging other funding sources to get work done in the Clinton River AOC. Rick also shared that at last year's All PAC meeting, Bob Day had given a presentation about funding opportunities through the Nonpoint Source Program. The [All PAC meeting recording](#) can be accessed online and the start point for the Bob's presentation is at the 1:37:55 mark. When accessing the link, you will need to fill in your name and email address and click "register".

- Fall Face-to-Face Meeting – Clinton River AOC had offered to host and it would likely be scheduled for late September or early to mid-October.

## Review of Action Items – Kimberly Passick

### Action items

- A poll will be set up and distributed to determine topics for an April All-PAC virtual meeting.
- Staff will try to locate a directory of hotels that honor the state lodging rate.
- EPA will provide a list of [Task Force Leads](#) for the PACs. (Kimberly or Melanie will follow up with them to accomplish this.) – **online link above and list attached at the end of these minutes.**
- The approved minutes from the fall meeting will be posted on the SPAC website.
- The addition of the DEIJ and Habitat subcommittee meeting minutes and the potential for an approval mechanism will be discussed at their next meetings.
- Melanie will look into having the PAC organization links moved toward the top of each AOC page.
- Melanie will look into having the selected SPAC logo slightly altered and begin putting it into use.
- Kimberly will check for the recording of last year's All PAC meeting to share.
- The PAC chairs for Clinton, Detroit, Manistique, Rouge, Saginaw, and St. Marys will send their new or continued designees to Melanie via letter or email.
- Melanie will pursue setting up an SPAC bylaws subcommittee.

Horst Schmidt moved to adjourn, second by Corey Barry – unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 3:07 PM

Area of Concern	Task Force Leads – October 2022
18 Mile Creek	Megan O'Brien
Ashtabula (Delisted)	
Black River	Michael Hennessy
Buffalo River	Chris Seslar (R2)
Clinton River	Sue Virgilio
Cuyahoga River	Leah Medley
Deer Lake (Delisted)	
Detroit River	Rose Ellison/Amber Falkner
Fox River/Green Bay	Sue Virgilio
Grand Calumet	Caitie Nigrelli
Kalamazoo River	Sue Virgilio
Manistique River	Michael Hennessy
Maumee	Leah Medley
Menominee River (Delisted)	
Milwaukee Estuary	Megan O'Brien
Muskegon Lake	Mark Loomis
Niagara River	Courtney Winter/ Chris Seslar (R2)
River Raisin	Meaghan Kern
Rochester Embayment	Chris Seslar (R2)
Rouge River	Rose Ellison/Leah Medley
Saginaw River	Courtney Winter
Sheboygan	Nick Green
St. Clair	Rose Ellison/Michael Hennessy
St. Lawrence River at Massena/Akwesasne	Michael Hennessy/ Dan Gurdak (R2)
St. Louis River	Leah Medley
St. Marys	Heather Williams
Torch Lake	Heather Williams
Waukegan Harbor	Nick Green
White Lake (Delisted)	Nick Green

# **STATEWIDE PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL HANDBOOK**

**Mission Statement, Operating Procedures & Bylaws**

**Established: Spring 1991**

**Revised: January 1995**

**Revised: Winter 2019**

## **Background**

Originally established in 1991, the members of the Statewide Public Advisory Council requested, then developed a Handbook that outlines Council goals, objectives, roles, responsibilities and rules of procedure. This Handbook was revised in 1995, and again in 2019.

The U.S. – Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), as amended from the 1987 document, directs the two governments to cooperate with state, provincial and tribal governmental units to develop and implement Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) for severely degraded Areas of Concern, as identified by the International Joint Commission. Forty-three (43) such AOCs have been designated: seventeen (17) in Canadian waters, twenty-six (26) in U.S. waters. Originally, there were fourteen (14) AOCs listed in Michigan, including three (3) binational AOCs.

As outlined in Annex 1 of the 2012 revised GLWQA, each Remedial Action Plan (RAP) shall embody a systematic and comprehensive ecosystem approach to restoring, monitoring, and protecting beneficial uses in AOCs. Each RAP will include problem identification, steps to solve or restore such problems, determination (where possible) of responsible parties, timetable(s) for action, and eventually, documentation that the problems are resolved or restored.

The RAP process is “inclusive,” with a decided emphasis on community involvement and public consultation. When formed, and under guidance from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), A Communication/Public Participation Strategy was developed and administered, statewide, in support of RAPs for Michigan’s AOCs. From 1996 thru 2017, the AOC program and the SPAC guidance was overseen by the Department of Environmental Quality. In 2011, the program was moved to the Office of the Great Lakes (OGL). Commencing in 2018, the OGL was moved to the MDNR. In 2019, the program was moved to the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, but the strategy and process were always the same. This strategy was designed to ensure public participation in decisions affecting the AOC program; heighten public awareness and knowledge of RAPs; secure broad public participation in the RAP process; and generate public support in the development and implementation of individual RAPs. Implementation of this strategy was through Public Advisory Councils (PACs) established in each AOC.

# STATEWIDE PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

## MISSION STATEMENT, OPERATING PROCEDURES and BYLAWS

### **ARTICLE I – MISSION**

*The Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC) shall act as a forum to provide advice and input to the Office of the Great Lakes on all aspects of the Areas of Concern program.*

### **ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

Each AOC is eligible to appoint one voting representative and one or more alternate representative(s) to the SPAC. Each PAC is encouraged to send more than one representative to SPAC meetings. However, each AOC may have only one vote. Appointment shall be for a two-year term, and appointees may be re-appointed. Whenever possible, half of the AOC appointments shall occur each year. State of Michigan (SOM) staff will remind AOCs of their pending appointments, and the SOM shall inform SPAC officers of these results. Alternates will succeed the Voting Member in the event of a mid-term resignation of the Voting Member, and for the remainder of that term.

Delisted AOCs are invited to appoint a representative to the SPAC, but they will not be voting members. SOM staff will not be voting members of the SPAC. Rather, the SOM shall consider the SPAC as a partner in the AOC program.

### **ARTICLE III – OFFICERS**

SPAC Officers shall include a Chair and a Vice-Chair, to be nominated and elected by the Council. Officers shall serve for two (2) years and may be re-elected. Their respective terms of office shall begin upon their election and terminate on the date that a successor is elected by the Council. In the event of a vacancy in the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall ascend to the Chair position and a special election shall be held for the Vice-Chair.

### **ARTICLE IV – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. **Officers'** responsibilities include:

1. Presiding at all SPAC Meetings;
2. Working with SOM to develop and review meeting agendas;
3. Appointing committees and sub-committees, and determining the scope of their function;

4. Draft or assign members the responsibility for drafting any correspondence, as requested by the Council;
5. Performing all other duties normally deemed incident to the office, or as determined by the Council.

**B. Member's responsibilities include:**

1. Attending all meetings and functions of the SPAC, or contact the AOC alternate to attend and vote in the member's place;
2. Representing the AOC and provide brief updates, to include (but may not be limited to) successes, failures, concerns, project status, etc.;
3. Providing a report back to their respective local PAC on Council activities and program issues;
4. Seeking local PAC input on program issues, and to relay this information or advice to the SOM;
5. Actively participating in meeting discussions and to serve the Council to the best of his/her abilities, assisting the Chair to keep meetings on-track and productive, while respecting the opinions and statements of others.

**C. Committees and Sub-Committees** may be appointed as deemed necessary by the Chair for various tasks, including:

1. Planning Committee (planning SPAC Priorities and Activities)
2. Nominating Committee (secure nominations for Officer positions)
3. Membership Committee (ensure Member appointments)
4. AOC Host Committee (plan details for AOC-hosted meetings)
5. Sub-Committees (as deemed necessary by the Chair)

**D. SOM staff:**

SOM staff are guided by the most recent version of a Roles and Responsibilities document developed by AOC program management.

## **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS**

- A. All SPAC meetings are open to the public. Attendance by AOC residents and other stakeholders is encouraged.
- B. Meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) where specific rules have not been pre-empted by these bylaws.
- C. Whenever possible, the SPAC will operate by consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, the SPAC will operate by a majority vote, with documentation of the minority position. All decisions will be duly recorded in the meeting minutes.



- D. A quorum shall consist of 50% + 1 of voting members (or their respective alternates). Should no quorum exist, all actions and decisions made at that meeting must be reviewed at the next meeting.
- E. Voting by the duly authorized member or alternate may be by teleconference or videoconference, when available, and when that member is not able to attend in person.
- F. At the discretion of the Chair, members may discuss issues and vote via email, when an issue is time sensitive and the next scheduled meeting is not timely.
- G. Meetings shall be held three or four times per year, unless determined otherwise by the membership. Meeting notices shall be distributed by SOM staff one month prior to the meeting date.
- H. Agendas shall be prepared by SOM staff, in cooperation with officers and distributed no later than two weeks prior to the meeting. Agenda items shall include (but may not be limited to) old and new business, action items and AOC status updates. Additions to the agenda shall be allowed at the discretion of the Chair.
- I. Meeting locations may vary, and may include host AOC Communities. In host AOCs, tours of local projects are encouraged.
- J. Meeting minutes shall be prepared by SOM staff and distributed within a month after the meeting date for SPAC review.

## **ARTICLE VI – REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

Council Members will be eligible to receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending Council meetings and other related activities subject to approval by SOM.

- A. Reimbursement shall not exceed the most current mileage, hotel, and meal rates specified by State of Michigan Standardized Travel Regulations.
- B. Other expenses such as parking, bridge tolls, etc. may be authorized for reimbursements, with the proper receipts.
- C. Normally, reimbursement will be for one (1) voting member from each AOC, unless otherwise specified by SOM, and may include one specifically identified individual from each delisted AOC. AOCs whose representatives serve as SPAC Chair or Vice Chair may receive reimbursement for up to two (2) individuals.
- D. Each person requesting reimbursement must be qualified by the State as a State of Michigan vendor.

- E. Each member requesting reimbursement must complete the appropriate request form, and return that form to the specified AOC Coordinator, in the proper format and accompanied by appropriate paid receipts.
- F. Requests for reimbursement must be received by SOM no more than thirty (30) days after the meeting date.

## **ARTICLE VII – SALARIES**

No Officer or Member shall receive a salary from SPAC or from SOM by reason of his/her participation in SPAC activities.

## **ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS and/or ADOPTION**

These Bylaws may be amended and/or new Bylaws adopted by a simple majority of duly authorized voting members, at any meeting of the SPAC.

These Bylaws are adopted on this date: \_\_\_\_\_, **2019** and take immediate effect.

I, **Mary Bohling**, Chair of the Statewide Public Advisory Council do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of the Bylaws and Rules of Procedure as revised and adopted by the SPAC Membership on \_\_\_\_\_, **2019**

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, I have affixed my signature on this:

\_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_, **2019**  
**Mary Bohling** SPAC Chair

Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern Program  
Roles and Responsibilities updated 2018

**Role and Responsibilities of Public Advisory Councils**

Public advisory councils (PACs) were established during the late 1980's and early 1990's in the Areas of Concern to help fulfill requirements in Annex 2 of the 1987 amendments to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement to: "...ensure the public is consulted in all actions undertaken pursuant to this Annex." PACs fulfill this role through a variety of specific activities listed below. Individual PACs should periodically discuss how they can fulfill their public consultation role given this list of activities and the needs of their community.

Potential PAC activities:

- Provide historical knowledge of local water quality issues and concerns;
- Foster communication between governmental agencies at all levels, quasi-governmental agencies, educational institutions and tribes and other AOC stakeholders;
- Advocate for specific and general remediation activities;
- Locally communicate AOC-related issues in a fair, accurate, not overly technical manner;
- Identify and recruit key stakeholders and stakeholder groups as PAC participants;
- Cultivate alliances with political leaders in support of RAP goals;
- Help celebrate AOC restoration successes;
- Offer a local forum by holding regular meetings for civil discussion among a variety of community interests;
- Facilitate public involvement in cleanup efforts;
- Coordinate or manage local projects focused on BUI removal;
- Provide advice to state and federal agencies on environmental issues of concern to local communities;
- Review and help prepare Remedial Action Plans (RAPs);
- Engage with other public participants in Ontario and Wisconsin on shared AOCs;
- Provide for logistics for PAC operations;
  - Distribute meeting agendas;
  - Maintain PAC member list serves;
  - Arrange meeting logistics;
  - Prepare and distribute meeting summaries;
  - Recruit appropriate membership;
  - Review, revise, or produce updated educational materials for PAC members;

- Retain records of PAC operations;
- Designate a member and an alternate to serve on the SPAC;
- Review and evaluate BUI removal recommendations.

### **Role and Responsibilities of the Statewide Public Advisory Council**

The Statewide Public Advisory Council was established in 1991 as a coalition of representatives from the 14 community-based public advisory councils.

The SPAC will:

- Advise the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on AOC program priorities and policies;
- Provide input to the DNR on effective public participation strategies;
- Serve as a forum for sharing information about the AOC program, funding opportunities and remediation and restoration techniques with PACs and other stakeholders;
- Assist PACs in addressing administrative, operational and organizational issues;
- Inform legislators, government officials and others of AOC program needs and successes.

### **Role and Responsibilities of DNR Area of Concern Coordinators**

The U.S. and Canada are the parties to the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Under the agreement, the Parties cooperate with state and provincial agencies to: "...ensure that Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) are developed and implemented for Areas of Concern." To that end, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides funding to the Great Lakes States to support the AOC program. The DNR devotes a significant amount of this funding to AOC Coordinators. These AOC Coordinators work with local PACs, EPA, other federal agencies, state agencies and local stakeholders to develop and implement RAPs.

AOC Coordinators will:

- Establish strong working relationships with the PACs and develop an understanding of their needs, capabilities and expectations;
- Provide overall support to help PACs fulfill their roles and responsibilities as agreed upon;
- Communicate effectively with PAC members generally on program policies and direction, agency activities, and funding opportunities and specifically on information relevant to their AOC;
- Provide or secure sound technical advice and guidance when needed;
- Routinely attend PAC meetings and events, either in person or via conference call;
- Consult with PACs when preparing and revising AOC-specific documents including RAPs;

- Serve as a liaison between PAC members and State and federal agency representatives;
- Prepare summaries of PAC meetings with action items relevant to state agencies and distribute those summaries to affected staff;
- Maintain official AOC files and ensure the information is publicly available as appropriate;
- Implement the Delisting Guidance and Strategy:
  - Track AOC actions needed for delisting;
  - Coordination of BUI assessment;
  - Track BUI removal;
  - Prepare RAP updates as appropriate;
  - Prepare final RAPs;
- Communicate and coordinate priorities and needs with other state agency staff and other agency programs including the Four Agency Management Committee, Four Agency Working Group, and Four Agency Ad-hoc Technical Teams;
- Track remedial actions with other programs;
- Coordinate site visits and field investigations as necessary to assess BUI removal feasibility;
- Coordinate and communicate funding opportunities;
- Provide updated information for the GLNPO or DNR AOC web sites;
- Convene technical teams for assessing BUIs;
- Prepare information and education materials on AOC program and specific local issues;
- Coordinate and manage implementation projects for AOCs and administer grants;
- Work closely with the SPAC and PACs to advance goals of the AOC program;
- Communicate and coordinate AOC actions with the relevant DNR Lake Coordinator.