

**Rouge River Advisory Council (RRAC)
Draft Meeting Summary
February 22, 2016**

Attendees:

Attended?	Name	Attended?	Names
Y	Dan Ballnik, Chair	N	Karen Mondora, Farmington Hills
Y	Cory Borton, Hubbell Roth and Clark, Inc.	Y	Noel Mullett, Wayne County Dept. of Public Services
Y	Jeff Braunscheidel, MDNR	Y	Rob Myllyoja, Stantec
Y	Bill Craig, Vice Chair and SPAC representative	Y	Chris O'Meara, ARC
N	Don Carpenter, Lawrence Tech University	Y	John O'Meara, Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC)
N	Rose Ellison, EPA Representative	Y	Sally Petrella, Friends of the Rouge
Y	Jacy Garrison, Oakland County Water Resources Commissioners Office	Y	Heather Rice, Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioners Office
N	Orin Gelderloos, U-M Dearborn	N	Devan Rosturfer, SEMCOG
N	Kevin Goodwin, MDEQ	Y	Brandy Siedlaczek, Southfield
N	Barb Goryca, Dearborn citizen	N	Jennifer Tewkesbury, MDEQ Coordinator
N	Amy Mangus, SEMCOG		

I. Introductions

Introductions were completed.

II. Old Business

The meeting summary from November 24, 2015 was reviewed and approved by the Council.

III. Habitat Project List Approval

John O'Meara reviewed the list noting the updates that were made during the two Habitat Committee meetings held 1/21/16/ and 2/4/16. There were two wetland projects that were removed and replaced with the Merriman and Wallaceville projects. John O'Meara stated that the Habitat Committee recommended that the list be approved. The project descriptions will be refined, in the near future, to present a more comprehensive package. There was detailed discussions regarding each of the projects including those that were replaced with new projects.

The motion was made by Brandy Siedlaczek, City of Southfield, and seconded by Bill Craig, Vice Chair, to approve the habitat project list and forward it to the MDEQ. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. EPA/MDEQ Update

MDEQ/Federal Partners meeting

J. Tewkesbury was not in attendance so there was no report.

AOC Conference

Bill Craig discussed some of the activities that will be available for the participants for the upcoming AOC conference at U of M-Dearborn on March 2-3. Sally Petrella will be doing a presentation on the Rouge River on the second day of the event. Registration can be paid with RRAC funds and are available if one of the RRAC members would like to attend the event. If interested let Bill know. There is also a reception at the Henry Ford Museum during the conference.

NOAA partnership opportunity

J. O'Meara informed the group that the Friends of the Detroit River and the ARC turned in a joint NOAA partnership grant application.

Henry Ford Oxbow

J. O'Meara informed the group that the oxbow did not get funded through NOAA, the ARC will continue to look for future funding for this project.

HFE Dam Fish Passage Design

J. O'Meara informed the group that this NOAA funded design project is moving forward. The design package is expected to be completed this fall. ARC Staff will be looking for construction funding in the 2017 cycle. The question was asked if RRAC would be able to review the design package. J. O'Meara answered that yes, all partners will be involved. D. Ballnik asked if the sink hole was fixed and N. Mullett said that it has been fixed.

Wayne County Invasives

N. Mullett stated that they are proceeding with the grant and had a meeting in January. They are working on the invitation to bid for the County parks. Efforts continue with Marathon on Fordson Island along with other property owners for Elizabeth Park and the Gateway area. Work will be in August and September of 2016 and into 2017. They are also looking at future invasives control at Newburgh and Wilcox Lake. Wayne County is also working on an extension on the grant. FOTR is training the coordinators for Rouge Rescue under the grant along with the Student Conservation Council. Friends of Detroit River along with the Student Conservation Council will have a training day at the International Wildlife Refuge as part of the grant as well.

Lower Rouge River Old Channel Sediment Clean-up update

J. Tewkesbury was not in attendance so there was nothing new to report.

BUI Updates

There was nothing new to report. D. Ballnik, Chair, stated that he would send an email to J. Tewkesbury about the need for a letter from RRAC regarding the BUI updates.

V. SPAC Meeting Update

The SPAC meeting will be held during the AOC Regional Conference on March 1 at U of M-Dearborn. B. Craig invited all to attend this event which will give you a chance to meet with other AOCs in the state to hear what they are doing.

Nina Ignaczak, writer, is planning to attend the AOC program at the SPAC meeting to get interviews at the reception at the Environmental Interpretive Center.

VI. New Business

There was no new business.

VII. Comments

Members

B. Craig stressed his concern with the Wayne County Parks vacancy. We don't want to lose habitat to gain habitat. He stated that most of the projects on the project list were slanted with a recreation overlay. This has been corrected by the Habitat Committee to either remove or include those types of things only if there is funding available for that aspect of the project. Sometimes the parks portion of a project causes controversy. He stressed the fact that we are here to preserve habitat, not slice it up and manage it. He stated that he wrote a letter to Warren Evans regarding the Holiday Nature Preserve. He feels the government, at times, seems to work against us and our efforts. He gave an example of the county wanting to put a parking lot in the flood plain across from Nankin for marshmallow drop parking. He feels that other groups have similar issues. S. Petrella, FOTR, stated that they are preparing a letter requesting that the Wayne County Parks vacancy be filled with a qualified person.

D. Ballnik asked if RRAC should send a letter. Bill responded saying that he is talking to J. Tewkesbury about that. He feels it would be appropriate to have a natural areas manager who would report to the Director which would provide the connection necessary.

General Public

There were no comments from the general public.

VIII. Review of Action Items

- Approved meeting summary for 11/24/15
- Approved RRAC Habitat Projects Needed to Remove the Habitat BUIs list
- John O'Meara to send grant summary for NOAA partnership grant application
- Contact Bill Craig if you wish to attend SPAC at UM-Dearborn
- Dan Ballnik to talk to Jen Tewkesbury about BUI update letter from RRAC
- Request update from Jen Tewkesbury on the Lower Rouge River Old Channel Sediment Clean-up

The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by J. Garrison and supported by N. Mullett. The motion passed.