

Rouge River Remedial Action Plan Advisory Council



RRAC Work Group/Officers Meeting 10 am, November 9, 2012

Wayne County Department of Public Services: 3600 Commerce Court, Wayne MI

Meeting Summary

Attendance

Dan Ballnik
Noel Mullet
Bill Craig

Zachare Ball
Annette DeMaria
Sally Petrella

Jennifer Tewkesbury
Brandy Siedlaczek

Fall SPAC meeting report

Bill's Outreach Efforts

September 26, 2012: Bill attended the Clinton River Public Advisory Council meeting held in Clinton Township, MI 48038. Their meeting had a summary of the September AOC conference held in Cleveland, OH, and updates on several GRLI projects and other habitat restoration projects or proposals. Jen Tewkesbury, who is their AOC Coordinator, attended.

October 25, 2012: Bill attended a workshop sponsored by SPAC, Remediation to Restoration to Revitalization – Building Environmental and Economic Prosperity in Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern. Some AOC's are on verge of delisting. Some SPAC members are discussing "life after delisting" issues, such as how to sustain stewardship and how to showcase their restored "place"; and connecting water quality and habitat improvements to economic benefits with waterfront development, tourism and quality of life marketing. Several case studies showed how vision, good governance, and investment have made some places better to live in or visit (an example Marquette, MI). A consultant explained how poor perceptions and bad reputations can be overcome with good work, honesty, diverse partnerships and leadership. The Rouge River AOC was asked if we need, desire or are ready to "brand" our restored watershed. Bill said we were not quite ready, he did not know of anyone who wanted to, or if we even needed to. He did benefit on the discussion of perceptions; however, he saw no need for "branding" work.

October 26, 2012. Bill attended the SPAC Fall Business meeting held in Kalamazoo, MI. Some AOC's are interested in "life after delisting" and "branding". Further discussions may be done on individual basis. He gave very brief update of the Rouge projects. EPA responded to SPAC letter with a very detailed presentation on "the NEW process" for selecting and funding priority projects as described below under Funding and Programming Strategies. The Business meeting agenda and the presentation from EPA are included as Attachments A and B.

Bob Burns (Detroit River) Anne Vaara (Clinton AOC) and Bill have agreed to meet and discuss our BUIs and the common issues experienced in southeast MI AOCs.

Statewide Bond initiative update

Bill reported that RRAC's letter asking for environmental bond will be moved forward into discussion with other environmental representatives. Great Lakes Commission is taking the lead on this.

Funding and AOC Programming Strategies

Jen reported that the EPA is working directly with the MDEQ to determine the projects that need to be funded in order to remove the BUIs in the AOCs. The EPA plans to route funding either through the state, use their own contractors, or use of cooperating agreements with other federal agencies. The PACs need to work with the state in order to develop a list of 10 – 15 projects that are critical of delisting. Currently, staff at ECT are working with the Clinton AOC to accomplish this through development of an information management system. This is being done via a contract with EPA. Jen asked if the Rouge would like similar assistance from ECT. All agreed that it would be beneficial. Jen will follow-up with the MDEQ and EPA to get the ball rolling on this. EPA will fund the work.

Bill drafted a list of projects (Attachment C) that should be included in the Rouge's list of critical projects. They are:

- Remediation of the contaminated sediments in the Lower Rouge Main Channel,
- Remediation of the contaminated sediments in the Lower Rouge Old Channel,
- Remediation of the habitat in the concrete channel, and
- Restoration of fish passage at Henry Ford Estate Dam.

Lower Rouge Delisting Strategy

Given, EPA's focus on funding a short list of projects, there was some discussion regarding removing/repurposing the Lower Rouge Delisting Strategy scope from the current SPAC support grant. It was decided that that work should continue as planned since other funding sources may be available in the future. Jen will provide the group the Rouge's current list of 80 plus projects. Zach is in the process of gathering projects for the Delisting Strategy.

Report Card

Noel was in the beginning stages of gathering data to develop the Report Card. It will consist of a series of maps and text that show current conditions verses historic conditions. And conditions will be shown on a subwatershed basis. Jen, Bill, Dan, Noel and Annette agreed to meet on Dec 5th to discuss further. Jen volunteered to take the first stab at identifying current conditions for the BUIs.

Officer Nominations

The Nomination Committee identified officer candidates for consideration by the RRAC in December. They are Dan as Chair, Brandy as Vice Chair and Bill as SPAC representative. The new officers will serve a two year term.

Website and Logo

The group provided the following comments on the website:

- Order the document links (RAP updates and Report Cards) from most current to older,
- Add the Statewide Aesthetics Assessment report,
- Add the AOC Eat Safe Fish Fact Sheet,
- Annette's name from the member list, and
- Who gets the Contact Us email?

Subsequent to the meeting, Annette confirmed that Chris O'Meara gets the Contact Us emails and she will forward them to the appropriate person. The officers agreed that this was acceptable. On November 27th, the above edits were completed.

Based on a request to recolor the RRAC logo (remove the red color), Chris developed a new logo and associated letterhead for consideration by the RRAC (See Attachment D). Since the original artwork was not available for the current logo, Chris had to recreate it. The group requested that the blue color around the tree be changed to white. After some discussion, the group agreed to recommend the new logo (with white instead of blue) for consideration by the full RRAC.

ARC letter of appreciation

Noel circulated a draft letter of appreciation. No substantial comments were provided. *Subsequent to the meeting it was forwarded to the ARC.*

Next Meeting: December 11, 2012 at U-M Dearborn at 1:30

Suggested agenda items:

- Officer election
- Presentation of new logo and clarification to the RRAC's name.
- Potential Presentation on the Old Channel sediment quality data (Subsequent to the meeting it was determined that EPA was not available).
- Field trip to Wayne Road Dam removal site.