



**Rouge River Advisory Council (RRAC)**  
**Draft Meeting Summary**  
**June 3, 2020**

**Attendees:**

Attended?	Name	Attended?	Names
Y	Dan Ballnik, Chair	N	Amy Mangus, SEMCOG
N	John Beisel, Farmington Hills	N	Karen Mondora, Farmington Hills
N	Marty Boote, Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC)	Y	Noel Mullett, Wayne County Dept. of Public Services
N	Cory Borton, Bloomfield Township	Y	Rob Myllyoja, Stantec
Y	Bill Craig, Vice Chair and SPAC representative	N	Caitlin Nigrelli, Liaison to USEPA-GLNPO
Y	Annette DeMaria, ARC	Y	Chris O'Meara, ARC
N	Rose Ellison, EPA	Y	John O'Meara, ARC
Y	Jacy Garrison, Oakland County WRC Office	Y	Sally Petrella, Friends of the Rouge
N	Orin Gelderloos, U-M Dearborn	Y	Heather Rice, Washtenaw County WRC Office
N	Kevin Goodwin, EGLE	Y	Brandy Siedlaczek, Southfield
N	Barb Goryca, Dearborn citizen	Y	Jennifer Tewkesbury, Michigan EGLE
Y	Tennille Newsome, ARC	Y	Dean Tuomari, Citizen
Y	Shawn Duke, CARDNO	Y	John Bauman, MDNR Fisheries
Y	Marie McCormick, Friends of the Rouge	Y	Tennille Newsome, ARC

**Introductions**

Introductions were completed. Guest include Paige Schurr and James Polidori with University of Michigan.

**Meeting Summary**

The meeting summary from December 16, 2019 was reviewed and approved. The motion to approve the summary was made by D. Ballnik and seconded by J. Garrison and passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

D. Ballnik wanted to discuss the drone documentation and wondering if any funding is available and what the next steps are. J. O'Meara mentioned it was part of the discussion that EGLE was doing. J. Tewkesbury mentioned EGLE anticipates purchasing a drone for Southeast Michigan district that could be used for project sites. There was a hold on that due to Covid. They are currently going through the process and hope to have it this summer. J. O'Meara mentioned for projects they are bringing in drone footage during the project process through the watershed.

**SPAC Report**

Bill Craig reported that since Covid SPAC has changed their scheduled events. There was a phone/Skype conference on March 24<sup>th</sup> regarding Covid changes. Part of the discussion was that EGLE wanted to follow up on the U of M project so that EGLE would have more involvement in the PACs. There was discussion on the U of M projects for the students to interview the PAC members. This needs to be discussed today because there is a deadline for volunteers to be interviewed. The next SPAC meeting will be July 23, 2020 via phone conference. They are hoping for a face to face meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

**EGLE Update**

J. Tewkesbury reported that EGLE employees have taken a one day a week layoff until July which is a reduction of 20% in her workload. It should not affect RRAC but it affects the over all workload. She has been working with Rose Ellison on the final management action list for the Rouge. It is all for the habitat

projects and sediment cleanups in the concrete channel so they can start putting dollar amounts next to those items and plan accordingly. They are still in the action plan to be delisted soon, but they would like to continue to plan and fund. EGLE started a collaboration with John Allen who is the former Great Lakes Director, currently with the University of Michigan working with a contract through EPA and NOAA with the sediment issue. He is going to take on the task to face the approach to gather local, corporate and partners for the sediment cleanup. They are calling it the Detroit Rouge Revitalization Plan which is a regional approach to get the sediment projects cleaned up. EGLE is handling the advanced sediment work there. J. Tewkesbury has his project overview outline describing his approach and she will send it to Chris O'Meara for distribution. The old channel is on hold right now due to the high water levels and contract and change order issues between contractor and the Corps. They plan to get back out there this summer.

The concrete channel biological assessment work was completed by the Army Corps. That report should have been sent out, if not, she will send to Chris O'Meara for distribution.

She also reported that PFAS sampling in the Rouge has occurred in a couple sites. Two of the sites came back over the criteria is the Racer Eckels Road site just north of Newburgh Lake and Advanced Disposal at Arbor Hills. They are being looked at and will discuss cleanup. She also mentioned they did four samples around Zug Island and they came in at detect levels but not above the level of criteria. There is a 2020 sampling plan for the Rouge where EGLE will start collecting 55 samples throughout the watershed this summer to rule out any high levels.

S. Petrella had a question in regard to the Advanced Disposal issue. She wanted to know if it was complicated by the recent news that Advanced Disposal wants to start putting leachate into Johnson Creek. J. Tewkesbury mentioned it is something they need to address.

B. Craig wanted to know since there is a deadline for the management list, is it in draft or work in progress. J. Tewkesbury reported that it is ready they just don't have final numbers yet. She has a spreadsheet she put together that she will send out to the group after Rose reviews it.

### **EPA Update**

J. Tewkesbury reported EPA is busy and shorthanded. She mentioned Rose is still working her full schedule.

### **Rouge AOC Grants Update**

Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – HFE Fishway/Oxbow Phase 3 Implementation/Nankin Lake Oxbow: J. O'Meara reported that the Oxbow is complete with vegetation maintenance occurring this spring. The as-builts will be sent into the agencies to close out the permitting this summer.

HFE Fishway: J. O'Meara also reported that the HFE Fishway is in a hold due to the heavy rain events. We are waiting for the site to dry out so the work can be finished. They were projecting to start June 15th. Final grading, topsoil and vegetation work are left to do. The crossing had been taken out late this spring. He also reported that there were sightings of individuals using it as a waterway for fun.

Nankin: J. O'Meara also reported that Nankin is waiting on the state permit. Once that is issued it will be ready to bid. He is hoping to have a contractor by early fall. Work will either start late this fall or early spring. J. Tewkesbury asked if EGLE was still in their window for the permit. John mentioned to hold off for now since there is correspondence between EGLE and ARC.

#### ARC Rouge AOC Habitat Restoration – Tamarack Creek/Johnson Creek Design

Johnson Creek: J. O’Meara reported that the contract with the contractor has been approved by the ARC and City of Northville. It just has to go to Northville Township for June 18<sup>th</sup>. Construction will start June 19<sup>th</sup>. Johnson Creek should be completed by mid-September. It will be under surveillance for a year.

Tamarack Creek: J. O’Meara reported that the work is in the design phase and working with property owners on getting final signatures to do the permitting. J. O’Meara informed the council that it should be ready to bid this fall and some work should be started in the fall and finished in 2021.

#### EGLE PAC Support Grant

S. Petrella reported the QAPP was approved and signed by EGLE in May. They are going to start the fish surveys in July. She prepared an operating procedure to utilize volunteers for FOTR post Covid. The fall bug hunt will not be by large indoor gathering.

J. O’Meara reported part of the grant is to make sure RRAC is still meeting, which they are. They will also assist with the final descriptions so EGLE and EPA will have more information for projects when needing grant funds.

#### Wayne County Parks Restoration – 5 Parks Restoration (Riverview, Lola, Bell Creek, Sherwood, Lower Rouge)

J. O’Meara the projects are in design phase for Riverview, Lola Park, Belle Creek and Sherwood. These projects are wetland enhancements, restorations, etc. and on the Lower Rouge is forestation with additional plantings and removal of some of the log jams. Fieldwork has been started on that since mid-April. The designs should be done by fall. Wayne County and the ARC are working with EPA on the implementation grant which would be for some in 2021 and some in 2022.

#### ARC Seeley Creek Habitat Restoration

J. O’Meara reported that the project is currently moving forward with fieldwork and design and is scheduled to be out to bid in the fall with construction (depending on activity) late this fall or after spring rains next year.

#### ARC Colonial and Venoy Habitat Restoration

J. O’Meara reported these are new projects that just started. These are wetland-based projects in Wayne County Parks. Venoy has some bank stabilization. The QAPP is currently being developed for submittal to EPA.

#### ARC Johnson Creek Intercounty Drain Restoration

J. O’Meara report this project is in the process of being worked through by the EPA. It may go through Heather at Washtenaw County acting as the fiduciary. EPA agreed to the funding and just need to get the grant package submitted and approved.

J. O’Meara reviewed the updated project list.

S. Petrella asked if the flyer could be put on the RRAC website for ease of access and review. She also asked if an updated GIS map of site locations could be available. J. O’Meara mentioned it could be done. Chris O’Meara confirmed the map on the handout is not GIS. J. O’Meara informed that we would get a GIS location map out. Annette DeMaria mentioned they did a KMZ file around 5 years ago.

### **Other Projects of Note**

J. O'Meara reported there are no updates due to Covid.

### **New Business**

Paige Schurr reported they would like to get interviews done as soon as possible. If members are available between July-August for interviews, there are 4 members of U of M students doing interviews for their project on implementation. They are interviewing AOC coordinators, the state, etc. James Polidori would like to inform the council of their email address [aoc-team2021@umich.edu](mailto:aoc-team2021@umich.edu) for any questions or comments.

### **Comments**

D. Tuomari had a question for J. Tewkesbury regarding the 55 sites and wanted to make sure they were for PFAS sampling. J. Tewkesbury confirmed.

S. Petrella gave a quick report on Friends of the Rouge. She mentioned FOTR has been currently working from home. Rouge Rescue couldn't be held. They developed a game where people could learn about the river which just wrapped up. Around 300 people participated. They determined they couldn't have the Rouge Cruise. They are working on an uncruise of the river. She will be interviewing Rose Ellison (EPA) and David Usher (MPC) during the event.

### **Adjourn**

The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by D, Ballnik. Seconded by S. Petrella. The motion passed.

### **Action Items**

- EGLE to send out the management list spreadsheet once complete
- ARC to update Rouge AOC location map/descriptions on the RRAC website along with GIS location map