

March 6, 2024
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Committee
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Rob Kastner	Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District
Wesley Carder	City of Canton
Tony Demasi	City of Cuyahoga Falls
Ron Etling	Portage County Board of Commissioners Appointee
Mike Fritz	City of Wooster
Kevin Givins	City of Orrville
Eric Gorczynski	City of Kent
Genny Hanna	City of Akron
Bob Hempel	Wayne County Health Department
Dan Joseph	City of Akron
Jenn Kiper	Wayne County Planning Department
Justin Rechichar	Portage County Health District
Ali Rogalski	Summit County Public Health
Paige Seech	Stark County Health Department
Patricia Vanah	Ohio EPA
Mike Vinay	Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services
Gordon Cromley	Portage County Water Resources
Nick DeHaven	Portage County Regional Planning Commission
Pat Gsellman	Environmental Design Group (Akron Waterways Renewed!)
David Kohlmeier	CTI Engineers, Inc.
Joe Hadley	NEFCO
Tom LaPlante	NEFCO

Chair Kastner called the meeting to order.

Public Comments

Mr. Gsellman reported that on March 1st, U.S. District Judge John Adams denied the City of Akron's requested fourth amendment to its federal consent decree (to abate its combined sewer overflows). He added that Judge Adams, in his ruling, indicated that previously approved amendments have already saved the city millions of dollars. The judge also noted that the Cuyahoga Valley National Park is downstream, and that the consent decree states: "zero overflows". Had it been granted, the fourth amendment would have allowed the city to implement other studies and projects in the Cuyahoga River watershed in lieu of constructing an enhanced high-rate treatment facility at the end of the Ohio Canal interceptor tunnel (OCIT) to capture and treat only two or three OCIT overflows per year at a project cost of \$209 million. Mr. Gsellman noted that the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio EPA, NEFCO and many other government entities supported Akron's requested fourth amendment. He added that the city is considering its next steps in light of the judge's decision.

Meeting Summary

The February meeting summary was accepted as transmitted.

Discussion Item

"This Winter, Use the Right S.A.L.T. (Stuff, Amount, Location, Time)"; Amy Roskilly, Conservation Education and Communications Manager, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District
Ms. Roskilly's presentation covered the history of the Cuyahoga River fires prior to wastewater treatment regulations and why it's important to properly manage stormwater to protect the Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie today. She described the watersheds that make up the Lake Erie basin and how unmanaged stormwater in those watersheds can transport pollutants, including road and sidewalk

deicing salt, directly into Lake Erie. She covered how overusing deicing salt can contaminate both surface water and groundwater being used as public and private drinking water sources. Her presentation concluded with a discussion on ways individuals and municipalities can reduce chlorides entering the Cuyahoga River and Lake Erie through the implementation of sensible salting practices and ordinances. She covered in detail the following topics:

- Stormwater pollutants (litter, lawn chemicals, oil, grease, pet feces, road/sidewalk salt)
- Public outreach – storm drain stenciling: “Lake Erie Starts Here”
- History of road salt – its use began in 1945; widespread usage by 1975
- Benefit of salt usage: up to 87% reduction in accidents on the roads
- Increasing annual salt usage: 10 million tons/year in 1970s to 22 million tons/year today
- Problem with salt usage: \$10 damage to roads for every dollar’s worth of road salt
- Problem with salt usage: Weakened infrastructure – salt corrodes bridges
- Problem with salt usage: Kills vegetation needed to filter stormwater
- Environmental impacts from winter salting: Increases chlorides and salinity in surface water and groundwater; negatively impacts biological use attainment
- Sensible salting practices for individuals: Use 50% less on sidewalks, shovel snow often
- Sensible salting ordinance for municipalities: leads to a 30% reduction in road salt usage
- H2Ohio chloride reduction grant (\$1 million; up to \$75,000 each municipality) for:
 - Live edge blades, salt spreader control systems, and salt storage facilities upgrades

Ms. Roskilly’s presentation concluded with her fielding many questions from the ERTAC. She brought and distributed to each ERTAC member public outreach materials to encourage sensible salting practices, including a “Lake Erie Starts Here” coffee mug, which holds enough salt to deice ten sidewalk squares.

NEFCO FY2024 Work Program

FY2025 annual 201/208 Facilities Planning Area update begins; status

Mr. LaPlante announced that this year’s voluntary annual FPA update began on February 16, 2024. He noted that NEFCO staff initiated the start of the update by sending notification of it to the region’s primary wastewater management agencies. He indicated that the notification included the guidelines and general timeline for the update to proceed efficiently. He noted that MA participation in this year’s update is slightly higher than the participation in last year’s first annual update. He added that on March 13th, NEFCO will hold a virtual mapping meeting with the participating MAs to go over the mapping guidelines.

208 Plan’s revised draft Chapter 4 update sent to subcommittee of local health districts for final review; next steps

Mr. LaPlante indicated that at the time of agenda mailout for this meeting, he expected the 208 Plan’s revised draft Chapter 4 update to be sent to the subcommittee of local health districts for final review, but after the mailout he and Mr. Hadley agreed that a better plan would be to review the revised draft internally before sending it to the health districts for final review. He noted that this would help prevent substantive changes to the revised draft from being needed after final review by the health districts.

Ohio EPA briefly delays public notification/state certification of submitted NEFCO Board approved 201/208 FPA updates March 2023 through December 2023

Mr. LaPlante reported that Ohio EPA is doing this to avoid NEFCO’s submitted FPA updates and the other five areawide planning agencies’ FPA updates from getting entangled with Ohio EPA’s public notification/hearing of the agency’s FPA update involving the Big Darby Creek watershed, which the agency expects to generate many public comments. Mr. LaPlante noted that Ohio EPA expects its

public notification of NEFCO's FPA updates to occur in May or June of this year instead of March, as the agency initially indicated in December 2023.

ERTAC meeting schedule ad venues in 2024; input requested for needed June and August meeting venues

Mr. LaPlante continued this discussion from the previous month's meeting, reiterating that all ERTAC meetings this year will be held at The Natatorium, in the Hopewell Room, on the first Wednesday of each month, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., except the June and August meetings. He asked for the committee's input to help find a venue for these two meetings. Ms. Hanna suggested that NEFCO staff contact Summit Metro Parks to see if a meeting at one of its lodges might be an option, perhaps with Summit Metro Parks staff giving a tour or presentation on the recently restored Valley View area of Cascade Valley Metro Park.

Reports from ERTAC members (a chance for members to report on activities or problems affecting their communities)

Mr. Gorczynski reported that on April 20th, there will be a clean-up of homeless encampments in the City of Kent. Mr. Demasi reported that in preparation for the eclipse on April 8th and the influx of visitors to the City of Cuyahoga Falls that it is expected to bring, the city's public water system will be operating at peak capacity. Mr. Demasi also reported that he and Bill Zawiski with Ohio EPA will be reporting on the Gorge Dam removal project at the American Society of Civil Engineers meeting on March 21st at the Spaghetti Warehouse in Akron. Mr. Hadley mentioned that the Cuyahoga River AOC Symposium will be held on March 15th from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 pm., at Happy Days Lodge in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. He noted that there is \$5 fee to cover lunch.

Information items requested

Mr. Etling requested a copy of selected articles.

Ohio EPA Public Notices requested

No copies of Ohio EPA public notices were requested.

Ohio Environmental Legislation Recently Signed or Introduced

Chair Kastner briefly went over the specifics of HB 426, which was introduced to designate the first week of October as "Stormwater Awareness Week". This is the only Ohio environmental legislation recently introduced.

Other Business

There was no other business.

ERTAC Contact Hour Course List

Chair Kastner drew the ERTAC's attention to the list.

Next Meeting

Chair Kastner said that the next meeting would be held at 9:00 a.m. on April 3, 2024, at The Natatorium (Hopewell Room) 2345 4th Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.