

June 5, 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
Dominic DiSalvo	City of Ravenna
Mike Fritz	City of Wooster
Kevin Givins	City of Orrville
Eric Gorczynski	City of Kent
Chuck Hauber	Summit County Engineer's Office
Bob Hempel	Wayne County Health Department
Patrick Jeffers	City of Twinsburg
Dan Joseph	City of Akron
Jenn Kiper	Wayne County Planning Department
Ross Nicholson	Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services
Justin Rechichar	Portage County Health District
Paige Seech	Stark County Health Department
Gordon Cromley	Portage County Water Resources
Stephanie Deibel	Summit County Engineer's Office
Patrick Gsellman	EDG (Akron Waterways Renewed!)
Mike Johnson	Summit Metro Parks
David Kohlmeier	CTI Engineers, Inc.
Pete Wearstler	City of Alliance
Tom LaPlante	NEFCO

Chair Kastner called the meeting to order.

Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

Meeting Summary

The May meeting summary was accepted as transmitted.

Discussion Item

"Summit Metro Parks' recent acquisition and restoration of the Valley View area of Cascade Valley Metro Park"; Mike Johnson, Chief of Conservation, Summit Metro Parks

Mr. Johnson gave an overview of Summit Metro Parks' acquisition in 2017 of the 200-acre Valley View golf course, which provides a Summit Metro Parks link between Sand Run Metro Park and Cascade Valley Metro Park North and South. He acknowledged the partners that helped implement this project to restore 5,000 linear feet of the Cuyahoga River mainstem, 3,300 linear feet of headwater stream, and 18 acres of wetlands in the Valley View area. They include the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern (AOC), Great Lakes Commission, Ohio Lake Erie Commission, Ohio EPA, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Ohio Public Works, Davey Resource Group, River Reach Construction, EnviroScience, Inc., and Marks Construction, Inc. He noted that Phase 1 of the project was funded by a \$1.4 million Clean Ohio Conservation Fund grant to manage invasive species, remove existing turf grass, remove non-native and invasive trees, demolish structures and regrade, reseed with native mixes, restore terrestrial habitats and reforest, restore 18 acres of wetlands, and restore 3,300 linear feet of headwater stream. He further noted that Phase 2 was funded by \$2.2 million in grant awards from the Great Lakes Commission Regional Partnership and NOAA to restore 5,000 linear feet of Cuyahoga River

mainstem by removing berms and levies, excavating and restoring the floodplain, installing fish habitat, and reforesting. He showed slides of each of the two phases being implemented. He showed several Google Earth aerial photos of the Valley View area taken over the entire project period and noted that they really captured this Cuyahoga River restoration project at all stages, from start to finish.

Mr. Johnson's presentation concluded with him fielding many questions from the ERTAC.

NEFCO FY2024 Work Program

Ongoing annual 201/208 facilities planning areas update; status: June 26th update submittal deadline quickly approaching for participating management agencies

Mr. LaPlante reported that as of May 15th, the eight wastewater management agencies participating in this year's annual FPA update indicated that they will be submitting a combined total of 64 update areas. He noted that MAs participating in last year's first annual update only submitted a total of 9 update areas. He added that about half of the participating MAs have submitted draft updates for NEFCO staff's review to date and that the June 26th update submittal deadline is quickly approaching for the other MAs who have yet to submit anything for staff's review. He indicated that any MAs that miss the update submittal deadline may need to submit their proposed updates during the next annual update cycle.

NEFCO's two water quality management planning contracts with Ohio EPA; status

Mr. LaPlante reported that NEFCO's water quality management contracts with Ohio EPA are in the queue for signing by the Director; the agency will let us know when they've been signed.

City of Akron's requested fourth amendment to the federal Consent Decree; status

Mr. LaPlante deferred this item to Mr. Gsellman, who noted that not much has changed since March when U.S. District Court Judge Adams ruled against the city's request to forgo constructing the enhanced high-rate treatment facility at the end of the Ohio Canal Interceptor Tunnel to capture and treat only two or three overflows per year at a cost of \$209 million. He noted that Judge Adams didn't accept the city's proposal to replace the EHRT with alternative water quality improvement projects and studies for the Village of Peninsula and Springfield Lake in the Cuyahoga River watershed. Mr. Gsellman further noted that at the end of April, the city filed a motion before the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals requesting a stay to the District Court ruling while the appeal process plays out.

Save the date: July 3rd ERTAC meeting to include presentation on "Regulatory Updates to the Clean Water Act – Ohio Wetlands Law and Compliance" by Michael Liptak, PhD, Certified Senior Ecologist, EnviroScience, Inc.

Mr. LaPlante noted that Dr. Liptak is a past ERTAC speaker who is an expert on environmental law with a focus on Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) and Ohio's related laws and compliance with them. He asked the ERTAC to mark their calendars to join Dr. Liptak for his presentation on updates to this topic at the July 3rd ERTAC meeting.

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

Mr. Gsellman reported that the annual Blue Heron Homecoming is June 15th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Mustill Store, 57 West North Street, Akron, Ohio.

Information items requested

No copies of information items were requested.

Ohio EPA Public Notices requested

No copies of Ohio EPA public notices were requested.

Ohio Environmental Legislation Recently Signed or Introduced

Mr. LaPlante briefly went over the status of HB 519, HB 534, and HB 652, as listed in the agenda.

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 July 3, 2024, at The Natatorium, Hopewell Room, 2345 4th Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio