

**June 4, 2025**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Executive Committee**  
**Meeting Summary**

**Attendance**

Tia Rutledge	Portage County Water Resources
Wes Carder	City of Cuyahoga Falls
Dominic DiSalvo	City of Ravenna
Ron Etling	Portage County Commissioners Appointee
Mike Fritz	City of Wooster
Kevin Givins	City of Orrville
Eric Gorczynski	City of Kent
Genny Hanna	City of Akron
Chuck Hauber	Summit County Engineer's Office
Bob Hempel	Wayne County Health Department
Patrick Jeffers	City of Twinsburg
Jenn Kiper	Wayne County Planning Department
Ross Nicholson	Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services
Justin Rechichar	Portage County Health District
Julie Reis	Summit County Public Health
Amy Reichlin	Portage County Regional Planning Commission
Tom Sanderson	City of Canton
Pete Wearstler	City of Alliance
Ashika Adhikari	City of Akron
Eric Akin	Ohio EPA
Stephanie Deibel	Summit County Engineer's Office
Patrick Gsellman	Environmental Design Group/Akron Waterways Renewed!
Dan Joseph	City of Akron
Heather Ullinger	City of Akron
Joe Hadley	NEFCO
Tom LaPlante	NEFCO

**In absence of Chair Kastner, and Vice Chair Rutledge 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**

*"Akron Waterways Renewed! Program Updates"*; Patrick Gsellman, PE, Class III Wastewater Operator, Senior Advisor, Environmental Design Group; and Heather Ullinger, PE, Senior Engineer, Akron Engineering Bureau

Mr. Gsellman and Ms. Ullinger gave an Akron Waterways Renewed! Program Update that included an update on the Northside Interceptor Tunnel (NSIT) project (required by the federal consent decree to abate Akron's combined sewer overflows (CSOs)), a consent decree amendment 4 update, and update on the Blue Heron Homecoming (annual public outreach event to educate the community on water quality improvements to the Cuyahoga River resulting from the AWR! Program). They also gave an update on the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern (AOC) and Gorge Dam Removal project, which will address the river's last remaining beneficial use impairments and help delist it as an AOC on U.S. EPA's list of AOCs in the Great Lakes. Mr. Gsellman began by stating that Emily Collins is the new AWR! Program Manager, but she had a scheduling conflict with this ERTAC meeting. He explained the background of the consent decree and noted that it was lodged with the federal court in November

2009 and subsequently resulted in Akron's CSO Long Term Control Plan Update in November 2011. He added that the consent decree was entered in January 2014 and requires that the city completes all projects by October 2027 and have zero untreated overflows in a typical year and zero secondary by-passes (100% biological treatment) at the time of completion. He noted that to help meet the requirements of consent decree, the Akron Integrated Plan was developed and approved in July 2015, and the Akron Baseline Financial Capability Assessment was completed in August 2015. He explained that consent decree Exhibit 3 incorporates green infrastructure projects into the Integrated Plan and it was approved in October 2015. He summarized the three consent decree amendments that were approved from September 2016 through November 2023, and consent decree amendment number 4, the motion for which was entered in September 2023. He noted that the City of Akron has completed 24 of 26 projects under the consent decree and he summarized those 24 projects, showing slides of them, and further noted that they have now resulted in only 0 to 3 untreated overflows in a typical year, down from 848 overflows per year. He added that the 25<sup>th</sup> project, the NCIT, is currently under construction. He reported that consent decree amendment number 4, which would allow Akron to forgo constructing a \$209 million remote enhanced high-rate treatment facility to treat only 3 or less remaining overflows per year, was denied in March 2024; Akron appealed the decision, and it is now in mediation. Ms. Ullinger showed many slides of the NCIT and Gorge Dam removal projects and discussed the engineering details of those two projects and their projected completion dates.

After their presentation, Mr. Gsellman and Ms. Ullinger fielded many questions from the ERTAC.

### **NEFCO FY2025 Work Program**

#### *FY2026 201/208 FPA update; status and next steps*

Mr. LaPlante gave the status of, and next steps for the ongoing FY2026 FPA update, noting that four management agencies across Portage, Stark, and Summit Counties submitted GIS mapping data for a combined total of more than 400 parcels or combinations of parcels with proposed wastewater prescription changes and/or FPA boundary modifications. He further noted that to assist the MAs with their FPA map updates, NEFCO's GIS specialist has grouped these updates into suggested update areas that contain multiple parcels being updated, as she did last year, and provided the MAs with templates to create PDFs of their draft update location/index maps and draft existing FPA and proposed FPA maps. He added that the MAs have until June 25<sup>th</sup> to coordinate with any affected MAs with jurisdiction in the update areas then submit their draft graphics and draft prescription text to NEFCO; and after the June 25<sup>th</sup> submittal deadline, NEFCO staff will review the draft graphics and text and notify the participating MAs of any needed revisions. He noted that MAs will have until July 18<sup>th</sup> to submit their complete final draft update packages to NEFCO.

#### *Discussion regarding when text updates to the 208 Plan's Chapter 3 appendices are required*

Mr. LaPlante led a discussion with the ERTAC regarding the difference between a management agency's voluntary written wastewater prescription text update and when updates to the written prescriptions in the Chapter 3 appendices are required, noting that NEFCO staff won't accept updates to the prescriptions shown on the FPA maps without a written prescription being stated in the associated FPA appendix.

#### *Clean Water (208) Plan's Chapter 5 update; status and next steps*

Mr. LaPlante gave the status of, and next steps for the 208 Plan's Chapter 5 update that was initiated during this fiscal year, reminding the ERTAC that Chapter 5 covers "Management of Nonpoint Source Pollution and Stormwater Runoff". He went over bullet points of what NEFCO staff has done to date for this chapter update and what will be done for it in FY2026.

#### *NEFCO's FY2026 water quality management planning contracts with Ohio EPA; status*

Mr. LaPlante reported that NEFCO received its fully executed FY2026 contracts with Ohio EPA by mid-May, which may be a record for the earliest it received the contracts to date. He noted

that, like last year, the Ohio EPA staff focused on assisting the six areawide planning agencies in the state, including NEFCO, in receiving these contracts before the start of the upcoming fiscal year. He thanked Mr. Akin and other Ohio EPA staff for their quick processing of the scopes and no delays from Ohio EPA's legal department, which really aided the process. Mr. Hadley noted that due to Ohio EPA's efficiency, NEFCO's contractual work will be able to begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>, as intended, and he thanked Mr. Akin for standardizing the contract applications. Mr. Akin thanked NEFCO staff for recognizing Ohio EPA's quick and efficient work on the contracts and he noted that more standardization of the process is coming next year.

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

There were no reports from ERTAC members.

**Ohio EPA Public Notices requested**

There were no Ohio EPA Public notices requested.

**Ohio Environmental Legislation Recently Signed or Introduced**

While no Ohio environmental legislation was recently signed or introduced, Mr. Hadley indicated that he has been looking for any new developments with HB 182, which proposes to prohibit a public water system from adding fluoride to its water or, possibly, from having naturally occurring fluoride from its source water, as noted by Ms. Vanah at the May ERTAC meeting. He noted that he isn't aware of any new developments with the bill but will report on them to the ERTAC if/when he sees them.

**Information items requested**

Mr. Hempel requested copies of selected information items.

**Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

**ERTAC Contact Hour Course List**

Ms. Rutledge drew the ERTAC's attention to the list.

**Next Meeting**

Ms. Rutledge said that the next meeting would be held at 9:00 a.m. on **July 2, 2025** at The Natatorium, Hopewell Room, 2345 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.