

**August 6, 2025**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**Executive Committee**  
**Meeting Summary**

**Attendance**

Rob Kastner	Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District
Wes Carder	City of Cuyahoga Falls
Ron Etling	Portage County Commissioners Appointee
Mike Fritz	City of Wooster
Kevin Givins	City of Orrville
Eric Gorczynski	Kent City Health Department
Genny Hanna	City of Akron
Chuck Hauber	Summit County Engineer's Office
Bob Hempel	Wayne County Health Department
Kendra Heiser	Summit Soil and Water Conservation District
Ross Nicholson	Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services
Justin Rechichar	Portage County Health District
Julie Reis	Summit County Public Health
Tom Sanderson	City of Canton
James Taylor	Summit County Dept. of Community and Economic Development
Patricia Vanah	Ohio EPA
Ashika Adhikari	City of Akron
Sarah Clutter	City of Canton
Ty Clark	Wayne County Planning Department
Gordon Cromley	Portage County Water Resources Department
Patrick Gsellman	Environmental Design Group/Akron Waterways Renewed!
David Kohlmeier	CTI Engineers, Inc.
Dan Joseph	City of Akron
David Emerman	Ohio EPA
Joe Hadley	NEFCO
Tom LaPlante	NEFCO

**Chair Kastner called the meeting to order.**

**Public Comments**

There were no comments from the public.

**Meeting Summary**

The July meeting summary was accepted as transmitted.

**Discussion Item**

*"Ohio EPA NEDO program updates"*; David Emerman, Chief Community Officer, Ohio EPA Northeast District Office

Chief Emerman gave the ERTAC an overview of impacts to certain Ohio EPA programs from the approved state biennium budget. He explained that in 1993, Ohio EPA adopted the Title V Operating Permit program under the 1990 federal Clean Air Act Amendments and maintained the same fee level of \$25 per ton of emissions over the last 30 years. Meanwhile, emission reduction programs under the Clean Air Act have led to significantly lower emissions. As air quality improved, revenue decreased for Ohio EPA's air program and local air agencies. This loss in revenue has been compounded by the closure of six power plants since 2014, resulting in an additional annual revenue loss of about \$2.4 million. Ohio EPA's Title V annual revenue dropped from \$16.5 million in 2009 to \$8.2 million in 2024. For the SFY2026-27 budget, the agency estimated that \$7 million in increased revenue was needed to support both the local air agencies that are under contract with Ohio EPA and Ohio EPA's air

pollution control program, with \$4.5 million needed for Ohio EPA and \$2.5 million for the local air agencies. To achieve that revenue increase, the agency proposed a new \$5,000 base fee and 50 percent increase in the PTI fee for the state's 509 Title V facilities and 791 'synthetic minor' facilities, which equals \$7 million in increased revenue and brings the total revenue back up to the 2009 revenue level, he explained. The approved biennial budget includes these fee increases and the first invoices for the new fees are expected in October 2025, with payments due in summer of 2026.

Chief Emerman noted that there are few to no impacts from the approved budget to the core programs in the Division of Surface Water (DSW) and Division of Drinking and Ground Waters (DDAGW). Also, Ohio EPA DSW and DDAGW expect few to no fee increases in SFY2026-27. He indicated that the Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance (DEFA) expects some impacts from the approved state budget and federal funding cuts to the state's Water Pollution Control Loan Fund (WPCLF) and Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA). Federal funding that DEFA receives for the WPCLF and WSRLA from the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), expires September 30, 2026. He explained that it's too early to know exactly where cuts in the state's WPCLF and WSRLA programs will be seen, noting that DEFA may no longer offer 'principal forgiveness' funding, which is grant-like funding for certain projects such as replacing failing septic systems for low-income households throughout the state. The Chief showed and discussed slides of some of his favorite water quality projects, funded by Ohio EPA's H2Ohio program, to reduce nutrient loading in waters of the state. He explained that the agency's SFY2025 budget estimate for its H2Ohio program was reduced from \$27.5 million to \$7.5 million for SFY2026-27. Therefore, funding of fewer good projects under the program is expected to occur during this fiscal year and the next, he noted. He added that it's not known whether the H2Ohio winter salting grants to reduce chlorides in waters of the state will be offered again as they were previously under the program.

After his presentation, Chief Emerman fielded many questions from the ERTAC.

### **NEFCO FY2026 Work Program**

*FY2026 201/208 FPA update; status after the MA's July 28<sup>th</sup> final draft submittal deadline*

Mr. LaPlante reported that by the July 28<sup>th</sup> final draft submittal deadline, all four management agencies participating in NEFCO's FY2026 FPA update had submitted the required PDFs of their final draft update maps for a combined total of more than 400 parcels or combinations of parcels with proposed wastewater treatment prescription changes and/or facilities planning area boundary modifications. He noted that they also had submitted their required draft written prescriptions for the 208 Plan's Chapter 3 appendices before July 28<sup>th</sup>. He reported that in all, the participating MAs are proposing to update the wastewater prescriptions for 13 FPAs plus for one area outside of any FPA, and are proposing to modify three FPA boundaries, all within the MAs' own jurisdiction. He noted that NEFCO's GIS specialist has now begun to construct the draft online FPA update map that will be posted on NEFCO's website during public notification of the update, which is anticipated to occur this October after the NEFCO Board releases the update for public review and comments, with the ERTAC's recommendation to do so at its September 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

*Website maintenance and updating being performed by NEFCO staff in preparation of public notification of the FY2026 FPA update*

Mr. LaPlante reported that in preparation of public notification of the FY2026 FPA update, NEFCO staff is revising the text of last year's FPA update website. He noted that the website will state the start date of the 30-day public comment period, and the date final comments will be received. He further noted that it will have the final draft PDF update maps, organized by county, posted on it. He added that the website will also have a link to an interactive online draft FPA update map and instructions on several ways comments can be submitted to NEFCO. The online map will allow viewers to enlarge the update areas shown on the PDF maps to show details at the parcel level.

*FY2025 201/208 FPA update, and Sterling FPA amendment submitted to Ohio EPA in January, status as of July 23<sup>rd</sup>*

Mr. LaPlante reported that on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, Ohio EPA informed the six Areawides that the state's 'logjam for 208 Plan updates' is finally starting to move after Governor DeWine certified Ohio EPA's Mid-Ohio FPA update in mid-July, and the documents have been sent to U.S. EPA Region 5 for approval. He noted that Ohio EPA also informed the Areawides that the state's pending 208 Plan main text and Delaware County FPA updates are in the final stages of Ohio EPA signoffs before being sent to the Governor for certification. He added that the Areawides' updates, including NEFCO's, from CY2024 are next in the queue for certification, noting that Ohio EPA intends to start the update and certification process in early August with the release of the public notice. This would put the Areawides' updates on pace for state certification this fall.

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

Mr. Gorczynski reported that the City of Kent's Cuyahoga River clean-up day is August 30<sup>th</sup>. Chair Kastner reported that Wayne County's new Sterling wastewater treatment plant and sewer construction project is in progress and expected to be completed by the end of the year. Mr. Nicholson reported that Summit County Department of Sanitary Sewer Services' new Peninsula wastewater treatment plant and sewer project is at 100 percent design and DSSS will be meeting with the Village of Peninsula in October to discuss the construction schedule and other details of the project.

### **Information items requested**

Mr. Etling requested copies of selected information items.

### **Ohio Environmental Legislation**

There was no Ohio environmental legislation to discuss.

### **Ohio EPA Public Notices requested**

Mr. Hadley reported that a couple of Ohio EPA public notices were posted after the ERTAC agenda mailout. One is pertaining to proposed rules for Ohio NPDES permits under Ohio Administrative Code Chapter 3745-33 with comments being accepted by Ohio EPA until September 9, 2025. The other is pertaining to public water systems and Ohio EPA's proposed rules for record maintenance under OAC 3745-81-33 with comments being accepted by the agency until September 5, 2025. He offered to provide these to anyone requesting them, and noted that they may also be found on Ohio EPA's website.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Hadley discussed NEFCO's past and present water quality management planning funding, noting that before NEFCO received state funding, our agency received \$50,000 per year in federal pass-through funding, and he appreciates NEFCO and the other Areawides now being in Ohio EPA's budget, much like the local air agencies are in Ohio EPA's budget.

### **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 **September 3, 2025** at The Natatorium, Hopewell Room, 2345 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.