

January 5, 2022
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Committee
Meeting Summary

Attendance

Rob Kastner	Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District
Wesley Carder	City of Canton
Kevin Givins	City of Orrville
Patrick Gsellman	City of Akron
Genny Hanna	City of Akron
Trevor Hunt	City of Barberton
Dan Joseph	City of Akron
Sam Norman	City of Canton
Ali Rogalski	Summit County Public Health
Tia Rutledge	Portage County Water Resources
Patricia Vanah	Ohio EPA - NEDO
Pete Wearstler	Wayne County Planning Department
Doug Darrah	ECS Limited
Dan Moeglin	City of Canton
Chris Barnes	City of Canton
Marissa Lautzenheiser	Rural Action
Joe Hadley	NEFCO
Tom LaPlante	NEFCO

Vice Chairman Kastner called the meeting to order

Public Comments

There were no comments from the public

Meeting Summary

The December meeting summary was accepted as transmitted.

Discussion Item

“Rural Action’s Water Quality Improvement and Protection Projects in the Muskingum River Watershed”; Marissa Lautzenheiser, Rural Action’s Director of Northern Programs

Ms. Lautzenheiser began her presentation with an introduction to Rural Action (RA), a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit with a mission to build a more just economy by developing the region’s assets in environmentally, socially, and economic ways. She indicated that water quality/environmental restoration is a big part of RA’s core work. She described in great detail the reach of RA’s major water quality projects, which span throughout the entire Muskingum River watershed, from Portage, Stark, Summit, and Wayne Counties in northeastern Ohio, to the Appalachian counties in southern and southeastern Ohio. Topics covered included:

- Abandoned mine lands (AMLs) reclamation
- AML impacts in Ohio
- Mines of Ohio online database (slide showed map of mines in NEFCO region)
- Three levels of AML impacts
 - Priority 1: Public health & safety impact from *extreme* dangers
 - Priority 2: Public health & safety impact from *general* dangers
 - Priority 3: Environmental restoration (RA’s focus)
- Acid mine drainage and types of acid mine drainage treatment systems in use in Ohio

- Monitoring bio criteria/tiered aquatic life use designations to gauge treatment success
- Reclamation of AMLs and treatment successes in Huff Run watershed (shown by incremental biological improvements from 1997 to 2020 through monitoring)
- Tuscarawas River water trail
 - 130 miles long from Stark to Coshocton Counties; 112 miles designated for paddling
 - Joining the Muskingum River, it creates a 224-mile journey from NE to SE Ohio
- Walhonding River monitoring and protection
 - Started in 2017 with a grant to study mussel populations below Mohawk Dam
 - Mussel survey completed in 2019
 - Watershed-wide chemical water quality characterization survey completed (2021)
 - Next step: Hellbender population surveys/habitat improvement project (2022-2023)
- Greater Walhonding Conservation Alliance
- Little Killbuck Creek watershed NPS-IS plan
- H2Ohio/brownfields/AML mitigation projects
- Partners
 - Contracts/grants with 14 organizations/state and federation agencies, combined
- Collaboration opportunities

Ms. Lautzenheiser's presentation concluded with her fielding questions from the ERTAC.

NEFCO FY2022 Work Program

NEFCO's state-certified 208 Plan amendments and Chapter 3 update; status of federal approval

Mr. LaPlante reported the Ohio EPA Central Office's Division of Surface Water staff communicated with US EPA Region 5 on December 13th regarding the status of the agency's submitted 208 amendments and updates but it hasn't heard back; therefore, federal approval of NEFCO's state-certified 208 Plan amendments and Chapter 3 update still hasn't been received.

Areawides/Ohio EPA sewerred and unsewerred areas data collection and mapping project; Ohio EPA's update to the Areawides directives

Mr. LaPlante reported that at the December 9th collaborative mapping project meeting, Ohio EPA provided the Areawides with its directives on how to include income data, and distance from priority areas to existing sewer. He indicated that Ohio EPA directed that the Areawides include low-to-moderate income data, but only if it's already available to them. He added that Ohio EPA would prefer that the Areawides show the distance from priority areas to existing sewer by creating a 'heat map', i.e., a map showing the warmest colors where existing sewer is the closest. Mr. LaPlante then announced that all four counties have sent NEFCO staff their priority areas, with the health districts and wastewater management agencies (MAs) generally agreeing on the priorities. He showed and discussed slides with examples of each of the four county's submitted priority areas. He noted that he still needs to coordinate with the MAs in Portage and Summit Counties to determine whether their priorities are the same as the health districts' priorities.

Portage Lakes Management Study (PLMS) – Phase 6; draft Management Plan rollout; status

Mr. LaPlante reported that the PLMS Partners met on December 2nd and gave the go ahead for the draft Management Plan rollout, which is being modeled after Watershed Action Plans (at the request of Ohio EPA). He added that staff will seek endorsement of the Management Plan by the Portage Lakes communities and seek public comments prior to presenting it to the ERTAC and NEFCO Board for adoption consideration. Mr. Hadley provided clarification, stating that NEFCO will give the Portage Lakes communities the opportunity to provide comments and endorse the Management Plan, not require that it be endorsed by them, prior to presenting it to the ERTAC and NEFCO Board for adoption consideration.

Canal Diversion Dam Removal Project's river water pump station installation; status

Mr. LaPlante reported that Friends of the Crooked River (FOCR) and the project's Owner's Representative recently informed NEFCO staff that the project is 88 percent complete—the dam removal is 100 percent complete, and the installation of the river water pump station is 80 percent complete. Staff also learned that the screw pump was delivered to FOCR's contractor's facility and was inspected, and FOCR and its contractor are finalizing the next steps before delivering the screw pump to the jobsite. Mr. LaPlante also reported that FOCR recently requested that NEFCO apply for a no cost US EPA grant extension to extend the end date from March 31, 2022, to May 31, 2022 (Note: FOCR changed its extension request to June 30, 2022 on the day after this ERTAC meeting). The delay in receiving the screw pump due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the onset of the winter months were stated by FOCR as the reasons for the needed extension.

NEFCO region projects that will receive funding under Round 3 of the Ohio BUILDS Water Infrastructure Grants, as created by HB 168, and announced on December 7th

Mr. LaPlante showed and discussed a slide of NEFCO region projects that were awarded funding under Round 3 of the Ohio BUILDS infrastructure grant program. The slide indicated that Portage County was awarded \$3 Million for the Mantua public water system water main and booster pump station project; the City of Massillon (Stark County) was awarded \$618,914 for a sanitary sewer main and water main replacement project; the City of Norton (Summit County) was awarded \$3 Million for a new water main and elevated tank to provide water to Norton and Barberton residents; and the Village of Fredericksburg (Wayne County) was awarded \$500,000 for a public water system replacement project to address manganese removal.

Save the date: Jerry Rouch, Ohio EPA's Deputy Director for Infrastructure Funding, to give a presentation to the ERTAC on February 2nd: "Ohio's Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Funding Prospects: Opportunities and Challenges"

Mr. LaPlante reminded the ERTAC that at its February 2nd meeting Jerry Rouch, Ohio EPA's Deputy for Infrastructure Funding, will give a presentation that will cover everything from Ohio EPA DEFA's traditional water and wastewater SRFs to H2Ohio funding, to the Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Grant Program that was created by HB 168, to general information about the recently signed Infrastructure Act, which Ohio EPA is still working through.

ERTAC Operator Contact Hour Course and Attendee Tracking 2021

Mr. Hadley indicated that he brought hardcopies of this document to distribute to ERTAC members and alternates upon request.

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

There were no reports from ERTAC members.

Information items requested

No items were requested.

Ohio EPA Public Notices requested

While no Ohio EPA public notices were requested, Mr. Hadley explained that the second notice on the agenda regarding the Water Supply Revolving Loan Account (WSRLA) contained a typo: "FY2023" should be stated as "PY2023" to indicate the WSRLA program year, not fiscal year.

Ohio Environmental Legislation Recently Signed or Introduced

None.

Other Business

None.

ERTAC Contact Hour Course List

Vice Chairman Kastner drew the ERTAC's attention to the list.

Next Meeting

Vice Chairman Kastner said that the next meeting would be held on February 2, 2022, at The Natatorium, Hopewell Room, 2345 4th Street, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio