

**Rouge River Advisory Council (RRAC)  
Draft Meeting Summary  
February 1, 2018**

**Attendees:**

Attended?	Name	Attended?	Names
N	Alice Bailey, Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC)	N	Marie McCormick, Friends of the Rouge
Y	Dan Ballnik, Chair	N	Karen Mondora, Farmington Hills
Y	John Beisel, Farmington Hills	Y	Noel Mullett, Wayne County Dept. of Public Services
N	Marty Boote, ARC	N	Rob Myllyoja, Stantec
N	Cory Borton, Bloomfield Twp.	Y	Chris O'Meara, ARC
Y	Jeff Braunscheidel, MDNR	Y	John O'Meara, ARC
Y	Bill Craig, Vice Chair and SPAC representative	Y	Sally Petrella, Friends of the Rouge
N	Annette DeMaria, ARC	Y	Heather Rice, Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioners Office
N	Rose Ellison, EPA Representative	N	Devan Rosturfer, SEMCOG
Y	Jacy Garrison, Oakland County Water Resources Commissioners Office	Y	Brandy Siedlaczek, Southfield
N	Orin Gelderloos, U-M Dearborn	Y	Jennifer Tewkesbury, MDEQ Coordinator
N	Kevin Goodwin, MDEQ	Y	Dean Tuomari, Citizen
N	Barb Goryca, Dearborn citizen	Y	Sue Thompson, WCDPS-WQMD

**Introductions**

Introductions were completed.

**Meeting Summary**

The meeting summary from October 5, 2017 was reviewed and approved.

**Old Business**

J. Tewkesbury reported that at this time she did not have a date for a public meeting for the old channel.

**SPAC Report**

B. Craig reported that he attended the Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council meeting that was held October 10-11, 2017. Dan Ballnik attended the meeting. There were reports from both the GLC and EPA. They reported that \$300 million in appropriations was passed by the House on December 1 and will be available for GLRI funding. They reported that the FY2016 report on GLRI is available online. FY2019 funding is a question. EPA's goal of 72 BUIs removed was met by 73. He stated that projects need long-term monitoring and maintenance plants.

B. Craig reported that the AOC Conference will be in Cheyebogan, Wisconsin May 16-17.

B. Craig reported that Paul Seelbach has a class, Sustaining Community Vitally Across MI AOCs, at the University of Michigan. In partnership with the Office of the Great Lakes, two students will be interviewing PAC members on PAC strengths, struggles, effectiveness and sustainability. J. Tewkesbury added that the class will be looking at how it can be improved.

GLC will still be providing PAC grants. Grantee instructions were distributed which included SIGMA Reporting.

B. Craig stated that Vice Chair Anne Vara resigned and her position in the SPAC is vacant. They are also working on revisions to the By-laws and the nominations sub-committee is seeking persons to fill the Chair and Vice Chair at the next SPAC meeting.

The Michigan legislature gave a briefing and a status report was given on restoring and revitalizing Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern.

Speakers at the conference included Senator Phil Pavlov, Representative Stephanie Chang, Jon Allen (OGL) and Mayor Robert Clark (City of Monroe). Also, in attendance were Representative's Laura Cox, Christine Greig, Robert Kosowski, Jewell Jones.

### **MDNR Update**

J. Tewkesbury reported that her office has transferred from the MDEQ to the MDNR.

J. Tewkesbury reported that the MDEQ director met with Ford in hopes of getting them interested in partnering on the Main Channel as a non-federal sponsor. With this Legacy Act funding could possibly be used which requires a 60/40 split.

J. Tewkesbury reported that work with the Army Corp continues on the concrete channel. The feasibility study is on-going. They don't know who owns the channel. Both the MDNR and the EPA are talking with them regarding the possibility of direct funding from GLRI and this could be a \$40 million project.

### **EPA Update**

J. Tewkesbury reported on behalf of Rose Ellison that the EPA is planning a public meeting on the Lower Old Channel for the week of March 12. She requested that the Council forward any names of people that should be invited to attend.

### **Existing Grants Update**

#### 2017 GLC PAC support Grant

S. Petrella informed the council that they are working on the report and the rest of the fish surveys will continue once the weather is warmer. J. Braunscheidel will check to see if he sent Sally the 2017 data that they collected.

J. O'Meara reported that they are continuing to detail the next set of habitat projects from the list. This includes possibly packaging the Bell Creek Park Wetlands, Sherwood Park Wetlands, and Lola Valley Park Wetlands. M. Boote and N. Mullett met with Wayne County Parks to lay out what needs to be done to make sure the project covers all interests and habitat.

J. Tewkesbury informed the council that she has tried to put the projects on a schedule for potential funding and she said she may be able to share that with the group.

#### Wayne County Invasives

N. Mullett reported that the grant is coming to a close. It included treatment of 47 sites in Wayne County Parks, 3 Detroit parks, 5 County drains, and treatment in Livonia, Canton Twp., and Fordson Island. A Phragmites map is being developed for these treatments. Controlled burns were also done in Southfield. We will be tracking metrics by year and month. There were also 268 events with 2,300 volunteers, 12,000 cubic yards of invasives were removed and 225 acres were treated. The project was given an extension until 12/31/18 to include activities in Farmington Hills for Rouge Rescue and to prepare a video. Noel will provide the report from the contractor to Sally for the video being developed.

#### Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – HFE Fishway and Oxbow Phase 3 Implementation

J. O'Meara reported that the project is moving forward with bids received from the contractors and Wayne County is putting the contracts through their system for approval. Both came in under bid.

#### Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – Nankin Lake Restoration

N. Mullett stated that he expects expanded work will be able to be funded because of the under bidding on the HFE and Oxbow. This will include dredging and in-water habitat. ECT was awarded the project with design in 2018 and implementation in 2019.

#### USDA Forest Service Grant

J. O'Meara reported that the ARC received another \$100,000 grant to replace trees affected by the emerald ash borer within the Rouge River Watershed.

#### EPA Direct Funding

The ARC received funding in November 2017 for design engineering for the restoration of Tamarack Creek/wetland and habitat restoration on Johnson Creek at Fish Hatchery Park. These two priority projects were considered the next one that would have significant impact on the removal of the BUIs in the Rouge AOC. Anticipated award in April/May 2018.

#### **Other Projects of Note**

N. Mullett reviewed a CMI funded project that is producing an insecticide monitoring map. The project documents the pesticide results which include flea/tic/ant pesticides being the worst. N. Mullett will send the report to Chris to distribute to the RRAC. This would affect the benthos & fish consumption BUI's.

#### **New Business**

##### Sustaining watershed initiatives/value of volunteer monitoring

B. Craig and S. Petrella stressed the importance of the macroinvertebrate monitoring and the results it shows on the condition of the watershed. S. Petrella informed the Council that due to additional permit requirements to the ARC communities the funding for this monitoring was cut. She stated that they have found some funding from the Erb Foundation and Washtenaw County but they continue to look for more to fund all events. She stated that they are also looking at ways to cut costs. It was suggested that maybe the communities sponsor some of the sites. It was agreed that this monitoring provides lots of valuable data gathered by the volunteers but it needs more sustainable funding. J. Tewkesbury asked Sally to put together a funding package request to her for the monitoring as they may have some funds that can be used for the activities. B. Craig will work with J. O'Meara to draft a letter to Jon Alan regarding the importance of funding monitoring done by volunteers.

##### Rouge River watershed 3D terrain model

Sally Petrella showed the Council the new public education piece that was developed showing the terrain of Michigan and the watershed.

##### PAC Support Grant 2018 Task Suggestions

J. O'Meara requested ideas for the next PAC application for 2018-2019. He is anticipating fish sampling and possibly macro sampling, more project development and RRAC administration.

#### **Comments**

##### Members

B. Craig, on behalf of RRAC, provided brief public comment on Wayne County Parks Vision and 5 Year Recreation Plan 2017-2022. A letter was sent regarding the flow/glacial terrain. Both the Detroit and Rouge AOC were mentioned before but not in the later draft.

B. Crain stated that he has observed that detention basins are not being maintained to sustain their functions. Two sets of photographs were passed around to members to make this point. There seems to be a weakness in local enforcement of ordinances and/or deed requirements. Since flow is of concern in the watershed, there may be need for better regulations and better enforcement of local ordinances.

**Adjourn**

The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by J. Garrison and seconded by B. Siedlaczek. The motion passed.