



Black River Remedial Action Plan Coordinating Committee

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BLACK RIVER REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN

Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 10, 2014

11:30 AM

Black River Landing Transportation Center

421 Black River Lane

Lorain, OH 44052

In Attendance:

Biohabitat, Inc. (Tom Denbow), Citizen Representatives (Jennifer Scott-Wasilk, Andy Vidra, Cheryl Wolfe-Cragin), City of Elyria (Tonya Nigro), City of Lorain (Derek Feuerstein, Kate Hoffmann, Louise Kilbane), Coldwater Consulting (Kristen Risch), Cuyahoga County Board of Health (Meiring Borchers), EcoSphere (Ricki Herdendorf), LoCo 'Yaks (Robb Koscho), Lorain County Community Development (Lyn Ickes), Lorain County General Health District (Dave Covell, Duane Cribley, Heather Heck, Stephanie Lesco, Jill Lis, John Sabo), Lorain County Metro Parks (Bryan Goldthorpe), Medina Soil and Water Conservation District (Jeff Van Loon), NOACA (Pam Davis), ODNR (Steve Holland-Coastal Management, Tom Homes - DSWR), Ohio EPA (Ted Conlin, Amy Jo Klei), OSU-Stone Laboratory (Eddie Herdendorf), Tetra Tech (Kevin Kratt), Western Reserve Land Conservancy (Andy McDowell)

Agenda Items

Black River Intern Project Update

- Update on the home sewage treatment system (HSTS) inventory project started in summer 2013
- Inventory all HSTS in the county
- 100 left to positively identify in the Black River watershed

Bringing Back the Black River Video Update

- Video premiered at the Palace Theater on April 26, 2014; approximately 125 people were in attendance
- DVD copies were shared with local libraries; video has been shown on public television
- Video being considered for viewing on Cleveland PBS
- To view video on YouTube:
<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=bringing+back+the+black+river+youtube&FORM=VIRE2#view=detail&mid=E3A1A3C2031477943887E3A1A3C2031477943887>

Black River in Vermont; Request to Become a Sister River

- Black River in Vermont contacted Medina Soil and Water about becoming a sister river with our Black River
- What being a sister river may entail:
 - Compare notes on programs, find common ideas or projects, share information
 - Set up fact sheets on both rivers online
 - Include other Black Rivers as sister rivers
- RAP will consider the request and formalize a decision at a later date

Willow Creek Project Update

- Project to study environmental conditions in the watershed and develop remedial actions was awarded to EnviroScience
- First public meeting was in mid-June
- Started collecting land owner permission slips to access property
- Preliminary modeling with data sets is in process

City of Lorain Restoration Activity and Grant Update

- 7 projects are occurring/will occur in the Black River and Lake Erie
- Projects include:
 - NOAA Phase 2
 - Heron rookery restoration
 - OEPA grant in design phase for surface and groundwater
 - Green infrastructure for innovative stormwater treatment at Lakeview Beach
 - Bank restoration
 - Fish shelves
 - Drum removal assessment
- Invasive Species Removal
 - Weather conditions have made it more difficult this season, as well as losing employees
 - 20 acres of phragmites has been chipped and shredded
 - Areas treated last year are not as high or dense
 - Changing treatment methods to accommodate human component

New State Guidance Document for Ohio RAPs

- Guidance document from 2008 has been revised; new document can be found here: http://epa.ohio.gov/portals/35/lakeerie/Ohio_AOC_Delisting_Guidance.pdf
- Major changes include:
 - BUI removal can be done by 12-digit HU, Large River Assessment Unit (LRAU), or other agreed upon stream segment or sub-watershed
 - Fish Tumors - DELT at 3% for lacustuaries and boat sites and 1.3% for wading areas; Bullhead river tumor rate at 5%
 - Eutrophication/Algae: a new trophic index will be used as the target

- Recreational Use
 - Beaches - no more than 19 days in a season with a no-swim advisory for 3 of the last 5 years
 - Rivers/Streams - bi-annual 303(d) list and for Class A Streams only
- Aesthetics - consideration for combined sewer overflow long-term control plan and MS4 plan added to be able to delist
- Wildlife Habitat - if wildlife populations are no an impairment (as it is in the Black River AOC), then wildlife habitat shouldn't be an impairment
- Local RAPs have the opportunity to develop alternative targets for BUI delisting; local RAPs should work cooperatively with EPA to develop the new targets that will better fit the AOC

Old Business

Black River Clean-Up

- 2nd annual clean-up; coordinated by LoCo 'Yaks
- 289 people participated over the 2-day event
- 660 pounds of scrap metal; 19.29 tons in the dumpsters
- Would like to have partners represented at next year's event and make more of a festival type atmosphere

New Business

Fish Tumors

- Ohio EPA reported that external fish tumors were very low (around 0.45% to 1%)
- Bullhead liver tumors have increased; BUI remains Impaired/In Recovery Phase
 - In 1999 Paul Baumann found the liver tumor rate to be less than 7% (still above current delisting)
 - The recent study found it to be 11.3%

NOACA Update

- EPA contracted with NOACA to work on a near shore area in Avon/Avon Lake
- See draft project document at the end of the meeting minutes

Announcements

Engagement of Children in the Black River

- Interested in ways to get children interested and engaged in the Black River
- Black River video could be used for this
- Kate Hoffmann mentioned that there are watershed materials for kids that she can provide

Soil Erosion Magazine

- City of Lorain Mayor Chase Ritenauer had a piece in the magazine and talked about the Black River

Creation of a Stormwater Video

- Idea of creating a stormwater video was brought up
- Explain the importance of stormwater management; want the public to understand what is happening with stormwater and what is being done/can be done to manage it

Groups to Engage in RAP

- There are partners who are not currently engaged
- Some potential partners are: Friends of Cascade Park, Sullivan Township in Ashland County

Land Acquisition

- Western Reserve Land Conservancy acquired land in Serenity Park and an area northeast of Sullivan Center
- There is already a proactive group involved in conservation

Open Discussion - Role of the Black River RAP

- Held open discussion on the mission of the RAP, what we are currently doing, and what we could do more of in the future
- RAP members were asked to provide input on those three areas

Next Meeting - Thursday, November 13, 2014 at 2:00 PM in the Carlisle Room of the Carlisle Visitor Center, 12882 Diagonal Road, LaGrange, OH 44050

Minutes submitted by Stephanie Lesco August 6, 2014

Lorain County Near Shore Action Planning Effort Heider Ditch¹-Frontal Lake Erie

Current Use Status²

Ohio Environmental Planning Agency (Ohio EPA) evaluated the “Heider Ditch-Frontal Lake Erie” watershed assessment unit during the summers of 2012 and 2013. This assessment unit includes Heider, Gable and Powdermaker Ditches. Ohio EPA sampled and tested the water quality and walked the stream as part of its evaluation. Ohio EPA recently posted the 2014 Integrated Report summary of this assessment unit. The results indicated that Heider Ditch was in partial attainment of its Warmwater Habitat Aquatic Use Designation, while Gable and Powdermaker Ditches were found to be in nonattainment of their Warmwater Habitat Aquatic Use Designation. Additionally, Ohio EPA determined that all three ditches met the Primary B Recreational Use Designation, which only supports occasional recreational activity.³

Causes of Impairment

Ohio EPA has determined that the Heider Ditch-Frontal Lake Erie watershed assessment unit drains 26.3 square miles of Avon, Avon Lake, and small portions of Bay Village. Ohio EPA’s 2014 Integrated Report assessed that 61.1% of the land is developed; 27% forested; 4.1% grass or pasture and 2% row crops. The remaining 5.3% includes other land uses.⁴ Ohio EPA determined that the sources of aquatic use impairment include direct habitat alterations, the loss of riparian habitat and channel erosion/incision from upstream hydromodifications. Additionally, Ohio EPA determined that in-stream bacteria levels were elevated and the streams’ recreational use was impaired sufficiently to warrant the Primary Class B recreational use attainment designation.

Land Use & Development are Contributing Sources of Impairment

In the Heider Ditch-Frontal Lake Erie watershed assessment unit, land development and encroaching land uses is altering habitats through the loss of riparian vegetation/habitat and channel erosion/incision. Aerial views of Heider, Gable and Powdermaker Ditches illustrate direct and indirect impacts from adjacent and upstream land uses.

Action Strategy

Ohio EPA has contracted with the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) to provide watershed action planning assistance to engage local stakeholders in the development of an Action Plan for the Heider Ditch-Frontal Lake Erie watershed assessment unit. NOACA is contracted to convene the stakeholders to develop a list of storm water best management practices to mitigate the causes of impairment in this near shore area.

Goals & Role of the Lorain County Near Shore Action Team

The goals and role of the Action Team include:

¹ Although Heider, Gabel and Powdermaker waterways are referred to as “ditches,” Ohio EPA considers them waters of the state; the water quality and habitat of these streams are regulated and assessed by Ohio EPA

² No waters are currently utilized for water supply; fish tissue assessment use attainment is unknown

³ Recreation Use Designations include three categories: Bathing Beach, Primary Contact and Secondary Contact. The Primary Contact categories is further divided into three Class A – frequent recreational activity, Class B – occasional recreational activity; and Class C – infrequent recreational activity. The Classes are determined by the level of E. Coli (bacteria) found within the stream samples.

- Promote and advance a watershed approach to protecting the stream resources in the Heider Ditch-Frontal Lake Erie watershed assessment unit, including Heider, Gable and Powdermaker Ditches
- Identify and engage local community leaders in the Cities of Avon and Avon Lake
- Assist in the evaluation of current streamside conditions that are potentially related to the causes/sources of use attainment and recreational impairments
- Assist in the identification of strategies and Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address the causes/sources of impairment along each of the ditches
- Review and provide valuable insight into the Draft Action Plan
- Work with other watershed stakeholders to embrace/adopt the Action Plan
- Actively implement the BMPs on site specific locations

Potential Near Shore Action Team:

The following potential stakeholders have been identified as members of the Near Shore Action Team:”

| Name | Agency | Potential Role | Potential Benefit |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| Joe Reitz | Avon Lake Public Works Director | Co-Chair, rep. of one of two communities in the watershed | MS4 community; assistance in updating SWMP |
| Rob Knopf, P.E. | Avon City Engineer | Co-Chair, rep. of one of two communities in the watershed | |
| Grant Thompson | Lorain County Metroparks | Large property owner, potential streamside restoration and education opportunities | |
| | Avon Lake Planning Commission | Advocate to update setback ordinances, limit stream habitat encroachment/alterations, streambank erosion | Better protect public health and safety |
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| Jill Lis, R.S. | Lorain County General Health District | | |
| | City of Lorain Health Department (contractor to Avon Lake) | | |
| Bucky Kopf | John Crist Winery | Large property owner, potential streamside restoration and education opportunities | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| Bucky Kopf | Sweet Briar Golf | Large property owner, potential | Public relations, |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | Course | streamside restoration and education opportunities | community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| Teachers/students/administration | Avon Lake Schools | Prominent stream property owners, opportunity for streamside restoration (parking lot/vegetation) | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| Teachers/students/administration | Avon Schools | Prominent stream property owners, opportunity for streamside restoration (parking lot/vegetation) | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| | Petitti's | Potential source of vegetation for large & small streambank stabilization projects | Public relations, community engagement, Increased sales, technical assistance |
| | Lubrizol | Prominent stream property owners | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| Matt Hlaven | Thogus Products | Prominent stream property owners | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| Terry Sermen | Applied Specialties, Pin Oak Parkway | Prominent stream property owners | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| | Jacobs Real Estate Services, LLC | Prominent stream property owners | Public relations, community engagement, potential funding & technical assistance |
| | Pine Meadows, Bridgeside PUD Fairways, Handford Blvd | Home Owner Associations (HOA's) | |
| Dr. Haddock | Avon Lake Animal Clinic | Community advocate for picking up dog wastes | Public relations |

Potential Best Management Practices (BMPs) to Address Sources of Impairment

General BMPs need to be evaluated and selected based upon specific site conditions. The following list of potential BMPs need to be selected and implement based upon local site conditions.

Direct Habitat Alterations

- Protection and re-establishment of native species of stream corridor vegetation
- Adopt and enforce riparian setback ordinances to ensure that vegetation is not encroached upon
- Work with land owners and farmers to protect riparian areas with conservation easements
- Develop a land owner incentive program to reestablish riparian vegetation

Loss of Riparian Habitat BMPs

- Protection and re-establishment of native species of stream corridor vegetation
- Adopt and enforce riparian setback ordinances to ensure that vegetation is not encroached upon
- Work with land owners and farmers to protect riparian areas with conservation easements
- Develop a land owner incentive program to reestablish riparian vegetation

Channel Erosion/Incision from Upstream Hydromodifications

- Adopt and enforce riparian setback ordinances to ensure that vegetation and stream banks are not encroached upon
- Stabilize stream banks with native vegetation
- Potentially regrade stream banks and revegetate
- Implement conservation crop rotations, conservation tillage methods (no-till, strip till, mulch till, and deep till), cover crops, and residue management
- Plant field borders and filter strips and installed grassed waterways, terraces, diversions, and grade stabilization structures

Additional BMPS

- Public Involvement & Public Education (PIPE) activities to communicate importance of current use attainment status and need for stream vegetation
- Update of ordinances that manage construction and post-construction practices
- Day-light culverted stream sections and reestablish riparian corridors with vegetation and habitat
- Increase opportunities to manage stormwater with on-site infiltration

Bacteria

- Pick-up pet waste campaigns
- Inspect all home sewage treatment systems for system failure/malfunction; address issues
- Eliminate all illicit discharges
- Adopt local ordinances that mandate routine (every two years) pumping
- Establish and protect riparian vegetation/buffer strips as filters for stormwater runoff

Potential BMP Opportunities by Large Property Owners

Avon Lake High School/stadium

Streambank stabilization pilot project, education, signage, etc.

Green parking refers to several techniques that, applied together, reduce the contribution of parking lots to total impervious cover: permeable pavement, reducing maximums for the number of parking lots created; minimizing the dimensions of parking lot spaces; utilizing alternative pavers in overflow parking areas; using bioretention areas to treat stormwater; vegetated swales and rain gardens; tree box filters; encouraging shared parking; and providing economic incentives for structured parking.

Belle Park

Streambank stabilization pilot project, education, signage, etc.

Lorain County Metro Parks

Streambank stabilization pilot project, education, signage, etc.

John Crist Winery

Winery BMPs

Layout and site development, roads and parking lots, cover crops, tillage practices and erosion control, drainage, riparian/buffer zones, "Soil Loss Reduction Programs" cover crop to manage erosion, filter/buffer strips, tree & shrub establishment, water management programs/techniques (reduce/reuse/recycle) opportunities, as well as pollution prevention techniques

Industrial permit

Required? If yes, review and identify BMPs to address issues

Sweatbriar Golf Course

Golf Course BMPs

Design & construction (location & setbacks), irrigation, nutrition & fertilization, turf & compost management, waterway and plant management, pesticide & pest management & maintenance operations

Avon Commerce Parkway

Industrial development BMPs

Layout and site design, vegetative riparian/buffer areas, reduce/retrofit impervious surfaces to manage runoff onsite and to adopt water quality BMPs for runoff that leaves the site, street sweeping, privately maintained streets?, better housekeeping practices – catch basin cleaning, routine maintenance of bio/retention/detention facilities,

Property north of 1101 Jaycox Road

Setbacks, management of bare ground storage area

Avon Pet Lodge/Avon Lake Animal Clinic

Decaying pet waste consumes oxygen and sometimes releases ammonia. Low oxygen levels and ammonia can damage the health of fish and other aquatic life. Pet waste carries bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can threaten the health of humans and wildlife. Pet waste also contains nutrients that promote weed and algae growth (eutrophication). Cloudy and green, Eutrophic water makes swimming and recreation unappealing or even unhealthy.

Kennel BMPs

Pet waste management program

Farming – property owners and farmers

Buffer strips, contour farming, cover crops, grade stabilization, nutrient & pest management, tile system design, controlled drainage, culvert sizing, grassed waterways, two stage ditch, conservation tillage, riparian and channel vegetation

Lear Industrial Parkway

Setbacks, vegetation maintenance, catch basin cleaning, street sweeping, illicit discharges, spill prevention, control and clean-up plans

Petitti's

Commercial nursery/garden center BMPs

Composting area BMPs, soil storage/mixing areas, fertilizer & pesticide storage areas, parking/lots & loading docks, maintenance areas, non-production landscape areas, production areas, general water management (use, treatment, stormwater, etc.), etc.

Demonstration restoration/protection project along the ditch

Avon East Elementary

Green parking refers to several techniques that, applied together, reduce the contribution of parking lots to total impervious cover: permeable pavement, reducing maximums for the number of parking lots created; minimizing the dimensions of parking lot spaces; utilizing alternative pavers in overflow parking areas; using bioretention areas to treat stormwater; vegetated swales and rain gardens; tree box filters; encouraging shared parking; and providing economic incentives for structured parking.

Other Potential Sites/Properties

Acacia Court

Firestone/Country Club Drive

Bearing Technology

Trinity Court

Holy Trinity Schools

Zaremba Developments

Design Engineering

Chemtron

Thogus Products

Pin Oak Parkway

Home Owners' Associations

Farmers/farm land owners

Custom Culinary – Avon Commerce Parkway – Sustainability in Action

Flavor Seal – Avon Commerce Parkway