



**Black River Advisory Committee**  
Lorain County Conservation District | Facilitating Organization  
conservation@loraincounty.us  
(440) 326-5800

**BRAC QUARTERLY MEETING** | Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 2:00 PM

Location: Lorain County Public Health, 8995 Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria, OH 44035

Or via Zoom:

Your cloud recording is now available:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/smj4zuGrabiLkl2iTv7bDjvqjwoe8AMgatxC4oMbBhSb\\_3KEp6K4Z1B2EOXLQ5al.EukqZE2l3qSZ2bBK](https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/smj4zuGrabiLkl2iTv7bDjvqjwoe8AMgatxC4oMbBhSb_3KEp6K4Z1B2EOXLQ5al.EukqZE2l3qSZ2bBK) Passcode: 0hN8Mqx=

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## **MINUTES**

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- ❖ Welcome / Call to Order: 2:05 PM by BRAC Chair Don Romancak
  - Attendees (in person): Patti Donnellan (LC Conservation District); Kate Golden (City of Lorain); Don Romancak (LC Development); Scott Pozna (LCPH); Mike Jindra (LCPH); Chip Wendt (Coldwater Consulting); Jennifer Wasilk (Amherst City Council/Sandstone Environmental Health Services)
  - Attendees (virtual): Kim Brewster Shefelton (CRWP); Hannah Boesinger (Ohio Lake Erie Commission); Carla Rosenfeld (US EPA); John Timmons (ODA); Steve Holland (ODNR Coastal Management); Pam Davis (NOACA); Matt Nahorn (Beaver Creek Watershed)
- ❖ Fiscal Report – Q3 reports included in agenda
  - Grant money needs to be spent down
  - Ideas from Committee:
    - Advertising – billboards, radio spots, informational flyer, pens, chap sticks, rulers, pencils, pocket notebooks, posters, litter grabbers, fish for river & detention basins (?). Currently NO promo materials
    - Booms, spill socks, etc. for LC EMA – FOLLOW UP: not an allowable expense under the grant
    - Canoes/kayaks – FOLLOW UP: not an allowable expense
- ❖ Old Business
  - Approval of Meeting Minutes from 11/8/2023
    - Motion to accept the minutes by Scott P. / Seconded by Kate G.
- ❖ New Business
  - [Grant: F24AS00062 National Fish Passage Program Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: Restoring River, Floodplain, and Coastal Connectivity and Resiliency](#)
  - AOC/Community Field Day/Work Day
    - Partner with [Lorain County Beautiful](#)

- Boat launches, piers, beaches, Metro Parks, staging areas pre/post eclipse on April 8, 2024
  - Matt N: Vermilion River Watershed 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Open House – April 6, 2024 @ Vermilion-on-the-Lake Clubhouse
    - Can advertise Black River at that event – AOC
  - Steve H: CMAG – take part in marine debris monitoring program in Lorain County?
- [Great Lakes Commission Semiannual Meeting - March 2024](#)
  - No one from BRAC attending
- ❖ Lorain County Stormwater Management District: Conservation projects update
  - \$1 million H2Ohio award for 60-acre Gerber wetland project
    - Floodplain – previously farmed. Waterway, floodplain, wetlands, similar to what Coldwater Consulting did on Lake Ave. in Lorain
  - \$1 million (contract currently under review) from NFWF Sustain Our Great Lakes program for the Willow Creek watershed.
    - Building on management action plan areas
      - Wetlands
      - Fortune Ditch in Eaton Township, east of SR 83
      - H2Ohio project planned on Fortune Ditch, a tributary to Willow Creek that is a tributary to E. Branch of the Black River in agriculture, golf course, residential, suburban land use areas
      - 2 square miles of drainage area, 75-acre feet of water
      - KEM & Davey awarded design & construction administration
      - 800,000 cubic yards of fill
  - H2Ohio grant for Foster Ditch – no news yet
    - 2 stage ditch – 2 segments
    - KEM – engineer
    - South of Lagrange & cuts through residential
    - Keep wooded areas intact; construction in ag sections
- ❖ Black River Watershed Project Updates
  - County:
    - Kim Brewster-Shefelton: Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc., n behalf of the Central Lake Erie Basin Collaborative is writing NPS-IS plans and providing technical assistance for project development for the Black River Watershed HUC-12, Lower West Branch Black River HUC-12, and Jackson Ditch-East Branch Black River HUC-12. They plan to include these 3 Black River HUC-12s in their 319 application for NPS-IS writing and technical assistance, capacity building, project development in disadvantaged census tracts.

- Project development, assistance basic concepts, budgets, landowner outreach, & public meetings hosted by Lorain County Conservation District
- Township(s) update: Lorain County Rural Wastewater (LORCO) & the County are working with N. Ridgeville, Avon Lake, & Vermilion to address current & future sanitary sewer needs & consolidating the WWTP to enable the County to extend sewer service & address failing septic systems, with the ability of residents to opt-in later. OEPA is providing technical assistance. More updates will be provided at next meeting.
- City:
  - Kate: All restoration activities on the Black River are complete
  - Final 14 acres of Rec Site is completed; awaiting vegetation propagation in spring before closing it out
  - Waterfront redevelopment plans still ongoing
    - Sunset Pier
    - Hot Waters Boat Launch
    - Lorain Harbor
  - USFWS/GLRI award of \$200,000 for vegetation management project at the Heron Rookery site at River Mile (RM) 3-3.5
    - Bush honeysuckle, phragmites, reed canary grass
    - Currently in design phase
    - Work to begin in the fall of 2024
- ❖ Ohio AOC Program Updates & Announcements: Hannah Boesinger
  - Kris Patterson (Partners for Clean Streams) will be taking over Lynn Garrity's position on 2/26/24. She will be invited to all future BRAC meetings.
  - BUI 4 for fish deformities/tumors (DELTS) is officially removed
  - BUI 10 evaluation is almost complete., Hannah B. is still working on data review. Look for update in Spring 2024.
  - Four BUIs remain: One for beaches, three biological BUIs
  - [Ohio AOC Program Highlights 2022-23](#)
  - Please update your files to include revised documents:
    - [Delisting Guidance and Restoration Targets for Ohio Areas of Concern](#)
    - [A Framework for Implementing Ohio's Area of Concern Program - Federal AOC Program Updates & Announcements](#)
- ❖ Federal AOC Program Updates & Announcements
  - None at this time

❖ Announcements | Other Business

- Republic Steel is being sued by USEPA for releases/discharges into the Black River for violations of the 1972 Clean Water Act
  - Between May 2017 to May 2023, the Lorain and Canton mills discharged chlorine and mercury, high pH liquid, oil and grease beyond the monthly and daily maximums (>12,000gallons/day). [Article in Chronicle-Telegram](#) for more information/details.
  
- 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Ohio Stormwater Conference – will send details when registration opens
  
- Don & Kate to coordinate interview with Anna from Freshwater Future
  
- Schedule for 2024 BRAC meetings:
  - Budget spend down meeting via Zoom Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 2:00PM
  - Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2:00PM@ LCPH
  - Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup> @ Rec Site meeting room
  - Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2:00PM@ LCPH

❖ Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Jen, second by Scott

