

# Detroit River PAC Meeting notes

Monday, July 21, 2014 2 – 4pm

Friends of the Detroit River Office, 20600 Eureka Rd., Taylor, MI 48180

## 1. PAC Administration

- a. Introductions – see attached sign in sheet.
- b. Agenda comments/revisions/additions
  - i. Items added, update on Detroit River Water Festival removed, as it was covered at the prior meeting.

## 2. Fish Tumors BUI – discussion with Joe Bohr (MDEQ) and Michelle Bruneau (MDCH)

- a. Current status – handout attached.
  - i. Still impaired based on USFWS/USGS study conducted 2011-2012.
- b. Next Steps
  - i. BASF to toll bridge studied intensively. Remedial design underway.
  - ii. October sampling from free bridge to top of Celeron Island.
  - iii. Subsequent site characterizations next year.
  - iv. By end of 2015, entire US shoreline will be characterized.
  - v. Isolate the tumor problem to the Trenton Channel.
    1. Wait until end of next year because characterization will be finalized and the studies conducted by University of Windsor will be complete showing relationship between tumors and PAH concentrations (report by fall 2015).
    2. Consult with Jeff Braunschudel on white sucker population numbers.
  - vi. Form committee to keep abreast of updates to data and consider options.
- c. MDEQ BUI review criteria
  - i. Observational – not being used.
  - ii. PAC should consider using white suckers instead of brown bullhead.
- d. Funding to MDCH for fish consumption of Detroit River around 2016.

## 3. Updates

- a. Upper Trenton Channel
  - i. EPA Chicago is looking for a habitat project associated with the GLLA site cleanup. Rose provided them the Hennepin Marsh project information and is trying to lead them in that direction. Bob and Mary will be meeting with project personnel.
- b. Detroit River Canadian Cleanup – Claire Sanders
  - i. Detroit River evening mid-June – public event. Close to 50 people discussing climate change and launched the pathway to delisting document.
  - ii. Aesthetics report recently listed for public comment – no comment. Comment period is closed. Will move forward with the report to the 4-Agency group.

- iii. This fall will be focusing on habitat and wildlife population lists for projects required for BUI redesignation.
  - iv. Claire will send the 5 year work plan document to Tricia so we can post it on our website.
  - v. Agreement between – Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and Canadian Registry of Lands. 3 properties included, City of Windsor added Peche Island as well as some shoreline. The International Wildlife Refuge is officially international.
  - vi. Ojibway shores – discussions between DRCC, Windsor Port Authority (property owner), and Canadian government. 1 year was given to study the property to truly assess the ecological value of the property. June 28<sup>th</sup> bioblitz. First done in Essex County. 24 hours, discovered over 1,000 species on the property. Eastern Fox snake, spiders. Very successful. Urban national park, or city of Windsor Park, or conservation easement.
- c. MDEQ updates on BUI status
- i. Dredging – looking at doing another statistical assessment based on new data. Will likely remain impaired.
  - ii. Bird or animal deformities – herring gulls were not found mostly ring billed gulls were found. Did Bald Eagle studies results to follow.
  - iii. Many BUIs are linked to 303(d) list. Looking into adding language to statewide BUI removal criteria. Melanie will provide the draft additional language so the PAC can provide comment. If request for comment comes out in between PAC meetings, comments will be sought via email.
- d. Grants
- i. Stony & Celeron Island (Sam Noffke – MDEQ, Rose Ellison – EPA, John O’Meara – ECT)
    1. Conference call last week with MDEQ, EPA, and ECT to discuss challenges with sediment contamination.
    2. Stony one elevated arsenic hit in one barrow pit – that pit has been abandoned to avoid the contamination. High PAHs in northern bay, but no construction there, so no issues.
    3. Celeron – furthest southern shoal OK. No sediment buildup there. Furthest west portions of J hook area also OK. No sediment buildup there. Issues are eastern half of J-hook along eastern most shoal. Scrapping eastern shoal. Eastern half of j-hook will be redesigned to protect the wetlands. Proposed replacement shoal on northeastern side of the island.
    4. The 2 projects will be sent separately to the district for permitting.
    5. Site characterization by EPA should be completed any day. PAH hotspot that is toxic based on calculations. Likely coming from upstream in the Trenton Channel. There is a sediment hotspot there that may need to be addressed in the future.

- ii. Belle Isle Invasive Species and Control project – Sam Lovell
  - 1. Schedule is very tight.
  - 2. Mapping of Island of 4 target invasive species (fragmites, Japanese knot weed, purple loosestrife, and buckthorn), has been completed by Dave Lindel with help of SCA and Greening of Detroit.
  - 3. Greening of Detroit worked on removal of shrubbery (honeysuckle and buckthorn) – no chemical application.
  - 4. Bids for chemical application and controlled burn should be released August 11.
  - 5. Target species, fragmites, purple loosestrife, Japanese knot weed, and reed canary grass will be treated beginning end of August/September/October.
  - 6. MI Sea Grant will be providing educational posters on invasive species.
  - 7. Need to put up a project sign, media advisory by Mary Bohling, and article in FDR newsletter by Sam.
- iii. Lake Okonoka Application Status through NOAA – Sam Lovell
  - 1. Very optimistic. NOAA requested small changes to project price. Will likely take an additional 2 months before notification.
- iv. Milliken State Park Application Status through SOGL – submitted by DNR Parks
  - 1. Nothing to report.
- e. SPAC meeting in Ishpeming July 16, 2014
  - i. Membership to SPAC was discussed for AOCs once delisted.
  - ii. Chris Koreleski talked about the Updated Great Lakes Action Plan – public comment period closed. Comments received will not substantially change the document.
  - iii. Michigan is doing a white paper on the Water Strategy.
  - iv. MDEQ reorganized the Office of the Great Lakes. This moved some AOC coordinators. 4 AOC coordinators remain. Melanie Foose, Jen Tewkesbury, John Riley, and Sharon Baker. 4 LAMP coordinators: Michelle Selzer (Lake Erie), Bretton Joldersma (Lake Huron), Stephanie Swart (Lake Superior), and Matt Preisser (Lake Michigan).
  - v. EPA is looking to hire a LAMP coordinator for Lakes Michigan and Erie.
- f. Detroit River Water Festival planning meeting September 17, 4:30pm at Belle Isle Nature Zoo.

#### **4. Other Items**

- a. Reefs that are being installed in St. Clair River (Hearts Light has 2 cells and Point Aux Chene). Lessons learned with bottom substrate and sedimentation potential. Additional Detroit Reefs will likely be installed next year (Grassy, NE Belle Isle, Fort Wayne)
- b. Invited to speak at upcoming meeting. Adam Rizen Lake Erie Binational Public Forum is looking for presentation on Detroit River and efforts to reduce nutrient pollution, monitoring, and current research being done in cooperation with Canadian partners.

Mary will follow-up contact Adam to get additional information and will follow-up with Bob, Melanie, and Meghan.

- c. New grant opportunities. To restore and protect the Great Lakes. EPA released some money and is requesting project proposals. Current RFPs do not seem to fit our needs.
  - d. Thursday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, FDR cruise 6pm, board at 5:30pm. Leaving from Rivard Plaza.
  - e. October 3<sup>rd</sup> time TBA. FDR annual meeting. Portofinos.
  - f. August 1, Belle Isle Nature Zoo event will be bringing the new NWF CEO (Colin O'Mara) to the Island to see the GLRI projects.
  - g. Dossin Museum is installing (has installed) our sediment mapping data.
  - h. Exhibit at Windsor Community Museum – Saving our Straight, History of the Detroit River.
- 5. Next Meeting dates:**
- a. September 15<sup>th</sup> 2pm at FDR Conference Room
  - b. November - TBD
- 6. Adjourn**