

## **OHIO LAKE ERIE COMMISSION (OLEC) MEETING**

Ohio Department of Transportation  
December 16, 2009

*The Ohio Lake Erie Commission meeting was preceded by the Ohio Water Resources Council (OWRC) Meeting at 9:30 a.m. The purpose of the back-to-back meetings was for presentation of the new Balanced Growth Watershed Projects both for the Ohio River Basin and Lake Erie Watershed. The watershed projects were voted on separately - Ohio River projects during the OWRC meeting; and the Lake Erie projects during the OLEC meeting. The members of OWRC were presented with an overview of the Ohio Balanced Growth Program and the project applications by Gail Hesse, OWRC Administrator, and Ed Hammett, OLEC. Four proposals for developing Balanced Growth Watershed Planning Projects in the Ohio River Basin were unanimously approved by OWRC. These new watershed projects will expand Ohio's Balanced Growth Program statewide in the areas of Medina County – Upper Chippewa Creek; Clermont County – Middle East Fork; Trumbull County – Lower Mosquito Creek; and the Olentangy River watershed. The two Lake Erie projects were voted on during the Executive Committee Report of the Lake Erie Commission.*

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Sean Logan, Director; Ohio Department of Natural Resources at 10:15 a.m.

### **Commission Roll Call:**

Sean Logan, Director; Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources (ODNR) and Commission Chairman;  
Robert Boggs, Director; Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA);  
Gail Hesse, Director's Designee; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA);  
Tim Hill, Director's Designee; Ohio Dept. of Transportation (ODOT/Commission Secretary);  
William Murdock, Director's Designee; Ohio Department of Development (ODOD); and  
Gene Phillips, Director's Designee; Ohio Department of Health (ODH.)

### **Chairman's Report**

The Commission Chairman recognized two members attending from FSA (Farm Service Agency) – Steve Maurer, State Executive Director, and Tony Logan, former chief counsel for ODNR. It was also announced that Cathryn Loucas will assume the chief counsel duties at ODNR along with working on the Wind Development Program and deputy director duties for Coastal Management.

## **BUSINESS MEETING**

### **Minutes**

The Commission members approved the September 28, 2009 quarterly minutes from the Lake Erie Commission meeting held at the University of Toledo's Lake Erie Center, Oregon, OH.

### **Executive Committee Report**

Ed Hammett, OLEC, gave the Executive Committee Report with three action requests presented for approval: Future 2010 OLEC Meetings: March 10; June 23; September 22; and December 15, 2010 were presented for approval by the commission members. Motion was made by ODOD and seconded by ODOT to accept these proposed meeting dates. The Commission members voted all in favor and the motion carried. It was discussed that although these dates were approved, occasionally a date may need to be changed wherein advance notification of any change would be provided.

Annual Business Item: Each year according to ORC 1506.21, the members of the Commission shall designate a chairperson and secretary to preside at the quarterly commission meetings. The Executive Committee members recommended that the chairmanship remain with ODNR and ODOT as secretary. Motion was made by OEPA and seconded by ODOD that the director of ODNR, Sean Logan, serve as commission chairman and Director Jolene Molitoris, ODOT, serve as secretary. Both directors and agencies were thanked for agreeing to remain in these positions. The commission members voted all in favor and motion carried to re-elect the new officers for year 2010.

**Balanced Growth Watershed Projects:** It was reported that the RFP for new Balanced Growth watershed projects was released this past August for planning projects in the Lake Erie watershed. The Executive Committee and State Assistance Work Group members reviewed and have endorsed the funding of the following two projects:

- o Project entitled, “*Eastern Lake County Coastal Tributaries Watershed Balanced Growth Plan*” in the amount of \$100,000 by the Lake County Planning Commission, Project Manager – Jason Boyd; and
- o Project entitled, “*Balanced Growth Watershed Management Plan for Furnace Run*” in the amount of \$57,400 by Cuyahoga County Community Planning Organization, Project Manager: James White.

Motion was made by ODOT and seconded by ODOD to approve the projects. The commission members voted all in favor and motion carried to approve the two new Lake Erie Balanced Growth watershed planning projects.

## **Grants Committee Report – Lake Erie Protection Fund (LEPF)**

### **Small Grants Program**

Julie Letterhos, OEPA, presented the Grants Committee funding recommendation for two small grant projects submitted for the third quarter of State Fiscal Year 2010 in the total amount of \$24,898. Motion was made by ODOD to approve the Grants Committee recommendation and was seconded by OEPA. The commission members voted all in favor and motion carried to approve the following small grant projects:

- o The University of Toledo, Department of Civil Engineering for project entitled, “*Improving Detection Limit of Phosphate Microsensor*”; Project Director: Youngwoo Seo in the amount of \$14,998; and
- o Ohio Sea Grant College Program – The Ohio State University for project entitled, “*Artificial Fish Habitat in Marinas*”; Project Directors: David O. Kelch and Colleen G. Wellington in the amount of \$9,900.

Proposal dates were reviewed for upcoming deadlines for future quarterly applications of: February 4 and April 22, 2010.

## **INVITED REPORTS**

### **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)**

Ed Hammett, OLEC, provided an update on the GLRI and Ohio's proposed projects. It was reported that \$475M is proposed for the U.S. EPA FFY 2010 budget with the current RFP at \$120M. U.S.EPA will provide funds to other federal agencies through interagency agreements in order to address the most significant problems in the Great Lakes. There are four major themes in this Initiative: (1) target most significant Great Lakes issues; (2) seek projects that are result- and action-oriented; (3) projects that fully engage the Great Lakes community as implementation partners; and (4) projects will have transparency and accountability. The GLRI focus areas include: Toxic Substances and Areas of Concern (AOCs) Invasive Species; Nearshore Health and Nonpoint Source Pollution; Habitat and Wildlife Protection and Restoration; and Accountability, Monitoring, Evaluation, Communication, and Partnerships (AEMEC&P.) Deadline for applications to U.S.EPA is January 29, 2010 with the earliest start dates projected for April and May 2010. Project periods are expected to range from one-to-three years and some additional funding for five years.

Chris Riddle, OLEC, provided an overview of Ohio's proposed projects that are being refined under each of the five focus areas. Ed Hammett reported on the continuing issues to be addressed in the next month that include finalizing the list of Ohio projects, collaboration and partnerships with the agencies, discussions in how to strengthen project monitoring and accountability for outputs and outcomes, and assure administrative capacity for effectiveness and efficiency of the projects.

### **Asian Carp Update**

Director Sean Logan, ODNR, provided an update on the asian carp issue and how the carp's migration is being addressed. It was reported that southern fish farms originally brought over the asian carp (silver carp) to control algae in fish ponds. Due to the flooding of the Mississippi River, the carp escaped and have made their way north. The Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal has become the regional epicenter of the problem. Environmental DNA sampling has shown a presence of the invasive species in the ship canal beyond the electric carp barrier which was installed to prevent the fish from entering Lake Michigan. The concern is that the asian carp will make their way to the Great Lakes and destroy the sport and commercial fishing industry. The State of Michigan has a pending lawsuit against the

State of Illinois to shut down the canal and locks. ODNR is working closely with Ohio's Attorney General and the Governor's Office to continue aggressive action on this issue.

### **Ohio Lake Erie Commission ~ Office Report**

Ed Hammett, OLEC, presented the Commission Office Report on the following projects and programs:  
Balanced Growth Program

It was reported that Director Logan recognized the Chagrin River Watershed Plan on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and that all four pilot project watershed plans have been endorsed by the Commission. The Lake Erie Balanced Growth Strategy is online at the Balanced Growth website (dated August 2009) and work on an update is underway. The Best Local Land Use Practices program is focusing on case studies of successful examples of practices and developing further training sessions and workshops based on these case studies.

Ohio's Coastweeks Program took place this year between September 12 – 21, 2009 with 15 clean-up events taking place in the Lake Erie watershed. Over 1,000 volunteers removed 15,154 pounds of debris from 65 miles of shoreline. Coastweeks 2010 will include International Coastal Cleanup Day on Saturday, September 25, 2010 and will be the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the program.

Lake Erie Commission Photo Gallery displaying the 2009 "Life on Lake Erie" Photo Contest winning Images are now on tour. Currently, the gallery is being hosted at the Statehouse in Columbus and will continue its tour in January at the Cleveland Boat Show.

The next quarterly OLEC Meeting will take place March 10, 2010 at Alum Creek State Pk., Delaware, OH.

### **Agency Reports**

Director Boggs, ODA, reported on the November ballot issue on Ohio's Livestock Care Standards and the agency is looking forward to the Phosphorus Task Force report in early 2010. Legislation passed in December on the NPDES authority transfer from OEPA to ODA which was supported by Director Korleski, OEPA, and Director Boggs.

William Murdock, ODOD, complimented OWRC and the Lake Erie Commission working together on expanding Balanced Growth. Recently, ODOD collaborated with OEPA on the abandoned storage tanks issue.

Sean Logan, ODNR, reported the Great Lakes Compact Advisory Panel is making progress with the water quality assessment tool. The Office of Coastal Management is seeking members for the Coastal Resources Advisory Council. They have four vacancies and are seeking county representatives, realtors, and would welcome people with underwater archeology interests and those with soil and water conservation backgrounds.

Gail Hesse, OEPA, reported that most of the agency's efforts have been focused on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The Phosphorus Task Force is making progress for a final report.

Tim Hill, ODOT, reported that the agency is focused on "going green" in their use of sprays and salts. A comprehensive study is being conducted about what the department can do to be a better steward.

Gene Phillips, ODH, provided an update on sewage legislation in which a moratorium has been extended for six months. It is the agency's hope by the end of July 2010 to move forward with sewage legislation.

### **Advisory Committee Reports**

Edith Chase, Ohio Coastal Resource Management Project (OCRMP) announced that leadership changes have taken place on the board. Lynn Garrity has been elected to serve as president and Frank Lichtkoppler - Vice President. OCRMP will continue working in 2010 on initiatives to identify partnerships with ODNR's Office of Coastal Management and the Lake Erie Commission to advance restoration and management goals for Lake Erie. The Commission Chairman thanked Edith for her advocacy.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Steve Maurer, Farm Service Agency, provided an informational handout on the Lake Erie CREP program that has been involved in the health of Lake Erie. It was reported that over 37,445 acres have been enrolled in the program with an estimated cost share of \$5.5M.

Lt. Col. Dan Snead, USACE Buffalo, introduced himself and stated he would like work with the Commission state agencies under the Water Resources Development Act. It was stated this is an opportunity to do this with four districts covering the State of Ohio. He looks forward to attending future meetings. The Commission Chairman asked Lt. Col. Snead if he would consider being part of the Advisory Panel and that he appreciates Lt. Col. Snead's openness and communication with the agencies. Ed Hammett, Executive Director; OLEC, reported that Advisory Panels are in statute, but members are not.

## **Meeting Guests:**

Matt Adkins, ODNR; Tom Allen, OEPA; Michael Baker, Dick Bartz, USGS; Edith Chase, OCRMP; Ryan Cummins, Chagrin Valley Engineering; Sue Daly; George Elmaraghy, OEPA; Larry Fletcher, Ottawa County Visitors Bureau; Rebecca Fugitt, ODH; Steve Grossman, OWDA; Ed Hammett, OLEC; David Hanselmann, ODNR; Tom Jedlinsky, CDM; Ron Kozlowski, USACE; Julie Letterhos, OEPA; Ding Li, OSU; Matt Lindsay, MVRP-OARC; Michelle Lohstroh, NRCS; Ted Lozier, ODNR; Elaine Marsh; Steve Maurer, USDA/FSA; Mike Miller, OPWC; Valerie Montoya; Amy Bowman Moore; Jim Morris, USGS; Greg Nageotte, ODNR; Chris Riddle, OLEC; Dave Romano, USACE; David S. Rutten; Greg Schell, CDM; Lt. Col. Dan Snead, USACE; John Watkins, ODNR-OCM; Colleen Wellington, Ohio Sea Grant College Program; Jill Woodyard, OLEC; and Meng Xia, University of MI.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

*Prepared by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office  
on behalf of the Commission Secretary*