



Black River Remedial Action Plan Coordinating Committee

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BLACK RIVER REMEDIAL ACTION PLAN

Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

1:30 PM

Carlisle Reservation

12882 Diagonal Road

LaGrange, OH 44050

In Attendance: David Ashenurst (Oberlin By Design), Jo Ann Banda (Fish & Wildlife Service), Christin Brandon (Lorain County Community Development), Stephanie Charles (LCGHD), Ted Conlin (Ohio EPA), Dave Covell (LCGHD), Bob Goard (LCGHD), Mike Jindra (LCGHD), Chad Kettlewell (Coldwater Consulting), Bob Kowalski (Village of Grafton), Ann Maczuga (LCGHD), Matt Nahorn (Beaver Creek Watershed Group), Tony Nigro (City of Elyria Wastewater), Sarah Opher (NOAA), Scott Pozna (LCGHD), Raymond Romero (LCGHD), John Sabo (LCGHD), Mark Smith (LCGHD), Andy Vidra (Citizen), Cheryl Wolfe-Cragin (Citizen)

Presenters: Doug Inkley and Kara Reeve (National Wildlife Federation), Chad Kettlewell (Coldwater Consulting)

Minute Approval: Minutes from the October 9, 2012 were approved and are available on the Black River RAP website (www.blackriverrap.com)

Agenda Items

Climate Smart Presentation

- Presented by Doug Inkley and Kara Reeve of the National Wildlife Federation and Chad Kettlewell of Coldwater Consulting
- Addressed the topic of climate change and what it means for planning for conservation and restoration efforts
- Highlighted the climate-smart restoration work that has been done in the City of Lorain
- Please see the PDF version of the presentation and the handout on climate-smart conservation

2012 Black River RAP Annual Report

- We're collecting topic ideas to feature in the annual report
- Suggestions include the following:
 - Tribute and thank you to Ken Pearce for his time served as chairman
 - 2012 summer sampling (includes fish tumor study in Main Stem and Ohio EPA's comprehensive watershed sampling)
 - Main Stem improvements in the City of Lorain
 - Extremes in rainfall and flow regimes (summer drought to floods from Hurricane Sandy) and the effects from these on environment and sampling efforts
 - January 2012 Wellington gas leak

- If there are additional topics you would like featured in the report, please contact Stephanie Charles at scharles@loraincountyhealth.com or 440-284-3263
- Projected completion of report is spring 2013

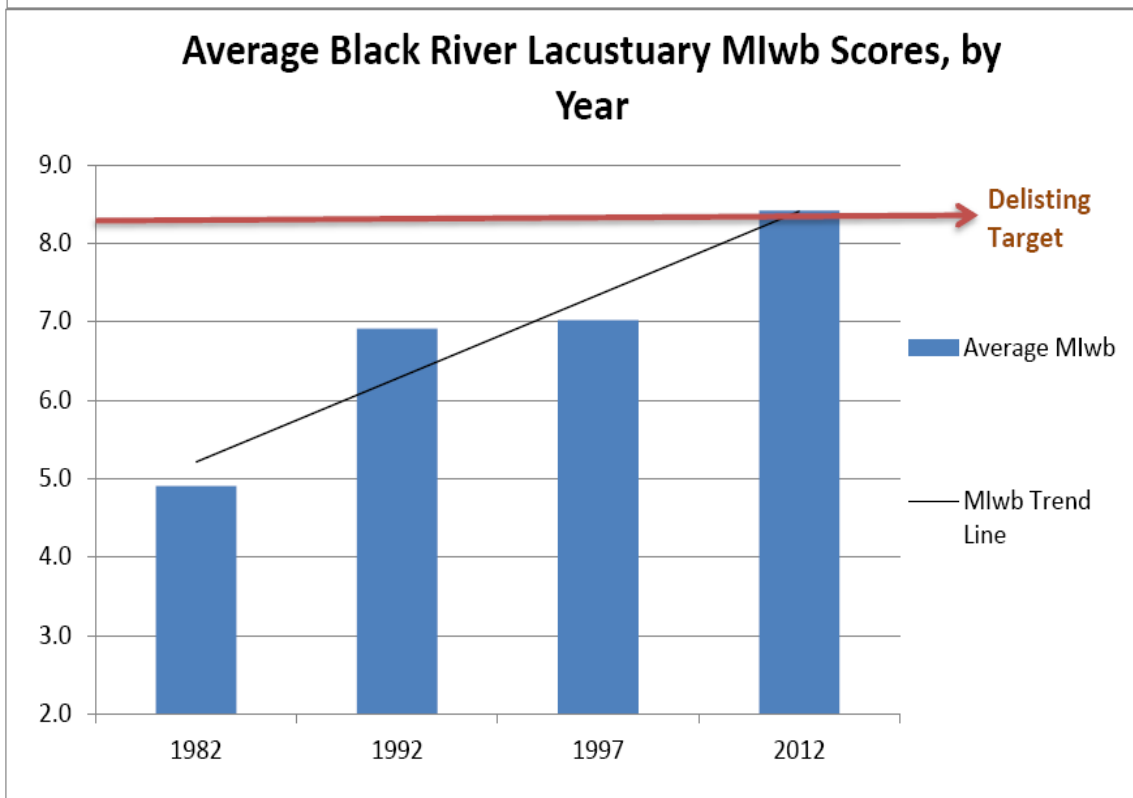
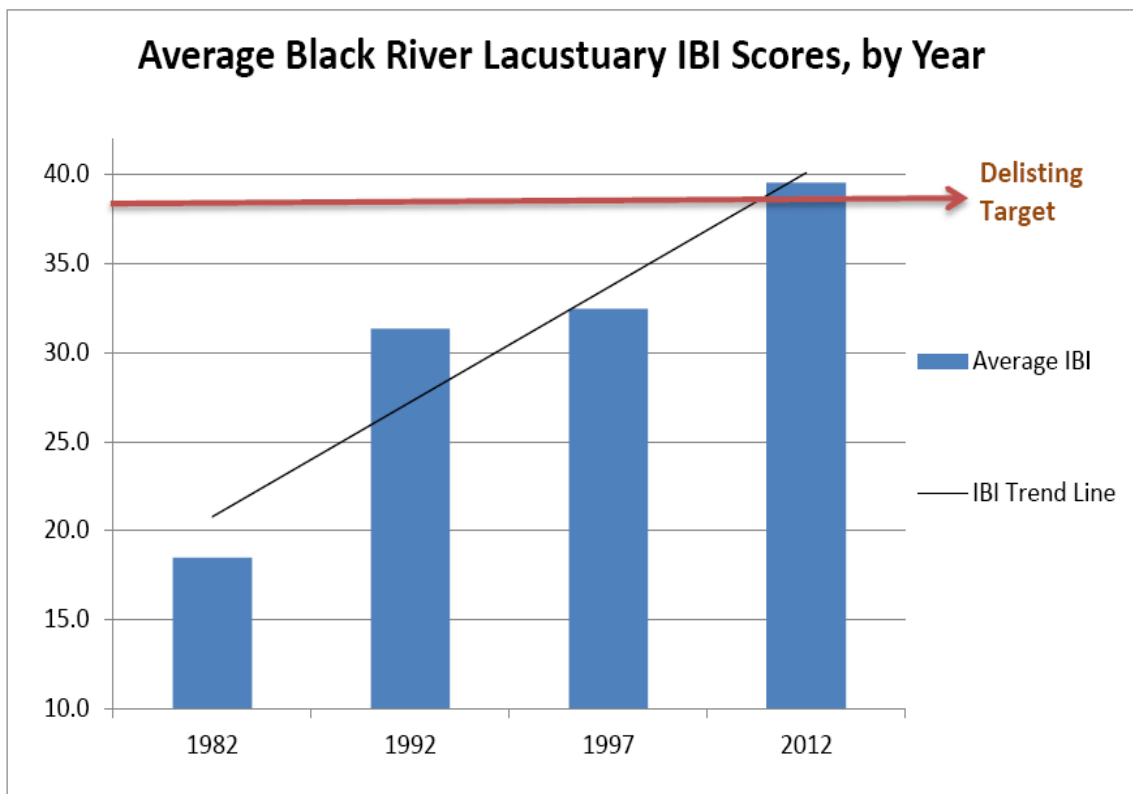
Revisions to State Delisting Guidance Document

- Ohio RAP Coordinators are revising the state delisting guidance document and some changes are expected
- Guidelines were developed in 2004 and last revised in 2008
- Revisions could affect our AOC and the ability to delist
- Would like to make revisions that are more customized to Ohio Lake Erie tributary rivers
- Changes are expected for the following BUIs:
 - BUI 1 - Fish Consumption: explore better method for determining background levels of PCBs and mercury in fish tissue
 - BUI 4 - Fish Tumors: tumor and external anomalies study started in 2012 in Black, Cuyahoga, and Maumee AOCs, which could affect bullhead liver tumors delisting target
 - BUI 8 - Eutrophication/Undesirable Algae: information on harmful algal blooms will be added
 - BUI 10 - Beach Closings: in discussion and changes unknown at this time
 - BUI 11 - Aesthetics: in discussion and changes unknown at this time
 - BUI 14 - Fish and Wildlife Habitat: for fish, in discussion and changes unknown at this time; for wildlife, agricultural land matrix could be added to determine land use and habitat quality
- More information to follow on this document as discussion continue

Preliminary Results of 2012 Summer Sampling

- Comprehensive sampling was conducted in the Black River watershed with the hope of using the data
- Sampling included about 89 different sites and included:
 - 82 passes for fish populations
 - 536 samples for inorganic analyses
 - 23 samples for organic analyses
 - 20 fish tissues samples
 - 68 samples for bacteria
 - 4 samples for sediment
- The hope is data gained from the sampling can be used to delist BUIs in the watershed
- **NOTE: This is preliminary data, and although some improvements are suggested, any changes in BUI status anywhere in the AOC will not be discussed until final data are published by Ohio EPA**
 - BUI 1 - Fish Consumption: No data available yet
 - BUI 2 - Tainting: Not impaired in our AOC
 - BUI 3 - Fish Populations:
 - West Branch, including Plum Creek, Charlemont Creek, and Wellington Creek, remains impaired and requires additional sampling.
 - Preliminary data is good enough to delist in all of the Main Stem and East Branch. Over time, the fish populations in the lower main stem have improved dramatically, as seen by the following charts:

Temporal Improvements Seen in the Fish Population Scores in the Lower Black River



- BUI 4 - Fish Tumors: Study is not complete
- BUI 5 - Bird or Animal Deformities: Not impaired in our AOC
- BUI 6 - Benthos: No data available yet
- BUI 7 - Dredging: Not included in 2012 summer study; next sampling from Army Corps of Engineers is due in the next year or so
- BUI 8 - Eutrophication/Undesirable Algae:
 - Eutrophication: dissolved oxygen levels meet delisting criteria throughout AOC
 - Algae: upgrades to the Grafton WWTP and Findley Lake WWTP plus removal of the dam at Brentwood Lake may have removed the problem throughout the AOC
- BUI 9 - Drinking Water: Not impaired in our AOC
- BUI 10 - Recreational Use: No areas in AOC currently meet delisting criteria, but revisions of state delisting guidance document could affect status of BUI
- BUI 11 - Aesthetics: Suspended solids in river/stream waters meet delisting criteria; unknown of other criteria is being met
- BUI 12 - Increased Cost of Agriculture or Industry: Not impaired in our AOC
- BUI 13 - Phyto and Zooplankton: Not impaired in our AOC
- BUI 14 - Fish and Wildlife Habitat:
 - Fish Habitat: French Creek meets In Recovery designation; all upstream areas of lacustuary meet delisting target; lacustuary remains impaired
 - Wildlife Habitat: Not included in 2012 summer study, but revisions of state delisting guidance document could affect status of BUI

RAP Chairmanship

- Ken Pearce retired from LCGHD in August 2012
- Need to decide who will take over as RAP Chairman
- Ted agreed to run meetings in the interim, but his duties cannot extend beyond that
- If letters of support, etc. are needed, the Lorain County General Health District (LCGHD), as the RAP secretariat, will sign them
- If RAP matters are shared via email and require a vote or discussion, it is requested that you "Reply All" so all members receive the information
- We will continue to discuss this matter

Old Business

Use of EPA Pass-Through Grant Funds

Black River RAP Video

- A new video will be created to highlight the restoration work completed on the lower Black River
- We will begin discussions with the scriptwriter used in previous videos, Gay Eyerman, and video production at Lorain County Community College to see if they are interested in participating

Interns for Home Sewage Treatment System Inventory

- LCGHD brought up the possibility of using grant money to hire interns to complete an inventory of home sewage treatment systems (HSTS) in our county and better identify areas of potential contamination from failing HSTSs
- Would need to get approval from EPA central office to use funds in this manner
- LCGHD will draft a proposal to send to EPA

Retirements

- Need to get plaques made for members who retired in 2012 (Jim Boddy, Ken Pearce)
- LCGHD will contact the business and get these made
- Plaques will be presented at the July 2013 RAP meeting

New Business

Delisting of AOC

- There has been a huge push for all AOCs to delist
- Ted Conlin explained it this way: There is delisting with a “Capital D” and a “lowercase d” - the difference is science/data proving that the river has recovered vs. a letter stating that all actions were completed to satisfy delisting requirements
- More information will follow as this discussion continues

Status of the Black River

- Ted Conlin will be speaking with Marcy Kaptur on the status of the Black River, along with representatives from other AOCs
- Since speaking time will be limited, he will draft a document to share with her

Announcements

Fish and Wildlife Service - Jo Ann Banda

- Expect a letter from the regional office requesting proposals for projects to help delist BUIs for fish and wildlife
- Information will be shared as soon as it is available

World Wetland Day - Cheryl Wolfe-Cragin

- Saturday, February 2 is World Wetlands Day
- Ohio Wetlands Association is hosting its annual Marsh Madness 2013 event that day from 6:30pm-10:30pm at Rivergate Café, part of Cleveland Metroparks, and includes dinner, musical entertainment, natural history interpretation, door prizes, and cash bar
- Early registration is \$25 per person and goes through January 28; On-site registration on the day of the event is \$30 per person
- For more information or to register, visit http://ohwetlands.org/?page_id=108

Nature Conservancy - Ted Conlin

- The University of Michigan-Dearborn is looking to see if there are on-the-ground projects in the Black River AOC and Ashtabula AOC that need potential assistance
- Projects will begin this year (2013) and run through next year (2014)

Art Show at Elyria Public Library - Cheryl Wolfe-Cragin

- There is a wetlands art show at Elyria Public Library, West River Branch going on now through January 31
- Please stop by and vote now, and prizes will be awarded at the Marsh Madness event on February 2