



Black River Advisory Committee

Lorain County Conservation District - Facilitating Organization
blackriveraoc@gmail.com
440.326.5800

BRAC QUARTERLY MEETING | Tuesday, November 12th, 2024 @ 2:00 PM

Location: Lorain County Public Health Building, 9880 Murray Ridge Rd., Elyria, OH 44035

Minutes

❖ **Call to order:** Time: 2:05pm by Don Romancak

- In attendance (19): *In person:* **Don Romancak**, LC Stormwater/Community Development; **Kate Golden**, City of Lorain Stormwater Manager; **Steve Holland**, ODNR; **Scott Pozna**, LCPH; **Duane Cribley**, LCPH; **Mike Jindra**, LCPH; **Shane Derricotte**, Elyria WWPC; **Bruce Kole**, USCG Aux; **John Sabo**, Community member; **Jennifer Scott-Wasilk**, City of Amherst; **Julie Mackey**, OSU Ext; **Patti Donnellan**, BRAC Facilitator/LC Soil & Water; *Online:* **Amber Bellamy**, USFWS; **Matt Nahorn**, Amherst City Council 4th Ward/Beaver Creek Watershed; **Julie Kastanis**, Ohio Sea Grant; **Heather Elmer**, CRWP; **Sarah Stanzi**, NOACA; **Jennifer Reeves**, City of Oberlin Stormwater Coordinator; **Janet Deardorff**, GLRI

❖ **Fiscal report**

- Q2 reports submitted to EPA on 10/16/24. Motion: John Sabo / Second: Jen Scott-Wasilk. Passed with no comment/discussion.

❖ **Old business**

- Minutes from July | Approved by Scott P. / Second by: Kate G.
- Water Management Association of Ohio (WMAO) 53rd Annual Conference: "Navigating Troubled Waters: Past, Present, Future" November 19th & 20th, 2024 @ Crowne Plaza Columbus North
 - No one representing BRAC attending. One person from Ohio Coastal Management & two from Old Woman Creek attending per Steve Holland.

❖ **New business**

- Heather Elmer, Executive Director, Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc.: Section 319 grant awarded from EPA to create 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
- Lorain High School - William Brion, teacher of Special Education/Integrated Science wbrion@lorainschools.org
 - Students wrote to the blackriveraoc@gmail.com email with comments & concerns about the health of the Black River. Kate will take lead to arrange a classroom visit with support from Don R., Patti D., & Bruce K.
- Summer Supervisors School - annual conference for Ohio Soil & Water staff & board members. 2025 will be in here in District 2 in Cuyahoga Falls. Patti D. offered suggestions for a Lorain County tour, but is > 45 minutes from conference center. Committee members suggested a tour of Martin's Run instead of Rec Site. Patti D. will update committee if tour is accepted so plans can begin.



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Minutes, cont'd

❖ **Black River Watershed Updates**

- **County updates:**
 - Scott Pozna retiring from LCPH. Motion for Mike Jindra (also LCPH) to take his place on the committee. Motion by Steve Holland / Second by Kate Golden. No objections. Mike Jindra to replace Scott Pozna's position on committee, effective January 1, 2025.
 - Mike Jindra currently manages the Lorain County Home Sewage Treatment System program for LCPH. Mike previously managed the residential mosquito project. He has wastewater & chemical plant experience. He was also a professional naturalist with a degree in Environmental Education. Welcome aboard, Mike!
 - Lorain County Board of Commissioners approved the Kelner Ditch project. The ditch petition process received no objections & is now going out for bid. The project will include removal of log jams & clogged culverts along the five mile stretch.
 - City of Lorain and Lorain County Metro Parks will be looking into identifying future monies (NatureWorks) for the 60 acre Gerber Wetlands project in Eaton Township in late 2025/early 2026.
- **City/Township updates:**
 - City of Lorain: Nine days before the geopools were to begin accepting dredged material from the Black River, straight line winds damaged four of the eight geopools. However, dredging still began on schedule by USACE, utilizing the four undamaged structures. Approximately 61,000 cubic yards of material was received into the geopools & the dewatering process is currently underway. The removal of solids from the geopools will take place in February & March of 2025.
 - The four damaged pools will not be used as the structural integrity cannot be guaranteed. An insurance claim was filed & four new pools will be purchased & installed.
 - USACE will NOT be using the geopools next year (2025).
 - The discharged water back into the Black River had very low turbidity, indicating that the geopool structures and discharge process were very effective.
 - City of Lorain: Money received for waterfront development at the Hot Waters location for new docks. Construction expected to begin in 2025.



Minutes, cont'd

❖ **Ohio AOC Updates**

- Hannah Boesinger gave birth on August 19th to healthy baby boy named Miles!
- **From Kris Patterson (OLEC):** "The Ohio EPA director has not reached out to schedule her boat tour and I imagine that boating season is done for this year so maybe next year sometime."
 - "Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) is working with US EPA and some of our federal partners to secure some funding for next year for USFWS to take a look at the benthos in the lacustuary zones of the rivers so we can figure out why those areas aren't as close to meeting the BUI removal targets as riverine areas or if the target needs to be adjusted for lacustuary areas. We should know before the next AOC meeting if USFWS will be out in the field next year."
 - Amber Bellamy (USFWS) responded: "USFWS may have to rethink the criteria. Is there a better metric for measuring benthos in lacustuary areas compared to riverine areas? What does a healthy Ohio lacustuary look like?"
 - KP, cont'd: "I don't have any dates picked out, but I will be planning an Ohio AOC Summit (like Lynn [Garrity] used to) for sometime this winter, probably February or early March. I may reach out for some assistance since Lorain seems to be a great central location for meetings like that."
 - Committee members discussed Henry's Barn (LCMP) as a possible option.
- **From Carla Rosenfeld USEPA:** "The only EPA update is that we had another AOC delisted –Rochester Embankment in New York state in October 2024

❖ **Announcements & Other business - see agenda for working links to the items below**

- Workshops:
 - 11/20: Riparian Setback Implementation Workshop, 1pm-4pm
 - 11/21: Cost Estimating Virtual Training Workshop 9am-11am
- Grant opportunities:
 - Ocean Odyssey Marine Debris Prevention Awards for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Accessibility (DEIJA) Full proposals are due on November 20, 2024 by 11:59 PM
 - 2024 Enbridge Watershed Mini Grant Program (WRLC) - deadline extended! Contact Kate Pilacky for more info: kpilacky@wrlandconservancy.org
 - Stormwater Filtration System Grant from Dart Container Corporation through Council of the great Lakes Region. No deadline & a simple online form to apply
 - Boat Wrap Collection Project from Council of the Great Lakes Region

❖ Motion to adjourn: Jen Scott-Wasilk / second: Julie Mackey

❖ **Adjournment until February 11th, 2025, 2:00pm at Lorain County Public Health.**