



OHIO COASTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL

David Spotts, Chair
Tom Denbow, Vice Chair

Mission Statement

To advise the Director of ODNR on the Ohio Coastal Management Program and to promote, protect, enhance, and encourage the wise use of Lake Erie's coastal resources and its watershed.



ODNR – OCM
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August 4, 2011 – Meeting Minutes

10:00 a.m.

Call to Order

- Welcome/Introductions – meeting called to order at 10:05 by Mr. Tom Denbow. Members who requested to be excused were noted.
- **Motion:** To accept minutes as presented.
Made by Mr. Vince Urbanski and seconded by Mr. Jim Kastelic. Unanimously approved as written with minor corrections submitted by Mr. John Hageman.
- Dr. Ed Herdendorf was excused to attend Lake Erie Legislative Day events.

10:15 a.m. Office of Coastal Management Update, John Watkins, Chief

- Briefing on afternoon Legislative Day events on South Bass and Gibraltar islands (provided by John Watkins and Mr. Hageman. Chief Watkins noted that at the end of the meeting he will lead interested council members on a tour of Ohio's newest Lake Erie Public Access site- the city of Sandusky's Paper District Marina and Amphitheater which officially opened to the public in July.
- OCM distributed the quarterly update to council members electronically and in print (attached). Various items in the update were discussed as follows:
 - **Lake Erie Literacy Principles and Concepts** - Mr. Tom Szabo said that the document was enticing to the eye and people will want to look at it. Dr. Robert Heath gave kudos to the educational opportunity having the LELPC presents.
 - **Lake Erie Public Access Sites/ Lake Erie Tributary Access Sites** – After being briefed on the latest OCM publication effort, council members discussed what they thought were either new/additional Lake Erie Public Access sites or tributary sites including the public access ramp into the Cooley Canal near Anchor Point Marina. (Note: this site will be included in the tributaries guide).
 - **Coastal Design Manual** – printed copies are available and can be downloaded online.
 - **LESEMP** – Ashtabula Region for LESEMP is completed and OCM hopes to wrap up the rest of the coast within the next two years. Ms. Sandy Bihn suggested that in future CDM and LESEMP planning efforts, the specific types of native vegetation that should be placed along shore should be detailed. Chief Watkins noted Ms. Bihn's comment and mentioned that PA Sea Grant has a document noting the best types of vegetation to use along the bluff environment. The PA document is transferable to Ashtabula, Lake, Cuyahoga and some parts of Lorain counties. Ms. Bihn also suggested that recommendations on vegetation reflect possible climate change conditions.
 - **Wind Energy** - Lake Erie Alternative Power is proposing to build 886 wind turbines and their associated components out in the lake. This proposal is requesting use of 1,160 grid cells in three areas – the first is a large area out by west sister island in the Western Basin. In the Central Basin, LEAP is proposing an area off Vermilion and a separate area off Lake /Ashtabula counties. LEAPs proposal would also request a wind turbine area in Pennsylvania and a fifth offshore of New York. LEAPs proposal shows all of the groups of turbines would be connected by large offshore cables. IN response to a question about on shore wind, Chief Watkins noted that

the state of Ohio has limited authority on private property as to the deployment of wind turbines in the onshore area. The state can issue recommendations, but unless there is a take of an endangered species, the state has limited jurisdiction. Mr. Hageman asked if there will be public participation in the rule making process for offshore areas. Chief Watkins said the existing leasing rules cover structures built along the shore, and can be used for proposed turbines in the Lake, but there are no rules in place specifically addressing the development of offshore wind turbines in Lake Erie. LEEDCo. currently has an option to lease. If LEEDCo proposes entering into a submerged lands lease, the lease would be written using existing ORC and OAC. However, the OCM believes that new rules need to be drafted to adequately address offshore wind energy development. OCM is working on drafting such rules with the administration. The next step will be to present the rules to council, receive their feedback and present the rules to the public. Mr. Szabo asked if offshore wind turbines could serve as artificial reefs. Chief Watkins said that the location where wind turbines are currently being proposed is off of Cleveland/Lakewood is in 50-55 feet of water – and according to Ohio Sea Grant it could be a dead zone area on the bottom. Perhaps more ideally placed habitat would be providing a structure 20-30 feet below the water surface which might actually hang off the side of the foundation. Additional decisions information still needed includes the most suitable type of habitat to have. OCM will be getting feedback from the ODNR Division of Wildlife, Ohio Sea Grant, etc. when considering habitat issues.

- **Grants** – RFPs will go out in September for CMAG.
- **CELCPs** funding status was discussed. Federal money was appropriated for the Erie MetroParks Barnes Nursery project along Sheldon Marsh, but other funding had been secured for this site prior to the federal award being officered. NOAA is allowing OCM to transfer the grant award to the Lake Erie Bluffs II project in Lake County. Mr. Vince Urbanski said he wanted to thank OCM's Yetty Alley for her very valuable hard work in helping secure the funds. Chief Watkins reminded council to start thinking about projects that they would like to nominate for the annual round of CELCP funding RFPs which should be issued in January/February 2012.
- **CZ2011**- In addition to the OCM activities mentioned in the quarterly update, Chief Watkins noted that the Land Use Planning and Balanced Growth presentations given by Mr. Denbow and Ms. Sandra Kosek-Sills who works at the Ohio Lake Erie Commission, were well received. Chief Watkins said many other coastal states see Ohio's Balanced Growth Program as a model on how to work on land-use planning at the local level. Mr. Denbow said that one of the things that struck him at CZ2011 was it was only the second time that the conference was held in the Great Lakes and 1,100 people attended. Mr. Denbow also noted that the focus of many conference sessions was the impact of climate change on coastal communities – which may be more significant on east coast. However, on the Great Lakes, the intensively used south shore of Lake Erie has many navigation and shore structures – both publicly and privately owned – that could be impacted. Chief Watkins said the USACE and NOAA are planning on re-evaluating the Open Coast Flood Levels across the Great Lakes due to the additional information that has been obtained in recent years. Chief Watkins noted that OCM uses the Open Coast Flood Level Maps and the information on them as a starting point for assessing the design of shore structures.
- **Ohio Lake Erie Award** - Chief Watkins noted that the Ohio Lake Erie Commission is now accepting nominations for the Ohio Lake Erie Award to recognize individuals or groups who have significantly contributed to improving Lake Erie.
- **Lake Erie Environment Use Case Map Viewer** was showcased by Chief Watkins. This latest addition to the Ohio Coastal Atlas Project was added to the OCM website on August 1 to showcase the ecological network that makes the Lake Erie region a dynamic and vital habitat for many aquatic and terrestrial species.
- **Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program** – Mr. Matt Adkins with Division of Soil and Water Conservation was present and gave a brief update. The Division of SWR is still funded, but there have been many staff changes due to retirements, etc. David Hanselmann is retiring in August 2011; Ted Lozier will be replacing him. A person has been hired to manage nutrients in the

Grand Lake St. Mary's Watershed. The OWLS conference is August 25-26. Mr. Adkins said many watershed plans are being completed, endorsed and reviewed including the Blanchard River (endorsed) and Black River (developed). The Rocky River received about \$500,000 for reducing sediment and erosion. And the Upper Maumee Watershed is working with the state of Indiana to reduce sediment and erosion. Chief Watkins noted that the CNPCP is Ohio's ability to reach up into the watershed and improve the headwaters that flow down and impact Lake Erie.

- **Ohio Lake Erie Commission** – Chief Watkins was serving as the Acting Interim Director of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission in addition to being the OCM Chief. Gail Hesse was hired to serve as the Ohio Lake Erie Commission Director. Ms. Hesse comes from the Ohio EPA and will begin on August 15 at the OLEC.

- Dr. Heath, Mr. Denbow and Mr. Szabo said they are interested in OCM showcasing our tools (maps, manuals, etc.) to the various user groups from students, to colleges to the public. Chief Watkins noted that OCM's tools are targeted at various levels and we do work some with the schools. For example, OCM is working with the Great Lakes Science Center and LEEDCo to assemble educational displays focused on wind energy targeted at high school students. Additionally, in 2012 OCM plans on working with staff at the travel and tourism bureaus in Ohio's coastal counties teach them how to use the Use Case Map Viewers. OCM is also encouraging people involved in academic research to use the datasets as a starting point to further their research. Chief Watkins said that the events such as Legislative Days on Lake Erie provide valuable time to talk to decision makers about the activities and products the OCM has developed. Mr. Spotts said that distribution of information from the OCM to the local level is a responsibility of all council members. Chief Watkins said he appreciates those efforts. Mr. Spotts suggested that council members invite OCM staff to come speak to the local groups that council members serve on. Ms. Bihn suggested that local decision makers who serve on planning commissions be a target audience. Dr. Heath said OCM should also focus on giving presentations at larger conferences, such as the State of the Lake Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) which is being held this year in Erie, Penn. on October 26-27.

10:45 a.m. Council Business

- Executive Committee Report – Mr. Spotts noted that there is no *executive committee report because the executive committee did not meet*.
- **New Business** – Upper Great Lakes WATER LEVEL Study - HOW WILL LAKE ERIE BE IMPACTED? The Great Lakes Study website at iugls.org.
 - Ms. Bihn attended the IJC meeting on the Upper Great Lakes Water Levels study that was held in Ohio. She provided council members with her typewritten notes (see attached).
 - Ms. Bihn summarized that the bottom line is that the USACE(?) is considering installing structures in the bottom of the St. Clair River to slow down the flow of water leaving the Upper Great Lakes. If that happens, that could lower levels in Lake Erie between 2 and 8 inches over a period of 30 to 50 years. The IJC looking for feedback on the report by August 30. Mr. Spotts said that water levels on Lake Erie and the entire Great Lakes are extremely important to the shipping industry. Mr. Spotts suggested having the council's executive committee look further into the report and draft a letter recommending that the Water Quantity Advisory Board be created. Mr. Spotts asked if any council members wanted to make such a motion.

Motion: To have the Coastal Resources Advisory Council Executive Committee look at the information in the *International Upper Great Lakes Study: Options for Restoring Lake Michigan-Huron Water Levels: an Exploratory Analysis* report and draft a letter recommending that the proposed Water Quantity Advisory Board be created and that future studies also exam the effects that actions in the upper Great Lakes will have on the water levels/ quantity in Lake Erie, including the social, economic, ecological impacts.

Motion made by Dr. Heath and seconded by Mr. Hayberger. Unanimously approved

The report was generated by the **International Joint Commission**. They have a website dedicated to this study which is: <http://www.iugls.org>

The most recent report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.iugls.org/docs/Revised%20Restoration%20Report%20-%20Final.pdf>

Mr. Denbow said a report by the USGS regarding water availability in the Great Lakes is also informative. The **Lake-Level Variability and Water Availability in the Great Lakes: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1311** has a summary webpage at: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/2007/1311/> and can be downloaded in its entirety from the summary page.

The USGS report titled: *Water Availability and Use Pilot: A Multiscale Assessment in the U.S. Great Lakes Basin* can be downloaded here: http://pubs.usgs.gov/pp/1778/pp1778_complereport.pdf

▪ *New Business* – continued

- Mr. Hageman began a discussion on water withdrawal legislation that was approved by the Ohio Legislature but then vetoed by the Governor. Dr. Heath said he was part of a panel the Nature Conservancy put together to testify as an interested party. The legislation as crafted would allow unregulated removal up to 5 million gallons per day, per businesses without the need to apply for regulation. Dr. Heath said that what started the Great Lakes Compact was a company in Minnesota requesting the 5 million gallon limit and that is what started the Great Lakes Compact, a bi-partisan, bi-national agreement on both sides of the border. Various council members voiced their support for the governor's veto of the legislation and expressed interest in formally passing along their sentiments to the governor via ODNR Director Mustine. Mr. Spotts asked if council wanted to make a motion on the issue.

Motion: To have the Coastal Resources Advisory Council Executive Committee draft a letter to the director acknowledging their support of the Governor's veto of the Water Withdraw Legislation (House Bill 231) and have the executive committee make recommendations of what they feel should be included in future legislation.

Motion made by Dave Spotts and seconded by Mr. Kastelic. Unanimously approved.

- Council members set an 11 am Wednesday August 17 day for OCM to organize a teleconference so interested council members could join the council's Executive Committee in discussing and drafting letters in relation to the above two motions.

11:20 a.m. Old Business

- A letter was sent to Director Mustine regarding the Great Lakes and Asian Carp and the **Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study (GLMRIS)**. Since the letter was sent, there were 13 positive hits on DNA in Chicago Canal and of those 11 were near Lake Calumet in Indiana. The USACE has gone to a Stage 2 which is a lot more intensive sampling, Mr. Denbow said.

11:30 a.m. Public Comment

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

11:35 a.m. Adjourn

- **Council members voted unanimously to adjourn.**
- **Chief Watkins led those interested on a walking tour of the Paper District Marina which is a block west of the Office of Coastal Management.**
- *Those council members participating in the afternoon activities had the following pm schedule*

2:00 p.m. Legislative Days on Lake Erie - Board the 2 pm Jet Express Ferry

- 2:30 pm – arrive at Put-in-Bay and transport to Gibraltar Island. Activities available include:
 - short trip on one of OSU’s research vessels, where CRAC members pulled a fish trawl and collected water, plankton, and bottom samples from Lake Erie;
 - brief discussions with scientists and Ohio Sea Grant staff studying and addressing Lake Erie issues. Learn about Asian carp and aquatic invasive species, the importance of nutrient loading and watershed management, harmful algal blooms, water snakes and other endangered species, and the economic contributions of fishing, boating, birding, and tourism. Plan to get up close and personal with zebra mussels, Lake Erie water snakes, and round gobies!
 - observe live microscopic Lake Erie life in a scientific laboratory;
 - tour Stone Laboratory and Gibraltar Island, including Cooke Castle, a National Historic Landmark

5:00 p.m. Reception at Waldock Gazebo at Stone Laboratory, Gibraltar Island

6:00 p.m. Transport back to South Bass Island.

Final: approved @ 11-05-2011