

OHIO LAKE ERIE COMMISSION MEETING

Geneva State Park Lodge

Geneva-on-the-lake, OH

September 5, 2007

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

Roll Call:

Sean Logan, Commission Chairman and Director; Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources (ODNR)
James Beasley, Commission Secretary and Director; Ohio Dept. of Transportation (ODOT)
Chris Korleski, Director; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)
Robert Boggs, Director; Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA)
Gene Phillips, Director's Designee; Ohio Department of Health (ODH)
Brad Biggs, Director's Designee; Ohio Department of Development (ODOD)

Guests:

Matt Adkins, ODNR – Division of Soil and Water
Carl Anderson, Ashtabula RAP; 2007 Lake Erie Award Winner
Eugene Braig, Ohio Sea Grant College Program
Bob Bransky, 2007 Photo Contest Winner
Rich Brewster, Ashtabula River Partnership
Kay Carlson, The Nature Conservancy
Edith Chase, OCRMP
Commissioner Dan Claypool, Ashtabula County Commissioner
Sandra Cobb, 2007 Photo Contest Winner
Pamela Davis, Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
Steve Davis, USDA – NRCS
Vicki Deisner, ODNR
Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells, Chagrin River Watershed Partners
Kurt Erichsen, TMACOG
Natalie Farber, OEPA; Ashtabula RAP
Dorothy Farris, ODNR - DSWC
Bill Goodman, Ohio Department of Agriculture
Edwin J. Hammett, Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office
Ed Hauser, Citizen
Gail Hesse, OEPA
Tim Hill, ODOT
John Hull, Citizen
Karen Hull, 2007 Photo Contest Winner
Alvin D. Jackson, Director; Ohio Dept of Health
Kevin Kayle, ODNR – Division of Wildlife
Ken Krieger, Heidelberg College
Marty Kuula, Ashtabula City Port Authority
Christy Lahmers, Citizen
Elizabeth Lehtola, League of Women Voters/Stone Lab
Fred Leitert, Ashtabula River Partnership, 2007 Lake Erie Award Winner
Linda Letson, Citizen
Frank Lichtkoppler, Ohio Sea Grant
Jamie Lockwood, 2007 Photo Contest Winner
Ryan Lockwood, Citizen
Ted Lozier, ODNR
Duane Myers, Ottawa County Visitors Bureau
Dave Noble, Lake MetroParks
Gary Norcia, Medina County SWCD
John Patterson, 2007 Photo Contest Winner

Ray Petering, ODNR
Adam Prokop, ODNR – Division of Watercraft
Karl Rabeneck, Friends of Stone Laboratory
Dr. Jeffrey M. Reutter, Ohio Sea Grant College Program
Chris Riddle, Ohio Lake Erie Commission
David Schneider, 2007 Photo Contest Winner
Matthew Smith, ODNR – DNAP
David Spotts, CRAC
Gary Timonere, Saybrook Township
Jeff Van Loon, Medina County SWCD
John Watkins, ODNR - Office of Coastal Management
Mark Wolfe, Ohio Geological Survey
Jill Woodyard, Ohio Lake Erie Commission
Matt Zlocki, ODNR

WELCOME

The annual meeting of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission was opened with welcoming remarks by Ashtabula County Commissioner Dan Claypool.

Announcement of 2007 “Life on Lake Erie” Photo Contest Winners

Sean Logan, Director of ODNR and Commission Chairman presented an overview and history of the Commission’s annual photography contest which began in 1992. The Commission Chairman was assisted by Duane Myers, Ottawa County Visitors Bureau and Photo Contest Judge, in announcing the 2007 winners and presenting their award certificates. Fourteen “Judges’ Favorites” were recognized:

- Jamie Lynn Lockwood of Oak Harbor for man and youngster fishing off Sand Beach and was recognized as the “Judges’ Overall Favorite”;
- Bob Bransky of Monroe, Michigan for his photo of the Marblehead Lighthouse;
- Sandra Cobb of Lakewood for her picture of sunset over the Cleveland shoreline;
- Karen Hull of Port Clinton for her Catawba Island sailboat at sunset photo;
- John T. Patterson of Toledo for his photo of a white egret in a tree along the Ottawa River;
- David Schneider of North Ridgeville for his print of the Lorain Lighthouse and a ship; and
- Chris Adams of Sandusky for her picture of the Vermilion Lighthouse;
- Maggi Dandar of Curtice for her photo a winter shoreline scene on Maumee Bay;
- Shelly Haverkamp of Seattle, Washington for her picture of a sunset at Ruggles Beach.;
- Thomas G. Liskai of Helena for his July Fourth photo of fireworks along the Maumee River.;
- Connie Maksemetz of Tiffin for a children’s silhouette along Kelleys Island, Lake Erie;
- Rona Proudfoot of Lorain for snapping the photo of flying seagulls at sunset in Lakeview Park;
- Erin Rice of Euclid for her photo of a girl jumping rocks along the Lake Erie shore near Eastlake;
- Philip Weeks of Canton for his photo of the Fairport Lighthouse at Headlands Beach State Park.

BUSINESS MEETING

Chairman’s Report

The chairman’s report was presented under the Special Reports section of the meeting entitled, *Report on Ballast Water Issue*.

Minutes

Motion was made by OEPA and seconded by ODA to accept the May 31, 2007 meeting minutes as presented with no changes. The Commission voted all in favor and the motion carried.

Executive Committee Report

Vicki Deisner, Executive Committee Chairman; ODNR, presented the committee's recommendation for the 2007 Ohio Lake Erie Award recipients and background information about the awards. Two awards are presented yearly to the most outstanding citizen and organization devoting their life's work to the environmental stewardship of Lake Erie. This award recognition enhances awareness of the citizens of Ohio and encourages their support of the Ohio Lake Erie Commission programs. Since 1995, 12 individual and 12 organization awards have been presented. Motion was made by OEPA and seconded by ODNR to approve the committee's recommendation. The Commission voted all in favor and the motion carried.

The Commission Chairman read the award citations and announced that the individual award recipient was Norm Schultz, President Emeritus of the Lake Erie Marine Trades Association, and the organization award was presented to the Ashtabula River RAP and Partnership. Carl Anderson representing the Ashtabula River RAP and Fred Leitert of the Ashtabula River Partnership accepted the Ohio Lake Erie Award.

Grants Committee Report

Lake Erie Protection Fund - Small Grants Program

Bill Goodman, ODA, presented the Grants Committee recommendations for Small Grant Projects submitted during First Quarter FY 2008 in the total amount of \$58,881. Motion was made by OEPA and seconded by ODH to accept the committee's recommendations. The Commission voted all in favor and the motion carried to approve the following four grant projects:

- U.S. Geological Survey for project entitled, "*Use of MST Tools in the Portage River Watershed*", Christopher M. Kephart, Project Director - \$15,000;
- Bowling Green State University for project entitled, "*Winter Assessment of Lake Erie Microbiology*", R. Michael McKay, Project Director - \$14,300;
- Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc. for project entitled, "*Bioswale Effectiveness Monitoring, Cuyahoga County*", Rachel Webb, Project Director - \$15,000 (*Balanced Growth project*); and
- University of Toledo for project entitled, "*Tracking Fecal Pollution at Recreational Beaches*", Von Sigler, Project Director - \$14,581.

Special Reports

Report on Ballast Water Issue

Director Logan, ODNR, reported on his recent trips to Washington D.C. regarding federal legislation on the Ballast Water issue. He provided background information on issue in which ocean freighters (salties) are introducing the problem into the Great Lakes and are the vehicle for this type of discharge. The shipping industry states there should be a federal solution. The State of Michigan has approved their own legislation. Director Logan reported that Ohio would prefer federal legislation over state legislation. Members of the Governor's Cabinet will be stepping up this effort with HR 2830 in the House and 1578 in the Senate for Ballast Water legislation. The Director stated that the Great Lakes Commission was very active on this issue and suggested a link at the Commission website to the Great Lakes Commission web page on ballast water. Director Logan asked the meeting attendees to get involved and write letters to their senators and members of the committee. Maritime Attorney David Spotts stated that it is not just the U.S., it is an international issue along with Canada and that there needs to be international inspections. Carl Anderson, Ashtabula River Rap, stated the way the legislation is currently written affects pleasure crafts in that a citizen would have to get a NPDES permit which would be another tax on boaters – that portion needs to be dropped out.

Report on Wind Generation

Vicki Deisner, ODNR, presented a report on wind generation in the Lake Erie basin as Ohio moves forward with this type of new industry. Wind does not have air emissions, but does have impact on wildlife and we need to learn the lessons from other states. In Ohio, we have the Ohio Wind Working Group comprised of agencies and concerned citizens involved on active committees looking at wind generation. The meeting attendees were invited to the September 21 active committee meeting of the

working group's Environmental Action Team. There are five goals and projections that have been set as strategic actions in this effort: (1) Identify priority research needs and funding sources for wind and wildlife; (2) Develop cooperative agreement for wildlife studies and mitigation; (3) Help develop a Great Lakes Wind Working Group to explore offshore wind power issues; (4) Develop post construction wildlife monitoring protocol; and (5) Develop pre-construction wildlife monitoring protocol. The state is looking at Pennsylvania as a model in which they have 35 wind farms and have been sharing their information with Ohio. There are no wind turbines offshore in any of the Great Lakes states. The Ohio Wind Working Group has a website for this type of information or you can contact Vicki Deisner at ODNR.

Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) ~ Office Report

Ed Hammett, Executive Director; OLEC, provided a report on the Commission's public outreach program ~ *Coastweeks 2007* and announced that today's meeting is Ohio's official kick-off for the program which takes place through Sept 22. The Ohio Lake Erie Commission has been the regional coordinator for the program since 1992 and is a nationwide celebration of our waters and coastlines throughout the United States and internationally with the Ocean Conservancy out of Washington, D.C. being the lead sponsor for the cleanups. Ten (10) Ohio cleanups are planned for this year's program from Northwest OH to Mentor Lagoons in Northeast OH. Mr. Hammett encouraged the meeting attendees to come out and join in these outstanding events.

Best Local Land Use Practices Sessions

Mr. Hammett provided an update on the Best Local Land Use efforts. The Coastal Training Program has developed an evaluation of the first year efforts. A year two scope of work is being finalized. It is anticipated that additional workshops will be conducted including day long programs focusing on specific practices, development of materials for local governments to use to inform their citizens and technical assistance on the available tools such as the DVD being prepared with funding from the "Giving Back Gang".

Pilot Projects

The four Balanced Growth Watershed Pilot Projects (Chagrin River Watershed; Swan Creek Watershed; Upper Branch of the Rocky River Watershed (Medina County) and Chippewa Creek have continued to meet and continue to focus on presenting PCAs and PDAs to their local communities.

State Assistance Work Group (SAWG)

This new work group has met July 31 and August 21, 2007. Each agency of the Lake Erie Commission has one representative on the work group including the Ohio Water Development Authority. The group will assist the Watershed Planning Partnerships (WPPs) in identifying technical and financial resources that can be used to support PCAs and PDAs including sources of support, obtaining agency guidance on utilizing support, and making state agencies aware of the WPPs intentions. The group has also set a schedule to bring additional incentives to the December commission meeting for your approval and inclusion in the Balanced Growth Strategy.

Lake Erie License Plate Program

Mr. Hammett further reported that the Lake Erie License Plate Program supports Lake Erie Protection through Ohio's Lake Erie Protection Fund. This program began selling plates in 1993 with the first plate design featuring the Marblehead Lighthouse by Ohio Artist Ben Richmond. The Lake Erie license plate was Ohio's first environmental plate and led the way for Ohioans to become directly involved with environmental protection. The program has earned over \$8.5 million since inception. Over the past 14 years, the plate donations have steadily declined due to competition from over 100 other Ohio specialty plates. In state fiscal year 1997, the plate earned \$919,210 in donations, compared to \$345,580 in state fiscal year 2007. Grant projects have focused on an array of issues critical to the effective future management of the Lake. These include: fisheries management, watershed planning, non-point pollution abatement (particularly agricultural), wetlands restoration ecology, exotic species, Lake Erie ecological shifts, ecotourism and environmental measurements. The projects have also attracted significant amounts of federal funding into Ohio as Lake Erie Protection Fund projects are often matched with funds from one of numerous federal agencies.

Agency Reports

Director Korleski, OEPA, commented that the Ashtabula River (delisting of the river) is an example of the success and what can be done when the community, concerned citizens and agencies work together, and thanked the people who had the vision and foresight to make this happen. He further reported on the Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force meetings taking place focusing on the western basin sediment and phosphorus, and the algae problem in Maumee Bay.

Director Beasley, ODOT, reported that the agency does not have a major project in the watershed. However, two resource projects are taking place that deal with environmental issues, such as how to remove contaminants from our highway system, removing sedimentation and materials from the highway with water returning cleaner, and addressing EPA and citizen concerns how we manage runoff from the highway.

Gene Phillips, ODH, reported that beach monitoring updates have taken place from Memorial Day to Labor Day with 22 samplings of public beaches along the Lake Erie shoreline for *E. coli* bacteria. This is an annual program that will continue. It was further reported that HB 119 suspended operation of most portions of ORC Chapter 3718, the sewage law, until July 1, 2009. This law, which had allowed for continued state oversight and the ability in the future to effectively treat sewage for homes and businesses not served by public sewer systems, is suspended in the interim. In compliance with HB 119, the director of health adopted statewide interim sewage rules effective July 2, 2007. The Public Health Council, at its July 25, 2007 meeting, adopted these rules as minimum standards through July 1, 2009.

Director Boggs, ODA, congratulated the members of the Ashtabula River RAP and Partnership. He further reported on the Governor's policy in regards to energy and the announcement that wind power will be a key piece of this administration along with bio-fuels. We now have more corn in production since WWII and that there is interest in a bio-processing in Ohio.

Brad Biggs, ODOD, reported that the Lieutenant Governor recognizes Lake Erie as the premiere environmental treasure for Ohio and the gateway to Ohio's shipping. In doing so, there has to be a balanced structure between the environment and industry and we need to do a good job with our environmental stewardship. Any project the agency takes on goes through rigid environmental checks on businesses and are working very closely with energy groups.

Director Logan, ODNR, reported that the agency is working on new policy for management of Ohio's north coast. Chief John Watkins, Office of Coastal Management, is working on adopting new rules and regulations for Ohio's new Lake Erie shoreline policy. The agency will seek greater outreach to decision makers and that is why ODNR is very interested in the Balanced Growth Program which is an important component in this effort.

Advisory Committee Reports

Edith Chase, OCRMP, provided a handout and comments on the Middle Bass Island State Park Marina Plan and the issue of endangerment to the Lake Erie watersnake. There needs to be a revised mitigation plan to protect the snake and the commission members were asked to consider recommendation of a plan.

Dr. Jeffrey M. Reutter, Ohio Sea Grant, congratulated the commission on the Lake Erie Award winners and that the Ashtabula River is a model for our region. Directors Logan and Korleski were thanked for being part of Stone Laboratory's recent Lecture Series. Announcement was made of the upcoming Annual Open House on September 8 which includes visiting Gibraltar Island and the facilities, and the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Friends of Stone Lab.

Pamela Davis, NOACA, provided a handout to the commissioners from NOACA (regional planning agency for the five counties surrounding Cleveland) on the ballast waster resolution. It was further reported the agency is conducting roundtable discussions with the area health departments on the

new sewage rules, and holding their annual planning and zoning workshop which includes the topic - how to get farmers' markets in our community. Director Boggs, ODA, commented that farmers' markets are a great way to get fresh food to the community.

Kurt Erichsen, TMACOG, reported that the agency is regional council of governments in northwest OH and Monroe, MI. They will host the Storm Water Coalition in their area with an annual workshop on September 25 focusing on runoff controls from construction sites with the new Bass Pro facility in Rossford being a demonstration area. They are working on a project at Maumee Bay State Park with issues related to fecal bacteria at the beaches, and working with local stakeholders to identify sources and solutions to control bacteria.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Frank Lichtkoppler, Ohio Sea Grant Agent, thanked the Commission for their small grant award and reported on the economic study project taking place. Preliminary data is showing a lot of money coming into the area from outside Ohio. ODOT was also thanked for the new Lake Erie Coastal Ohio trail signs.

Jeff Van Loon, Medina County SWCD, stated that we need to identify the watershed in Ohio along Lake Erie with markers that will help citizens understand the watershed and become aware when they are entering the Lake Erie basin. Director Boggs, ODA, stated that it was a great idea and that most people do not realize how big it is.

Carl Anderson, Ashtabula River RAP, commented on the Ashtabula River becoming a Scenic River. Director Logan stated it was proceeding through the appropriate channels.

Ed Hauser, Cleveland, OH, provided a handout and update on Whiskey Island and the Port Authority's plan in Cleveland. It was reported that the road to Whiskey Island is "deplorable" and help is needed and support to make Whiskey Island a metro park.

Linda Letzin, cottage owner along Geneva-on-the-Lake, commented on being pleased on what she had heard at the meeting today and will share the information with other homeowners. Ms. Letzin was referred to Chief John Watkins, ODNR's Office of Coastal Management, regarding questions on water levels and lakefront erosion issues.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made to adjourn, all in favor the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*James Beasley, Commission Secretary and
Director; Ohio Department of Transportation
Prepared by the Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office
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