



*address this funding issue for a few years, but has not had any luck identifying additional funding.*

- *Bartz – NCWQR has undercut USGS costs for collecting this data for years.*
  - *Cosby – this issue should be a high priority for us. Operations Committee will need to address this further.*
- LTC Snead – apologized for the late arrival – thanked Indiana for hosting the meeting.
    - Stated that by the end of September, we will have completed the WLEB study covering 9 sub watersheds and the Maumee Bay itself, and will call this a WLEB State of the Basin Report. We will be presenting this official Corps report to Matt Kaplan of Congresswoman Kaptur's office on 2 Oct 09. He thanked everyone for the time and effort they have spent in providing input and reviewing this report. This will provide a basis for much good work in the WLEB to come in the future.
    - The next step is for us to prioritize the hundreds of potential projects identified in the report. We will start that today, and his goal is that we will identify the top five WLEB projects today. This is important, and is a follow up to our recent WLEB meeting and the request from Congresswoman Kaptur to identify our top 5 WLEB projects.

### **Open Action Items (Forgette)**

**Open action items review. (see list at end of document).**

### **- Discussion and Coordinated Response to June Congressional meeting**

- USDA Joint 3 State Proposal - Indiana NRCS/Larry Clemens, TNC (10 min)
  - Three items came out from the June 13 briefing:
    - Flooding
    - Large scale projects
    - Future stimulus potential
  - Bottom line – business as usual is not meeting expectations at this time. Handout provided from Maumee River Basin Commission regarding proposed activities.
- USACE Programs Update and Responses - Craig Forget, USACE (10 min)
  - WLEB Report Update
  - Top 3 Projects Discussion
    - 1. Continue Section 441 WLEB Investigation – Blanchard River Flood Risk Management/Ecosystem Restoration Project. Also looking at St. Joseph River, Swan Creek, and perhaps others. Constraint is a lack of implementation authority
    - 2. Operation and maintenance of Toledo Harbor.
    - 3. Section 204 for Maumee Bay Habitat Restoration Units. Cost sharing (35% non-federal) and \$7.5 million cost limitation.
- Questions and Open Discussion - LTC Snead, Terry Cosby (5 min)
  - Snead - Much of the Indiana projects are programs that could use funding – is there a need for programs to be implemented?
  - Davis – there is a organizational difference between how NRCS and USACE are funded and address programs vs. projects.
  - Snead – If there is a program need that fits in several states, the partnership could be a way to address it.
  - Clemens – what is the current issue with WRP? Is it landowner willingness?

- Cosby – There was a change in the rules that has changed who NRCS could work with in Ohio.
- Indiana NRCS – there were not a staff people to get the process completed in the time they had – could have utilized more dollars than were available, but didn't have the staff they needed.
- Discussion continued on the need for staff to knock on doors and get people started into programs, as well as need for staff within NRCS and other agencies that help move people into the programs.
- Davis – the Operations group will take these sets of suggestions and fine tune them.

## **- Great Lakes Restoration Plans and Funds Update and Panel Discussion**

- Federal Update From USEPA - Dan O'Riordan, USEPA (5 min)
  - Working under the presumption that the budget will be restored to the total \$475 M proposed by the President. As well, USEPA's budget has been increased, which may lead to funding for sewers and other projects.
  - Working with Federal partners to create a template for FFY11 funding opportunities to continue the funding for GLRI in the future.
  - Hoping to issue first RFP by the end of the month - \$140M range.
  - Written into the RFP is a focus on furthering the priorities of the Lake Erie LaMP – the Western Basin is an area where urgent action is needed.
  - During the initial RFP development process, the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan is one important document that was used.
  - Lake Erie priorities will be stated in the RFP – they are algal blooms, reduction of DRP, watershed governance issues (local watershed groups) to help communities make wise land use decisions, nutrient transport.
  - Advise people to look at Lake Erie LaMP.
  - Crane – 5 priority areas – Toxics and AOCs, Invasive Species, Nonpoint Source and Nearshore Health, Habitat and Wildlife, & Evaluating and Monitoring Progress. This last one speaks to how we measure success for these programs that we are operating – the idea of good metrics and ecosystem improvements is important.
  - O'Riordan – the use of metrics is what OMB wants as a way to show what we are improving. If there is a new way to look at things, this is a way to get to it. There isn't a well established baseline to work from – so there will be focus here.
- NRCS Update - Michelle Lohstroh, NRCS (5 min)
  - What we know – NRCS will be addressing 3 of the 4 areas, through existing programs. We will be targeting these projects to specific areas.
  - Question – will there be technical assistance ?
  - Lohstroh – the funding so far is for in the field, not necessarily for staffing.
  - Question – how will funding be split out ?
  - O'Riordan – this will be spelled out at the federal level through agreements between agencies, ie USEPA and NRCS.
- State Update - Gail Hesse, OEPA (5 min)
  - Six cabinet agencies under the Ohio Lake Erie Commission have been working to identify projects under the mantle of the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan – which was structured similarly to the GLRC.

- We have been interacting with particular stakeholder groups (ie AOC/RAP, P-Task Force).
- We hope to do additional public consultation with the public as we get the matrix together.
- We are particularly interested in talking to USACE about Toledo Harbor.
- State Update - Indiana, Jerod Chew, Indiana State Dept. Agriculture (5 min)
  - We are anxious to see the RFP, and see how much time we have to respond (note: USEPA is planning on 2 months).
  - On the state level we have not had a chance to branch out too far, but have spoken with Depts. of Environmental Management and Natural Resources.
  - Are of the understanding that there will be a lot of focus on implementing watershed plans that are already complete – which makes a lot of sense.
  - Will try to create a unified voice from Indiana to put a proposal in under, rather than a lot of smaller efforts.
  - O’Riordan – The funding will not be exclusive to areas with completed plans – of course having a plan will be a good thing, but that will not be a limitation of the funding.
- State Update - Michigan, Steve Shine, Michigan Dept. Agriculture (5 min)
  - Have been working with DEQ and DNR to create a state strategy.
  - Concern about having enough boots on the ground to get funding out to projects.
  - Glad to hear that the funding will not be limited to just existing watershed plans – there is a lot out there that would be missed if that were the case.
  - Also looking at ag assessment program to find projects on specific farms that can be done.
  - Putting a lot of time and effort into it, so we are hoping that it passes into the budget.
- Questions and Open Discussion - LTC Snead, Terry Cosby (5 min)
  - Davis – has this discussion helped achieve our goals for today?
  - Cosby – we have a lot on the table there – how do we make sure that these projects all come together and how do we work together as partners to make sure that when someone knocks on a door, they are talking about all of this, rather than having two people show up with two programs on two separate days.
  - Snead – How do we get there with the authority we have with this partnership? We need to come forward to Congress with the top projects that we can support. Leaving it where it is now leaves a lot on the Operations Committee.
  - O’Riordan - A focus on key activities, keeping linkages to the relevant plans, and get as many partners on board as you can – this will get you to the best place you can get.
  - Cosby – Can those staff from the Congressional offices give us some feedback on this?
  - Ruvolo – I think you are going in the right direction – identifying your major priorities and the funding you need.
  - Representative for Congressman Sauder – Would like to learn more about other projects that USACE may have and how that would impact flooding and water quality. The sediment program in Toledo Harbor – if we can keep that sediment in Indiana that would be good.

- Ruvolo – the Maumee River basin Commission piece is very good – it lays out some priorities and direction – so long as it has the support of the technical staff.
- Crane – GLC helped set up state agency and public workshops in each state for USEPA as a part of the GLRI. A few items that have come up...
  - Everyone was impressed with the level of knowledge of the general public.
  - State agencies are struggling with how to organize considering their budgetary constraints.
  - Technical assistance/staff issue has come up in many states. If we don't have boots in the field, this program won't succeed. There is real fear that states will get money but not have the people to do the implementation.
  - USEPA has concern that there will be "random acts of kindness for the environment" – that the funding will be spread so thin that we will not have an impact at the end of the day.
- Lake – Can the Operations Committee pull together representatives of the 3 states to talk about delivery systems, priority areas, etc and agree upon how we will go after funding by state, and how we can coordinate by state so we at least complement each other. We can let those folks have the detailed discussion.
- Snead – I agree with that. If the operations committee can get that going, then present it here.
- USFWS – Like that concept and the Maumee River Basin Commission document as well. There is a need to respond to Rep Kaptur's continued request for input on flooding, water quality, etc. If we can put something together that is very simple to discuss the priorities, and use the GLRI as a way to fund those activities, that would be very useful.
- Kroll – DU would like the opportunity to get involved more and help to find a different approach than we have used in the past to get boots on the ground.

### **3. Committee Reports (continued)**

#### **c. Operations Committee - Craig Forget, Steve Davis - 5 min**

*All items are in the open action items section – there are no additional items.*

#### **d. Projects Committee - Ed Crawford or Gegg Lake - 5 min**

*Update on Watershed Capacity Grant Projects*

*Defiance SWCD – organizing a watershed group across state lines – trying to work out the details on who to do this.*

*Lenawee Co Michigan – Bean Ck – trying to get people together and organized – have sent out a survey to try to get some input.*

*Blanchard River – used to match up with ODNR watershed funding – have a part time coordinator. Working on watershed management plan and have a community outreach project. Set up monitoring at a few sites.*

*Partners for Clean Streams (Ohio) – supplement efforts on the Coastal Zone Management Plan portion of watershed plan.*

*Van Wert Co Ohio – Powder Creek – flooding is what is pulling people together in the watershed. Getting some involvement, but a lot of finger pointing as well.*

*Allen SWCD Indiana – outreach effort on TMDL from 2006. Received a \$400K 319 grant.*

*St Joe Michigan – used to supplement other funding in the watershed. Holding a few informational meetings and working on a series of projects.*

#### **e. Funding Committee - 5 min -**

*Update on Newest Round of Joyce Project Grants - Karen Chapman*

Should get final word from Joyce Foundation for \$1.1M to continue their work in the area. Have 4 contractors now targeting outreach in Tiffin and Blanchard watersheds – expecting funding approval to continue this work. Requesting funding to continue Heidelberg’s monitoring efforts on Lost Ck and Blanchard. Adding more people to on-farm network project – additional consultants to help with this effort. Will allow producers to analyze their own data, and compare it to others in their watershed. Also have another year of Conservation Innovation funding coming to help within the watershed. Finally hoping to get funding for an environmental biologist in the Blanchard to work with outreach consultants to increase conservation planning. Also using this information as a part of their lobbying efforts in D.C.

*Lake Erie Commission Funding - Chris Riddle*

Lake Erie Protection Fund – awarded \$250K in grant funding to two projects in early 2009 to look at DRP and algal blooms. The first of those is set to wrap up in early 2010. This group would be a good place to have the researchers provide a report from the first project, which is looking at soil testing issues Ohio.

#### **4. New Business and Presentations**

##### **a. Proposal for Wetland Delineation Software using LIDAR data - 15 Min**

Steve Shine and Ed Crawford

- It is a highly accurate, time saving program. It provides accurate costs estimates for projects and is user friendly.
- The LIDAR data only exists in Ohio (about 1/3 of Ohio, and some in Monroe Co, MI). It is very effective for planning (within 2' versus current 10m-30m tools). Could be used to help the WLEB Partnership with projects.
- Currently for this program is designed for pond building, but could be very useful for wetland restoration.
- Some work has been in Defiance to see how the program works in Ohio (developed in Iowa) – it is very accurate. If we can get LE LIDAR, it would be a good project for GLRI.
- Cosby – in Iowa they are using this program to save staff time in the field.
- Comment – a couple of counties in Indiana have LIDAR.
- Shine – a couple in Michigan do too, but they will not share it.

##### **b. USDA ARS Research ongoing in St. Joe Watershed and new ideas for new sediment reduction practices and techniques in WLEB area - 15 Min**

Doug Smith, USDA, Agricultural Research Service

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#### **5. Box Lunch**

**1:15 – 1:45**

**6. New Action Items/Next Meeting Date** (Forgette, Riddle)

- *Forgette – outlined the action items – see chart below for new items.*

- *Request Operations Committee follow up in detailing top 5 WLEB projects.*
- *Next Meeting Monday 8 Feb 09, or Tuesday 9 Feb 09 in Toledo, OH*
  - *Next meeting will be held on February 9th – Will find a location in Toledo to hold the meeting.*
  - *Adjourn to tour at 2:00pm.*
  - *NOTE: Meeting was delayed to 14 Apr 2010*

**7. Orientation and Travel to Field Tour**

**8. Field Tour**

*Filed tour to visit Indiana Two Stage Ditches Research and Demonstration Sites (site is short drive from meeting site)*

Hosted by TNC - Larry Clemens and Joe Draper

**9. Adjourn**

Adjourn for home from tour site.

WLEB 22 Sept 2008 – Leadership Committee Meeting – Continuing Action Items

#	Action Item	Person Responsible	Deadline	Status
<b>New Action Items</b>				
1	Update the State of the Basin report to the website when it is available.	Outreach Committee	30 Oct 2009	
2	Follow up on the loss of funding for the gauging program run by the National Center for Water Quality Research at Heidelberg University.	Operations Committee		
3	Come up with a more unified vision and approach to our priorities, both for the basin plan and the GLRI.	Operations Committee	Next leadership meeting	
4	Set up a LIDAR webinar.	Operations Committee		
<b>Continuing Action Items</b>				
1	At annual progress meeting in the spring or fall, review Strategic document.	Davis	01 Jan 10	Brief Feb 2009
2	Submit project ideas to the Projects Database	Project Committee	-	Ongoing
3	Submit events to the web calendar.	Outreach Committee	-	Ongoing
4	Submit articles and events for the WLEB newsletter	Outreach Committee	26 Sep 08	Ongoing
8	Add website links to GLRC database and other databases of relevance	Outreach Committee	31 Oct 09	Ongoing
9	Review and provide information on the staffing needs and the funding sources necessary to meet that need. - Skills, location for staff, number of staff.	Operations Committee	21 Sep 09	Ongoing
<b>Completed Action Items</b>				
1	Plan for January/February 2-day workshop, including Congressional briefing	Operations Committee	28 Feb 09	Complete
2	Revision of website organization, posting of maps and watershed group info for each subwatershed on wleb.org	Outreach Committee	28 Feb 09	Complete
3	Arrange a joint briefing to Congresswoman Kaptur, with USACE, NRCS, USGS, USEPA, and USFWS WLEB leaders so that we present a unified messaging concerning the health of the watershed	Operations Committee	31 May 09	Complete
4	Collect agency input on actions in WLEB Draft management Plan. -OEPA & ODNR have been granted two extra weeks to respond.	Operations Committee	20 Mar 09	Complete
5	Development of Strategic Plan tracking form – FTP Site – Progress column	Davis	01 Jan 10	Brief Feb 2009

6	Annual needs report	Research Committee	20 Nov 2009	Complete
7	Develop a White Paper to address the key products of the Research & Data Committee for the WLEB Leadership Committee meeting.	Research & Data Committee	21 Sep 09	14 Sep 09 Dick Bartz provided a report that reviewed these items for the group.