



A clean lake reflects well
on all of us.

(final)
ONONDAGA LAKE PARTNERSHIP (OLP)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Annual Review Meeting
October 4, 2010

ATTENDEES

Committee Members Present:

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Stephen H. Bales, Commander, USACE, Buffalo District
Mr. Seth Ausubel, USEPA, Region 2
Mr. Kenneth Lynch, Regional Director, NYSDEC, Region 7
Mr. Charles Silver, Environmental Scientist, NYS Office of the Attorney General
Mr. Andrew Maxwell, Director of Planning and Sustainability, City of Syracuse

Others In Attendance:

Mr. Bj Adigun, Chair, Outreach Committee Chair
Ms. Diane Carlton, NYSDEC, Outreach Committee
Mr. Chris Dere, USEPA, Region 2, Project & Outreach Committees
Mr. Vince Esposito, City of Syracuse, Project Committee
Ms. Kacie Gehl, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Outreach Committee
Ms. Dereth Gance, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Outreach Committee
Mrs. Julie Gorecki, USACE, Buffalo District
Ms. Lynn Greer, USACE, Buffalo District, Outreach Committee
Mr. Bill Kappel, USGS, Project Committee
Mr. Dave Kubek, Central New York Regional Planning Board, Project Committee
Ms. Kathy McGrath, SUNY-ESF, Project Committee
Dr. Edward Michalenko, Onondaga Environmental Institute (OEI)
Ms. Karen Moore, ESF, Outreach Committee
Ms. Mary Jane Peachey, Chair, Project Committee
Ms. Barbara Rivette, Onondaga Historical Association, Outreach Committee
Ms. Lindsay Speer, Office of Joe Heath
Mr. Patrick Sullivan, ASLF, Outreach Committee
Mr. Steven Vriesen, USACE, Buffalo District, Project Committee
Mr. Chris Wiles, Attorney General's Office, Outreach Committee
Ms. Debra Willis, City of Syracuse, Outreach Committee

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. David Coburn, Director, Onondaga County Office of the Environment

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS: The meeting was held on Monday, October 4, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. at the Water Environment Protection Office in Syracuse, New York.

1. OPENING REMARKS: LTC Bales welcomed everyone to this year's Annual Review Meeting.

2. Standing Committee Reports:

a. FFY 2010 Project Committee Objectives: Ms. Peachey reported on the Project Committee's federal fiscal year (FFY) 2010 objectives: Objectives 1 through 10 were reviewed. The Project Committee rated itself as passing the first nine objectives.

Objective No. 5: By September 30, 2010, identify OLP interim project needs, estimated Federal and non-Federal resource requirements and develop a timeline for outstanding tasks. USACE does not have an approved budget for FFY 2011; the current Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA) approved by Congress extends through December 3, 2010. Due to uncertain future funding, the OLP will continue to wrap up existing projects with the remaining funds. Many of the outstanding tasks have been identified in the Onondaga Lake Watershed Progress Assessment and Action Strategies (OLWPAAS).

A discussion was held on FFY2010 **Objective No. 10**, to identify future action items based on the OLWPAAS, development of the three models, Amended Consent Judgment (ACJ) modifications and other major lake improvement projects for OLP involvement; develop a schedule or schedules for OLP Actions. The Project Committee informed the group that the committee has not been able to achieve this objective because some of the models are not complete, while others are just producing outputs.

The Project Committee has not considered any new projects due to the limited resources and agreed to complete ongoing priority projects. While the OLP will not presently be taking on new projects, Mr. Lynch added that projects mandated by the Record of Decision (ROD) and the ACJ include some new projects that may not even have a role for the OLP. Before August 17, 2014, the end of the OLP authorization, the OLP will try to identify agencies that may take on ongoing projects. Mr. Ausubel added that the OLP has the challenge before them to leverage other resources to implement projects that reduce phosphorus. Ms. Peachey thanked the Project Committee members for their dedication in the past year.

ACTION ITEM: The Project Committee will review ongoing OLP projects to ensure USEPA funding is spent by September 30, 2012 and identify agencies that would be interested in completing ongoing projects.

b. FFY 2010 Outreach Committee Objectives: Mr. Adigun reported on the FFY2010 Outreach Committee's objectives. Mr. Adigun added that the objectives for this year included activities/programs as a close-out strategy. Due to uncertainties regarding EPA funding, the Outreach Committee is operating under the assumption of receiving no funding in 2011. The

committee is concentrating on two permanent signage efforts in the watershed: 1) watershed signs on County and State roads to alert residents that they are entering the watershed, and 2) interpretive/educational signs installed at the County and City parks. The Outreach Committee has stepped up efforts through the development of a campaign plan for 2010. The Outreach Committee is also reaching out to Time Warner Cable to partner with their Scientific, Technical, and Educational Program (STEP) to educate students in the community. The future of the OLP website is also being addressed to see if another agency can host and preserve it beyond the end of the OLP. Mr. Ausubel requested that the committee provide a budget for a limited 2011 program to accomplish critical activities.

Mr. Adigun reported that the Outreach Committee rated Objectives 1-8 as passing. Objectives 5,9,10, 11 and 12 include plans from year to year as funding allows.

ACTION ITEM: The Outreach Committee will prepare a list of outreach programs along with a budget for consideration for 2011 funding by their December 2010 committee meeting.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. FFY 2010 Executive Committee Objectives: Mr. Vriesen reviewed the 12 Executive Committee Objectives for FFY2010 and reported that seven out of the 12 were rated as passing. Objective Nos. 7, 8 and 10 will carry over into FFY2011.

Objective No. 3: By June 30, 2010, develop an OLP position and statement regarding contact recreation in Onondaga Creek and assess the need for additional efforts to communicate potential risks to creek users. The Executive Committee has held numerous discussions on contact recreation in Onondaga Creek over the past several months while drafting a statement for public dissemination. The Executive Committee finalized the statement at their September 17, 2010 committee meeting. Although the partners did not meet the June 30, 2010 deadline, the objective was completed to everyone's satisfaction in September 2010. The challenge, however, is getting the word out to those who need to know. In addition to developing a contact recreation message, the OLP will engage the groups that regularly use Onondaga Creek. Ms. Speer has agreed to assist the OLP in providing the contact information of creek user groups.

Objective No. 8: By September 30, 2010, the OLP will ensure that a sustainable funding source and program is available to ensure that sediment input from the mudboils is minimized. The mudboils have been a topic of discussion on a regular basis, especially since the increased mudboil activity in the Rogue mudboil area that is adversely impacting Onondaga Creek. At the request of Mr. Kappel, the Executive Committee authorized the drilling of two mudboil depressurization wells in September to reduce sediment input into Onondaga Creek. It is too soon to evaluate the flow rates to claim success of reducing the sediment loading. The proposal for a diversion channel around the mudboil area is still in the conceptual stage, but funding is the challenge before the OLP. The OLP has not been able to secure a sustainable funding source for the mudboils other than USEPA funds. The partners agreed to carry over this objective into FFY2011 and continue to pursue other resources.

Mr. Kappel asked the Outreach Committee about the effectiveness of their messages in the OLP newsletter. The OLP newsletter is an insert in the *Post Standard* that is distributed to

approximately 85,000 households within the watershed. Ms. Rivette added that the perception of the lake seems to be somewhat improved and not quite as negative as in the past. Mr. Lynch explained that there has historically been apathy among most of the public, but since they are actually seeing work being done, the apathy is changing into interest. Although not everyone agrees with the lake improvement projects, the public seems to know a lot more about what is going on. As a result, there are more local groups hosting events on the lake. There is still more work to be done, but the OLP is headed in the right direction. Mrs. Gorecki thanked both Mr. Adigun and Ms. Peachey for their dedicated service as committee chairs in times of many challenges.

b. OLP USEPA Budget: Mr. Ausubel informed the standing committees that the Executive Committee has a standing monthly agenda item to ensure the Continuing Clean Water Improvements (CCWI) USEPA grants are expended by September 30, 2012 and used effectively. Mr. Ausubel invited the standing committees to set a course to do the same and provide feedback to the partners on setting priorities. Mr. Ausubel reminded all that there is still a \$108,738.00 deficit to be addressed. There are still outstanding issues that may require additional funding, most notably the OEI Administration budget and the proposal for the Onondaga Creek diversion channel. The proposal for the creek diversion channel will not likely begin until early spring if approved. A public meeting will be held in October 2010 on the NEPA process. Mr. Ausubel stressed that recommendations to close the budget gap need to be identified by December 2010 by identifying potential budget cuts in every area, if needed. Mr. Ausubel asked the Project Committee to only fund essential projects, such as the lake model peer review panel and mudboils remediation, that protect the environment and are ready to go. He asked the same of the Outreach Committee to identify priority programs and associated funding for 2011 by December 2010. Mr. Ausubel thanked OEI for their service to the OLP and asked that they also identify cuts in their budget by the end of December. If the choice is to fund the diversion channel, additional cuts will have to be addressed. The OLP will continue to close the gaps where it can.

ACTION ITEM: Project and Outreach Committees will provide a balanced budget for EPA-funded projects by the end of December 2010.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Develop FFY2011 Committee Objectives: Mr. Vriesen drafted a list of 12 Executive Committee objectives for FFY2011 for all to review and comment. It was asked if Honeywell was approached for interest in continued funding of the mudboils. The response was they have not received any assurances to date. There may be potential and the OLP agencies will continue to communicate this issue. Funding for the mudboils is a complex issue and the partners agreed to keep expressing the need as opportunities arise. Ms. Glance added that local foundations and/or private parties may be interested in providing matching funds where needed.

Draft Objective No. 4 was changed to be completed by September 30, 2011 to develop an OLP strategic vision statement. The Outreach Committee has held numerous discussions on what that the OLP message should be. The Executive Committee has also brainstormed a strategic vision for the OLP and beyond its authorization in 2014. A suggestion was offered to develop a vision consistent with all committees' input. After 2014, there will be still be work to be done and it

may be possible to pass along the remaining tasks to the appropriate parties. The OLP will continue to work to identify priorities and who may take them on beyond 2014. The OLP recognizes that there are existing parallel efforts and will coordinate efforts whenever possible. Ms. Willis added that the OLP should focus on developing a mission statement and not a vision statement. Mr. Maxwell agreed that rather than develop a statement, the OLP should develop a plan to preserve its legacy. The OLP efforts will not hopefully stop after 2014, but if the OLP develops a plan along the way, its legacy will live on in another format, provided other agencies take on the mission.

Mr. Ausubel agreed to draft a mission statement and asked the standing committees to develop a scope of work for priority projects. A plan may be clearer for the OLP once the total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for the lake are developed next year. The ROD, the ACJ work, and agricultural environmental management (AEM) projects will continue beyond 2014.

ACTION ITEM: The Executive, Project and Outreach Committees will work together to develop a process and a plan to develop an OLP mission statement.

7. OTHER BUSINESS:

Issues: None

8. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

9. FUTURE MEETINGS: The next OLP Executive Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 30, 2010 at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation office in Syracuse, New York.

10. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Number	Date of Origin	Due Date	Action Officer	Tasking	Status
E09-7	17-Aug-09	17-Sep-10	NYSDEC	Draft/develop OLP position regarding primary contact recreation in the creek.	Complete
E10-3	13-Apr-10	Ongoing	NYSDEC	Project Committee will review OLP projects funded by USEPA grants to ensure completion by September 30, 2012 and recommend agencies to leverage ongoing projects.	Ongoing
E10-4	13-Apr-10	Ongoing	Onondaga County	Outreach Committee is directed to reassess their 2010-11 outreach plan and budget as a close-out strategy to complete tasks to carry on outreach.	Ongoing
E10-6	15-Jun-10	Ongoing	USEPA	Mr. Ausubel/Dere to provide any updates or new information for the USEPA grant budget standing Agenda item to Mr. Vriesen.	Ongoing
E10-7	04-Oct-10	31-Dec-10	Onondaga County, NYSDEC	Project and Outreach Committees will provide a balanced budget for EPA-funded projects by the end of December 2010.	Ongoing
E10-8	04-Oct-10	30-Dec-10	Onondaga County	Provide a budget for a 2011 outreach program to the Executive Committee.	Ongoing