



A clean lake reflects well  
on all of us.

(final)

## ONONDAGA LAKE PARTNERSHIP (OLP)

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2007

#### 1. ATTENDEES

##### Committee Members Present:

LTC John S. Hurley, District Commander, USACE, Buffalo District  
Mr. David Coburn, Director, Onondaga County Office of the Environment  
Alt. for Mr. Nicholas Pirro, Onondaga County Executive)  
Mr. Kenneth Lynch, Regional Director, NYSDEC, Region 7  
Mr. William Owens, Contract Compliance Officer, City of Syracuse  
Alt. for Mayor Matthew Driscoll, City of Syracuse)  
Mr. Seth Ausubel, Chief, Freshwater Protection Branch, USEPA Region 2 (VTC)  
Alt. for Mr. Mario DelVicario, Chief, Community and Ecosystem Branch USEPA Region 2)  
Mr. Charles Silver, Environmental Scientist, NYS Office of the Attorney General

##### Others In Attendance:

Mr. Christopher Dere, Onondaga Lake Program Manager, USEPA Region 2 (VTC)  
Mr. Steven Vriesen, OLP Program Manager, USACE, Buffalo District  
Ms. Susan Miller, Onondaga County, Outreach Committee Chair  
Ms. Julie Zielinski, OLP Recording Secretary, USACE, Buffalo District  
Ms. Lindsay Speer, Office of Joseph J. Heath, Onondaga Nation General Counsel

##### Committee Members Absent:

None

2. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS: The meeting was held on Monday, March 26, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.
3. AGENDA ITEMS: An Agenda was provided which included the following items:

Opening Remarks: LTC Hurley welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- a. Executive Session: An Executive Session was held from 10:20 a.m through 10:40 a.m.
- b. Approval of the December 19, 2006 minutes: The December 19, 2006 minutes were approved unanimously.

Approval of the February 23, 2007 minutes: The February 23, 2007 minutes were unanimously approved with the following amendments: Page two, subparagraph c., delete the third sentence and reword the fourth to read, "Based on information from Don Hughes, bacteria from Onondaga Creek is not solely a CSO issue." Mr. Lynch will discuss the accompanying issues further with the Department of Health (DOH). Page two, subparagraph a., 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet, change "bi-annual" to "semi-annual".

- b. Action Items: Ms. Zielinski will revise the list as appropriate. Action Item E07-6 – Mr. Lynch will discuss health issues associated with contact with Onondaga Creek after storm overflows with the Department of Health (DOH) on the assessment of existing bacteria, the cause, and the prevention.
4. Correspondence: Ms. Zielinski reported that USACE received neither incoming nor outgoing correspondence this month.
5. Standing Committee Reports:
  - a. Outreach Committee: Ms. Miller reported on the Outreach Committee meeting on March 21, 2007:

The following key items were discussed:

- Transition of Chair, from Mr. Ausubel to Ms. Miller for a two-year term.
- Approved expenditure of \$4,900.00 for re-design to update the look of the OLP website.
- Speakers Bureau is getting off to a great start. The OLP has received 11 speakers bureau requests to date.
- Onondaga County completed production of a video regarding urban best management practices (BMPs) funded in part through the USACE Public Education/Outreach Grant #4.
- Onondaga Creek Sub-basin Conceptual Revitalization Plan Project - A stakeholder meeting was held on March 20, 2007 at the MOST. Approximately 100 stakeholders attended the 7:00 a.m. meeting.
- OLP Mini grants - The Outreach Committee decided to release announcements for the OLP mini grants on a semi-annual basis (July 1, December 1) to gain more interest.
- Onondaga Lake Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 2, 2007.
- OLP Tabloid - The next tabloid edition will be distributed prior to Onondaga Lake Day.
- Discussion on EcoLogic, LLC draft lake visioning report.

(b) Project Committee: Mr. Vriesen reported on the Project Committee Meeting on March 15, 2007.

Highlights from the meeting were as follows:

- Reviewed a table of compiled comments on the EcoLogic, LLC draft lake visioning report. OEI was directed to request completion of an annotated bibliography as specified in the technical scope of services. The Project Committee passed a motion stating that they had completed review of the draft report, had generated comments and questions, anticipate that the comments and questions can be readily and acceptably addressed, and determined that the report is consistent with the intent of the OLP, the RFP and the scope of work.
- FFY2007 OLP Project List - Reviewed and prioritized the OLP project proposals on the recommended project list. The funding needs of ongoing projects were given consideration while reviewing and prioritizing the FFY2007 list of projects.
- In response to an Executive Committee action item, Mr. Kappel from USGS explained to the Project Committee that maintenance and closure of the mudboils is subject to fulfilling legal and contractual requirements established when work at the mudboil area began in the early 1990's. If such action is taken, the mudboils would, in his opinion, quickly return to pre-1993 sediment discharge conditions of approximately 30 tons/day to Onondaga Creek. Mr. Kappel also briefed the committee on the status of ongoing studies in the Tully Valley brine fields where USGS is attempting to better understand the hydrogeology of the mudboils.
- Discussed the proposed watershed management strategy with respect to impending ACJ milestone dates. USEPA has proposed to develop plans for the strategic areas that are identified in the 1993 OLMP and appending them to the OLMP. The committee agreed that further discussion was needed to better understand the proposed approach, what the specific deliverables would be, how this would be accomplished, and how this strategy is different than the Watershed Management Study. Mr. Coburn agreed to organize a meeting of the Partner members to continue discussions on these issues.
- Discussed a memorandum from QEA documenting efforts to acquire publicly funded Onondaga Lake monitoring and water quality process study data from UFI. QEA has not and does not expect to receive the process study data and has therefore requested to develop the relevant information with project funds that were specifically approved to acquire this data. A Motion was passed to approve the action.
- Received a monthly update from OEI describing their OLP-related activities.

#### 6. Unfinished Business:

a. EcoLogic, LLC Draft Vision Project: Mr. Vriesen explained that he compiled all the standing committee comments and listed each by agency. Approximately half of the comments reflected uncertainty as to whose opinions were stated, those of EcoLogic or those of the interviewees. The majority of the remaining comments were merely of a typographic nature. The Project Committee passed a Motion stating that the report is consistent with the OLP intent and the RFP's Technical Scope of Services. Mr. Lynch

suggested that that it would be in the best interest of the OLP to submit the comments to EcoLogic, and to request that EcoLogic re-submit the draft revised version to the Executive Committee for a final decision on the public roll-out plan. Mr. Coburn added that Onondaga County has recommended that the final report include a statement that clarifies that the opinions stated throughout the report are those of EcoLogic, and not those of the OLP. The partners discussed the need to go back out and ask the same sampling group to confirm that this is what EcoLogic heard. It is also unclear whether or not EcoLogic intends to go back out to different groups and questioned if there are records of those interviewed. Although clearly stated in the SOW, the same group will not be interviewed again. Mr. Owens stated he does not see the utility of questioning different groups than those originally interviewed. The questions on the survey focused on the issue of perception rather than a community vision. The partners agreed that the report should emphasize that the vision put forth is that of the community and it will assist the OLP as a planning tool in developing future plans.

Mr. Silver recommended that an additional comment be added to the list regarding the statement in the report addressing cold water fisheries. The report states that restoration of a cold water fish community does not appear to be realistic for a sustainable future condition. This statement runs the risk of being misconstrued or misinterpreted. Mr. Silver recommended deleting the last sentence in paragraph three and the first sentence in paragraph four of Chapter 4, page 4-4. The partners agreed with his recommendation. Mr. Silver's comment will be added to the list of comments.

The Executive Committee recommended the following Motion. The Motion was moved by Mr. Lynch, seconded by Mr. Coburn and approved unanimously.

**MOTION:** The OLP directs the Project Committee Chair to submit the OLP consolidated list of comments, as amended, to OEI and request that EcoLogic respond to all comments and provide the revised draft report to the Executive Committee for future guidance.

b. Project Committee Chair Assignment:

Project Committee Chair: Mr. Lynch informed the partners that the position of the Project Committee Chair remains under discussion at NYSDEC. LTC Hurley agreed that USACE would continue to Chair the Project Committee for the short term.

7. New Business:

FFY2007 Recommended Projects: Mr. Vriesen reviewed each of the proposals on the FFY2007 OLP project list by rank for further explanations and/or clarification.

FY07-5 OLP Grant Researcher, Coordinator, and Writer: This proposal has been discussed in detail by the Project Committee and Resource Sub-committee. Mr. Vriesen explained that the proposal cannot be funded with USACE funds. The grant writer could be funded with USEPA prior year funds but grants could only be sought for approved projects within the USEPA 05-06 work plan. The proposal would also be eligible for new USEPA funds, but it is unlikely that USEPA will receive funds for Onondaga Lake in FFY2007. Funding this proposal under the Outreach Support Services project would most likely require a

modification to the contract and may require that the RFP be re-advertised. Another option discussed was the Project Support Services project but that project scope is of a technical and scientific in nature and does not qualify. Therefore, the project has been placed on-hold. USEPA will continue to obtain further guidance on the eligibility of using USEPA unassigned prior year funds.

FY07-2 – Tully Valley Mudboil Area, Remediation Monitoring and Control: The Executive Committee agreed that it is the goal of the OLP to support this project. However, Mr. Ausubel explained that USEPA has historically funded the mudboil activities. Since future USEPA funding is uncertain and available funds are limited, Mr. Ausubel recommended that the OLP set a goal to recommend an alternative funding mechanism for the mudboil program. The mudboil program is presently funded through September 2008. Mr. Lynch added that the OLP needs to find a way to continue the maintenance program and additional work but also needs to find a long term solution. Mr. Kappel is studying the causes of the mudboils but no direct link to date has been made to any source. Long-term funding options remain uncertain. The maintenance program is presently funded at approximately \$250k annually which limits USEPA in funding other projects. The Executive Committee recognizes the need to establish a fund to draw from to continue the mudboil program but realize that the options are limited.

The following Motion was moved by Mr. Coburn, seconded by Mr. Lynch and approved unanimously.

MOTION: The Executive Committee approves the FFY2007 OLP Recommended Project List as amended.

It was suggested to move the Outreach Committee Budget (FY05-10) and Outreach Committee Support Services (FY05-11) line items to the Future Projects with Potential Funding Needs Category. USACE will amend the FFY2007 project list and prepare a draft OLP Resolution to approve the FFY2007 OLP Project list at the next Executive Committee meeting.

8. Other Business:

- a. Syracuse Office of Creek Development Update: None to report.
- b. Issues: None to report.

9. Public Comment: No public comment.

10. ADJOURN: The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 27, 2007 at the NYSDEC office in Syracuse, New York at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Number	Date of Origin	Due Date	Action Officer	Tasking	Status
E07-6	16-Jan-07	27-Apr-07	Lynch	Contact the State Department of Health for further information on the health risks associated with human contact with Onondaga Creek.	In-Progress
E07-7	16-Jan-07	27-Apr-07	Lynch	Provide a recommendation for Project Committee Chair.	In-Progress
E07-8	26-Mar-07	27-Apr-07	USACE	Prepare resolution to formally approve the FFY2007 OLP Project list for vote at the April committee meeting.	In-progress