



Help Lake Huron and Bring Funding to Your Community: Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Community Meetings

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Detroit District is leading a watershed reconnaissance study for the WLHB and we need your input and local knowledge. We know what the past and current planning documents say about the problems around Lake Huron, but we want to hear from local officials, community organizations, and residents. What are the problems you see around Lake Huron and what solutions will work in your community? If you can tell us about the problems and opportunities, we can help find the funding to make the solutions happen.

WLHB Community Meeting Schedule

Please join the USACE and other concerned stakeholders at a community meeting in your area.

Wednesday, August 17, 2011

9:00 am – 11:00 am: Lake Superior State University Cisler Center, Anchor Room, 650 W. Easterday Avenue, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783 (*focus: Chippewa and Mackinaw Counties*)

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm: Cheboygan Public Library, 100 S. Bailey Street, Cheboygan, MI 49721 (*focus: Cheboygan and Presque Isle Counties*)

Thursday, August 18, 2011

9:00 am – 11:00 am: Alpena Community College, Donald Newport Center Building, Room 104, 665 Johnson Street, Alpena, MI 49707 (*focus: Alpena and Alcona Counties*)

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm: East Tawas Community Center, Multi-Purpose Room, 760 Newman Street, East Tawas, MI 48730 (*focus: Arenac and Iosco Counties*)

Tuesday, August 23, 2011

9:00 am – 11:00 am: Alice and Jack Wirt Public Library, Community Meeting Room, 500 Center Avenue, Bay City, MI 48708 (*focus: Bay County*)

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm: Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, Lounge, 1710 W. Street Andrews, Midland, MI 48640 (*focus: Midland County*)

Wednesday, August 24, 2011

9:00 am – 11:00 am: Port Austin Visitor's Center, 17 W. State Street, Port Austin, MI 48467 (*focus: Huron and Tuscola Counties*)

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm: Bark Shanty Community Center, 20 N. Ridge Street, Port Sanilac, MI 48469 (*focus: Sanilac and St. Clair Counties*)

If you have questions about these meetings, please contact Kellie DuBay, the WLHB project outreach specialist, at kellie.dubay@tetrattech.com or by phone at 216-861-2950, ext. 104.

Community Meeting Agenda

- What Is a Watershed Reconnaissance Study and What Does It Mean for the WLHB?
- Existing Plans and Projects in the WLHB
- Interactive Session: Identifying WLHB Problems, Projects, and Partners in Your County
- Project Schedule and Next Steps



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Photos courtesy USEPA/GLNPO, NOAA/OER, and USGS.

What Is a Watershed Reconnaissance Study?

Authorized by Section 102 of the River and Harbor Act of 1966, the WLHB watershed reconnaissance study is the first phase of a larger USACE planning process. It is intended to identify impairment areas and determine if there is both federal interest and local support for conducting more detailed feasibility studies in the future. Reconnaissance studies are 100 percent federally funded. Feasibility studies are cost-shared efforts that use 50 percent federal funding and 50 percent non-federal funding, with the provision that the non-federal share may be a combination of funds and credit for eligible in-kind services necessary to complete the study. Through the watershed reconnaissance study process, USACE hopes to identify interested non-federal cost-share partners in the WLHB.



Getting to Know the Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Project Area

- Includes the 14 coastal counties in Michigan
- Approximately 8,700 square miles
- Two Areas of Concern (AOCs): the Saginaw River/Saginaw Bay and the St. Mary's River
- Problems include polluted stormwater runoff, combined sewer overflows, habitat loss, natural drainage modifications

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Finding and Funding New Opportunities to Restore the Western Lake Huron Basin

Getting to Know the Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB)

- Includes 22 counties and 20 watersheds in Michigan (the 15 coastal counties are the focus of the Corps' WLHB watershed reconnaissance study)
- Drainage basin of approximately 8,700 square miles
- Two Areas of Concern (AOCs): the Saginaw River/Saginaw Bay and the St. Marys River
- Problems include polluted stormwater runoff, combined sewer overflows, habitat loss, natural drainage modifications

The Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) is a scenic portion of eastern Michigan that supports agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, outdoor recreation, and provides habitat for wildlife. While the historical industrial and municipal sources of pollution that caused environmental problems either no longer exist or have been effectively addressed, other factors continue to threaten the health of the WLHB—polluted stormwater runoff, combined sewer overflows, habitat loss and modifications to natural drainage. Stakeholders throughout the WLHB are developing plans and conducting studies to address these remaining challenges. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Detroit District is leading a watershed reconnaissance study for the WLHB that will compile and review past and ongoing planning efforts and work with WLHB stakeholders to identify potential solutions.

What Is a Watershed Reconnaissance Study?

The Western Lake Huron watershed reconnaissance study is authorized by Section 102 of the River and Harbor Act of 1966. A watershed reconnaissance study is the first phase of a larger Corps planning process. It is intended to help the Corps identify impairment areas and determine if there is both federal interest and local support for conducting more detailed feasibility studies in the future. Reconnaissance studies are 100 percent federally funded. Feasibility studies are cost-shared efforts that use 50 percent federal funding and 50 percent non-federal funding, with the provision that the non-federal share may be a combination of funds and credit for eligible in-kind services necessary to complete the study. Through the watershed reconnaissance study process, the Corps hopes to identify interested non-federal cost-share partners in the WLHB.

The Corps Detroit District has contracted Tetra Tech to support the WLHB watershed



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Photos courtesy USEPA/GLNPO, NOAA/OER, and USGS.

reconnaissance study. This support includes compiling and reviewing past and ongoing studies and reports relevant to the WLHB, including two Lake Huron Areas of Concern—the Saginaw Bay and St. Marys River. This information, in addition to watershed stakeholder input, will serve as the foundation for the development of a watershed reconnaissance study report.

How Can Stakeholders Participate?

Stakeholder participation is essential to the success of the WLHB watershed reconnaissance study process. Throughout the course of the project, the Corps Detroit District and Tetra Tech are planning nine stakeholder meetings throughout the WLHB. The first of these nine meetings will focus on Technical Stakeholders, including federal, state, tribal, and academia, took place in July 2011. The remaining eight stakeholder meetings, focusing on obtaining input from local agencies, organizations, and residents, are scheduled for August 2011.

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If you have questions about these meetings, please contact Kellie DuBay, the WLHB project outreach specialist, at kellie.dubay@tetrattech.com or by phone at 216-861-2950, ext. 104.

What's In a Section 905(b) Watershed Reconnaissance Report?

- ➔ Study Authority/Purpose
- ➔ Project Location/Congressional District
- ➔ Prior Studies & Reports/Existing Projects
- ➔ Plan Formulation
- ➔ Federal Interest
- ➔ Preliminary Financial Analysis
- ➔ Summary of Feasibility Assumptions
- ➔ Feasibility Milestones
- ➔ Feasibility Costs
- ➔ Recommendations
- ➔ Issues Affecting Feasibility Phase
- ➔ Views of Other Agencies

Corps Detroit District Project Contacts

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What is a Watershed Reconnaissance Study and What Does it Mean to the Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB)?

Community Meetings
August 2011



US Army Corps of Engineers
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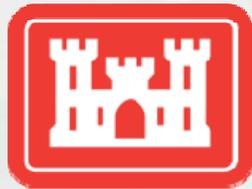
What We'll Cover

- Overview of the WLHB watershed reconnaissance study
 - ▶ Team
 - ▶ Geographic scope
 - ▶ Purpose
 - ▶ Study tasks and report contents
- How the process works
- Example projects and outcomes





Western Lake Huron Basin Project Team



US Army Corps of Engineers –
Detroit District

Tetra Tech
(Public Outreach and
Technical Support)

Western Lake Huron Basin Stakeholders



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WLHB Project Area



- 13 coastal counties
- 2 inland counties
- Saginaw River/Bay AOC
- St. Marys River AOC
- Heavily forested
- Sparsely populated



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WLHB Watershed Reconnaissance Study Purpose

- Create a “wish list” of projects that fall into organizing framework
- Determine interest in proceeding to Feasibility Studies with eligible non-federal cost-share partners



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WLHB Watershed Reconnaissance Study Outcomes

- Determine water resource problem(s)
- Define the Federal Interest (FI)
- Assess the level of interest and support from non-Federal entities – identify willing partners
- Prepare Project Management Plan (PMP) and Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) if above is established





WLHB Watershed Reconnaissance Study Contents

- General identification of watershed problems, potential partners, proposed projects
- Identify opportunities for multiple benefits
- Outline tasks for feasibility study
- Estimated schedule of feasibility study





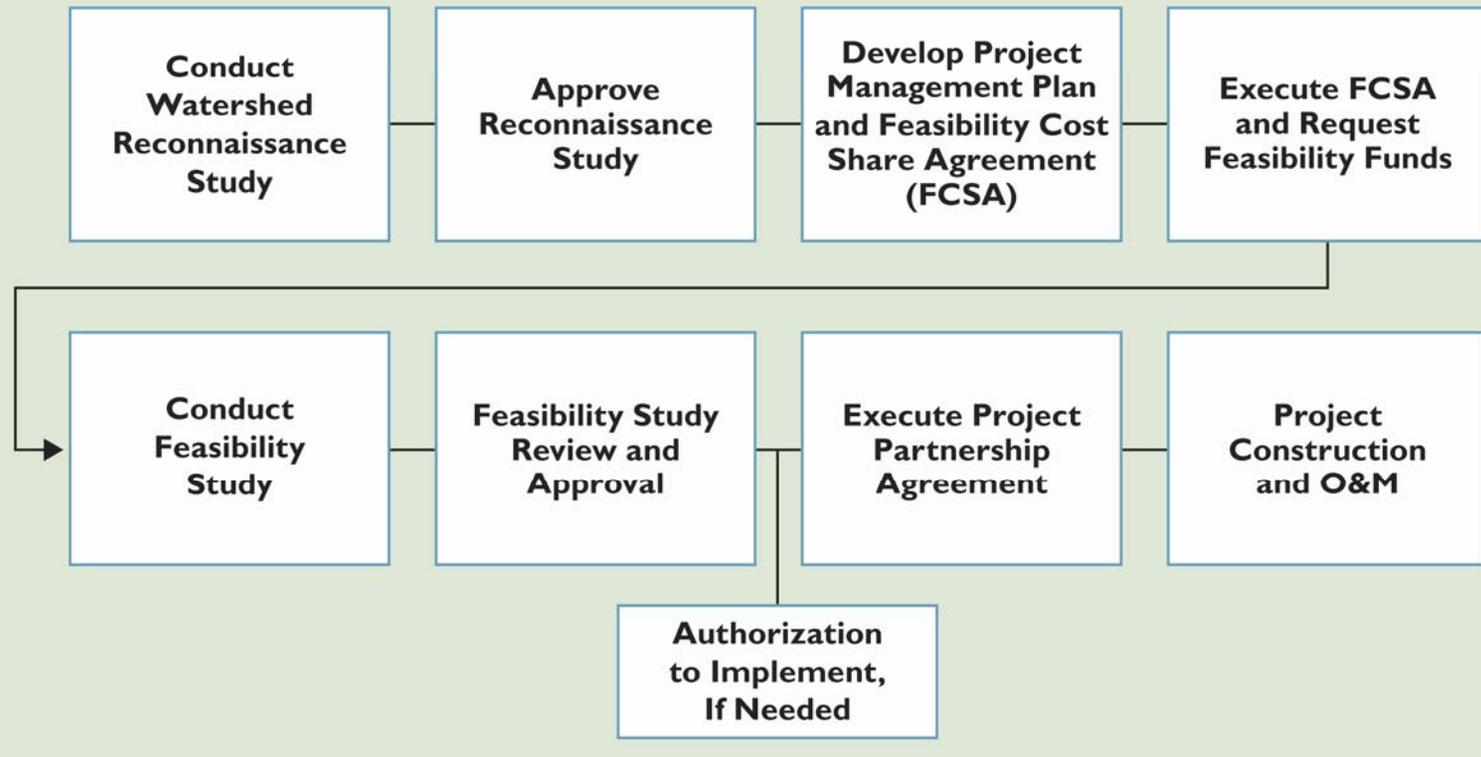
What the Corps Needs to Conduct the WLHB Study Follow-On Projects

- Authorization
- Appropriation
- Local participation that will lead to non-federal cost share partners for future feasibility studies





Corps Planning Process





Authorization

- Legislation that enables an agency to perform a specific task (i.e. provides permission)
- Continuing Authority Program that provides blanket authorization for certain types of projects





Authorization for WLHB Study

- Section 102 - 1966 River and Harbor Act

“Sec. 102 – The Secretary of the Army is hereby authorized and directed to cause (develop) surveys (studies) to be made at the following localities, and subject to all applicable provisions of Section 110 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1950:

Great Lakes, particularly Lake Ontario and Lake Erie, in connection with water supply, pollution abatement, navigation, flood control, hydroelectric power, and related water resources development and control.”





Appropriation

- Legislation that directs the levels of funds available to an agency for a fiscal year





Appropriation for WLHB Study

- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative
 - ▶ through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - ▶ appropriations for fiscal year 2010 and 2011



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Potential Non-Federal Cost Share Partners

- States



- Local governments



- Indian tribes



- Non-profit organizations
(Sections 1135, 206, 204)





Non-Federal Sponsors Must Be Able To:

- Generate Revenue
- Acquire Real Estate
- Save and Hold the Government Harmless
- Maintain project with 100% local funds





Cost-Sharing Considerations

- Project percentage break-outs can vary
 - ▶ 65 /35
 - ▶ 75/25
- Match can be both cash and in-kind services, but requires a 5 percent cash minimum



Potential Projects

- Navigation
- Flood Damage Reduction
- Ecosystem Restoration
- Shoreline or Streambank Protection
- Water Quality Enhancement
- Local Action Plans (i.e. Rain Barrels, Rain Gardens, Ordinance Changes, etc.)



Example Watershed Study Outcomes

The example projects listed below have been initiated because of Great Lakes Basin watershed studies:

- Blanchard River (Ohio) Watershed study for Flood Risk Management and Ecosystem Restoration.
- Lower Maumee Watershed study – Ecosystem and Flood Reduction.
- Low-head dam removals on Swan Creek in Toledo.
- Ottawa River Environmental Dredging Project.
- Removal of the Ballville Dam on the Sandusky River
- Modeling sources of non-point source pollution in Blanchard and Upper Auglaize watersheds.



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Information

If you want to provide additional input regarding this study, please contact the USACE Project Manager at:

email: WesternLakeHuronBasin-PM@usace.army.mil

Additional Information and Community Meeting presentations can be found at the following web pages:

- USACE Detroit District Home Page:

<http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/>

- Western Lake Huron Basin Study Web Page:

http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/kd/go.cfm?destination=Page&Pge_ID=2417



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Questions ?





Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Alpena Community Meeting Summary Thursday, August 18, 2011 • 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

1. Alpena Harbor
 - a. Channel to harbor is contributing sediment and tannic water to the harbor
 - b. Culverts are needed under the break wall in order to flush system
2. Sediment
 - a. North-East Michigan Integrated Assessment documents sediment sources
 - b. Huron Pines inventory
3. US 23 Heritage Route
 - a. Focus on viewsheds
 - b. Management plan lists priority projects
(<http://heritageroute.com/ManagementPlan/index.htm>)
4. Small Dam Assessment
 - a. Conducted by Huron Pines; work in progress
 - b. Inventory only (no prioritization)
5. Starlight Beach – Beach closings
 - a. Poor water quality due to *E.coli*, muck, sludge
 - b. Stormwater from Alpena is an issue
 - c. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program (IDDEP) has not been undertaken
 - d. Need stormwater master plan
6. La Farge Plant (wood pulp)
 - a. Mercury (although currently meeting EPA requirements)
 - b. Silt affecting Bell River/Harbor
 - c. CDK dust pile (problem area)
 - d. Flooding
7. Need study that focuses on small Lake Huron tributaries in the NEMCOG planning area
8. Manage tributaries with karst features

- a. Potentially expand Michigan Karst Conservancy Program which currently includes Thunder Bay Karst Preserve
 - b. Private land ownership issues could be obstacle
9. Lake Essau – Dolomite quarry (LeFarge)
- a. Is there a legal lake level?
 - b. Side effect of mining is the lowering of the lake level
 - c. LeFarge has agreed to capture and return water to lake but what about after the mine is abandoned (in 10 to 15 yrs).
 - d. Lake Essau level affect Grand Lake.
10. Phragmites
- a. Black River
 - b. Phelan Creek to Cheboygan
 - c. Huron Pines has mapped problem areas
 - d. Treated 80 sites – 80 – 100K a year
 - e. Need early detection and methods for land owners to address the problem
 - f. AmeriCorps SWAT program
 - i. Phragmites and other invasives (e.g., Buckthorne)
 - ii. Mouth of the Thunder Bay River
 - iii. Need to develop a sustainable way to deliver programs
 - g. Need to expand program
 - h. MDOT funding to spray phragmites been eliminated in past couple years
11. Van Etten Creek – Nutrient loading (non attainment)
12. Climate change impacts
- a. Marine Sanctuary affected
 - b. Need policy
13. Wolverine powerplant
- a. Potentially located in Rogers City
 - b. Concerned about potential impacts associated if it goes through
14. Bell River/Harbor
- a. Silt from mining
 - b. Clogged with invasives
15. Alpena Township
- a. Significant flooding concerns in Fletcher Creek and Sunset Lake areas
 - b. Runoff from north and west drains into Alpena Township
 - c. Worried about redirecting runoff and causing downstream impacts
 - d. Some ordinances in place, but adequately addressing issue because development is already there (need to retrofit)

- e. Grant application for potential projects completed by Alpena Township; could be used to create a future GLRI type grant
 - f. Marie Twite is primary point of contact
16. MDOT right of way on US 23
- a. Significant drainage issues
 - b. Low lots experiencing flooding
 - c. Having a difficult time finding people to accept the runoff
 - d. MDOT contacted to address drainage issues; limited opportunities for outlets
17. Alcona drainage issues
- a. No drain commission
 - b. Lack of coordination at county level to address drainage issues
 - c. Need ordinance and knowledgeable entity to handle drainage issues

Identified Significant Resources

Au Sable River
Pigeon River
Rifle River

Identified Priorities

- Phragmites
- Drainage/flooding

Identified Additional Stakeholders

Alpena Community Meeting Participants

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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Bay City Community Meeting Summary Tuesday, August 23, 2011 • 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

1. E. coli issues
 - a. Expand county septic system revolving loan fund
 - i. Two-step process: 1) identify then 2) remediate/educate
 - ii. Currently have small amount in test phase in Bay County
 - iii. Arenac, Huron, and Tuscola Counties are also interested
 - iv. Would involve changes to ordinances and mapping
 - v. Joel Strasz at Bay County Health Department or Laura Ogar at Bay County Environmental Department as points of contact
 - b. State sanitary code needs to be developed
 - c. Ensure all marinas have boat waste system pump out
 - d. SVSU e.coli study underway
 - e. Need assistance in distinguishing sources of e.coli to avoid beach closures due to wildlife e.coli

2. Saginaw Bay Channel
 - a. Need Corps' assistance on pier/navigational issues
 - b. Other sources of funding and a local sponsor are available (Laura Ogar, Bay County)

3. Kawkawlin River
 - a. Dredge for navigation into Saginaw Bay and four miles upstream (from Euclid Rd to M-13 at Kawkawlin Park) to increase flow for flood purposes
 - i. Spring backflow of particular concern
 - ii. Causes sedimentation/erosion of farm fields; as flood waters recede, deposits sediment downstream and into mouth of the Saginaw Bay
 - iii. Institutional issues about how the County Drain Commissioner looks at it (i.e., not a drain)
 - iv. Need to go to North and South Branch
 - v. Important for Walleye spawning
 - b. Install sediment traps
 - c. Promote 10 foot filter strips for farmers

- d. Refer to white paper in Kawkawlin River Watershed Management Plan written by the Kawkawlin River Watershed POA entitled "Restoration of Kawkawlin River from N. Euclid to Kawkawlin Park"
4. Saganing Creek
- a. No/minimal flow
 - b. High sedimentation
 - c. High TDS and TSS
 - d. Complete die off of all plant life
 - e. DO below WQS
 - f. No longer supports fishery
 - g. Has tribal interest for potential projects (Cary Schalm Paquette)
5. Bay City State Park
- a. Lagoon
 - i. Restore channel to pre 1974
 - ii. Want to restore fish habitat
 - b. Beach
 - i. Restore beach for recreation
 - ii. Pilot equipment for muck removal
 - iii. Address phragmites problem (see #6 below)
6. Muck
- a. Affects the entire shoreline
 - b. Rules do not allow for muck removal
 - c. Source of muck focus needs to shift to allow removal
 - d. Allow people with private property to control
 - e. Areas and timing associated with muck are similar
 - f. Need a study to help legislation to change
 - g. Causing extension of beaches and muck; more shoreline holds more muck
7. Invasive Species Control
- a. Saginaw Chippewa Tribe and Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy Project
 - i. Focus on coastal property
 - ii. Need for management and reseeding
 - iii. Potential long-term management through organizations that have land ownership of 100+ acres
 - iv. Species would include phragmites, purple loosestrife, emerald ash borer, autumn olive, honey suckle
 - b. Phragmites Management
 - i. Focus on coordination/prioritization
 - ii. Identified in numerous places

1. Throughout shoreline
 2. Along Cheboyganing Creek (Portsmouth Township)
 - iii. Saginaw Bay WIN funded a Pinconning Nature Preserve project that was successful, but phragmites is on the other side of the lake
 - iv. Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy submitted a GLRI grant to do technical mapping
 - v. Risk Assessment and Removal study submitted to GLRI, but not funded (unclear if this is related to the Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy GLRI grant application mentioned above; appeared on two different maps/groups)
 - vi. Need to provide more coordinated/comprehensive landowner education and assistance (e.g., cost-share project approach)
 1. Ducks Unlimited doing some of this
 2. One idea is to put it in landowners' taxes and then pay for informed contractor to do it
 3. In Cass River, a small team going house-to-house to inform landowners they have a problem and obtain approval to clear it
 - c. Asian Carp
8. Toxics/dioxins
 - a. Install sediment traps Tittabawassee/Saginaw Rivers
 - b. Goal is to catch migrating dioxins and other toxics before entering Saginaw Bay/Lake Huron
9. Wet Weather Issues
 - a. Flooding
 - i. Kawkawlin River
 - ii. Flood gates at Lincoln Rd. in Portsmouth Township
 - b. Combined Sewer Overflows
 - i. Saginaw
 - ii. Bay City
 - c. Rain barrels
 - i. Promoted by the Bangor Township Green Team
 - ii. Promote throughout watershed
 - d. Stormwater Master Plans for non-MS4 communities
10. Dam Removal
 - a. Midland County (Dow dam)
 - i. This is the "holy grail" of dams
 - ii. The dam is necessary to maintain a head of water
 - iii. Removal would help with fish passage
 - iv. Dow is hesitant to do anything until the dioxin settlement

- b. Saginaw County (Frankenmuth – ongoing)
 - i. Saginaw Bay WIN has provided match for this project
 - ii. There is concern about working with the Corps and the time associated; lots of steps to get reviews/approvals
 - iii. Corps appeared to have limited knowledge of how to create a fish ramp
 - iv. First time locals had experience working with Corps; affects perception for future projects
- c. Genessee County (Hamilton dam on the Flint River)
- d. Saginaw Bay WIN has a prioritized list of dams/fish passage projects on their website
- e. Need to consider the social component (recreational uses behind the dam) when considering dam removal

11. Wetland restoration

- a. Crow Island (along with phragmites control)
- b. Saginaw Bay Land Conservancy study of shoreline wetlands

12. Other Issues

- a. Phosphorus loads from Huron and Tuscola counties that enter the Saginaw Bay
- b. Mercury from coal ash discharged from coal-fired plants where Saginaw River enters the Bay
- c. Land application of fertilizers/sludge
- d. Re-establish road end access to Saginaw Bay at the end of State Rd.

Other Stakeholder Input

Laura Ogar, Director of Bay County Environmental Affairs and Community Development, provided additional input via email on August 30, 2011

1.) Impaired beach quality

A) beach closings due to bacteria - so we need funding for strategic source investigations and source control ..keeping in mind the SBCI Combined Sewage Overflow Workgroup reviewed the data from CSO discharges and we have been able to rule out CSO's as major sources of bacteria.

B) people avoiding the beach due to heavy accumulations of muck and its associated health and safety and odors problem - so we need funding to focus on muck removal on the beaches and in the nearshore swimming zone.

C) phragmites - the invasive weed growing 12' tall that blocks visual access to the bay, takes over and destroys wildlife/waterfowl habitat, and chokes off physical access to the bay- so we need funding support for treatment and control of dense stands of this invasive weed.

2) Inadequate access points to the bay

A) we have no restaurant or bay-front pier for sitting, viewing or fishing on the bay, no handicapped access to the shoreline in our 37 miles of shoreline, so we need funding to re-establish the Wenona Park bay-front park and public promenade with a bay-front restaurant within close proximity to the Bay City urbanized area.

B) we have inadequate public access points, and we need funding to help develop the limited sites we have and for additional sites.

Identified Significant Resources

Shoreline/beaches

Identified Priorities

Muck removal/management

E.coli source identification and control/septic system management

Phragmites management

Flooding in the Kawkawlin River watershed

Identified Additional Stakeholders

Saginaw County stakeholders

Bay City Community Meeting Participants

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Ernie Krygrer, County Commission and Save Our
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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Cheboygan Community Meeting Summary Wednesday, August 17, 2011 • 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

Cheboygan County Focus

1. Cheboygan Port Authority
 - a. Want to expand the Port to be a commercial center
 - b. Need to dredge from 21 ft to 23 ft (on average)
 - c. Targeting 760 – 1000 ft. boats
 - d. U.S. Oil is interested in having a port
 - e. No other competing Port in lower MI
 - f. Port Authority is 501c3
 - i. It can charge for services, raise revenue.
 - g. Need to purchase land
 - h. Business and jobs are the target
 - i. Working with Cheboygan Economic Development
 - i. Support businesses exist
 - i. De Rossa boat repair with a dry dock
 - j. County owns marina adjacent to proposed port
 - k. Ice breaker Mackinac is local attraction too
2. Road Stream Crossings
 - a. Undersized pipes
 - b. Too steep/too short
 - c. Perched culvert
 - d. Flooding
 - e. Huron Pines RC&D has inventory and ratings for each
 - f. Implementation of Better Back Roads activities
3. Paper dam in Cheboygan may need fish passage

Presque Isle County Focus

1. Ocqueoc River Watershed
 - a. Under-utilized fishery due to erosion
 - b. Breakwall is needed at the mouth of the Ocqueoc River to help with erosion issues

- i. Property acquisition for this type of project could be an issue b/c of private landownership
 - ii. MI DNR would be logical cost-share partner due to investment in launch infrastructure
 - c. Conducting water quality monitoring as part of planning phase for Atlantic salmon
 - d. Silver Creek Super Project led by the Huron Pines to address road-stream crossings to reduce sedimentation and improve fish passage; to be completed December 2011 (<http://www.huronpines.org/project/93>)
- 2. Trout River dam
 - a. Need to be rebuilt because it is blocking lamprey
 - b. If it goes, huge sediment load behind it
 - c. Owned by the Presque Isle Conservation District
 - d. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Great Lakes Fisheries Commission might have vested interest
- 3. Thompson Harbor State Park
 - a. Recreational plan in progress that might contain relevant information (Action: Tt to obtain from MI DEQ)
- 4. Septics an issue due to age and lot size, although health department appears to be on top of the issue
- 5. Invasive species concerns
 - a. Phragmites starting to appear along shoreline according to work done by Presque Isle Conservation District and Huron Pines
 - b. Asian carp from Lake Michigan
- 6. Rockport
 - a. Unimproved recreational access
 - b. Potential tribal issues
- 7. Alpena wants to extend the marine sanctuary to extend up to Presque Isle
- 8. Wolverine Cooperative Powerplant in Rogers City
 - a. potentially will go through; to be built in lime quarry
 - b. will include 1,000 ft dock that might involve Corps to do more dredging
 - c. could put more pressure on resources and could increase demand for recreation and access

Identified Significant Resources

- Ocqueoc River watershed (largest waterfall in the Lower Peninsula)

Identified Priorities

- Trout River dam rehabilitation

Identified Additional Stakeholders

- Tip of the Mitt
- Burt Lake Preservation Association
- County commissioners
- Rogers City representatives

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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study East Tawas Community Meeting Summary

Thursday, August 18, 2011 • 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

1. Tawas River
 - a. Milfoil
 - b. Lots of sand/sedimentation in river
 - c. Affecting habitat and wildlife
 - d. Decline in fishing
 - e. Is it a county drain?

2. Pine River
 - a. Sediment, especially at the mouth
 - b. Huron Pines recently received \$2 million grant; will address road/stream crossings
 - c. Pine River Van Etten Lake 319 WMP approved in 2010
 - d. Partners working in the watershed include Huron Pines and Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network (WIN)

3. Rifle River
 - a. Huron Pines updating the Rifle River WMP
 - b. Flooding issues
 - c. Road/Stream Crossing
 - d. Hydrologic alterations

4. Big Creek
 - a. 1980s watershed management plan (WMP)
 - b. Identifies stream restoration/stabilization sites
 - c. Possible feasibility estimate (very dated)

5. Au Gres River
 - a. Flooding at the mouth due to sedimentation
 - b. Primarily agricultural areas; need filter strips
 - c. Experiencing wind erosion

6. Tawas Harbor

- a. Needs continual dredging
 - b. Sand coming from the Tawas River
 - c. Shoreline/Bank stabilization needed
 - d. Tawas Lake levels are low; stakeholders suggested wing dam
 - e. Decreases in fish and wildlife abundance
7. Saganing Creek/Whites Beach
- a. Casino is going in/already there and there is proposed additional development (condos)
 - b. Lacking wastewater infrastructure
 - c. Known septic problems in the area
 - d. Small watershed in need of a WMP
 - e. Tribal interest in WMP (Cary Schalm-Pauquette)
8. Septic problems and straight pipes
- a. Forest Lake (outside study area)
 - b. Whites Beach
9. Whitney Drain
- a. E.coli problem
 - b. Levels triggering beach closings
 - c. BEACH program providing funding to do testing; sources identified as both human and bovine
 - d. Assuming that activities in Huron and Tuscola counties (e.g., agricultural operations) are affecting Arenac/Iosco due to wind effect in inner Saginaw Bay
10. Invasive species concerns
- a. Phragmites
 - i. Huron Pines helping with phragmites control; Tuttle Marsh slated for treatment
 - ii. MDNR and MDEQ have rules regarding phragmites management
 - b. Asian carp
 - c. Snakeheads
11. Dredging
- a. Specific areas in need
 - i. Oscoda
 - ii. Au Gres
 - b. Impediment to cruising which is affecting economy/tourism development
12. Beach grooming on private property
- a. Need for public education on benefits of shoreline protection and acceptable beach management practices

- b. Landowners are using bulldozers to clear the beach which affects shorebird habitat
- c. Area relies on birding as part of tourist draw; shorebirds are evading areas due to beach conditions

13. Loss of fisheries

- a. Salmon
- b. Perch

14. Agricultural issues

- a. Manure management
- b. Livestock management
- c. Michigan Agricultural Assurance Program
 - i. 2015 goal to have 85% of livestock farmers meeting standards
 - ii. New legislation

15. Existing ordinances

- a. Lack of staffing/resources to enforce
- b. No penalties
- c. In need of updating

Identified Significant Resources

- Pine River watershed (187,000 acres of wetlands)
- Shorebird habitat
- Lake Huron shoreline

Identified Priorities

- Watershed management planning
- Agricultural runoff management
- Septics/straight pipes management
- Sedimentation/Flooding/Dredging
- Phragmites control

Identified Additional Stakeholders

- Saginaw Bay RC&D
- Saginaw Bay WIN
- Rifle River Restoration Committee
- Huron Pines RC&D
- County drain commissioners

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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Midland Community Meeting Thursday, August 23, 2011 • 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

1. Tittabawassee River
 - a. Contamination
 - i. Well known contamination – Superfund project
 - ii. Working with feds
 - iii. Pending litigation - Jim Sigo – MDEQ contact
 - b. Flooding

2. Dam removal/fish ramps
 - a. Chesaning rock ramp
 - i. Poor structure; rocks are too large
 - ii. Results in capture of fresh water mussels; organisms are stranded
 - b. Frankenmuth rock ramp
 - i. Concerns about putting in incorrect structures
 - c. Dow dam
 - i. Study available
 - ii. Contact Roger Garner – Midland Emergency Services (989.832.6750)
 - d. Sanford dam in poor condition
 - e. Need an environmental impact type document to look at the consequences of dam removals; the Public Sector Consultants dam study is not a technical document of this nature
 - f. Future dam projects need to have data before and after to anticipate and assess impacts
 - g. Council of Michigan Foundations want to know where they can fit into the habitat restoration/dam removal process

3. Culvert project
 - a. MDNR/MDEQ interested in what is passing through culverts
 - b. Mussels as indicator species
 - i. Eggs are carried on fish near their gills. If the fish cannot get over the culvert the eggs drop off. Researchers found large numbers of eggs near culverts.
 - ii. Representative of how the system is changing
 - c. Suggest bottomless culverts (no science to back up yet)

- d. Mussels are good indicators of changes in environmental conditions over time because of their long life span, but need to look back 50 years and these types of studies don't exist
4. Restore hydrology on Salt River
 5. Watershed management planning/implementation
 - a. Sturgeon Creek WMP
 - i. Identifies Erosion repair sites
 - ii. WMP needs to be implemented
 - b. Pine River needs a 319 WMP
 - c. Chippewa River needs a 319 WMP; collaborative potential between CMU and Saginaw Chippewa Tribe
 6. Snake Creek
 - a. Largest source of flooding in the Midland area
 - b. New FIS maps with new Baseline Flood Elevations
 - c. Sanford Lake Dam
 7. Training for road commissioners
 - a. Not obtaining the necessary scientific information
 - b. Saginaw Chippewa Tribe interested in doing more trainings for road commissioners
 8. Shiawassee National Wildlife Sanctuary
 - a. Obtain documents/studies from Steve Kahl, Director
 9. Beal City septic system
 - a. Concern for Saginaw Chippewa Tribe, although it falls outside of WLHB project area (in Isabella County)
 - b. Large septic system area with straight pipes
 - c. Everything downstream of Mt. Pleasant is high for e. coli
 - d. Having an impact on downstream ecosystems
 - e. Group of organizations starting to form to address this issue

Identified Significant Resources

1. Shiawassee National Wildlife Sanctuary
2. Avral Preserve – log banking
3. Chippewa Nature Center property
4. Pere Marquette
5. Sand Point Nature Preserve

Identified Priorities

Fish passage/dam removal impact assessment

Septic systems/straight pipes

Flooding

Watershed management planning

Road stream crossing training for road commissioners

Identified Additional Stakeholders

Road commissioners

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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Port Austin Community Meeting Summary Thursday, August 24, 2011 • 9:00 am – 11:00 am

1. Port Austin Harbor
 - a. Considered a Harbor of Refuge
 - b. Steel breakwall constructed in 1980s
 - i. Owned by Corps
 - ii. Harbor designed by Northwest Design Group (Howard H. (231) 348-1180))
 - c. Breakwall prevents flow and harbor is stagnant
 - d. Stakeholders believe that the stone riprap wall adjacent to harbor prevents flow into harbor and contributes to muck-related problems
 - i. Due to declining lake levels the flow needed to increase circulation is most likely not available
 - ii. DNR owns rip rap portion of break wall
 - iii. Corp maintenance staff surveyed 2 yrs ago – we have report.
 - iv. Stakeholders stated that the Corps has indicated willingness to remove riprap even though the structure is on DNR property
 - e. Need to do a hydrological study to determine best solution
2. Drain maintenance
 - a. Stakeholder documenting problems with Huron County Drain Commission approach to drain maintenance in the Pinnebog watershed (see photos provided by stakeholders)
 - b. Ditch maintenance (referred to as “dredging” by stakeholders) leads to substantial erosion/sedimentation
 - c. Stakeholders want to see an improved method for drain maintenance that doesn’t cause excessive sedimentation
 - d. Need for changes to ordinances
 - e. Need for drainage commission education
3. Dredging needs
 - a. Sebewaing
 - b. Caseville
 - c. Bay Port
 - d. Port Hope
4. E. coli concerns
 - a. Beach closures
 - i. Health Department conducts beach testing

- ii. Lighthouse Co. Park has been closed for ½ the season
 - iii. Thought to be caused by stormwater/septics
 - b. CAFO/Agriculture
 - i. Significant CAFOs (60 – 70K dairy cows; 100K+ beef cattle; 600K+ chickens)
 - ii. Need an anaerobic digester demo project for the waste
 - iii. Drainage tile and soil saturation
 - c. Septics are problem
 - i. Inadequate septic systems along shoreline (Sand Pointe to Port Austin)
 - ii. Around Lighthouse Beach
 - iii. Need unified sanitary code
 - d. Migrating geese and other wildlife
- 5. Phragmites
 - a. Throughout shoreline
 - b. Need to control using chemical and mechanical methods
 - c. Want opportunities for individual landowners to participate
 - d. Affecting wildlife/ecosystem health, as well as recreation
 - e. Port Aux Barques has approximately 900 acres (1/3 wetlands) with phragmites
- 6. Muck
 - a. Problem at Oak Beach area since 2001
 - b. Identified around shoreline
 - c. Foamy/chocolate colored water at shore
 - d. Bird Creek beach unswimmable
 - e. Noted at Caseville and Port Austin beaches
- 7. Public Access Issues
 - a. Need more access on Pigeon and Pinnebog
 - b. Other points throughout Huron and Tuscola counties
- 8. Groundwater
 - a. Farm irrigation draining groundwater systems
 - b. New wells dug to compensate
- 9. Other Issues/Concerns
 - a. Lake water quality for public water systems
 - b. Deep water port expansion at Harbor Beach
 - c. Ballast water issues to prevent spread of invasive species
 - d. Concerns about changes in fisheries species

Significant Resources

1. Saginaw Bay
2. Port Austin (harbor of refuge)
3. Beaches/shoreline

Identified Priorities

Muck removal/management

E.coli source identification and control (septic system management and agricultural runoff)

Drain maintenance

Improving flow near marina/breakwall

Identified Additional Stakeholders

No additional stakeholders specifically identified by participants.

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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Port Sanilac Community Meeting Thursday, August 24, 2011 • 2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

1. Lexington Harbor breakwall
 - a. Increases sedimentation
 - i. Harbor becomes hazardous to navigate
 - ii. Masses of accreted land have occurred – applied to MDEQ to build on them
 - b. Water quality in the harbor is poor
 - i. Algae
 - ii. Stormwater runoff
2. Village of Lexington wants funds for a study related to converting a mobile home park into a public amenity adjacent to the harbor
3. Restore/preserve Lakeland prairie
 - a. Stakeholders feel this is more important than restoring/preserving wetlands
 - b. St. Clair shoreline study should identify sites
4. Weirs in agricultural drains
 - a. Tile drains to have weirs installed at strategic locations.
 - b. Retains water on field as well as nitrogen
 - c. Partners – Farm Bureau and Conservation District
 - d. Demonstration project/ technical assistance
 - e. Ben Thalen (NRCS) has information and will send
5. Erosion and flooding concerns
 - a. St. Clair County: Doe Creek Watershed/Ecosystem Restoration
 - i. Problems in the watershed include poor storm water management and flooding; erosion, bank failure, and sedimentation along Doe Creek and tributaries causing loss of habitat, damaging roads and culverts, and transporting excessive sediment loads to Lake Huron.
 - ii. Potential watershed/ecosystem restoration plan could restore aquatic habitat and provide more stable conditions to reduce erosion/ sedimentation conditions.
 - b. Sanilac County

- i. Occurring on smaller creeks with direct discharge to Lake Huron due to significant change in slope (150 foot drop in elevation along shoreline)
 - ii. Need for protective measures
 - 1. Potential to lose M-25
 - 2. Portions of the road have been taken out due to erosion
 - 3. MDOT cited this area as an issue during Alpena community meetings
 - iii. Private property concerns (received post-meeting phone calls from residents about this issue)
 - iv. Challenges in addressing this issue because DEQ has jurisdiction in this area, not county drain commissioner
 - v. DEQ jurisdiction is a roadblock for county/Corps to get onsite to do restoration work
 - vi. Potential project if Corps could request DEQ to authorize work and act as non-federal cost share partner; County would like to do this, but can't because not in their jurisdiction; watershed group could provide in-kind
- 6. Sanilac County in need of an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program
 - a. Worth Township currently under lawsuit due to failing septic systems
 - b. No action currently taken to remediate these sites

Identified Significant Resources

Shoreline

Identified Priorities

Erosion control

Flood management

E.coli source identification and control/septic system management

Identified Additional Stakeholders

Road commissioners

Port Sanilac Community Meeting Participants

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Western Lake Huron Basin (WLHB) Watershed Reconnaissance Study Sault Ste Marie Community Meeting Summary Wednesday, August 17, 2011 • 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Summary of Stakeholder Identified Problems/Opportunities

1. The Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development Commission has recently completed a recreational inventory between St. Ignace and Drummond Island. Funded through a Michigan Coastal Zone Management grant. Extends 1000 ft inland. *(Action: It needs to obtain)*
2. *E.coli* study (pre-TMDL) recently completed at the mouth of the St. Marys River *(Action: It has this)*
3. Sault Ste Marie Road Stream and Site Inventory
 - Available on Conservation District's Web site *(Action: It has downloaded)*
4. Septic system problem was identified in the Cederville area/Les Cheneaux Islands
 - The Nature Conservancy conducted a study in early 2000's
5. Dolomite mine/tailings north of the Les Cheneaux Islands
6. Munuscong Section 319 Watershed Management Plan (WMP) under development by Conservation District *(Action: Conservation District to provide draft Section 319 WMP in mid-September)*

Summary of Stakeholders' Notes on the Chippewa/Mackinac Counties Map

1. Problems by geographic location
 - A. Carp River
 - Sedimentation/erosion
 - Scenic River protection
 - B. Pine River and tributaries
 - Sedimentation/erosion
 - Agricultural impacts and deforestation
 - C. St. Marys Rapids
 - Loss of habitat due to water flow

- D. Lower Islands Rapids
 - Aquatic habitat

- E. Neebish Island
 - Rock cut
 - Aquatic habitat

- 2. Problems by category
 - A. Urban
 - Road stream crossings (railroad, multiple)
 - B. Agriculture
 - Sediment
 - Nutrients (Taylor Creek and Waiska River)
 - Deforestation
 - C. Residential failing septic systems
 - D. Contaminated Sediments
 - Algoma Steel
 - Various city sources (gas plants, Union Carbide)
 - E. Shipping Impacts
 - Aquatic habitat
 - Natural hydrology
 - F. Commercial dredging
 - Cedarville/Les Cheneaux
 - Raber
 - Munuscong
 - Sault Sainte Marie/Ashman Bay

Identified Significant Resources

1. St. Marys River Area of Concern
2. Carp Trail (Natural Historic Scenic Waterway)
3. Les Cheneaux Islands
4. Ashman Creek Bioreserve Area in the City of SSM (Greg Zimmerman's area of interest)

Identified Priorities

1. Habitat restoration of creeks
 - Riparian restoration/removal of hard lining
 - Restore hydrology (meandering streams)
2. Ordinance updating to protect waterways
 - No regional Master Plan

- Local code is from 1970's
3. Agricultural areas
- Restore wetlands (*Action: Look at MDEQ Functional Wetland Assessment; thought to be available*)
 - Restore riparian vegetation
 - Limit livestock access through fencing and alternative watering
 - Taylor creek is almost entirely impacted due to cattle access/manure

Identified Additional Stakeholders

- Mike Ripley, Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority
- Bob Smith re: Les Cheneaux Islands
- Greg Zimmerman re: Ashman Creek Bioreserve Area

Sault Ste. Marie Community Meeting Participants

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