

**Lower Menominee River Area of Concern  
Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting**  
December 4, 2014, 6:00 – 8:15 p.m. CST  
UW-Marinette, Marinette, WI  
Minutes prepared by Laurel Last

**\*note: Things written in green denote potential action items.**

**DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- Meeting attendees are updated on AOC sediment and habitat projects and have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss each one
- CAC members learn about eBird report and decide whether this activity meets AOC requirements for bird monitoring
- CAC members are informed about state/federal agencies AOC meetings and Spring SPAC meeting
- CAC members discuss Menominee Conservation District's AOC roles and responsibilities
- CAC members discuss community outreach needs for 2015

**ATTENDEES**

Dale Andersen (Menominee Conservation District), Sharon Baker (MDEQ), Cheryl Bougie (WDNR), Mike Bryant (USEPA), Donna Buechler (Menominee Conservation District), Jim Cox (Tyco), Mark Erickson (Co-Chair), Laurel Last (WDNR), Trygve Rhude (Chappee Rapids Audubon Society), Nick Utrup (USFWS; left after the fish passage update), Ben Uvaas (WDNR; left after the eBird discussion), Keith West (Co-Chair)

**Introductions, Overview of Agenda** – Mark Erickson and Keith West, CAC Co-Chairs

**Lower Menominee River Fish Passage Update** – Nick Utrup (USFWS)

- Nick sent project update from Rory Alsberg (ECRE) with link to pictures to Sharon
- **Sharon will send project update out to CAC members**
- Phase I – Downstream Passage at Park Mill Dam (Fish Bypass)
  - Some delays, but projected to be complete by end of 2014
- Phase II – Upstream Passage at Menominee Dam (Fish Lift)
  - On schedule to be complete by April 2015
- Phase III – Downstream Passage at Menominee Dam (Fish Bypass and trashrack replacement)
  - River Alliance of WI has signed GLRI grant agreement
  - Will be moving forward with final design (have 30% design) after team has reviewed new data from WDNR (report out soon)
  - Construction is expected to occur in 2016
- Mark—Noticed large pipe/tubing near Phase II—What is it?
- Nick—Overflow pipe, way to return “reject” fish to river

**Review of eBird report and discussion** – Ben Uvaas (WDNR)

- Ben shared presentation on “Utilizing the eBird Database to assess Avian Diversity and Abundance in the AOC”
- **Laurel will send out PowerPoint slides (pdf) with meeting minutes**

- TAC has decided that this activity meets the Fish & Wildlife Plan objective for bird monitoring in the AOC
- Does the CAC concur?
- Mark—Does this mean we need to do this again at a later date (show improvement)?
- Ben—Not necessarily. This is educational, it shows that we've looked at the data, it shows that the AOC is not as good as reference sites (justifies the habitat work)
- **After discussion, CAC members agree that this activity meets the F&W Plan objective**

**State/Federal Agencies Meeting Update** – Laurel Last on Wisconsin's Meeting and Sharon Baker on Michigan's Meeting

- The agencies discuss AOC/BUI work completed in 2014, project needs and planning for 2015, and BUI removals anticipated in 2015
- Wisconsin meeting summary
  - Updates on sediment characterization and remediation projects
  - Updates on habitat restoration projects
  - Proposed schedule for management actions
  - Funding needs—South Channel habitat
  - Potential 2015 BUI removals—dredging, fish consumption, benthos
  - Management actions complete in 2016
  - Potential AOC delisting in 2018 (after confirmation monitoring)
- Mark and Keith—Thought delisting would happen in 2016, not 2018
- Laurel—2016 is target for management actions to be complete, but some monitoring will be required before delisting to confirm objectives are met
- Mike—AOC will be “in recovery” after actions are complete
- Mark—Who is responsible for the monitoring?
- Mike—WI and MI responsible (funds available)
- Sharon—Main concern is with vegetation in habitat projects—Do the new plantings survive? Do the invasives come back?
- Sharon—Michigan meeting will be tomorrow—basically the same with some updates since the Wisconsin meeting

**Betterment Action Update** – Jim Cox (Tyco)

- Dredging completed November 4<sup>th</sup>
- 44,000 cubic yards of sediment removed
- Material greater than 20 ppm arsenic removed
- 70,500 tons disposed
- Water treatment plant decommissioned
- Much of equipment demobilized, finish in spring
- Complete restoration of site next year
- Placement of sand cover over select glacial till areas next year, after receive USACE permit

**Menekaunee Harbor Update** – Cheryl Bougie (WDNR)

- Cheryl shared PowerPoint presentation with overview and update on project
- Completed dredging, seawall removal, riprap
- Phragmites treatment in September, contractor will be back to chip canes in January
- Due to excessive wood debris, did not have enough material to follow original plan for habitat area
- Will probably bring in outside (non-native) material, then cover with native material

- Habitat restoration plan under review by TAC
- Plan to bid out in January, with restoration work in 2015 and monitoring for 5 years (Keith and his students)

#### **CAC letter to Menominee City Zoning Commission** – Mark Erickson (CAC Co-Chair)

- CAC discussed sending letter to City of Menominee supporting zoning ordinances as a means to protect natural areas (similar to letter to City of Marinette)
- Mark—City Planning Commission is currently busy with other issues; best to wait a while so the letter doesn't get lost
- **Mark and Keith will write and send City of Menominee letter**

#### **Menominee Conservation District roles and responsibilities as related to the AOC** – Sharon Baker (MDEQ), Laurel Last (WDNR), and Donna Buechler (Menominee Conservation District)

- **To save time, decided to have separate subcommittee discussion on this topic**
- **Sharon and others will report out to full CAC at January meeting**

#### **Spring SPAC Meeting** – Sharon Baker (MDEQ)

- **To save time, decided to move this discussion to our January meeting**

#### **South Channel Fish Passage and Restoration Update** – Laurel Last

- GLLA funds for habitat work will be used for Phragmites treatment in South Channel area
- Would spray summer 2015, chip canes in January 2016
- Habitat design in progress—concept plans in January
- Discussing accelerating the schedule to allow for some habitat work in 2015
- Planting will still need to occur in spring 2016

#### **Island Rookery Habitat Enhancement Project update** – Laurel Last

- Special CAC meeting on this project November 10<sup>th</sup>—see meeting minutes
- Contractors in town to do vegetation surveys
- Surveys confirmed need to do additional work
  - Little Blueberry untouched by previous project
  - Buckthorn seedlings on other islands
  - Brushpiles remain from previous project
- Project to end in 2016, but hope to set up long-term maintenance plan

#### **Community Outreach needs for 2015** – Laurel Last, Sharon Baker, and Donna Buechler

- Laurel—WDNR Conference call on the 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss AOC community engagement strategy
  - Capacity funds used to hire LTE to assist with engagement/outreach
  - Capacity funds also available to assist AOCs in carrying out their strategy
  - MI also has capacity funds available
  - Previously identified needs—update AOC display, Menekaunee Harbor sign
  - If removing BUIs in 2015, will need to engage the public there
- What do think should be our goals, priorities?
- Sharon—Menominee Conservation District (Donna) can also help with this
- Dale—MCD can help with stewardship awards, which encourage citizen stewardship
- Trygve—Focus on on-the-ground, visible projects
- Keith—Need to mark milestones
- Trygve—Sometimes newspapers don't print submissions from state agencies—might be better for someone else to send

- Donna—Send to Eagle Herald, Peshtigo Times, County newspaper—some print, some don't
- Consider posting information on websites

### **Agency Updates** – Laurel Last and Sharon Baker

- Fish contaminant monitoring report status—fish tissue in queue for lab
- Rio Vista Slough monitoring report status—data back, report in couple of months
- Funding for 2015 fish population monitoring
  - Will continue monitoring in Lower River and reference sites in 2015
  - Not sure yet whether we'll need additional funding (if so, use capacity grant funds)
- RAP Update
  - Current schedule has CAC and TAC reviewing early January
  - Then, public review period (document online)
  - Final RAP complete in February

### **Public Comment and Other News**

- Trygve—Does anyone have news on Green Island?
- Mark—Nancy says project is still moving forward
- **Mark will ask Nancy for an update and share with group**

### **Identify Future Agenda Items & Meeting Date**

- Next meeting January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015?
  - Keith will not be available that day
  - Decided on alternate date—**January 22<sup>nd</sup>**
- Identify Agenda Topics
  - Spring SPAC meeting
  - Report out on MCD roles and responsibilities
  - CAC outreach in 2015

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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## **ONLINE RESOURCES**

EPA – <http://www.epa.gov/grtlakes/aoc/menominee/index.html>

MDEQ – [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3313\\_3677\\_15430\\_57388---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,1607,7-135-3313_3677_15430_57388---,00.html)

UW-Extension – <http://fyi.uwex.edu/aocs/>

WDNR – <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/greatlakes/menominee.html>

## **2013 RAP and F&W Plans available**

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/greatlakes/documents/Menominee2013RAPUpdate.pdf>

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/greatlakes/documents/Menominee2013FishAndWildlifePlan.pdf>