

Citizen Advisory Committee Charter Lower Green Bay and Fox River Area of Concern

This charter outlines the responsibilities of the Citizen Advisory Committee (committee) and its members, the decision making process they agree to use, and committee boundaries. Attached to the charter is a list of the committee members and Area of Concern (AOC) impairments.

Purpose

The committee functions as the AOC's primary connection with the local community. The committee acts as a liaison between the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the greater community by helping to develop, provide feedback on, and advocate for, project plans and strategies to restore the AOC. Committee support gives credence to these locally developed AOC restoration plans and strategies, making them more competitive in funding applications and supported by DNR and the US EPA.

Membership

The 20 committee members are a balanced and diverse group representing public, private, and nonprofit sectors of the local community as listed below. DNR solicited volunteers for the committee in spring 2011. Members were chosen based on their unique background, interest, and ability to serve as a liaison to a larger audience.

Community Sector (# members):

Local Government (6)

Nonprofit / Recreational User (4)

Outreach and Education (3)

Private Citizen (3)

Private Sector (Businesses / Business Associations) (4)

Individual members can leave the committee and be replaced, due to changes in their availability, interests, and employment. Potential new members will complete and submit a nomination form to the AOC Coordinator for consideration. The AOC Coordinator will approve new committee members.

On July 22nd, 2013, the committee membership was expanded to include 4 Outreach and Education members and 4 Private Citizen members, increasing the total number of committee members when all slots are filled to 22, rather than the original 20.

DNR staff and AOC technical team members will be invited to participate in meetings to provide information and expertise to the committee.

Meetings are open to public attendance and advertised on DNR's Public Hearings and Meetings website (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/ce/news/hearmeet.html>). Public participation is limited to specific circumstances when DNR and the committee choose to open the meeting to public comment.

Committee Responsibilities

The committee focuses its work on issues that have a direct connection to restoring identified impairments in the AOC through the following activities:

Restoration Strategies and Projects – The committee assists in identifying available programs, resources, and opportunities to coordinate activities to restore AOC impairments. The committee provides letters of support for funding applications for projects to restore AOC impairments. The committee advises DNR and AOC technical teams on a community perspective of project plans and strategies to restore AOC impairments.

Public Education and Outreach – The committee publicizes and participates in public education and informational activities related to restoring impairments in the AOC.

Restoration Targets – The committee may be asked to review changes to restoration targets for AOC impairments suggested by AOC technical teams based on the results of new monitoring data or information.

AOC Delisting – The committee may review, provide feedback and issue letters of support for DNR requests to recognize restoration of impairments in the AOC. This may be through the removal of specific impairments or through delisting of the AOC.

Lower Fox River Contaminated Sediment Remediation – The committee will receive project status updates for the purposes of establishing a link between contaminated sediment remediation and its relation to restoration strategies and projects. However the committee will not participate in DNR decision-making or regulatory enforcement for this project as it is regulated and managed by DNR and EPA under a separate process.

Committee Member Responsibilities

Participation – Members are asked to attend an average of one meeting every 6 weeks or provide DNR with advance notice of inability to participate. Members are asked to adhere to the meeting agenda, come prepared, and willingly participate in meetings.

Interaction – Members are asked to follow common meeting ground rules by being direct, honest and respectful of other members and the decision-making process.

Implementation – Members are asked to help support AOC initiatives by providing timely and constructive feedback, generating new ideas, distributing materials, and sharing knowledge with others outside the committee.

Making Decisions

All committee decisions and recommendations are made solely by members. The committee will strive to achieve consensus, however a 2/3 majority vote of members will decide in absence of consensus. When a 2/3 majority vote is used, DNR will record opposition in the meeting notes.

Resources

The DNR Lower Green Bay and Fox River AOC Coordinator organizes the committee meetings. University of Wisconsin – Extension facilitates and leads outreach and education programs that inform and engage audiences in the AOC. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides a basic annual operations budget for the committee through DNR.

The DNR Office of Great Lakes, through the Director and the LaMP & AOC Coordinator, provides statewide guidance on the Area of Concern program and Great Lakes implementation priorities for Wisconsin. DNR staff will also provide expertise on specific programs and regulations as needed to facilitate committee work.

Contacts

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Beneficial Use Impairments

Lower Green Bay and Fox River Area of Concern

Impairment of beneficial use is defined as “a change in the chemical, physical, or biological integrity of the Great Lakes system sufficient to cause any of 14 identified use impairments.” (<http://www.ijc.org/rel/boards/annex2/buis.htm>)

In other words...A “beneficial use” is any way that a water body can improve the quality of life for humans or for fish and wildlife. Beneficial uses include (among others) providing fish and wildlife habitat, providing waters that are enjoyable for swimming and boating, and providing fish that are safe to eat. If a beneficial use is unavailable due to environmental degradation (for example if it is unsafe to swim in the water due to severe algae blooms), then that use is considered impaired. There are 14 possible beneficial use impairments that have been established by the U.S. and Canadian governments.

Thirteen of the identified Beneficial Use Impairments are present or suspected in the Lower Green Bay and Fox River Area of Concern:

- Degraded fish and wildlife populations
- Loss of fish and wildlife habitat
- Degraded benthos
- Degraded phytoplankton / zooplankton populations
- Eutrophication or undesirable algae
- Beach closings / recreational restrictions
- Degradation of aesthetics
- Restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption
- Restrictions on dredging activities
- Bird or animal deformities or reproductive problems
- Restrictions on drinking water or taste/odor problems
- *Fish Tumors or other Deformities (suspected)*
- *Tainting of Fish and Wildlife Flavor (suspected)*

The only Beneficial Use Impairment that is not present in the Lower Green Bay and Fox River Area of Concern is “Added Costs to Agriculture or Industry”.