

Upper Tuscarawas River Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Monday, June 19, 2006
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

John Torok (Green) Community Center
4224 Massillon Road
Green, OH 44232-0278

Meeting Summary

I. Welcome

Meeting Attendees:

Eric Akin – NEFCO; Phil Hillman – ODNR Division of Wildlife; Edith Chase – Citizen; Robert Hollis – Summit DOES; George Beckham – Coventry Township; Mike West – Congressman Sherrod Brown’s Office; Andy Burt – ODNR – Division of Wildlife

Meeting Overview:

The goal of the meeting was to review previous work completed on the Upper Tuscarawas River Action Plan, update stakeholders on Ohio EPA’s TMDL report, and establish preliminary water quality goals and objectives for the watershed.

II. Update Status

Summary of Previous Meetings and Presentations:

- Previous Upper Tuscarawas River Technical Advisory Committee meetings were held on August 26, 2005, and April 20, 2006. The first meeting established a need for an update to the watershed action plan and a general outline of what information needs to be included in the update. The April meeting reviewed the data collected, summarized the water quality programs established since the original report was completed in 1999 (Storm Water Phase II, Riparian Setback Ordinance, Watershed Plan Endorsement Criteria, etc.), set new subwatershed planning boundaries, and determined the preliminary format for the Action Plan. Summaries, handouts, and presentations for these meetings can be found at the update’s webpage: www.uptuscwatershed.org/tuscarawas_tac.htm.

Action Plan Sections Completed:

- A handout was distributed that showed the status of the information collected for the Action Plan update. Most of the Plan’s introduction and inventory information has been collected. Some of the information requested in the plan by the Ohio EPA and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is not currently available for the watershed. This information can be added to the plan when or if it becomes available. The largest gaps in the needed information include water resource quality and load reduction calculations. Fortunately, Ohio EPA is nearly finished with their water

quality (Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL) report for the Tuscarawas River that will contain this information when completed later this summer.

- The planning boundaries have been set and include five subwatersheds of the Upper Tuscarawas River. From upstream to downstream they include:
 1. Tusc. River headwaters from Hartville to Tuscarawas Diversion Dam
 2. Myersville Creek/Metzgers Ditch
 3. Upper Nimisila Creek/Singer Lake
 4. Portage Lakes
 5. Tusc. River below the Long Lake to Wolf Creek (including O&E Canal)
- The subwatershed boundaries were selected based on boundaries from previous NEFCO reports, Ohio EPA watershed boundaries, common land use characteristics, and geography.

Ohio EPA TMDL Update:

- The Ohio EPA is currently finishing up the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) water quality report for the Tuscarawas River. The report will determine which sections of the Upper Tuscarawas River are meeting State water quality standards. For river sections not meeting State standards, the Ohio EPA will determine why it is degraded and decide, by using computer models, how much a pollutant(s) must be reduced to bring the stream into attainment.
- Stream sections not meeting state water quality standards could pose a health risk (bacteria and pathogens) and/or possibly impact future growth of an area by limiting what can be discharged into the river. Therefore, it is in the best interest of local stakeholders to improve and protect local water resources.
- Ohio EPA collected water samples at five locations within the Upper Tuscarawas River Watershed. These sites are located (from upstream to downstream) at the Mogadore Ave. bridge, Pressler Rd. bridge, upstream of the Springfield #91 wastewater treatment plant, Arlington Rd. bridge, and the Synder Ave. bridge. Information from these sites will be used to determine any needed pollutant load reductions by Ohio EPA and set limits for permitted discharges into the River. The macroinvertebrate sampling locations were not provided by Ohio EPA.
- Preliminary TMDL results for:
 - a. Tuscarawas River Headwaters and Myersville Creek: Aquatic life (fish and macroinvertebrates) is impaired from the headwaters to just downstream of the Pickle Road Bridge in Springfield Township. The causes and sources of impairment are unknown at this time. Recreational use along this section is also impaired by high bacteria

levels. The primary sources of high bacteria levels are pastures and failing home sewage treatment (septic) systems. Downstream of Pickle Road to the Tuscarawas Diversion Dam, the river meets state water quality standards for both aquatic life and recreational uses.

- b. Tuscarawas River from Long Lake to Wolf Creek: From the outlet at Long Lake to approximately where the River enters the City of Barberton, the Tuscarawas River meets state water quality standards for aquatic life uses. Downstream from where the river enters Barberton to its confluence with Wolf Creek the Tuscarawas River is not in attainment. A low dissolved oxygen level condition resulting from flow alterations is the primary cause of poor water quality and reduced aquatic life along this stretch. Ohio EPA is still investigating the reason or source for the low dissolved oxygen along this section. Recreational uses are not impaired along this section of the river.
 - c. Upper Nimisila Creek and Singer Lake: This area is in partial attainment for aquatic life uses. Only low scores from macroinvertebrate sampling are preventing this section of Nimisila Creek from being in full attainment. The suspected causes of the low macroinvertebrate scores are habitat alterations, sedimentation, and flow alterations. Recreational uses are not impaired along this section of the creek.
- The Portage Lakes were not included in the TMDL study because Ohio EPA bases their water quality reports on the biology found in streams and rivers. They currently do little work in monitoring water quality of inland lakes. However, the Portage Lakes Advisory Council (PLAC) and NEFCO have a water clarity monitoring program in several of the Portage Lakes. Also, historical monitoring information of this type dates back to 1988 for many of these lakes. This information will be included in the Water Resource section of the updated Action Plan.

IV. Work Session

- Eric Akin led the Committee in a work session and began the task of setting preliminary water quality goals and objectives for each of the five subwatersheds using previously collected information and local knowledge of the basin. This task included the identification of subwatershed issues, determining areas of concern, and starting a list of needed stakeholders for each subwatershed.
- Information and data available to the committee to help with this task included the Summit County General Land Use Development Plan, Summit County Setback Ordinance, NEFCO's previous watershed reports, MetroParks' Wetland Inventory and Trails, Ohio EPA preliminary TMDL data, and MetroParks' Greenway Plan.

- A summary of the work completed can be found in the attachment titled "Work Session Notes." In general, the committee identified issues for each of the five subwatersheds, noted known areas of concern, and started a preliminary list of needed stakeholders for each of the five basins. Goals and objectives for all the watersheds still need to be determined and refined.

V. Next Steps

- The Committee determined more time was needed to establish goals and objectives for each of the subwatersheds. It was suggested that this should be the starting point for the next Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting. In addition, the next meeting will also begin the process of determining and prioritizing specific actions to address the identified issues in each basin.
- Eric Akin suggested having the Ohio EPA present their TMDL report findings at the next meeting. He said that the draft report should be completed by July or August. The Committee agreed and postponed selecting a date for the next meeting until Ohio EPA could be contacted. Eric Akin said he hopes to have the meeting in July or August.