

PA LEEF April 18, 2016 Meeting Synopsis

Prepared by Marti Martz, Pennsylvania Sea Grant

Pennsylvania Lake Erie Environmental Forum Meeting

April 18, 2016

Tom Ridge Environmental Center, Room 112 1pm-4pm

Relevant documents:

- **Agenda**
- **List of attendees**
- **Presentations:** will be shared via Pennsylvania Sea Grant website

Dates and logistics for next three meetings:

September 19, 2016 Erie County Conservation District 1 to 4pm

Status of current drafts of the Pennsylvania Domestic Action Plan to meet Lake Erie phosphorus reduction targets and timelines for implementation. The Special Focus topic will be stormwater management and the roles municipalities play in protecting Lake Erie water quality. Presentations will introduce new methods available to municipalities to sustainably fund stormwater management responsibilities and infrastructure.

December 12, 2016 TREC, Room 112 1 to 4pm

Topics: Final version of the Pennsylvania Domestic Action Plan and review of the organization and structure of the Lake Erie Lakewide Action and Management Plan. The Special Focus topic will feature the Pennsylvania Vested in Environmental Sustainability (VinES) Program and its collaborative work with grape farms and other agricultural land uses in the PA Lake Erie Watershed.

March 13, 2017 Erie County Conservation District 1 to 4pm

Topic: Developments and progress of Lake Erie LAMP at the basin scale. Additional topics to be announced prior to the meeting.

Public comments from April 18, 2018 meeting:

Karen Tobin, Erie County Department of Health: Thanks again for all your work on the PA LEEF meeting.

Here are my suggestions:

- Do introductions at the beginning of each meeting so people get to know each other
- Always provide this much notice about future meetings. I love that you already have them scheduled so far ahead of time. My calendar gets booked months ahead.
- Each spring meeting: describe projects/monitoring/topics/concerns scheduled for the upcoming year
- Each fall meeting-summarize actions that took place over the summer
- One topic could be all about our local environmental groups; who are they? What do they do? etc. This may bring us together more, instead of everyone working separately on so many projects; More partnership, sharing of funds, and assisting with manpower on projects makes our community stronger....

Regarding wastewater treatment plants...it's expensive to remove phosphorous. WWTPs are the most significant contributors of phosphorous. This is very important in the west basin of Lake Erie.

Sister Pat Lupo, Neighborhood Art House: Is anyone working on the Erie LAMP Annexes?

Tim's response: I represent the LAMP on the Management Committee. Jim Grazio represents the Technical Committee. We will convene a work group in 2017, anyone is welcome to participate.

Shayne Hoachlander, Pa Game Commission: If a state or province does not meet targets are there consequences?

Tim's response: No. the states are not parties to this agreement. Ohio, Michigan and Ontario will meet reductions by 2025...25% by 2020, 40% by 2025. Strict limits in other parts of the priority watersheds re: phosphorus targets. There will be legal ramifications for those probably ten years down the road.

Deb DiPlacido: Besides the riparian 'stuff' are farmers required to reduce application (of fertilizers)?

Tim's response: There is a tacit relationship that agriculture enjoys which allows voluntary or incentivized adherence and changes in farming practices. The DEP has been doing some outreach and state level programs to educate farmers. Some training is required, for example in application of manure.

Rick Diz, Gannon University: Pennsylvania has one regulatory tool for animal operations, a number of animals per acre criteria. If you're raising livestock you must create a nutrient management plan and submit it to DEP. Corn and soybean growers using chemical fertilizers have no such requirements. Farmers told they require a riparian buffer for a ditch resist this because it impacts their income.

Deb DePlacido: I see 25 horses in a barn 100 yards from Walnut Creek next to a big manure pile...this must have an impact.

Scott Tait: What is the time frame for real time storm and bluff recession data for monitoring?

Tim's response: Walnut Creek and Brandy Run stations are currently realtime. USGS website includes multiple parameters. It's very expensive. Eighty thousand dollars per year to install and maintain. Are there other watersheds that might be monitored?

Nate Irwin response: Data from the Presque Isle Bay buoy will be online in early May.

Karen Tobin: Do you need manpower to assist with streamwork?

Nate: big smile. Sure.

Joseph Hudson, Erie County Conservation District: Do you check the tribs for *E.coli*?

Doug Ebert, Erie County Department of Health: Has anyone considered using QPCR on *E.coli* assessments? Is it human linked *E.coli*? This might give us a better picture of what is going on in the tribs.

Jim Grazio, PA DEP: I'll bring that up, typical research is plated, not QPCR.

Karen Tobin: Jeanette Schnars, (Regional Science Consortium), and I are talking about grants to look at 400 small flow treatment plants that discharge to local streams.

Rick Diz: I got something in my mailbox about a program to educate rural audiences on septic and small treatment systems. Who is doing this?

Karen Tobin: Environment Erie. There are two workshops in May that hope to educate homeowners and provide funds to improve systems.

Sister Pat Lupo: PLEWA (Pa Lake Erie Watershed Association) people would be interested in knowing when sub watersheds would be assessed. Perhaps they can assist. Can Nate share the dates?

Rick Diz: what is the difference between Environment Erie and PLEWA:

Sister Pat Lupo: PLEWA is 18 local watershed groups and Environment Erie does school programs and community projects. They are separate organizations but they work together. PLEWA meets the first Tuesday of every other month.

Rick Diz: It would be helpful to know how frequently these meetings will occur and how long they will be. Will they be half day? What is their focus?

Tim's response: This is the first meeting and may be longer than those that follow because it covered multiple topics. Others can focus on single issues. Is there a preference for topics?

Rick Diz: What is DEP's funding cycle? What is DEP planning in the next calendar year? We can include this information in meetings.

Tim's response: Each of the next three meetings are focused on a topic that is pertinent. For example a budgeting meeting for municipal planners will take place at the September meeting as they are preparing to do budget planning in November and December.

I'd like to see these meetings provide the opportunity for collaboration. I'm open to suggestions re: topics for future meetings.

Doug Ebert: Can you add in an evening meeting to accommodate those who work during the day?

Rick Diz: Presque Isle Bay Advisory Committee conversations include an evening meeting that starts @ 7pm. (Question to those in the room): Would you come in the evening as a citizen or are you here as an employee who would not come after 5pm?

Karen Tobin: What are the dates for the next three meetings? (See listing at top of this document.)

Doug Ebert: As far as future topics...what about lift stations in the county that are hydraulically overloaded? What is being done about these? Thousands of gallons of sewage going into the lake...

Sister Pat: I'd like to see a discussion of an impervious tax and green infrastructure options.

Tim: any other suggestions? If not, I'd like to thank you all for your participation. These notes and presentations from today's meeting will be made available through PA Sea Grant's website.