

**Ohio Lake Erie Phosphorus Task Force
Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2008
Riffe Center**

Attendance: Seth Hothem, Jack Kramer, Dan Button, Julie Weatherington-Rice, John Crumrine, Dave Baker, Gail Hesse, Norm Fausey, Kevin Elder, Paul Bertram, Gerry Matisoff, John Kessler, Rick Wilson, Todd Hesterman, Robert Mullen, Libby Dayton, Julie Letterhos, Pete Richards, Eric Partee

The objectives of the meeting were to follow-up on discussions of the presentations and papers on lawn care, home sewage treatment systems, and Toledo Harbor Dredging and Open Lake Disposal. We would also identify priority projects for consideration under the Ohio Lake Erie Protection Fund targeted grant program and continue discussion the draft report.

Updates/General information

There are several upcoming opportunities for outreach

- Abstracts for the Nov.12-13 WMAO conference are due by May 30
- P Task Force issues may be part of next year's Institute of Journalists/Natural Resources program led by Peter Annin

Heidelberg, Ohio EPA and USEPA are working out an issue concerning SRP methodology and acceptable credible data methodologies.

Follow-up discussion on Scott's lawn care presentation from the previous meeting

- Lawn care is not as big an issue in relation to phosphorus loads as we thought it would be
- Scotts is packaging high P fertilizers in smaller packages to ensure that these fertilizers are only applied exactly as needed and just used for general application because it is sitting in someone's garage.
- Scotts is intending to follow the same approach to limiting P in their products as is done in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and Florida
- While not a substantial source, bans and public outreach may be useful for stewardship, to improve local conditions and for good PR

Recommendations for report

- Rank lawn care fertilizers as a comparatively low P source on a watershed basin level
- At a local level, personal level there is still a need for consumer education to use BMPs in urban settings
- In addition to Scotts' studies, there is other research that has shown that most fertilizer is bound in turf and stays there when properly applied
- Track the tonnage of P going into lawns vs farm fields
- Track the tonnage of P used in a state (Florida approach)
- Monitor for local hotspots (i.e. urban/suburban development of water edge communities)
- Watch for impacts at lakeshore/water's edge

- Need research connecting time of year for application and runoff

Discussion on potential of an MOU with Scotts

- Benefits
 - o Good PR for Scotts
 - o Good PR for Task Force to show cooperation/progress
 - o Scotts would track P fertilizer sales instead of the State
 - o Refer to Chesapeake MOU
 - o Potential for a regional, Great Lakes-wide MOU vs. just a state MOU
 - o MOU may be better politically and RP-wise than a ban
 - o Is it worth the effort (tracking and education)
 - o Should a Great Lakes wide MOU be negotiated through a group such as the Great Lakes Commission or the Council of Great Lakes Governors?

Storm water management BMPs include guidance on water the lawn, washing the car with high P content detergents. Some of these issues are already included in the requirements for outreach under the MS4 program.

Storm water MS4 permit for Toledo will require monitoring for SRP/DRP

Discussion on ODH's Home Sewage Treatment Systems report

- This is a low source
- If this was a P issue it would also be a bacteria issue and thus a potential health hazard
- Consider land use and development practices
- Homeowner stewardship
- Potential to consider a P limit for discharging systems

Package Plants

- Do they have P limits?
- Calculate how many package plants in the system
- Non-discharging systems with leach fields are designed to function for about 20 years
- Many soils can tolerate supporting non-discharging system leach fields
- Consider maintenance and stewardship
- Acknowledge HSTS as a potential source, characterize it, promote maintenance and stewardship, compare with package plants
- Many package plants are non-functioning, too

Toledo Harbor/Open Lake Disposal

- There are many areas we don't know much about
- Would be best to return soil to fields or keep it in a CDF
- Is most bioavailable P already stripped from sediment in the channel?
- Need to know grain size of dredge material. Mostly sand and gravel would not hold much phosphorus, but fine silts would
- For the final report, capture the issues but don't make particular recommendations.

Potential Projects for funding under the Ohio Lake Erie Protection Fund

- ~ \$100,000 available for small grants

- Need to get ideas for June 5 Ohio Lake Erie Commission meeting
- Potential to support a discovery farm (what watershed?)
- Focus on Lost Creek/Defiance County (2000 acres, better and more in-depth characterization of what is happening in the watershed as different BMPs are used – get more info from Steve Davis)
- Rock Creek – connecting water runoff with certain soil types
- Can we link runoff from farmland to algal blooms in the lake (running down a storm)
- Development of a screening tool
- Identify/monitor/measure P movement off the landscape
- Characterize sediments coming out the Maumee to see if they are suitable for OLD and beneficial reuse (this is already done)
- Monitor for Lyngbya
- Update P index for Ohio
- Soil tests