

Genesee River Conference – Organizational Meeting MINUTES

1:00, December 19th, 2006 ~ Monroe County Department of Environmental Services

Present: Charlie Knauf, Monroe County DOH ✓
Harry Reiter, Monroe County DES ✓
Andy Sansone, Monroe County DES ✓
Jayme Breschard, G/FLRPC ✓
David Zorn, G/FLRPC ✓
Brian Slack, G/FLRPC ✓

Agenda Items:

Discussion and consensus regarding the anticipated Goals and Outcomes of holding a Genesee River Conference:

- *What is the purpose of the conference? What do we hope to accomplish by having a conference? What, if anything, do we want the conference to lead to? (i.e. next steps)*
- AS indicated his concept of the conference as an initiative for future coordination and collaboration for further pollution reduction within the Basin. A pertinent example cited was that of the Hudson Bay Estuary
- DZ concurred; citing the example of Cayuga Lake, an initiative such as a conference can be an important part of jump-starting more action
- BS mentioned the Army Corps' 516e program and the SWAT predictive model that is being developed within the Basin; the timing of the conference will likely fall in synch. with the operation of the model, increasing the likelihood of it being used
- CK noted the importance of fostering better Army Corps communication, both internally and externally, with specific regard to future operation of the Mt. Morris Dam and efforts toward sediment reduction
- DZ noted that the conference can also be a starting point for fostering discussion of what the Corps has accomplished in the Basin, what it is currently seeking to accomplish and what are some possible best case scenarios as to what they could accomplish in the Basin.
- CK noted the relatively obvious need for Remedial Action Plan focus on the Rochester Embayment; while various water quality priorities are important (such as cited in the LaMP) addressing Area of Concern issues should be a top priority in the near-term

Length/Format

- *Plenary session over the course of 1 day? Or several break-out sessions...?*
- *Possible speakers and topics?*
 - ACE – Western Lake Erie Basin activities;
 - History – Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck (?)
 - RAP progress
 - Review of watershed activities
 - Others?
- Along with those mentioned above, other “umbrella” topics that were discussed included: updates regarding the major environmental planning initiatives currently in place, including the RAP, the LaMP, and LOCI; up-to-date report on the status of sampling and monitoring (i.e. what is the “state of the basin”); implementation of agricultural BMPs (progress to date and the challenges ahead); Education and Outreach; others include Rochester CSO program, Phase II Stormwater implementation, Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems and the USGS program in Monroe County.

Date/Location

- SUNY Geneseo; Houghton College?
- SUNY Geneseo seems to be the preferred location for a conference; Houghton College may be too much of an inconvenience to travel to – other locations can be considered by the planning committee

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Who is the Target Audience?

- *Will registration be open or closed? Can we make a guess regarding anticipated size?*
- Open registration to all interested individuals and organizations was the unanimously-preferred format

Possible funding opportunities

- *What potentially exists and how exactly can it be used?*
- CK mentioned the RAP EPA grant which covers 3 years; some money is intended for public outreach/RAP information dissemination. Whether it can be applied to a conference such as this remains to be seen
- CK also mentioned the possibility of a FL/LOWPA Special Projects grant; no such grant opportunity has been announced at this point in time, however
- AS mentioned the possibility of an EPA Special Projects grant that was intended for just such a conference; further investigation regarding the availability of this opportunity is warranted
- DZ: A nominal registration fee can help to cover costs and ensure registrant attendance

Organizational Committee

- *What type of structure do we need here?*
- *Who?*
- *How are we going to contact them?*
- *Subcommittees? (registration, speakers, publicity, exhibitors, etc.)*
- No formal structure should be necessary; simply organizing a “Planning Committee” should be structure enough
- There will very likely be two levels of committee members – “active” and “advisory.” Those who serve in an advisory capacity would provide valuable input regarding topic selection and speaker participation but may not be able to attend regular planning meetings in person
- The committee should have at least one representative of all of the primary areas and organizations of concern (i.e. DEC, ACE, “agriculture,” “recreation” “planning” etc.)
- A list of possible participants was attached; this list will be revised and the organization team will begin selecting “invitees”

What else?

- Set a goal of scheduling a planning committee kick-off meeting in January
- BS will get notes and a revised invitee list out to the organization team
- The Genesee River Basin Action Strategy <http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/GenRiverActionStrategy.htm> was noted as a strong resource for background information as the conference proceeds:
 - Closely consideration should be given to any ‘prioritized activities’ mentioned in the strategy
 - In particular, Appendix D which lists activities and programs in each county in the Basin should be updated for the conference.
 - Some assemblage of ‘future needs’ among local groups should be put together
 - A second printing and some sort of update with regard to the above should be considered

Action Items:

- BS to get minutes and revised list of possible committee participants to the organizational team
- Organizational team to get BS ideas regarding possible committee participants
- Once a solid list is put together, organizational team will begin contacting and soliciting possible committee participants