

**Coastal Health Conference Call  
Monday, September 26, 2005, 12 noon (CDT)**

**Call Summary**

The call focused on the next steps and guidance for the Rochester meeting. The group needs to generally address the comments by September 30 as a step to developing more detail at the Rochester meeting October 6 and 7. This includes a summary of summary of comments received and developing general thoughts on addressing them.

The call discussed potential near term actions regarding looking at specific to how the comments affect the chapter and identification of next steps, including potential new legislation that might be required to implement the chapter.

EPA coastal health comments were discussed. These focused more on Safe Drinking Water issues. Anyone who wants to send in a suggested response to those comments, please send them to Sarah Beazley ([sbeazley@cityofchicago.org](mailto:sbeazley@cityofchicago.org)).

The call's main discussion followed the outline of the "Major Issues Raised in Coastal Health Public Comments" document sent by Sarah Beazley the morning of September 26.

- **Address private septic systems**
  - The group discussed the potential of bringing this issue up as a bigger priority. Further discussion will occur in Rochester.
  - Don Zelazny asked that the group think about where in four point outline of the paper (Wet weather, other sources, risk reduction for recreational waters, drinking water) that the septic system issue fits.
- **Address regional planning**
  - The group agreed that the issue of engaging regional planning efforts in the coastal health issue should be addressed more closely. This will be discussed in more detail in Rochester.
  - Don Zelazny asked that the group think about where in four point outline of the paper (Wet weather, other sources, risk reduction for recreational waters, drinking water).that the regional planning issue fits.
  - Also, this overlaps with funding options and "soft" BMPs. It's important to provide incentives to groups, and reward communities already implementing BMPs.
- **Address industrial pre-treatment**
  - The group thought that since the industrial pre-treatment issue was brought up by a larger consortium of groups, the comment should be given more weight.

- The group discussed the need to discuss the issue in more detail with the toxics group to bring it more to the forefront. Will raise to Executive Committee.
- **Address timeline**
  - **Should be sooner (most said 2015):**
    - Concerned Groups' Collective Comment on Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Draft Plan:
    - Brian Smith, Citizen's Campaign for the Environment
    - Rochester Regional Group of Sierra Club
  - **Should be later (goals will take longer):**
    - Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
    - Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NORSRD)
  - The issue of when the target date was discussed in some depth. It was noted that the 2020 target date was arrived at with Executive Committee. Executive Committee thought was a reasonable target date.
  - Margaret Wooster noted that the Clean Water Act calls for earlier compliance through Long-term Control Plans (LTCP) must be implemented within 15 years of approval by USEPA. However, a loophole in the legislation provides no deadline for plans to be submitted and approved. 2020 was arrived at by using 2005 as start date for the plans and then go 15 years out from there to “mirror” CWA goals. The group can entertain reasons for why that reasoning for the target date should be changed. An earlier 2017 deadline was based on the belief that collaboration funding would begin in 2007 – 10 years on. Environmental groups expressed concern that stretching out the plan beyond 5 years creates difficulties given that the collaboration is envisioned as a five-year effort.
  - The group determined that it is important for the chapter to better reflect a continuum of target dates based upon communities that have LTCPs in place versus those that are trying to begin developing them now. We need to be more prescriptive about what we mean by the dates. There is a need for more specificity regarding how different plans fit into timeframe.
- **Address cost feasibility**
  - **Need more funding**
    - NORSRD: funding should instead be at least \$34 billion.
  - There was a discussion about the need to discuss different funding options. It would be helpful to put in place criteria for plan implementation and the range of costs that could occur based on different approaches. For example, Buffalo is examining the different costs of using more “soft” approaches (BMPs), versus the creation of a deep tunnel “hard” approach. These costs could be significantly different. BMPs could be more effective in the long-run, but there are significant disincentives for communities using BMPs as opposed to engineered approaches.
- **Address data gathering and presentation, i.e.**
  - NORSRD questioned representation of CDC report

- There was a discussion regarding the potential that the CDC numbers cited in the chapter may be misleading because they did not call out data that only one discharge came from the Great Lakes and that 90% of the outbreaks come from swimming pools, spas, fountains, etc. (treated body of water as opposed to lakes, rivers, etc.) There needs to be proper perspective for the data. Only one outbreak came from contact with Great Lakes water and this was only the first time it occurred in the Great Lakes.
  - It was determined that we need to develop a sentence that addresses this concern. Julie K. of Racine will look into this.
- **Address climate change**
    - The group discussed how climate change models indicate that climate change will lead to more extreme weather events that will increase the number and severity of wet weather events and increasing the potential for drought between the extreme events that will lead to lower lake levels. There is a lack of certainty regarding how this will affect coastal health, but it may be good to put it in the Problem Statement.
    - Jeff Reutter will be contacted to see if he has any thoughts on changing the language.
    - The chairs will speak with the Executive Committee on how it affects other groups and if the issue will be addressed at a higher level of the collaboration.
- **Utilize best management practices**
    - This issue was discussed during the discussion on timeline for LTCPs.
    - Since some of these issues seemed to be lost in the footnotes of the chapter, the chairs will see if we can expand the papers so that important issues are not lost in the footnotes.
- **Other**
    - **Many in support of Coastal Health chapter recommendations**
    - **Comments re: Implementation issues**
    - **Some comments not directly related to Coastal Health chapter (i.e. belong in other chapters)**
    - **Local projects-- examples or requests**
    - It was noted that the comments do not appear to require major changes to the chapter. It raised more the issue of how to segue into what communities are already doing.
    - The BMP issue may be a bigger issue, particularly regarding how to deal with disincentives for their use. Volunteers were solicited to provide case studies of how the recommendation examples of what BMPs could be utilized and how they can be implemented to compare and contrast them with engineered approaches.

- Margaret Wooster and Don Zelazny will discuss a possible Buffalo case study
- Northeast Ohio also a possible case study – representatives from Northeast Ohio Sewer District
- Julie Kinzellman from Racine will identify soft approaches that Racine has identified.
- Sarah Beazley and Suzanne Malec will develop criteria for evaluating communities' place along the continuum.

Note: All government rate rooms at the location of the Rochester meeting are taken. Don Zelazny suggested that the Clarion across the street may have government rate rooms.

**ACTION:** Send report to Executive Committee (DOE will do on 9/29); See below:

**Report to the Executive Committee from the Coastal Health Team: 9/26/05**

**Substantive changes to Coastal Health chapter:**

Based on the public comments submitted, the Coastal Health team does not foresee any substantive changes to the overall recommendations in our chapter. We do plan to make a number of strategic or tactical changes in presenting the information in our chapter, based on the public comments.

**Issues we wish to raise to the Executive Committee:**

- The five-page limit of the chapter forced the team to put some of important information in footnotes, which may cause some overlooking of important issues. We recommend that teams be allowed to have 6 pages to present their chapter, especially considering the extra clarification needed to respond to public comments.
- Global climate change was raised several times in the public comments. While this is a very serious issue that will affect coastal health (i.e. increase number of wet weather events, increase drought periods, etc.), we believe climate change is an issue that pertains to several strategy teams and to the Great Lakes as a whole, and should be addressed by the Executive Committee as part of a summary or introductory report to the final document.
- Some issues raised in the public comments overlap with the Toxics team, specifically the issue of industrial pretreatment. Here are sample comments:
  - Steve Hoin: I suggest that incentives be provided for local municipalities to upgrade treatment systems to address any mercury using BAT with the understanding that the WWTP would be encouraged to accept mercury.
  - Alliance for the Great Lakes: We recommend an increased focus on industrial pre-treatment program.
- We think the following comments apply more to the Sustainable Development team than to Coastal Health. Please forward these to the appropriate team:

- EPA Waste, Pesticides and Toxics Division: Include land-use planning and BMPs. (We are including BMPs but thought SD should see this too.)
- Bruce W. Fuwkey: Outlaw new subdivisions that don't have the capacity to handle their sewage.
- David Hohmann: Stormwater controls need to be implemented post-construction, even in developed areas.