



AOC Advisory Committee

MEETING MINUTES

October 7, 2019

Called to order 9:10am at the Brecksville Reservation Trailside Center.

Present – Jennifer Grieser, Bill Hughes, Robert Brand, Scott Hardy, Elaine Price (for A. Ball,) Melanie Barbis, Grace Gallucci, Pam Davis, Elizabeith Hiser, Marty Hilovsky, Pat Gsellman, Savannah Tracy, Bryan Stubbs, Lisa Petit, Janet Popielski (for Frank Greenland,) Bill Carlson (for Kevin Kratt,) John Zampino (for Dan Brown,) Joe Hadley, Kate Evans

Speaker – Ryan John Trimbath, CVNP National Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Update

Minutes – Correct the date that says October meeting is 10/8 (note: the minutes reflect what was the case at the time of the meeting,) Hiser moved to approve as amended/Stubbs second, approved unanimously

PRESENTATION

Ryan John Trimbath gave a preview of the initiative to designate the section of river from Peninsula south, assuming that the Peninsula area would not meet eligibility requirements. He sees a pathway to designation through the CVNP strategic action plan, assuming that delisting happens in/by 2021. The goal is to seek designation as national water trail.

The Wild & Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 is what sets the stage and the conditions for designation. Free-flowing condition is a prerequisite. (See sec 15 of Act) Why would this part of the river qualify to become a WSR or gain by designation? Fluvial geomorphology, adaptability to climate, land use changes, ecosystem services, flood plain access, storage/filtration, biological integrity, and offering the National Park Experience, plus there are dollars to be saved if managed.

Process –

Determine Eligibility (criteria: free flowing, Outstanding Remarkable Value [ORV], water quality)
Choose a Classification- wild, scenic, or recreational, based on level of development (CVNP would go for recreational)

Verify Suitability

Have a comprehensive river management plan

CVNP had an eligibility workshop in April 2018 with NPS staff and other partners.

Outstanding Remarkable Value = the river contributes to the function of the river ecosystem, which owes its location or existence to the presence of the river.

To meet the ORV criteria, the river or ecosystem must be rare or unique

That characterization must be defensible.

ORV Categories = cultural, recreational, geological, ecological, scenic

Challenges - Brecksville dam: even if it comes down, the shorelines are constrained. CVNP has a lot of riprap.

L. Petit described the work still needed to document structures involved with the dam before removal later this year.

A way to deal with free-flowingness is to segment areas with high concentrations of limiting factors, e.g. taking out Peninsula, then evaluating each ORV category in the chosen segments

Moving forward, the work will involve finalizing the eligibility study, and connecting to a comprehensive river management plan, involving a suitability study, partnerships, public input, and political support.

What if CVNP doesn't get the designation? Answer: They'll still have a management plan in place.

What's the value of being a WSR? Answer: Right now CVNP doesn't have total influence over the waterway, and no legal protection to prohibit dumping. Petit: This would give more protection. For example, if the designation is recreational and someone tries to impede that use, CVNP currently doesn't have the means to stop them. They don't own the infrastructure (power lines, etc.)

Bottom line: To get the designation, they really only need "free flowing" and the ORV criteria, not so much water quality.

Question: Who is the decider re eligibility? Congress could just name it without going through the process. Answer: Yes, that's usually how it's done, but the governor could also ask for designation and Dept of the Interior/NPS decides. (staff note: See <https://www.rivers.gov/designation.php>)

For clarification, CVNP is just looking at the 16 miles south of Peninsula to Bath? Yes, but only the parts inside the boundary of park, not any more than that.

Does it matter if the AOC exists for this to happen? No.

PUBLIC COMMENT – none

OLD BUSINESS

Chairwoman Grieser rose to acknowledge the contributions of Howard Simon and Tom Denbow who are retiring from the advisory committee, and also Meiring Borchers' time as Vice Chair. Bill Hughes was appointed to the Vice Chairmanship at the July meeting.

NEW Business

AOC Conference – All of our people and organizations were represented. Grieser asked for comments from attendees. Price liked the economic benefit presentation at end, would like to see more. Pat Gsellman would like to have seen more about the nuts and bolts of the delisting process, and how different states and AOCs do things. Grieser noted that we were seeing that other states do things differently than each other, and differently than how Ohio approaches it.

Hughes noted that the PAC (Public Advisory Committee, the name other places use for their Advisory Committees) process is very different in other AOCs.

Our AC's lack of diversity was mentioned, as well as that all the PACs seem to have a diversity issue. Do we have a diversity recruitment committee? That's something the governance committee is working on.

Grieser noted that there won't be an AOC conference next year. They used to be biennial, only started having annual conferences recently.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Governance met last week, made recommendations for appointments for the next 2-year term. The AC will see the slate and vote at the January meeting. There are going to be open seats, if the limit is kept at 26 voting members, so we have flexibility to add on a rolling basis. Chairman Stubbs asked members to contact if they have suggestions.

Outreach Chair Hardy told of several presentations that the committee and partners, especially Arrye Rosser, have made. The AOC was represented at Crooked River Connections and CR Chronicles, Grieser was featured on a Making Waves podcast (see link at <https://freshwater-science.org/news/making-waves-ep-42>), staff set up at CLE Metroparks' Backyard Bash, had a table and poster at the AOC conference, and gave walking tours. Was at the Friday Water Trail designation event.

Chair Grieser suggested that anyone who does something that ties in AOC info through his or her own outreach, like Hardy does with Sea Grant literature, should let us know what messaging is going out.

Strategic Implementation – Grieser reported that Chairman Greenland couldn't be here, but we did have a SIP meeting since the last AOC meeting, where we got short presentations from each management action implementer. Jenn will get the slides to Jane to post on the web. Russ Brandenburg will be giving a more in-depth presentation on the USACE work on the Boston Mills/Station Road projects on November 12 at 10am, location tbd.

Petit noted that the project is still at concept stage.

Hilovsky asked if all the subcommittee schedules, minutes, etc, being circulated. Grieser responded that people chose one or more committees, notices go to those to be on a particular committee, since we don't want to overload everyone with everything.

Staff usually includes everyone in all committee meeting notices for a committee's first meeting each year in case someone wants to add or switch committees. Goodman agreed to continue the practice, and to include the link to the Dropbox where minutes and agenda are kept, and, per Hilovsky's suggestion, to post all of them on the website.

OHIO EPA REPORT

AOC Coordinator Melanie Barbis thanked Jenn Grieser and Lynn Garrity for their conference organizing work, noting it was the best attended AOC conference in history. Tetra Tech is doing BUI 3, 6, and 14 assessments of data, and also beach closing information. For habitat BUIs, the SIP committee met. She wants to set a date for another SIP meeting in Nov/Dec to confirm

what management actions will move forward. Canal \$ has been approved. Mayfield Sandridge project funds have been approved. As far as the total management action list, they are evaluating the Restrictions on Dredging BUI to see if a management action is needed, and hope to decide by early 2020. She has started on the BUI 8 (Eutrophication or Undesirable Algae) removal document, shooting for submitting by end of year, to get it removed by late 2020. She will send the draft removal document to the Advisory Committee for review as soon as it is ready.

CUYAHOGA RIVER RESTORATION – NONPROFIT FACILITATING ORGANIZATION REPORT

Jane Goodman reported that CRR filed the first quarter (April-June) and semi-annual progress and fiscal reports, completed the second quarter of the new 18-month Ohio EPA subgrant, and finances and work plan are on track. In addition to general secretariat duties, during the July-September quarter, CRR:

- Participated in AOC conference organizing conference calls, developed and managed the interactive polling and evaluation survey process for the conference, presented an overview of the ship channel for the Nautica Cruise, and assisted with the walking tour.
- Managed the AOC membership application and reapplication process, promoted membership application through email blasts and social media, and staffed the Governance Committee.
- Participated in planning and public meetings for the NPS-IS plan for the City of Cleveland-Cuyahoga River HUC.
- Represented the AOC on the Doan Brook Partnership board and assisted with annual Fishing Derby and Take to the Lake events.
- Did press outreach and communication for the Fish Consumption BUI Removal Fish Fry celebration event
- Made presentations and gave tours to guests of the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation District's Summer Supervisor School; a Cleveland Museum of Natural History boat tour; Hudson Rotary
- Exhibited at Cleveland Metroparks' Backyard Bash and the NEORSO Open House
- Advocated in support of GLRI and the AOC program in Congress (no federal funds were used for this National League of Cities trip.)
- Gave numerous interviews on the river's recovery to press and student journalists.
- Worked with LAND studio and Thunderbird development partners on fish habitat project for the Scranton west ship channel site.
- Presented two workshops to 120+ land managers on controlling invasive plants without use of chemical pesticides.

VIDEO

Chairwoman Grieser shared a video from the port featuring Flotsam and Jetsam.

Staff will email committee to set a date for the January meeting.

Grace Gallucci moved to adjourn, Elaine Price seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:28am.