



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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NOTICE OF A MEETING
AGRICULTURAL & RURAL COMMUNITIES OUTREACH TEAM
MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
REMOTE MEETING

January 21, 2021, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order** – *Chair Jessica D’Ambrosio*
2. **Guest Presentation** – *Dr. Jackson-Smith, The Ohio State University*
3. **Approval of November 19, 2020 Meeting Notes**
4. **Funding Updates** – *Brooke White & Chair Jessica D’Ambrosio*
5. **Repository Update** – *Edwina Teye*
6. **Discussion of Action Items for the Year** – *Chair Jessica D’Ambrosio*
7. **Other Business** – *Chair Jessica D’Ambrosio*
 - a. **Member Updates**
 - b. **Member Input on Future Presentation Topics**
8. **Adjourn**

Please notify Lynn Kaufman at 614-233-4189 or LKaufman@morpc.org to confirm your attendance for this meeting or if you require special assistance.

**The next meeting of the
Agricultural & Rural Communities Outreach Team
will be on March 18, 2021.
This meeting will be remote; details to follow.**

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director

Karen J. Angelou
Chair

Erik J. Janas
Vice Chair

Chris Amorose Groomes
Secretary

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Remote Meeting

Agricultural & Rural Communities Outreach Team
Meeting Notes

November 19, 2020, 10:00 am

Members Present

Larry Antosch, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
Brian Brandt, American Farmland Trust
Chair Jessica D'Ambrosio, The Nature
Conservancy
Nina Duerk, Strand Associates
Laura Fay, Friends of the Lower Olentangy
Watershed

Michelle Mattix, Marion Soil & Water
Conservation District
Scott Stephens, Delaware Soil & Water
Conservation District
Aaron Wilson, OSU Byrd Polar & Climate
Research Center
Kyle Wilson, Franklin Soil & Water
Conservation District

MORPC Staff Present

Lynn Kaufman
Edwina Teye

Brandi Whetstone
Brooke White

Meeting Called to Order at 10:02 am

Welcome and Introductions

Team Members and staff introduced themselves, their goals for joining the Team and their organizational affiliation.

**Guest Presentation / Sustaining Scioto Board's Charge to the Team –
Brooke White, MORPC**

Dr. White presented to the group the Board Charge for the Working Team as a means of providing a context for the Sustaining Scioto Board and the purpose of creating the Working Team. According to her, the purpose of the Sustaining Scioto Board is to provide clean and abundant water for Central Ohio in the face of a changing climate and in order to achieve that it was important to focus on partner sectors including the agricultural sector and rural communities and determine their role in achieving the purpose of the Board while also addressing the impact of climate change on these sectors and the subsequent effect on ensuring clean and abundant water for Central Ohio. Among others, Dr. White highlighted some of the short-term strategies of the Board including establishing regional collaborative forum, conducting water quality monitoring and developing a cooperative program with agriculture to reduce pollutant loads as well as some of the recommendations from the initial Sustaining Scioto Study.

Through a number of stakeholder engagements, Brooke discussed some of the needs that were brought to bear and which will inform the work of the Working Team including the desire to understand the state of the watershed, working at watershed scale to connect communities i.e. rural to urban and among sectors i.e. agriculture to utilities.

To conclude, Brooke highlighted the hopes of the Board for the Working Team. These included performing outreach that supports the goals of pollution reduction in the watershed, addressing climate change as it impacts and is impacted by these communities. These can be achieved

through the resources that working team members bring to bear and the ability to access the resources and reach of MORPC staff.

Member Exercise

The Chair opened the discussion to allow members contribute their knowledge about the watershed including existing data or gaps, resources, ongoing work among others to help shape the work of the Working Team.

Modelling/Monitoring

Member Brandt on behalf of AFT made it known to the group the existence of a dataset on water quality monitoring compiled from different sources including Ohio EPA, City of Columbus which was used to develop a phase 1 SWAT+ modelling analysis. This is data and results can be made available to the Working Team. Additionally, AFT through the Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework has analysis done on 3 of the 30 HUC 12 in the Upper Scioto Basin. The analysis identifies certain structural practices that can be implemented and that addresses water quality impacts on farmlands and other areas.

Member Antosch also pointed out the presence of TMDL and water quality report for the Scioto River Basin on the Ohio EPA website which will provide some background information about the watershed.

Member Wilson from OSU Byrd Polar & Climate Research Center discussed the existence of weather and high-resolution climate observation data over the region to help determine how things have changed across the watershed. He added that there is also updated precipitation data.

Member Fay mentioned that the City of Columbus has commissioned the Midwestern Biodiversity Institute to sample the Olentangy (18) and the Scioto (24) for biological indicators with the intent of rotating to some of the other watersheds next year. Data may be accessed.

Data is also available from AFT through surveying of farm landowners and farmers in Ohio about their willingness to implement conservation practices. There is however insufficient data on absentee landowners in the region.

With regards to local watershed studies in the last 5 years, Dr. Wilson will verify and inform the group about any local watershed studies conducted in the last 5 years.

Dr. Wilson also informed the group about farmer adaptation within the context of a social science research in the Lower Maumee and lead by Dr. Robin Wilson whereby some of the research survey can be useful to the Scioto watershed.

Short Term Planning for the Team

The Chair led a discussion on what the Team could focus on in the next year per the outlined broad program areas below.

Monitoring/Modelling

Developing a baseline of information from City of Columbus, Delco Water and other utility companies that engages in continuous sampling of the watershed data within their service area. It is also important to develop a network of partners within the upper watershed to assist with monitoring and addressing any concerns before the water reaches the various treatment plants in the watershed.

Outreach

This may not necessarily be embarking on new outreach programs but rather information gathering focused on what activities are been done in the watershed, what partners are involved in those outreach activities and how best the Team can disseminate existing outreach activities to a wider audience. If gaps in outreach are determined, the Working Team will collaboratively work with other partners to develop new outreach programs. For this task, it is also necessary to identify the various end users of the outreach activities to ensure all relevant partners are being reached.

Social Science Survey/Studies

Overview of farmers in the watershed, characteristics including their motivations in the watershed among others.

Other

Practices (including conservation adoption), water quality needs/benefits and the cost to achieving this water quality goal, benchmarking of practices and developing programmatic ideas around the buckets identified above.

Other Business

Long- and Short-Term Funding for the Team

City of Columbus Department of Utilities has earmarked \$10,000 for the Working Team which can be leveraged to achieve the program areas identified above.

The working team brainstormed about ways to utilize the dollar amount and ways to increase the amount where possible.

One way is the potential to collaborate with the coalition of Central Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Districts through the Be the Change of Clean Water. The group given their work and network with farmers may be able to conduct the social science study of farmers in the watershed.

To increase the available amount, Brain Brandt discussed a private foundation funding from AFT which is geared towards education and outreach for farmers and landowners which can be reallocated to support the outreach component of the Working Team or can be used in a cost share program to support the outreach work including conducting the social science survey program in the watershed.

New Meeting Schedule

The meeting schedule will remain as scheduled. Meetings will be held on the third week of every other month with the next meeting scheduled for January.

Adjourned at 11:29 am.



Agricultural & Rural Communities Outreach Team

January 21, 2021



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Guest Presentation

Doug Jackson- Smith, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University

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Funding Updates

Jessica D'Ambrosio, Chair

&

Brooke White, MORPC

Repository Update



MORPC

Dropbox Link

- [_](#)
- [Nutrient Mass Balance Study](#)
- Upcoming Events – Feb 4th, TNC Lunch & Learn Series: Intro to Ag. Conservation Planning Framework Toolbox

Call to Action: Active Participation & Leadership

Agreed Objectives / Activities

- Monitoring/Modelling
- Outreach & Education
- Social Science Survey/Studies
- Other (i.e., practices, water quantity benchmarks etc.)

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Other Business

Jessica D'Ambrosio, Chair



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Meeting Adjourn

Jessica D'Ambrosio

Chair

**Ag & Rural Communities
Outreach Working Team**

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