



CARE Meeting Summary – July 23, 2020

Thursday, July 23, 2020, 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM CDT
Zoom Event, Held Remotely

In Attendance: Michelle Caldwell, Michael Spinar, Jim Bailey, Anne Remek, Paul McMurray (IDEM); John Fekete (CARE); Kristen Isom, Peg Donnelly (USEPA); Jenny Orsburn, Emily Stork (IDNR); Fernando Treviño (City of East Chicago); Kay Nelson (NWI Forum); Jennifer Birchfield (NWI Urban Waters – joined after the initial presentation); Leslie Dorworth (IL-IN SeaGrant); Linda Lancaster (NPS/NWI Urban Waters); Will Tucker (USFWS); Ashley Overton (City of Gary); Mariya Trenkinshu (ArcelorMittal)

Cline Ave Ditch Presentation: Jacob Hassan (USEPA); Mike Tomka, Eric Pardys (GHD); Rick Passmore (Glenn Springs Holdings, Inc.)

Public Attendees: 4*

* Members of the public should be considered approximate, as attendance fluctuated during the meeting and members of the public were not required to self-identify.

1. Presentation on Cline Avenue Ditch Proposed Remedy (See [PDF of Presentation](#))

Michael Spinar opened the meeting promptly at 1:00 pm with a presentation on the proposed remedy for the Cline Avenue Ditch. Michael mentioned that oily debris have regularly been noted at the old Cline Avenue Bridge. He then introduced Jacob Hassan, an on-scene coordinator (OSC) from U.S. EPA, who is the removal project manager for the Cline Avenue Ditch project. Michael stated that the regular meeting, including introductions, would occur at 1:30 pm, following the presentation.

Jacob provided some background on USEPA's involvement with the site and the nature of the petroleum product observed at the site. He then introduced two individuals from GHD, an environmental engineering firm, and one individual from Glenn Springs Holdings, Inc. (GSH), a subsidiary of Occidental Petroleum. The GHD staff walked through the presentation, which included a brief summary of the focused feasibility study and an overview of the proposed remedy.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Jacob discussed the public comment period, which extends through August 21. Documents are available for review online at <https://www.epa.gov/in/cline-avenue-ditch-site> and in-person at the Gary Public Library. Jacob also stated that, due to COVID-19, it is difficult for USEPA to review mailed comments and provided information on three preferred means of providing public comment:

- Online comment
- Calling a toll-free number
- Emailing Janet Pope, the USEPA Community Involvement Coordinator.



Jacob, GHD, and GSH staff then addressed questions from those in attendance. Michael Spinar thanked EPA, GHD, and GSH for taking time to present to the CARE Committee.

2. CARE Introductions:

At approximately 1:25 pm, John Fekete took roll of those in attendance.

3. June 2020 CARE Meeting Summary

John Fekete inquired as to whether there were any corrections to the June 2020 IDEM CARE Meeting Summary. No comments were received.

4. Sediment Management Actions (BUIs #1-2, #4-7) Update

a. Dredging of Navigational Channel

Michael Spinar reminded the group that this includes both the work to clear the dredging backlog of the Congressionally authorized federal navigation channel and the dredging of selected berthing areas outside the federal channel at the request of local property owners. All dredged materials will be deposited in the Indiana Harbor Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) in East Chicago.

Michael reported that water treatment at the Indiana Harbor Confined disposal facility continues. Water treatment for at least 60 days is required prior to initiating dredging. The contractor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers currently expects to resume dredging in September 2020 and continue through approximately November, depending on the weather. Dredging will occur 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A total of approximately 182,000 cubic yards is anticipated for removal during this dredging season, of which approximately 129,000 cubic yards is slated for removal from the federal channel. Dredging outside the federal channel paid for with ArcelorMittal Supplemental Environmental Project funds is no longer planned for 2020; however, the Army Corps still estimates that the remaining sediment backlog within the federal channel will be cleared this year.

The Army Corps has received incremental funding to begin the dike raise at the CDF and still expects to award a contract for the construction in September 2020, with the project being completed sometime in late 2023. Thereafter the CDF will be utilized to store sediments dredged over the next 30 years (through approximately 2053).

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

b. Lake George Branch Middle & East



Michael also provided CARE members with an update on this project, reminding members that the East Portion extends from Indianapolis Boulevard in East Chicago to the CSX railroad bridge in Hammond. Approximately 40 percent of the Lake George East project area is within the federal navigation channel. The Middle Portion extends from the CSX bridge to the BP land bridge.

Michael relayed that the US Army Corps is currently working to complete the project design. In the meantime, ARCO/BP continues source control work on the South and West Tank Farm parcels at the former ECI refinery site.

The 30 percent design completed by ARCO/BP's contractor is under review by the project team and the 90 percent design is expected to be completed by the end of 2021. The current construction schedule for the project components is as follows:

- Lake George East, first phase dredging:
 - Approximately 33,000 yards of material to be deposited in the Indiana Harbor CDF
 - Anticipated to occur this year, likely beginning in October or November.
- Lake George Middle, capping:
 - Beginning in early-to-mid 2021 and continuing through the first half of 2022
- Construction of BP's bank stabilization system at the West Tank Farm:
 - Beginning in mid-2021 and continuing through mid-2022
- Completion of BP's barrier wall at the South Tank Farm:
 - Expected to be conducted during most of 2023
- Lake George East, second phase dredging:
 - Will utilize offsite disposal in a permitted landfill for materials dredged from the south bank of the IHSC)
 - Expected to be conducted during most of 2023 and 2024.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

c. East Branch, Phase II

Michael also provided CARE members with an update on this project, reminding members that the East Branch Phase II project includes the dredging and capping of 2.5 miles of the East Branch of the Grand Calumet River between Cline Avenue and the US Steel Reach in Gary, as well as closure of the Ralston Street Lagoon in Gary.

Michael stated that EPA staff continue to work with the Gary Sanitary District to determine whether additional work may be credited as non-federal match. The agency is not currently aware of any additional non-federal sponsors that may be found to support the remedial portion of the project. It is therefore currently unknown whether sufficient nonfederal match will be available to proceed into the project phase.



No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

d. Junction Reach

Michael provided CARE members with an update on this project, reminding them that the Junction Reach includes approximately 1.5 miles of the Indiana Harbor Ship Canal south of Columbus Drive and approximately 1.4 miles of the Grand Calumet River between Indianapolis Boulevard and Kennedy Avenue. It is currently anticipated that only containment will be utilized for the portion of the Grand Calumet River from the Junction to Kennedy Avenue. Both removal and containment are anticipated for the remainder of the project area.

Michael related that a 70% design of the Junction Reach was completed in 2015, with the report being released in early 2016. EPA, IDEM, and the East Chicago Waterway Management District are still working to identify additional non-federal cost share needed to complete the Grand Calumet River and Indiana Harbor Ship Canal project areas concurrently. If all goes according to plan, the project design would be completed in 2021 and the project itself, conducted during most of 2022 and into early 2023.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

e. BUI #7 Removal Target Update

Michael noted that IDEM continues to work to revise the removal target for BUI #7: Restrictions on Dredging Activities. Once the draft target has been further refined, it will be vetted through the CARE Committee. IDEM currently plans to complete revision of this BUI removal target in 2020.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

5. Habitat Management Actions (BUI #3 & BUI #14) Update

a. Management Action #1 – Dune, Swale, and Riverine Restoration

Michael updated CARE members on some administrative notes regarding the Dune and Swale Grant. IDEM is in the process of amending the agreements with Lake County Parks and IDNR to allow for the work to continue through September 30, 2021, consistent with the no-cost time extension approved by U.S. EPA on May 11, 2020. Currently, the Lake County Parks Contract is routing through the electronic signature process. IDNR plans to submit a proposal for additional funding necessary to complete the work early next year.

Emily Stork updated members that Lake County Parks had lost a crew leader and TNC was providing support for this function. Ground crews are functioning well and have



gotten used to the COVID-19 social distancing procedures. Most properties have had an initial treatment at this point; only portions of Pine Station, Clark and Pine, and Gibson Woods have yet to be addressed by the crews.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

b. Management Action #2 – River Corridor Establishment

Michael updated CARE members that IDEM, IDNR, and a few other CARE members are evaluating alternative mechanisms for supporting the BUI #3 and #14 removal target in lieu of the River Corridor Establishment project.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

c. Management Action #3 – Lake George Branch Wetlands Restoration

Emily updated CARE members that she, Anne Remek, and Carl Wodrich visited the project site with Davey recently. IDNR observed good control of invasive species. Emily relayed that high water levels have inundated the BP wetland areas and it appears that many of the emergent plant species have drowned.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

d. Management Action #4 – Prescribed Fire Plan/Contractual Burns

Will Tucker updated the group that there have been no new burns conducted, as it is outside the burn season. The subawardees have conducted eight burns out of 25 planned. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is working to extend the cooperative agreement with EPA, which would allow the work to continue until September 30, 2022.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

e. Management Action #5 – Pine Station Ponds and Oxbow

Emily stated that there was no update since the June CARE Workgroup Meeting.

f. Early Detections

Emily reported that there have been no new early detections of invasive species at the properties.

g. BUI #3 and BUI #14 Removal Targets



Michael reported that IDEM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and IDNR continue work to revise BUI #14, Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat. Separate fish and wildlife habitat workgroups have convened to draft proposed revisions. It is currently anticipated that the revisions will be vetted before the full CARE Committee in the first quarter of 2021.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

6. Beach Closings (BUI #10) Update

Michelle Caldwell reported that, due to contractual issues, Gary was not able to begin monitoring for the 2020 beach season until July 16. All beaches are now monitoring for *E. coli*, but COVID-19 precautions have resulted in the closure of some of the beaches. It appears unlikely at this point that the Jeorse Park I and Jeorse Park II monitoring sites will meet the BUI #10 removal target in 2020.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

7. Aesthetics (BUI #11) Update

Michael reported that the main update with respect to the aesthetics BUI was the proposed remedy for the oil discharges into the Cline Avenue Ditch, as presented to CARE members. He reminded members that IDEM's AOC aesthetics monitoring has pointed to build-up of oily debris and trash at the Old Cline Avenue Bridge and reiterated that U.S. EPA has announced a 30-day public comment period, from July 13 through August 21.

IDEM RAP Program staff continue to track progress toward completion of work, such as the Cline Avenue Ditch project, that has the potential to positively impact aesthetics within the AOC.

No follow-up questions or comments were received from CARE members.

8. BUI #8 and #13 Update

Michael reminded CARE members that, during the summers of 2020, 2021, and 2022, USGS will measure pH, specific conductance, water temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, chlorophyll and phycocyanin at approximately 15-minute intervals at two streamflow gauges: the Indiana Harbor Canal near Canal Street and the West Branch of the Grand Calumet River at Columbia Avenue.

The USGS-IDEM Joint Funding Agreement that allocates funding for this work has now been signed. The upgrade to the Columbia Avenue site began in early July and the Indiana Harbor Canal site was upgraded early the week of July 13. The water quality data for both sites is currently being logged internally but should be configured to transmit data live to the USGS National Water Information System, or NWIS, within the next few weeks.



IDEM and its partners continue to work to determine appropriate reference sites against which to assess BUI status.

9. Outreach/Education Activities

Michael updated CARE members on the outreach and education activities being conducted. Such activities continue to be severely impacted by measures instituted to address the Covid-19 pandemic. However, IDEM is still moving forward with the AOC Beaches video. The agency's contractor for the project began filming on June 30 and July 1. Interviews were taped with Mayor Jerome Prince of Gary and Brenda Scott Henry of Gary, Natalie Adams of the East Chicago Marina, John Fekete, and Michael. An additional round of footage and interviews is planned for July 28. IDEM is looking forward to showcasing the video for the whole CARE Committee once it is completed in October.

Michael met with Marie Laudeman, the Indiana Dunes State Park Interpretive Naturalist, to go over some ideas for remote and other alternative-format outreach on July 10. Marie made some suggestions on types of remote presentations and potential resources to review. In particular, Michael was provided with a guide IDNR developed on conducting remote outreach earlier in the day. He plans to review the materials and suggestions and report back to CARE members at next month's meeting.

Finally, Michael reported that IDEM is working with its partners, including area land managers to obtain footage of the AOC remediation and restoration efforts. The goal of the effort is to develop a video highlighting the AOC restoration. This would be utilized for public outreach and Great Lakes Legacy Act partnership recruitment efforts. Michael encouraged CARE members to contact him with information on any footage that might be included.

10. Table Talk

Michael shared that progress drafting the new 2020-2024 Lake Michigan LAMP continues and that the Lake Michigan Partnership has adopted a new logo for use in branding the Lake Michigan LAMP program.

11. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

12. Meeting Adjournment

John Fekete adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:15 pm.

Next Workgroup Meeting: Thursday, August 27, 2020, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Tentatively a Zoom Meeting