

Purpose and Process for the Plan Update

Addressing Requirements for Water Quality Management Planning

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) brings together local governments, business organizations and community groups to collaborate on plans and programs for improving the Tri-State's quality of life and economic development potential. Members of OKI include almost 200 units of local government—cities, towns, villages and townships—in southwest Ohio (Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties), northern Kentucky (Boone, Campbell and Kenton Counties), and southeast Indiana (Dearborn County).

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) is responsible for water quality management planning in the greater Cincinnati region as an outgrowth of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, more commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act. The goal of the 1972 Clean Water Act has been “to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.”

Section 208 of the Clean Water Act requires that areas with substantial water quality problems develop a management plan to control pollution on a regional basis, often referred to as “208” plans for the sake of brevity. OKI was selected for this role both by its member governments and by the governors of Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. As a result, OKI developed the original water quality management plan in the period between 1974 and 1977. The resulting 1977 plan addressed point sources of pollution from publicly owned wastewater treatment works, nonpoint sources of pollution such as stormwater runoff, and intermittent sources such as combined sewers (older sewers carrying both stormwater and wastewater, the combination of which may bypass the treatment plant when the volume of flow increases with heavy rains).

Since OKI's original 208 plan was adopted in early 1978, federal funding for water quality management planning has not been consistently available, and updates and amendments to OKI's plan have been commensurately limited by lack of resources. By federal and state law, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) cannot issue discharge permits for wastewater treatment facilities that are substantially inconsistent with an adopted 208 plan. Consequently, an updated 208 plan for Dearborn County should help to enable permits for wastewater treatment facilities intended to deal with failing septic tank pollution or economic development opportunities without causing pollution.

The Plan Update Process

In February of 2010, OKI received a grant from IDEM to prepare a comprehensive water quality management plan update for Dearborn County. With assistance from the Dearborn County Plan Commission, one of OKI's first tasks was to form an advisory committee whose names and affiliations are listed at the end of this chapter.

The Advisory Committee was composed of individuals and organizations that have interest in and responsibility for aspects of water quality management in the county, because of their potential role in implementing the plan update, their knowledge of water issues and concerns in the county, and their assistance in informing the public about the plan update. The Advisory Committee's role was to represent citizens and local organizations in the planning process; to provide guidance to OKI; and to host public meetings and encourage public input.

Beginning in April, 2010 and concluding in June 2011, the Advisory Committee met with OKI staff every few months for a total of seven meetings, providing information and opinions, reviewing draft materials, suggesting modifications, and acting as a sounding board. (Advisory Committee meeting agendas and meeting summaries are provided in Appendix A.) In addition to meeting with the committee as a whole, OKI staff consulted with individual members about their specific areas of expertise: with conservation, watershed and health department staff about nonpoint sources of pollution such as stormwater runoff and hot spots of failing septic tank systems, for example, and with wastewater management agencies about their collection systems, treatment plants, operations, plans and resources.

In addition to involving the Advisory Committee, the plan update process also provided ongoing opportunities for public input. An initial public meeting was held in May 2010 to describe the plan update effort and gather input on public concerns related to water quality. Outreach to communities and organizations about draft plan recommendations was undertaken with presentations and visits countywide in February and March by the Advisory Committee Chairman and OKI staff. Another public meeting was held in May 2011 about revised draft plan recommendations to gather feedback with discussion, comments made at displays and a seven-item opinion survey that also allowed space for write-in comments. The plan update process and each of the public meetings was publicized to the media. (Public outreach and meeting materials are provided in Appendix B.)

To keep the plan update process as transparent as possible, public meeting materials such as agendas, presentations and surveys, evolving draft plan update recommendations and Advisory Committee meeting agendas and summaries were posted for public consumption and feedback on a dedicated page of the Dearborn County website via <http://www.dearborncounty.org/waterplan> which also has invited comments to county and OKI staff. From the beginning of the plan update process, it was clear that while participants agreed that water quality management issues are of great importance to Dearborn County, there was not consistent agreement on how they should be addressed in terms of which wastewater management agencies should provide centralized wastewater treatment to which areas in the county.

At the Advisory Committee's last meeting on June 13, 2011, much discussion and three sets of voting were needed to arrive at a final map of wastewater management designations, with votes of 10-13, 7-15 and 20-2; the process is described in greater detail in the meeting summary in Appendix A. This plan update includes the final map voted upon by the Advisory Committee and text describing the expectations associated with planning for and managing wastewater flows.

This plan update will be submitted to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and provided to OKI's policy body for action in keeping with OKI's planning designation by the state of Indiana. (On a quarterly basis the 117-member OKI Board of Directors meets and acts as the policy body, and during the other months an OKI Executive Committee of approximately 30 members has been named to act as the policy body.) After OKI takes action on the plan update, documentation of that action will also be submitted to IDEM.

Dearborn County Water Quality Management Plan Update
Advisory Committee Members
May, 2011

City of Aurora

Randy Turner, Director of Utilities

Dearborn Co. Chamber of Commerce

Mike Rozow, President and COO

Dearborn Co. Board of Commissioners

Tom Orschell

Dearborn Co. Council

Dan Lansing, Councilman

Dearborn Co. Geographic Information Systems

Margaret Minzner, GIS Specialist

Dearborn Co. Health Department

Doug Baer (Alternate: John Grace)

Dearborn Co. Plan Commission

Mark McCormack, Dtr., Planning & Zoning

Dearborn Co. Regional Sewer District

Steve Renihan, President of the Board

Dearborn Co. Soil and Water Conservation District

Rita Cutter, District Coordinator

Dearborn Co. Stormwater Coordinator

Jennifer Hughes

Dillsboro Sewer Board

Scott Fortner

Town of Dillsboro

Jim Deaton (*Committee Chairman*)

City of Greendale

Steve Lampert, City Manager

Hidden Valley Lake Prop. Owners Assn.

Bruce Keller, Community Manager

Lawrenceburg Conservancy District

E.B. Seitz

City of Lawrenceburg

Mel Davis, Utility Director

Logan-Miller-Harrison Utilities

Jeff Tucker, Tucker Homes

Moore's Hill Sewage Treatment

Paul Grimsley

Oxbow, Inc.

John Getzendanner, Vice President

South Dearborn Regional Sewer District

Bill Neyer, Superintendent

South Laughery Creek Watershed Group

Duane Drockelman, Coordinator

St. Leon Sewer Board

Chuck Hail (Alternate: Steve Canter)

Town of St. Leon

Andy Bischoff (Alternate: Carl D. Farrow)

Tanners Creek/Hogan Creek Watershed Groups

Heather Wirth, Coordinator

Valley Rural Utility Company

Floyd Ogden

Town of West Harrison

Christina Swafford