

# STATE COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GROUND WATER

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## TO PROMOTE AND GUIDE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A COORDINATED, COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE GROUND WATER PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE STATE OF OHIO

December 18, 2008  
Dutch Kitchen  
Plain City, Ohio

The December 2008 SCCGW meeting consisted of Agency announcements and a discussion of the unusual flooding event in Erie and Seneca Counties in Spring 2008 .

### ATTENDANCE

Ohio EPA: Tom Allen, Michael Eggert, Bob Knipmeyer, Barb Lubberger  
ODNR: John Kessler, Rick Pavey, Jim Raab  
ODH: Rebecca Fugitt  
ODOT: Andrea Stevenson  
USGS: Ralph Haefner

related to watersheds and ground water and would welcome assistance from other agencies.

National Ground Water Week is coming up in March. Besides coordinating on a press release, we would like to develop a story line on ground water resources in northwest Ohio for the EcoTrack II program.

### AGENCY UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **SCCGW Chairman:**

WMAO Water Luncheon. The next luncheon will be held on Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at OSU's Center for Automotive Research on Kinnear Road. Ralph Haefner (USGS) will speak on "Pharmaceuticals and Other Organic Wastewater Compounds in Waters of Ohio and the United States."

Storm Center. Ohio EPA received a request from StormCenter (EcoTrack II Program) and WTOL in Toledo for water resources-related stories. Particularly welcome are stories concerning environmental efforts in northwest Ohio. Please let Tom Allen know of any upcoming events or potential story lines. Ohio EPA is working on story lines

GW-SW Interaction Issues. Recently concerns have been raised that construction of the Cleveland Clinic could interrupt ground water flow into Tinkers Creek, which is a very high quality stream in northeast Ohio. Also, in southeast Ohio, a proposed coal mining and wastewater slurry pond could impact ground water flow to Casey Run.

#### **Ohio Dept. of Transportation:**

Project Criteria. A Track Review Commission is voting today on whether to adopt new criteria for which projects make it to the 'track list'. Among them:

- Does the project aid the economy?
- Does it reduce transportation-related air quality emissions?

Economic Stimulus Package. ODOT is hopeful that if funds are provided to Ohio as part of the promised Stimulus Package, a substantial portion will go to transportation projects that are currently on hold.

21<sup>st</sup> Century Transportation Committee. Recommendations are due out by the end of 2008.

***Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water:***

Great Lakes Compact. The Compact has been ratified by all concerned states and provinces, and signed by President Bush. It went into effect on December 8, 2008. The division is participating on an Advisory Board to develop recommendations for water withdrawals (first meeting will be in April). The division has sent out a form to all the large pumpers within the Ohio portion of the Great Lakes basin to get new baseline information.

***Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geologic Survey:***

Rockies Express (REX). The Ohio portion of the Rockies Express pipeline—a 42-inch-diameter pipeline to bring natural gas from Colorado to the eastern states—is underway. ODNR staff are monitoring the drilling beneath Scenic Rivers.

***Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Soil and Water Conservation:***

Core Programs. Despite severe funding cuts over the last few years--and the expectation of more to come--the Division's core programs are continuing their missions with fewer staff.

Livestock Operations. A task force, which includes representatives from the various state agencies, has been convened to provide recommendations regarding oversight of the state's 25,000 small CAFOs.

***United States Geological Survey:***

Climate Change. The USGS expects the Obama team to contact them soon to share the administration's goals on this topic, and determine the research that will be needed to reach those goals.

Cabinet Appointments. President-elect Obama has named Colorado Senator Ken Salazar as Secretary of the Interior.

Stream Gage Program. USGS is concerned that the state stream gage program--which is partially funded by ODNR--will be discontinued due to the ODNR budget cuts. USGS has approached the Ohio Water Development Authority for a grant to keep the program alive.

New Reports.

- Tertuliani, J.S., Alvarez, D.A., Furlong, E.T., Meyer, M.T., Zaugg, S.D., and Koltun, G.F., 2008, Occurrence of Organic Wastewater Compounds in the Tinkers Creek Watershed and Two Other Tributaries to the Cuyahoga River, Northeast Ohio: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report, 2008-5173, 60 p.
- Dumouchelle, D.H., 2008, Streamflow Gains and Losses for Hellbranch Run, Franklin County, Ohio, August 2007: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2008-5191, 7 p.

Lake Erie Beaches. A limited study of *E. coli* levels in shallow monitoring points along Lake Erie beaches suggests huge and rapid fluctuations of bacterial contamination, from 500 colonies (which exceeds recreational use standards) to millions of colonies. This year \$50,000 has been set aside to continue with this study.

Pharmaceuticals in Water Bodies. The main messages coming from this continuing program:

- A multitude of pharmaceuticals can be found in virtually all water bodies, albeit at very low concentrations.
- QA/QC is critical, because sampler contamination is common. Breathing above a sampling tube can contaminate the sample with such substances as caffeine, shampoo and soap.
- The treatment program that removes pharmaceuticals most effectively is granulated activated carbon (GAC).

Merger Rumor. Reportedly there has been some discussion at the national level of merging NOAA with USGS. NOAA has approximately one-third the staff of USGS, but many times the budget.

Brine Disposal. USGS has heard that increased drilling for natural gas in the Marcellus Shale in

Appalachia has led to the disposal of brine into the Ohio River.

#### **Ohio EPA, Directors Office:**

The Director's attention this month is focused on:

- The juvenile cancer cluster in the Village of Clyde. Eighteen cases of juvenile cancers have been reported in recent years but so far a common factor has not been identified. Ohio EPA has committed to doing more air sampling and water sampling, but so far environmental sources are not implicated.
- The Coal Bill. Recently a bill was proposed in the Ohio Senate to switch authority for regulation of mining operations wastewater from Ohio EPA to ODNR.

#### **Ohio Department of Health:**

Sewage Rules. The changes to the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3718, which were suspended for two years, are scheduled to be reinstated on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. ODH is starting to work on new rules for home wastewater treatment systems again, this time with much greater consensus from industry. More information on this topic is available at <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/eh/sewage/sewage1.aspx>

#### **Ohio EPA, Division of Drinking and Ground Waters:**

Technical Guidance Document. The Division recently updated Chapter 8 (on development of monitoring wells) of its *Technical Guidance Manual for Hydrogeologic Investigations and Ground Water Monitoring*. This chapter will be e-mailed to SCCGW members for technical review.

Radionuclides in Ground Water. The Division is finalizing its report on the occurrence and distribution of radionuclides in Ohio ground water. It should become available in January.

Fluoride in Ground Water. The Division is currently drafting a report on the occurrence and distribution of natural fluoride in Ohio ground water.

Well Standards Rules. Revisions to rules for public drinking water wells should be proposed in January.

Ground Water Rule. This U.S. EPA rule, to be adopted for Ohio by 2010, requires triggered raw water monitoring in ground water wells for *E. coli*. If *E. coli* is found, the system may have to provide corrective actions or treatment for "four-log removal" (i.e., removal of 99.99% of the *E. coli*).

New Washington Test Wells. Due to a significant drop in its reservoir levels, the City of New Washington completed a test well to a depth of 600 feet below ground surface. Water quality samples indicated levels of uranium that make this a suboptimal source of drinking water.

Karst Dye-Trace Study. A dye-trace study was recently conducted in the "Lime Ridge" area around Carey, Ohio, to obtain information about ground water time-of-travel through this karst terrain. Fluorescein was injected into a pool inside a cave at a depth of about 60 feet below surface, and was subsequently detected at various nearby springs and in some wells. The study is currently being compiled and more information will be available this Spring.

River Spill Studies. USGS recently conducted dye-trace studies in streams at Marysville and Delaware to calibrate the time-of-travel modeling software River Spill for those stream reaches upstream of public water supply intakes.

#### **DISCUSSION**

John Kessler (ODNR) summarized the Spring 2008 flooding event in Erie and Seneca Counties as follows:

Continuous heavy rains starting in March overwhelmed the subsurface drainage capacity and led to standing water in 179 separate basins throughout the area. As a result, State Route 269 was closed till mid-June and many homes were damaged from flooded basements and heaving foundations.

ODNR developed maps of the flooded areas based on high-resolution aerial photography provided by ODOT. Also, potentiometric maps were completed for water levels measured on September 3 and October 22, 2008. This enabled ODNR to provide a

draft “ground water watershed boundary for the flooded areas”.

ODNR also drafted a Fact Sheet that was distributed to SCCGW meeting attendees. It concludes that flood events such as this can be expected periodically in this area, and that ditch maintenance most likely will not provide sufficient drainage during such events. It recommends (1) creating and maintaining grassed buffer strips to reduce the amount of sediment flowing into the sinkholes; and (2) not building permanent structures within the areas that flooded during 2008.

The USGS is working on a more comprehensive study that will incorporate and refine these findings.

**NEXT SCCGW MEETING:**

...will be held February 19<sup>th</sup> at the Horace Collins facility and will feature a presentation on the Hellbranch Creek ground water influence report by ODNR-Division of Water and USGS.

**REMINDER:** Meeting agendas and final meeting summaries will be posted on the SCCGW Web site: [www.epa.state.oh.us/ddagw/SCCGW/index.html](http://www.epa.state.oh.us/ddagw/SCCGW/index.html)