



Waukegan Harbor Citizens' Advisory Group

P.O. Box 297

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<http://waukeganharborcag.com>

Minutes of the February 18, 2016, CAG meeting held at Lilac Cottage, Waukegan Park District, Waukegan respectfully submitted by Natalie Dutack, acting as Recording Secretary of the Waukegan Harbor Citizens' Advisory Group.

The February 18, 2016, meeting of the Waukegan Harbor Citizens Advisory Group was called to order at 6:11 pm by Chair, Susie Schreiber.

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and asked everyone to identify themselves and any group that they represent.

Attendance at the February 18, 2016 CAG Meeting:

Penny Bouchard	Concerned Citizen
Claudia Freeman	Waukegan Park District
Blake Hudson	Congressman Dold's Office
Paul Kakuris	Concerned Citizen
Lauren Luebker	Akzo Nobel Aerospace Coatings
Jamie O'Meara	Concerned Citizen
Laura Roberts	Concerned Citizen
Rich Romanek	National Gypsum
Ania Ruszaj	IDNR
Susie Schreiber	Illinois Audubon
Joe Seidelmann	Waukegan Port District
Zak Shapiro	Congressman Dold's Office
Angela Smith	Foss Park District
Fred Veenbaas	NRG, Inc. Waukegan Station
Don Wilson	Concerned Citizen

GUESTS:

Rosemary Heilemann	League of Women Voters – Lake County & Lake Michigan Region
Charlie Hoffman	Lake Forest Open Lands & Concerned Citizen
Jeff Sundberg	Lake Forest College

AGENDA

Welcome to the 280th meeting!

There is an addition to the agenda:

GLRI Grant audit – final report for July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

Penny Bouchard noted an additional announcement will be made of the end of the meeting.

MINUTES

We are all up to date on minutes.

Under the January 2016 minutes the following edits were noted:

- On page 3 under IDNR report it should be 309 not 307.
- Add IDNR instead of State of Illinois to the USEPA portion of the report.
- Add “motion to end meeting seconded”

Fred Veenbaas made a motion to accept the minutes, with the noted corrections. Don Wilson seconded the motion. Motion was approved and passed.

UPDATES

USEPA

North Shore Gas (Former Manufactured Gas Plants) sites

South Plant

USEPA approved the remedial design (RD) work plan for dense non-aqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) remediation on February 8th. The design for the DNAPL remedy is estimated to be completed in 15-18 months. USEPA and North Shore Gas are currently in negotiations on the construction of the DNAPL remedy. An agreement is expected before the year is over.

Johns Manville Corp. site

With the exceptions of road repairs and hauling in cover materials, most construction activities are on hold for the winter. Most of the work is expected to resume around April 2016, when weather permits. USEPA expects to receive a response from the IDNR about the next steps on a proposed remedy for Operable Unit (OU) 06 also known as Site 1 / Nature Preserve Road by the end of February.

Outboard Marine Corporation site

Some beaver activity created some more contamination on the north end of the site. USEPA will need to dredge the ditch and address the source of contamination to the western edge of the project area. Patch work will be done on the eastern side of the ditch.

Yeoman Creek Landfill

No Report.

Note: A new map is coming.

Questions

When will fence come down on the OMC Plant 2 site?

That is up to the City of Waukegan. USEPA has no issue with fence. Work should be done by early summer, and then the City can decide what to do.

IEPA

Nothing to report.

IDNR

Ania Rusjaz

Fish, Benthic, and Phytoplankton Sampling

We now have results of the fish sampling. At this stage it is just raw data. IDNR will analyze this data and then send it on to the Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program (a cooperative effort between the Departments of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Public Health, and the Illinois Emergency Management and Environmental Protection Agencies) to determine what the updated advisories are on the fish in Waukegan Harbor.

We are also working on data and analysis for the benthic sampling done in the summer of 2015. This work will be conducted April-June. We will have results to present to Waukegan Harbor CAG in the summer.

City of Waukegan

Not present

CAG BUSINESSS

USACE

The USACE has received an appropriation for the North Seawall repairs on the Waukegan Harbor Federal Channel. Under Structure Repair the Waukegan North Seawall Repair has \$2.36 million dollars budgeted. There is also \$1.439 million allocated for navigational dredging of Waukegan Harbor Outer Harbor and Approach Channel for 2016. Please thank your congressmen and senators. It's extremely good news!

USACE has requested the Waukegan Harbor CAG to complete a survey on the products and services provided to Waukegan from USACE for 2015 by Feb 26, 2016. This will be done.

USACE Great Lakes Navigation Team Stakeholder Meeting

The meeting will take place on Wednesday March 2, from 10 am - 12:00 pm in Detroit. The meeting will be live streamed to the USACE Chicago office. Please advise the USACE if you would like to attend the webinar in their Chicago office.

US and Binational Great Lakes Areas of Concern Meeting

The Great Lakes AOC meeting will take place March 2-3, 2016 in Dearborn Michigan. Susie Schreiber and Tom Chefalo will be attending. The Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) will cover the costs.

GLRI Support

We had a letter from GLNPO urging the community to contact our Congressional representatives and request them to support the next cycle of funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative by writing letters of support. Sample request:

Dear Great Lakes Area of Concern Leaders:

Please contact your Congressional representatives and urge them to support continued funding of \$300 million for the GLRI in FY 2017. Ask them to sign on to a bipartisan letter urging the House Appropriations Committee to provide level funding of \$300 million for the GLRI. The deadline for signing the letter is March 15.

The quickest way to contact your representative is to call the capitol switchboard at [202-225-3121](tel:202-225-3121) and ask to be transferred to their office. The “Dear Colleague” letter is below followed by the letter to the House Appropriations Committee.

Be sure to emphasize how the GLRI is supporting restoration efforts in your AOC and other important priorities for the Great Lakes – shutting the door on Asian carp and other invasive species; preventing polluted runoff that closes beaches and causes toxic algal blooms; and restoring habitat for valuable fish and wildlife. **Your voices make a difference and have helped build strong Congressional support for the GLRI – keep it up!**

Thank you and let me know if there’s any way I can help.

Matt Doss
Policy Director
Great Lakes Commission

Birding Economics: Activity and Preferences of Resident and Non-Resident Birders in Lake County Forest Preserves

Jeffrey Sundberg – Lake Forest College

We started the study wanting to know how birders used Lake County Forest Preserve District, how birding impacts the county as whole, and how to design sites for birders.

Why do we care about birds and birders?

Birds are useful because they are obvious. People don’t go to observe mammals because they are harder to spot, but birds *are* observable. Birds are also a good indicator of ecological health.

Birders themselves are visible and comprise a large portion of the population who are public about their activities and share data. There are a number of organizations that conduct surveys of birders.

Why Forest Preserves?

LCFPD (Lake County Forest Preserve District) has an excellent reputation with birders. There is a big emphasis on ecological quality and a variety of different habitats.

Why now?

There are a lot of opportunities to provide additional birding areas within Forest Preserve sites and chances to make specific preserves birding destinations.

Preserve Usage Data

We went to popular electronic sources: e-BIRD and IBET. They are public forums with a lot of data and input from local birders.

- Data relating to the Forest Preserves prior to July 1, 2014 were analyzed.
- Results showed top destinations were Rollins Savanna and Ryerson Conservation Area
- Other important sites were Middlefork Savanna, Fort Sheridan, Almond Marsh, Spring Bluff, Wright Woods, and Lyons Woods.

Survey Analysis

There were 147 responses; 72 were Lake County residents and 75 were from elsewhere. Of these, 39 were from Cook County.

In general it was also found that birders tend to have a higher income. When asked if birding at LCFPD caused them to spend money in Lake County, 103 said yes and 28 said no. For those who said yes, 30% said they spent between \$10 and \$50, 11% spent over \$100 and 16% spent less than \$10.

Respondent data:

- More frequently birders were female. Half were over 55 years old.
- Highly educated with 80% having at least a Bachelor's degree.
- Many have been birding for over 20 years.
- Each respondent visited at least 1 LCFPD site in the past 2 years.
- 88% of Lake County residents had visited at least 4 sites.
- Many used photography as part of birding activities.
- Waukegan Beach ranks very highly in attractive sites for birders.

Motivations for Birding

- 55% - seeking a wide variety of species
- 47% - looking for "lifers"/state birds
- 38% - seeking unusual species
- 37% - seeking a large number of birds
- 37% - casual birding with no specific goals
- 35% - provides focal point for being outside

Also, "listing" is a bigger motivation for those to travel to Lake County; it apparently generates more revenue.

Most Attractive Site Feature for Birders

- 80% - overall ecological quality of the site
- 60% - away from noise
- 52% - Birder-friendly trails; no bikes, dogs
- 36% - up-to-date sighting reports
- 35% - earlier/later park hours

Decision Variable for Destination Choice

- Generable abundance and diversity of bird species
- Variety of plants and other ecological features
- For Lake County Residents:
 - proximity to home
 - access to bike trails
- Unusual species found at the site (this was noted for all birders, but for nonresidents in particular)

LCFPD updated e-Bird totals for the past 10 years

- Rollins Savanna: 201 species, 454 reports
- Ryerson Conservation Area: 174 species, 433 reports
- Fort Sheridan: 235 species, 459 reports
- Middlefork Savanna: 201 species, 374 reports
- Spring Bluff: 210 species, 384 reports
- Lyons Woods: 146 species, 317 reports
- Almond Marsh: 148 species, 234 reports
- Wright Woods: 150 species, 158 reports

Illinois Beach State Park e-Bird totals for the past 10 years

There are notably more species at IBSP; more than twice as many reports as individual Forest Preserves.

- South Unit: 266 species, 990 reports
- North Unit: 260 species, 907 reports

What about Waukegan?

- Bowen Park: 111 species, 47 reports; this is significant due to the small size of the natural area.
- Johns Manville ponds: 54 species, 15 reports
- Lakefront: 193 species, 323 reports
- Beach: **258 species, 1,094 reports** – this is more than any individual Forest Preserve site!

IBET Data

- Rollins Savanna – 805 posts
- Ryerson Conservation Area – 474 posts
- Fort Sheridan – 284 posts
- Spring Bluff – 177 posts
- **Waukegan Beach – 1,575 posts**
- **Waukegan – 2,237 posts**

Data on Birding Festivals

Birding festivals are popular everywhere but Illinois, which only has 3. They are a good source of revenue and draw birders to the community. Of those surveyed, 75% said they purchased gas, food, and other items at these festivals.

- 71 respondents had visited Hawk Watch at IBSP
- 54 had visited other festivals in the past 5 years
- Almost all would be interested in a birding festival in Lake County.

Recommendations

1. Consider developing Forest Preserves just for birding and/or nature study.
2. Offer more trails for low-speed travel, like mowed trails. One site that would be well suited to this would be Waukegan Savanna.
3. Continue working to educate dog owners. Consider bans at certain parks.
4. Provide more elevated platforms and boardwalks. For example adding platforms to look out across marshes and sensitive areas would be one way of providing access while protecting resources.
5. Keep birders updates about recent sightings, such as at notebooks at kiosks.
6. Offer more opportunities for early/late birding. It would be great if Forest Preserves offered a pass for nature study or birding for early or night time birding.
7. Consider starting an annual Lake County Birding Festival.

Also, Birders don't leave a lot of money behind in Waukegan because there aren't amenities by the lakeshore or on Sheridan Rd. Ideas like food trucks or shops catering to birders were recommended. A Waukegan birding website was recommended, where local sightings could be shared.

Questions and comments

How are birding festivals set up?

They are all over the place. There are week long festivals that include field trips as part of the fee. Many are general interest, but there are also species specific festivals. Often there are speakers.

What are some of the changes Forest Preserves are thinking about?

Right now there isn't information to share about that.

It was noted that while it is important to have trails/access, continued habitat fragmentation is not recommended, particularly for areas with rare plant species or high quality ecosystems.

Waukegan Port District and Greater Waukegan Development Coalition

This week the Port District held the first Steering Committee for Waukegan Harbor Master plan. Master Plan funding was received through a grant from NOAA. This plan is just dealing with Port District property. The Port District selected Edgewater Resources, the group working with the City on their Lakefront Redevelopment Plan, to help with their plan. Edgewater Resources' work was very well received and the meeting had a diverse crowd.

GLRI Grant – Signage

We have spent a lot of time looking at and creating signage for the Waukegan Port District and Waukegan Park District. The goal is to have educational signage along the Lakeshore, on Port District property, and at Bowen Park, explaining the historical, cultural and geological/ecological importance of the sites. We looked at the rules of 3, focusing only on 3 topics per sign. People only spend about 30 seconds reading a sign so they need to be simple. QR codes will be used to link visitors to additional data and bilingual transcripts. This would allow for seasonal topic updates, like migratory species for birders, and Superfund Site information.

The Port District has come up with the following locations:

- South seawall – by huge fossil laden rock and flag pole looking towards the mouth of Waukegan River
- South of the Waukegan Port District office along the public walkway
- North of the Waukegan Port District office along the public walkway
- West end of Government Pier where it begins
- Coast Guard Station area
- Ice Cream and Hot Dog store location
- Waukegan Yacht Club
- Commercial Dock north of Waukegan Yacht Club

At Bowen Park the following locations have been selected:

- Waukegan Historical Museum
- Mrs. Bowen's house
- Frog Pond
- Children's Nature Playground
- Jack Benny Center
- Buffer area overlooking Glen Flora Ravine
- Plus, please stay on path signs – poison ivy prevalent. These would be 5 smaller signs, located at trailheads.

We would like your input on the signage. In general it seems that people want simple signs. Please let us know in the coming weeks if you have other suggestions.

Questions

Who is working on the signs?

The Waukegan Port District, Park District and the Waukegan Harbor CAG are working together on the design and implementation. Little Fort Media and Pronto Signs on Grand Ave. will be making them.

Waukegan High School History Project

Recently some students approached the Waukegan Harbor CAG and USEPA asking for information on the Yeoman Creek Landfill and OMC Superfund Site for local their History Olympiad project submittal. We met them at the USEPA Document Repository located in the Waukegan Public Library and gave them a thorough overview of the purpose of the Document Repository and the site histories. We look forward to hearing back on the result/reports of their completion presentations.

Chicago Wilderness

Over the last year and half a research team and scientists made up of CW members have worked to create a list of 12 species on which to focus research/work through 2020 in the CW region. Many of these 12 species are found at Bowen Park. We could focus on these species as part of any nature programming at Bowen Park.

IEPA - TMDL (Total Mass Daily Load)

The Waukegan Harbor CAG forwarded comments and questions to IEPA after their January presentation on the results of their TMDL study on PCB's and mercury in the Lake Michigan nearshore area - 5k out and 10m down. The major concern: they used modeling and said the-PCB's and mercury were all ABOVE contamination level in the nearshore and the four major harbors on Lake Michigan's shoreline, inclusive of Waukegan Harbor. However, this is not accurate. USEPA Superfund has just finished cleaning the PCB contaminants from Waukegan Harbor and has taken extensive sediment samples of their remediation their work. In addition, USGS has been testing the tree swallow eggs and embryos from numbered nesting boxes within the harbor area before, during and after the dredging which shows no mercury problems within the harbor at any of the stages. The final PCBs results are due out this coming summer. USEPA is now preparing to move Waukegan Harbor to the status of Area Under Recovery and is using their actual test data. IEPA is only using modeling, and never obtained the actual USEPA or USGS data, nor any of the IDNR fish sampling data, all of which we suggested they obtain last July.

Revitalizing our Ravines: Community Workshop 2016

Alliance for the Great Lakes and Partners

The workshop is being held June 1, 2016 at the Chicago Botanic Garden. There has been a ravine poster submittal invitation. Posters should be submitted by March 4, 2016.

Old Business

Research buoys off of Waukegan Shoreline

The Waukegan Harbor CAG, the Waukegan Port District and Midwest Generation/NRG and associated partners wish to follow up on the placement of a research buoy(s) off of the Waukegan shoreline to identify nearshore currents, bird migration and other data valuable to sand management issues and ecological management of the off of the Waukegan coastline. The Illinois Indiana Sea Grant has placed a research buoy off of the Winnetka/Glencoe shoreline last summer to gather weather and related data. We will follow up on the status of placing a similar unit(s) off of Waukegan.

New Business

GLRI Audit

Warady and Davis completed the 2010 GLRI Grant Audit last week. Per their recommendation we will be reviewing Policy and Procedure Manual and By-Laws,-something we should do anyway as we prepare to go into an Area Under Recovery phase prior to receiving Delisting status as a Great lakes Area of Concern. We want to keep our operating documents current.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Susie has been nominated for a LakeCountyCares, I Care award. Each year, LakeCountyCares is honored to recognize several of the best of the best volunteers in Lake County through the I Care awards. LakeCountyCares will host the 10th annual I Care Awards event on Saturday, April 23rd at the newly remodeled Gorton Community Center in Lake Forest.

Susie, so many people appreciate your good work! Congratulations!

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Claudia Freeman, seconded by Jaime O'Meara, and passed. The meeting ended at 8:10 pm.

CAG Members

*Abbott Laboratories
Akzo Nobel
Alliance for the Great Lakes
Bombardier Recreational Products
City of North Chicago
City of Waukegan
College of Lake County
Commonwealth Edison
Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council
Illinois Audubon Society
Johns Manville
LaFarge Corporation
Lake County Audubon
Lake County Chamber of Commerce
Lake County Planning, Building and Development Dept.
Lake County Health Department
Lake County Stormwater Management Agency
Larsen Marine, Inc.
Liberty Prairie Conservancy
NRG Waukegan Station
National Gypsum
North Shore Gas
North Shore Water Reclamation District
Outboard Marine Corporation
Salmon Unlimited
Sierra Club – Illinois Chapter*

CAG Members (continued)

*Waukegan Charter Boat Association
Waukegan Main Street
Waukegan Lakefront Development Corporation
Waukegan Park District
Waukegan Port District
Waukegan Yacht Club
Concerned Citizens*

CAG Associates

*Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Delta Institute
Illinois Citizen Action
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Illinois Lake Management Association
Illinois Pollution Control Board
International Joint Commission
Maritime Administration
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U. S. Fish and Wildlife
University of Illinois- Marine Extension
Waukegan Public Library
Concerned Citizens*

WEB SITES

<http://www.waukeganharborcag.org>

The Waukegan CAG website.

<http://www.epa.state.il.us/environmental-justice>

Illinois EPA – Environmental Justice website.

<http://www.ilenviro.org>

Good listing of all environmental bills in the IL House & Senate.

<http://www.glc.org>

Great Lakes Commission.

<http://www.binational.net>

Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy – Annual Progress Report

<http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/pubs/brochures/wlevels/wlevels.html>

Great Lakes Water Levels

<http://www.cciw.solec>

State of the Great Lakes – SOLEC full report

<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/solec>

<http://www.lkmichiganforum.org/>

The Lake Michigan Forum

<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakemich>

Lake Michigan Lake Wide Management Plan (LaMP 2000)

<http://wi.water.usgs.gov/lmmcc/index.html>

Lake Michigan Monitoring Coordinating Council

<http://www.epa.gov/lakemich>

Lake Michigan Sensitive Areas

<http://www.sph.umich.edu/ehs/umaql/mass.html>

Lake Michigan Mass Balance Study

<http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lmmb>

Lake Michigan Mass Balance

<http://biology.usgs.gov/S+t/noframe/x186.html>

Zebra Mussels in Southwestern Lake Michigan

<http://www.gvsu.edu/wri>

Annis Water Resources Institute

<http://www.epa.gov/OST/GLI/glimixqa.html>

A document on Bioaccumulative Chemicals of Concern (BCCs)

USEPA WEB SITE

Go the EPA Home site at *epa.gov*

Select *Illinois* from the map. It will go to an Illinois page.

Then select *Outboard Marine Corp Superfund Site* in the *EPA in Illinois* section.

Addition information may be reached by the top right hand box labeled *Site Information*.

Select *NPL Fact Sheet*. At the bottom you can click on *Site Profile Info* and it will take you to Superfund.

The Superfund Site Progress Profile contains the following additional information on the Superfund sites:

The site, contamination, cleanup progress summary, cleanup impact summary, land re-use, post-construction, five year review and community involvement.

For Area of Concern Information:

Go the EPA Home site at *epa.gov*

Select *Illinois* from the map. It will go to an Illinois page.

Select *Great Lakes Area of Concern* in the *EPA in Illinois* section.

Choose *Waukegan Harbor* for AOC information.