

McLouth Steel Superfund Site Community Advisory Group (CAG)

TECHNICAL MEETING SUMMARY

August 11, 2022 | Virtual Meeting No. 8

MEETING IN BRIEF

The August 11, 2022 meeting of the McLouth Steel Superfund CAG took place online in a Zoom webinar. The objectives of the meeting were to receive updates on:

- Remedial investigation of the NPL site
- Clean-up of the northern portion
- Human Health Risk Assessment
- Draft CAG website
- Trenton coastal resilience initiatives

See **Appendix A** for a list of CAG members, alternates, and agency representatives who were present. Links to summaries, presentations, and recordings from this and previous CAG meetings can be found at the CAG website here: <https://mclouthsteelcag.org/resources-and-documents/>.

ACTION ITEMS

Responsibility	Item
CAG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide feedback to improve the accuracy of this draft August Meeting Summary• Disseminate final August Meeting Summary to constituents and community members
US EPA/EGLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share updates on remedial investigations on the NPL site and RTRR portion at future meetings
MDHHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notify the CAG when the report of the Human Health Risk Assessment is open for public comment• Prepare to present on the report at a CAG meeting if requested
CBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce and distribute the draft August Meeting Summary, integrate CAG feedback, and share the final version for CAG dissemination and EPA posting• Coordinate with Leadership Board on agenda for the November meeting and internal CAG business• Continue work on the CAG website

DECISIONS REACHED & PROPOSED TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Decisions reached

- CAG and public questions or concerns about cleanup or investigation activities at the McLouth site should be sent to EPA, EGLE, and/or Stacie Smith, CAG facilitator

(stacie@cbi.org), and information or responses will be sent to the CAG to disseminate to the public.

- The CAG approved the draft McLouth Steel Superfund website.
- The next meeting will be held on November 10, 2022.

Proposed topics for future discussion

- Review of the Human Health Risk Assessment report from MDHHS
- Updates on Remedial Investigation (EPA & EGLE)
- Updates on the Monguagon Creek Upper Trenton Channel Site Lakes Legacy Act Project (EPA GLNPO)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Consensus Building Institute (CBI) facilitator, Stacie Smith, welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting agenda and ground rules. Slides used by the presenters can be found on the CAG website here: <https://mclouthsteelcag.org/resources-and-documents/>.

Updates on the southern portion (NPL site)

Greg Gehrig, US EPA Region 5 Remedial Project Manager, shared that EPA has selected a top candidate for the remedial investigation of the site. Contract negotiations are under way, and EPA hopes award the contract by October 2022. The goal is to initiate sampling in the spring, though some equipment, such as boats, will not be available until the summer. So far, everything is on schedule. Mr. Gehrig shared that he anticipates that by the November CAG meeting he will be able to share the selected candidate; however, he does not expect that the full scope of work will be ready for sharing by then.

Mr. Gehrig also reported that EPA has regular conversations with Crown Enterprises and MSC about redevelopment. EPA's understanding is that Crown & MSC would prefer to redevelop the northern & southern portions for a single purpose, rather than subdividing them. Mr. Gehrig noted that he would enquire about any updates to Crown & MSC's plans for redevelopment before the next meeting.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*). [Note: some of these questions or comments were made during later parts of the agenda – they are documented here to promote clarity. Some answers have been expanded in order to ensure that all the member's questions have been addressed.]

- **If Crown & MSC were to say they have an interest in redeveloping a portion of the site sooner, how would that impact EPA's remedial investigation?**
 - *EPA: That would depend on what we know about the area based on the Phase I Completion Report. The Settlement Agreement lays out that MSC would be required to identify and sample the area, then submit those results to EPA. It would then be up to EPA to determine whether or not it would interfere with investigations and the remedy.*

- **There have been concerns recently about per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and other contaminants of concern potentially leaching into the Detroit River. Are there any concerns with the NPL site or the Northern portion?**
 - *EPA: I have not seen any PFAS sampling done as part of any sampling before the site's listing on the NPL.*
 - *EGLE: We have not seen any PFAS sampling done for the northern portion. But PFAS sampling will be included in any groundwater, surface water, and sediment sampling going forward. [EPA confirmed that this will also be the case for the NPL site.]*

Updates on the northern portion

Jacob Runge, EGLE engineer and project manager, then gave an overview of progress on the northern/Riverview Trenton Rail Road (RTRR) portion of the site. He shared that things were moving at a slow pace. EGLE has completed phase I of its process and intends to begin its phase II work pending the crafting of a successor Corrective Action Consent Order by EGLE's legal staff.

A major driver for the phase II work will be addressing groundwater contamination. Sampling for phase I indicated some high pH leachates, heavy metals (likely from fill material), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs); VOC and SVOC readings were low but still above water quality standards. Potential ways to address these issues include slurry walls and extraction wells. EGLE intends for any water from the site to meet water quality standards before interacting with the river or the creek.

EGLE will also implement stormwater/surface water run-off mitigation measures as part of the next phase. EGLE's understanding is that stormwater on the northern portion percolates into the groundwater and that there is no sheet flow. Mr. Runge also noted that EGLE did not identify any new pockets of contaminants that would warrant an area of concern or waste management unit, though there is always the potential to discover something new.

In addition to EGLE's legal staff crafting the next CACO for phase II, Mr. Runge also explained that he and his team are working with EPA to ensure a Superfund-equivalent cleanup for the northern portion in line with EPA and EGLE's memorandum of understanding.

Mr. Runge also provided an update on drainage issues at West Jefferson Avenue. He reported that he had heard that construction had ceased, though he also received assurances that construction is on track to meet the end of summer deadline. CAG members subsequently clarified that the deadline is August 15 (and, hence, meeting the deadline seems unlikely) and that the drain seems to be the main issue. Members recently observed construction workers making progress along the roadway from Riverview to Wyandotte.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*). [Note: some of these questions or comments were made during later parts of the agenda – they are documented here to promote clarity. Some answers have been expanded in order to ensure that all the member’s questions have been addressed.]

- **Has EGLE done any recent testing of pH on the Northern portion? I often observe white cloudy leachate coming from the shoreline into the water, which could be high pH runoff following rain events. pH is often an indicator of other issues in the soil.**
 - *EGLE: During groundwater sampling efforts, we discovered high pH in most places, with readings in the high 11 range. Recently I was on site used my ph pen to test an area where stormwater had collected on Jefferson Avenue. The stormwater should theoretically not contain contaminants, which was confirmed by the pH reading of around 7.1. We know that pH is high across the site and normal in a few areas, which is particularly the case for the northern half of the RTRR parcel.*
- **In terms of sediments, where does the jurisdiction of EGLE’s project end? Under whose jurisdiction would slurry walls fall? Would that be for EPA’s Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO)?**
 - *EGLE: EGLE will address any contamination that can be traced to the RTRR parcel. We understand that most of the Detroit River and Monguagon Creek Upper Trenton Channel will be addressed by GLNPO. Overall, wherever contaminated sediments exist, they will be addressed by one agency or the other (there will be no “no man’s land”).*
- **I am worried that soils could be so contaminated that they carry liquids throughout the Creek in multiple directions. Vapors can be damaging to human health. Are we addressing things happening under the surface?**
 - *EGLE: Results of groundwater testing show that no metals are near the threshold for volatilization at levels of concern for indoor air. There are volatile organic compounds, but I am not aware of any over the thresholds of concern on the northern portion. In terms of the geology of the site, my understanding is that groundwater on the northern half of the parcel flows northerly and groundwater on the southern half flows due east toward the river. There is a deep aquifer, for which we had one monitoring well. EGLE is mostly concerned about the shallow aquifer as most of the soil is backfilled to bedrock. There may be a deep aquifer within the bedrock, but we do not have data on that. The volatilization to air pathway is not a concern at the moment, though we would address that pathway if we find any areas of concern where the owner intends to construct buildings.*
 - **Will the deep aquifer be tested?**
 - *EGLE: We intend to do confirmatory tests to ensure that water that goes to the deep aquifer meets drinking water standards. I am also generally curious about irrigation and emerging contaminants of concern (namely, PFAS).*

- **Having worked on phytoremediation, my understanding is that PFAS molecules are too large to be absorbed by trees and vegetation.**

Updates on the Human Health Risk Assessment

Dr. Puneet Vij, MDHHS toxicologist, shared an update on the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA). He reported that he completed a first draft and is working to address preliminary comments from colleagues. The document will then go to internal review by managers and subject matter experts, then to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) for their review. Afterward, the document will go out for a 30-day public comment period, at which time MDHHS will inform the CAG. Ms. Smith suggested that the quarterly CAG meeting schedule may be able to be adjusted to allow for a meeting during the public comment period. Mr. Vij also shared that MDHHS would be happy to present the report at a future CAG meeting.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*). [Note: some of these questions or comments were made during later parts of the agenda – they are documented here to promote clarity. Some answers have been expanded in order to ensure that all the member’s questions have been addressed.]

- **Do you have any indication when the document would be available?**
 - *MDHHS: The document will undergo a rigorous review process. I cannot predict the timeline because a number of agencies are involved. I hope to be able to provide a timeline at the next meeting, though I cannot promise that.*
- **Would the CAG be involved in the public comment period? Would we receive a copy of the report and be able to review it at a meeting?**
 - *MDHHS: The report will be up for public comment for 30 days, during which time anyone (including the CAG) can comment. [Dr. Vij also shared that he would be willing to present on the draft HHRA at a CAG meeting. He also encouraged CAG members to share the report with community members and encourage them to make comments when the report becomes available for public comment.]*

Review of the draft CAG website

At the request of the CAG, CBI has been developing a dedicated CAG website separate from EPA’s webpage. CBI presented a draft of this website – www.mclouthsteelcag.org - for review. CAG members offered comments and revisions for the website, which include –

- Adding “date last updated” to pages
- Consulting various sources for images
- Including links to websites and/or social media for CAG members’ organizations

One CAG member asked whether a petition related to waterfront redevelopment of site could be shared on the website. The Leadership Board advised that while a petition would not be appropriate for the website, it would be worth forwarding a copy of the petition to the Planning Commission and planner for Trenton so that they are aware. While the CAG and the Superfund

process are concerned about the health and welfare of the community, authority for redevelopment lies with other entities.

CBI plans to incorporate the suggestions and begin using the website to share information in advance of the next CAG meeting.

OTHER SITE AND MEMBER UPDATES, FUTURE DISCUSSION TOPIC IDEAS, AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Trenton Coastal Resilience Initiatives

Wendy Pate, CAG member and Trenton Mayor Pro Tem, gave an overview of recent initiatives related to coastal resilience. Firstly, Ms. Pate shared information about the Coastal Resilience Sustainability Assessment process. The Michigan Coastal Management Program (MCMP) partnered with the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) to deliver a Coastal Sustainability Assessment at no local cost to help coastal communities wisely manage coastal land. Key elements of the process included –

- Creating an inventory of coastal data, policies, regulations, and practices in the master plan, zoning ordinance, and county Hazard Management Plan
- Comparing the inventory to a standardized coastal sustainability assessment tool
- Reviewing the assessment with key staff
- Creating maps of vulnerability to heat and future flooding scenarios with relevant data for each community
- Presenting findings to the public
- Drafting an interactive report with findings of the coastal sustainability and mapping assessments and suggestions for next steps for each community

Ms. Pate also participated in the Coastal Leadership Academy, a 3-part pilot training module developed by MCMP and Michigan Association of Planning, funded by a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and US Department of Commerce hosted by SEMCOG. Downriver Community Conference (DCC) enrolled a coal community group in the training, and the goals were to understand and implement actionable planning principles to support coastal resiliency within communities. A DCC task force will take the actions forward and apply for funding.

Thirdly, Ms. Pate highlighted the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative, which involves mayors of municipalities along the southeast Michigan shoreline working to strengthen coastal resilience, restore habitats, and modernize water infrastructure in shoreline areas. She shared that of the 10-15 projects identified, it appears that around half of the projects funded will be in downriver communities.

Finally, Ms. Pate shared that Trenton is on the path to becoming a certified “Redevelopment Ready Community”, which involves building a foundation of economic, planning, and zoning

best practices into the City's daily operations with the support of technical assistance from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS

Ms. Smith thanked the CAG, presenters, and members of the public for their participation, questions, and comments. She reminded CAG members that the next meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Appendix A. CAG Stakeholder Representatives in Attendance

Primary and Alternate CAG representatives present at the **August 11, 2022** meeting are listed below.

Affiliation	Representative
City of Trenton	Jim Wagner Wendy Pate
City of Riverview	Chuck Norton
Grosse Ile Township	
Riverview Brownfields Authority	Brian Webb
City of Trenton Brownfields	
Trenton Visionaries	(Wendy Pate)
Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy	
Grosse Ile Civic Association	Greg Karmazin Bill Heil, alt.
Friends of the Detroit River	Robert Burns
DownRiver Waterfront Conservancy	
Past Employees of McLouth Steel	
Abutters	Robert Johnson
At-large Community Representatives	Emily Hornbeck Judith Maiga Edie Traster
Liaison for Rep Debbie Dingell's Office	
Downriver Community Conference	John D'Addona

Agencies represented

Greg Gehrig, US EPA Region 5
Brian Kelly, US EPA Region 5
Kirstin Safakas, US EPA Region 5
Jacob Runge, EGLE
Andrea Keatley, MDHHS
Dr. Puneet Vij, MDHHS