

McLouth Steel Superfund Site Community Advisory Group (CAG)

TECHNICAL MEETING SUMMARY

February 9, 2023 | Virtual Meeting No. 10

MEETING IN BRIEF

The February 9, 2023, meeting of the McLouth Steel Superfund CAG took place virtually via Zoom. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Receive updates on the remedial investigation of the NPL site and clean-up of the northern portion
- Review the CAG’s operating protocols
- Select a Leadership Board for 2023

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 February Meeting Summary• Disseminate final February 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">• Share updates on the Human Health Risk Assessment when available
Jim Wagner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow up with Trenton Building Department on McLouth property fence line maintenance issues
Leadership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow up with Bob Johnson and relevant parties on maintenance issues related to the fence line and the bridge/grade crossing
CBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce and distribute the draft February Meeting Summary, integrate CAG feedback, and share the final version for CAG dissemination and EPA posting• Coordinate with Leadership Board on agenda for the next CAG meeting and internal CAG business (including a review of membership)

DECISIONS REACHED & PROPOSED TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Decisions reached

- CAG members and members of the public should send questions or concerns about cleanup or investigation activities at the McLouth site to EPA, EGLE, and/or Stacie Smith,

CAG facilitator (stacie@cbi.org). Information or responses will be sent to the CAG to disseminate to the public.

- CAG members approved the operating protocols and selected a Leadership Board for 2023.
- The next meeting will be held on May 11, 2023.

Proposed topics for future discussion

- Review of the Human Health Risk Assessment report from MDHHS
- Further updates on Remedial Investigation (EPA & EGLE)

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Consensus Building Institute (CBI) facilitator, Stacie Smith, welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting agenda and ground rules. CAG members and representatives from agencies introduced themselves.

Updates on the NPL site (southern portion)

Greg Gehrig, US EPA Region 5 Remedial Project Manager, informed the CAG that EPA has selected a contractor for the remedial investigation/feasibility study (RI/FS). The goal is to begin fieldwork in the fall. US EPA's Great Lakes National Program Office (GLNPO) also plans to begin fieldwork in the river in late fall.

Mr. Gehrig also informed the CAG that MSC/Crown have been doing railroad rehabilitation work, the intention of which is to reconnect the Jefferson crossing to reinstitute rail access.

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.]

- **Could you share an estimate of the cost for the RI/FS? That information would be helpful for other similar sites that are working toward cleanups.**
 - *EPA: I am not sure whether I can release that information at the moment. (EPA has not formally awarded the contract yet.) I should be able to follow up at the next CAG meeting or offline.*
- **Who would oversee the railroad work? Would permits be required?**
 - *EPA: EPA does not have jurisdiction over local transportation – I imagine that the Federal Railroad Administration and relevant local and state entities would be involved.*
- **Is there a scope of work for the RI/FS?**
 - *EPA: There is not yet a scope of work (as the actual work has not yet been planned).*

- **Was there a public solicitation for the contractor?**
- *EPA: The solicitation was done via a request for proposals (RFP) to a shortlist of contractors with the appropriate expertise and who also expressed interest in the conducting the investigation.*
- **I had understood that any development on the land had to go through Trenton City Council. Is the inclusion of the railroad a means to get around local input on development?**
 - *Jim Wagner: Crown/MSC have had that permission from the Surface Transportation Board for several years and are now exercising that right with Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). They can go as far as Sibley Road. However, they cannot access the McLouth property because another property owner (the Wilkinsons) controls the railroad there. It was not my understanding that they would need to go through the City Council. Rather, because the City changed the ordinance to an industrial waterfront, a proposal would have to go before the Planning Commission. Crown/MSC would also be required to notify neighboring property owners (within 300 feet) and place a notification in The News-Herald. I am attempting to get the regional partnership to sit down with them for a conversation. They are not currently doing any work in Trenton.*
 - **The Surface Transportation Board ruled back in 2004 that RTRR has the right to reestablish a rail line. Both Riverview and Trenton have done legal analysis about federal/local preemption, which has showed that local decisions are often preempted by federal railroad status. Zoning reviews and local ordinances might be federally preempted.**

Updates on the northern portion

Marc Messina, EGLE geologist and project lead for the northern portion, provided updates on the northern/Riverview Trenton Railroad (RTRR) parcel. EGLE is finalizing a work plan for the phase II investigations with the technical contractor for the site.

The main driver of phase II work will be addressing groundwater contamination. Mr. Messina shared a several GIS spatial layers outlining EGLE's approach to groundwater sampling and monitoring wells. EGLE is concerned about groundwater-surface water interface (GSI) points and is, therefore, considering installing a number of wells along the shoreline.

An area of interest for EGLE is a former creek that was filled in. The fill material has a different porosity to the native soils, which may be relevant when considering groundwater flow throughout the site. EGLE is also interested in what appears to have been a former lagoon where a pier-like structure was constructed. This structure could block groundwater flow and would influence the placement of monitoring wells.

EGLE anticipates receiving an updated work plan in the coming weeks and beginning field work in the spring/summer.

CAG members offered the following comments and questions (*answers in italics*).

- **Will the investigation look into how far contaminants travelled (e.g., to Grosse Ile)? I am concerned that contaminants may have flowed beneath the river and might lead to public health impacts.**
 - *EGLE: Our investigation will mainly focus on immediate contamination, rather than going deep into the subsurface. Nonetheless, in terms of geology, we are aware that the Detroit Dolomite formation becomes exposed closer to the river and that gypsum salts are prevalent below the surface.*
- **One of the GIS layers depicts an area with a dead patch where there is no vegetation. Was that a location where water collected? Would it be worthwhile to install downgradient wells that could capture what is coming off of that patch?**
 - *EGLE: It is a dry area. There may have been a conveyor structure there in the past. In any case, we will be looking into that area from a groundwater perspective.*
- **Will you be installing new wells to track the old creek bed?**
 - *EGLE: Yes. There are some existing wells but these were not maintained – it is often more cost-effective to install new wells. The work plan will outline the well mobilization approach.*
- **I believe a pipeline at King Road/Jefferson Avenue was recently remodeled in order to drain water from the Sibley quarry site. That might be worth tracking.**
 - *EGLE: EGLE monitors the discharge from the Sibley quarry site, and they are required to be compliant under the terms of their permit. The materials being discharged are naturally occurring materials (e.g., lithium, selenium, and zinc) but not VOCs or PCBs.*

Other questions related to the site

- **I am concerned about the visual pollution caused by the fence line and bridge along the site. I think the CAG should investigate setting up a conversation to improve the visual appearance.**
 - **The owner of the bridge/grade separation is Conrail, who have refused to maintain the facility. They may be waiting to learn what is happening on the McLouth site. The fence line is owned by Crown.**
 - The CAG Leadership Board (and Bob Howey) will take up the issue of the visual appearance of the fence line and bridge. Jim Wagner will also follow up with Virgil Maiani and the Trenton Building Department.

- **There was recently a discharge of liquid onto West Jefferson Avenue near the southwest corner of the site. Brian Kelly (US EPA) was able to get in touch with DTE Energy, which owns the manhole. Mr. Kelly informed me that more investigations will be needed to understand what the constituents of the discharge are and where the discharge might be coming from.**
 - *EGLE: EGLE became aware of this issue last summer and worked with other agencies and DTE to investigate the situation. Eventually DTE plugged the manhole with cement. However, it now appears that another manhole (this one owned by MSC) is overflowing. Based on sampling, the constituents of that discharge suggest that it is not coming from Sibley quarry. The situation is ongoing, and EGLE is currently addressing the matter.*
- **Are there any updates the parcel of the NPL site owned by the Wilkinsons?**
 - *EPA: We will investigate that parcel (including the piles) under the Superfund RI/FS process. Under the purchase agreement, if the developer acquires that parcel, the developer will be required to address them.*

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

Review of CAG operating protocols & membership

CAG members reviewed and approved the operating protocols unchanged for 2023.

Greg Karmazin notified the CAG that the Grosse Ile Township representative Russell Bodrie is no longer the fire chief. He recommended a Grosse Ile Township Trustee as a replacement and will put the facilitators in touch with that individual.

Selection of a Leadership Board for 2023

CAG members selected the following members to serve on the Leadership Board for 2023.

- Wendy Pate (City of Trenton & Trenton Visionaries)
- Doug Thiel (Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy)
- Jim Wagner (City of Trenton)
- Brian Webb (Riverview Brownfield Authority)

Other updates and notices

CAG members and agency representatives shared the following updates:

- EPA invited Crown to attend the CAG meeting (on behalf of the Leadership Board), but Crown declined the invitation.
- The [National Brownfields Conference](#) will take place on August 8-11 in Detroit.
- Bob Johnson will take the issue of the railroad interconnection to the City of Trenton Planning Commission.

- EPA will share an announcement of the next meeting to their ListServ and also instructions for subscribing to the CAG’s website. Local community papers may also be able to do a community announcement ahead of the next meeting.

WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS

Ms. Smith thanked the CAG, presenters, and members of the public for their participation, questions, and comments. The CAG will meet next on May 11, 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Appendix A. CAG Stakeholder Representatives in Attendance

Primary and Alternate CAG representatives present at the **February 9, 2023** meeting are listed below.

Affiliation	Representative
City of Trenton	Jim Wagner
City of Riverview	
Grosse Ile Township	
Riverview Brownfields Authority	Brian Webb
City of Trenton Brownfields	Robert Howey
Trenton Visionaries	
Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy	Doug Thiel
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	Judith Maiga Edie Traster
Liaison for Rep Debbie Dingell's Office	Cal Kirchen
Downriver Community Conference	John D'Addona

Agencies represented

Greg Gehrig, US EPA Region 5

Diane Russell, US EPA Region 5

Kirstin Safakas, US EPA Region 5

Courtney Fung, EGLE

Marc Messina, EGLE

Amber Falkner, US EPA Great Lakes National Program Office

Andrea Keatley, MDHHS

Carolyn Koch, MDHHS

Dr. Puneet Vijj, MDHHS