McLouth Steel Superfund Site Community Advisory Group (CAG)

Technical Meeting Summary

Thursday, May 8, 2025 | Virtual Meeting No. 19

Meeting in brief

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Share updates on the remedial investigation & feasibility study (RI/FS) for the Superfund site; and
- To share findings and next steps for investigations and corrective actions in the northern portion of the site; and

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	• Review the May Meeting Summary
US EPA/EGLE	• Continue to share updates on RI/FS for the NPL site and corrective action on the RTRR portion at future meetings
CBI	• Update the CAG website with meeting materials • Distribute the draft meeting summary for review

Summary of Discussions

Consensus Building Institute (CBI) facilitator Stacie Smith welcomed participants and reviewed the meeting agenda.

Updates on the NPL site (southern portion)

During the February Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting, members provided feedback on a draft informational sign planned for the Jefferson Avenue fence line. At the May meeting, Dianne Russell (US EPA Region 5) presented the finalized sign design and the initial corresponding video accessible via the sign's QR code. The EPA will continue developing a library of short, topic-specific videos documenting ongoing site activities. To view the initial video in this series, please visit the EPA webpage here.

Ernest Ashley (CDM Smith) reviewed the remedial investigation's goals and purpose, then summarized the completed Year 1 field work across the site's three operable units. Mr. Ashley presented findings from the Trenton Channel bathymetric survey, which mapped the channel's underwater structure. This data will be used to adjust sampling locations, optimize sediment trap collection, and guide field work throughout OU3. Mr. Ashley presented images from the bathymetric survey and highlighted features of the channel such as the dredged area adjacent to the site, a channel bar with shallower depths downstream from the site, and the bulkhead along the shoreline of the site. Year 2 fieldwork for OU1 and OU2 will begin in May 2025 and OU3 year 2 field work is expected to begin in July 2025. Data will be evaluated in the fall of 2025 and will result in technical memorandums posted to the EPA's website. The full presentation is available on the CAG website linked here.

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

- **I appreciate the efforts to improve the fenceline. Painting and cleaning the fence could help market the property**.
- **The OU3 field work could be great content for the next videos.**
- **There is a lot of clean up going on the railroad track near the southern part of the site. Are there plans to develop the railroad or is that up to the property owners?**
    - *EPA: They have posted, for builders, an outline of options. Redevelopment was noted in the plan as a potential option. There was nothing in the plan indicating that they were in the process of installing the railroad.*
    - *Jim Wagner: They are cleaning it up in response to requests from community members. In conjunction with that effort, they have been asked to clean up the bridge as well.*

Updates on the Northern Portion (EGLE)

Marc Messina (EGLE) reported on the investigation and corrective actions for the northern RTRR parcel. Mr. Messina shared a timeline of recent EGLE site visits and the results from samples collected during the visits. In early March, RTRR installed polypropylene booms along the shoreline to contain a seep EGLE observed entering the Huntington Creek. During a later site visit, EGLE observed a high pH solution entering the creek at the outfall location north of the Jefferson Avenue bridge and noticed that the booms appeared to solely address surface level contamination. EGLE sampled three locations:

1. Outfall: north of the Jefferson Avenue bridge
2. Seep: within the boomed area
3. Surface: outside of the boomed area

The analytical results of the 'Seep' and 'Surface' samples revealed no exceedances. The 'Outfall' sample exceeded GSIC for Silver (0.3 ug/L), Dibenzofuran (8.5 ug/L), Fluoranthene (1.8 ug/L), and Naphthalene. Phenanthrene (11ug/L) in the sample exceeded both the GSIC (Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals) and FAV (Final Acute Value). In April, the outfall was discharging high pH solution and results showed vinyl chloride exceeding

the Michigan Drinking Water Criteria (DWC) but not the GSIC. Due to ongoing seeps, EGLE directed RTRR to install groundwater extraction wells. As of early May, the extraction pumps have been set up but are not yet fully operational. EGLE will meet with RTRR in May to discuss deliverables and next steps.

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

- **Do the floating booms have a weighted skirt?**
    - *EGLE: No, they are not weighted.*
- **How are the pump systems powered?**
    - *EGLE: I believe they are powered by a power take off near an old control box and the corner of the railroad crossing.*
- **What progress has been made on the plan for a permanent measure to stop the contamination?**
    - *EGLE: These have been interim measures. We will have a meeting in May to discuss a permanent solution with the property owner.*
- **Is there a calculation to determine the necessary volume to pump to prevent the chalky water entering the creek?**
    - *EGLE: We have told them to halt the flow but it is ultimately up to their technical consultant to determine how to do that. We will try to get more information from them during our meeting with RTRR.*
- **There is water near the north end of the property. Is there a way to determine if there are elevated groundwater levels in that area? What equipment do you have to actively monitor this?**
    - *EGLE: EGLE did propose a real time monitoring device. The plan is to have that working in conjunction with the pump. A challenge with the site is that the water is fast moving. Our primary focus is to stop the flow of contamination. We hope to have more tools in the ground going forward to shed some light on how it is working if the remedy is not effective.*
- **At this point, do we know where the contamination is coming from, how it got there, and why it goes up and down in level?**
    - *EGLE: We know how it is entering the creek. We have identified the seep. We do not know how the source is interacting with the groundwater. We hope to have more information in the future.*
- **Is this an active current contributor or something from the past that no longer exists?**
    - *EGLE: We are operating on the idea that the source is the buried calcium hydroxide deposit on the site. As far as we know, it is not an active contributor.*
- **Could there be another site or contributor upstream of the site that has not been identified?**
    - *EGLE: For this particular site, the visual nature of the seep tells us a lot about where the seep is coming from and where it travels.*
- **Has EGLE checked if there is pooled water near the northside of the site. If so, have samples been taken in that area?**

    - *EGLE: Since the last CAG meeting we have not observed a high pH solution on the north side of the site. There was a rain event and there was some water near the tracks on the northside but, there was no elevated pH or milky substance.*
- **The barrier fence on the north side of the site has been taken down. Is the barrier fence still necessary?**
    - EGLE: *It is outside of my purview to determine whether the fence is necessary but, recently we have not had issues on the north side.*
- **There has been a lot of vegetation removed from the shoreline of the river. Is there a sediment erosion control plan for the northern portion of the site? Is that under EGLE's purview?**
    - *EPA: In May, there was a permit for tree and brush clearing. The City of Trenton conducted an inspection. The site looked stable at the time of the inspection.*
    - *EGLE: The State does have a general soil erosion and sedimentation control program. However, enforcement is the responsibility of either the county or the city. So, it is the City of Trenton's responsibility to enforce the general civil erosion sedimentation control.*
    - *Jennifer DePaulis: A city can either run its own soil erosion and sedimentation control permits, or the county can do it for you. So if the city has applied to be its own entity for any soil, erosion and sediment control issues they are then in charge of anything that goes on within the city.*
- **Is there any progress on installing a sidewalk near the bridge? Is there anything the CAG can do to advocate for this?**
    - *Jim Wagner: I spoke with the group working on the bike path and they are aware of the issue. The sidewalk will not be installed this year.*
    - *CBI: The sidewalk is outside of the scope of this group and the jurisdiction of the Superfund site, but there is expertise in the room that spurs people to raise the issue in other venues.*
- **What was the highest pH measured out of the storm drain outfall this spring?**
    - *EGLE: We used pH strips for that outfall area, so it is a visual indicator. They were ranging between 10 or 11. The threshold for characteristically hazardous waste is 12.5.*
- **Have your chemists looked at the results? Without the silver, the results appear to be the components of asphalt. Please keep us up to date.**
    - *EGLE: I will look into this and keep the CAG up to date.*

Wrap Up & Next Steps

Ms. Smith invited members of the public participating in the meeting to join the McLouth Steel CAG and thanked the CAG and presenters for their participation.

The next meeting will take place on August 14th.

Appendix A. CAG members and agency representatives in attendance

Affiliation	Representative
City of Trenton	Jim Wagner
City of Riverview	Brian Webb
Grosse Ile Township	
Riverview Brownfields Authority	Brian Webb
City of Trenton Brownfields	
Trenton Visionaries	Wendy Pate
Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy	Doug Thiel
Grosse Ile Civic Association	Bill Heil
Friends of the Detroit River	Robert Burns
DownRiver Waterfront Conservancy	Paul Frost
Past Employees of McLouth Steel	
Abutters	Robert Johnson
At-large Community Representatives	Judith Maiga
	Edith Traster
Liaison for Rep Debbie Dingell's Office	
Downriver Community Conference	John D'Addona

<u>Agencies & consultants represented:</u>
Nilia Green, US EPA Region 5
Diane Russell, US EPA Region 5
Amber Falkner, US EPA GLNPO
Megan Cynar, EGLE
Christina Hebert, EGLE
Marc Messina, EGLE
Jennifer DePaulis, Wayne County
Meira Downie, Consensus Building Institute
Stacie Smith, Consensus Building Institute