



**NOACA Water Quality Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes**  
September 19, 2025  
NOACA Offices  
1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

**Present:** Please see the attached attendance record.

Mr. George Warnock, Chair of the Water Quality Subcommittee, convened the meeting at 12:12 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Nick Gorris made a motion to approve the minutes of June 20, 2025, which was seconded by Mr. Jeff Jowett. The motion passed by voice vote.

**Public Comment**

No comment was made at this meeting.

**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Joe MacDonald, on behalf of Director Grace Galluci, announced the following additions to the Water Quality team:

- Ms. Sarah Mulligan, Environmental Planning Manager
- Ms. Maiya Sack, Water Planning Intern

**Action Items**

**Medina County FPA Prescriptions Modification Request for the Villas at Hidden Lakes and Stonegate Subdivision in Medina Township**

Ms. Sarah Stanzi reported that the Medina County Sanitary Engineers submitted an FPA modification request to NOACA, proposing prescription changes for two parcels in Medina Township totaling 101.24 acres, with 84 acres requiring updates. Specifically, 50 acres of PPN 026-06C-14-002 would change from "Areas Served by On-Site Systems" to "Sewers Expected Within 20 Years," and 34 acres of PPN 026-06C-14-001 (part of a 51.24-acre parcel) would change from "Areas Served by On-Site Systems" to "Currently Sewered." She confirmed that all notifications have been completed and all parties are in agreement.

Ms. Stanzi reviewed FPA maps to show the current prescriptions and the proposed FPA changes. She noted that, pending Board approval, NOACA would submit the modification to Ohio EPA for certification by the Governor. Following approval, copies of the resolution would be transmitted to the appropriate agencies.

Mr. Jeremy Sinko made a motion to recommend the Medina County FPA Prescriptions Modification Request for the Villas at Hidden Lakes and Stonegate Subdivision in Medina Township to the Planning and Programming Committee for placement on the December 2025 Board of Directors' agenda. Mr. Gorris seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

## **Presentation/Discussion Items**

### **NOACA Water Quality Program Update**

Ms. Pamela Davis presented information on the following:

- Regional Coordination Work
  - Regional Riparian Setback Legislation Review 2024 will be presented at OTEC October 14, 2025, 3:30-5:00 p.m.
  - Western Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Early Season Projection and current status
- Overall Work Program (OWP)
  - Support Water Quality Subcommittee (WQS) & provide quarterly updates
  - Black River AOC Advisory Committee
  - Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee

Ms. Kristin Hall said she recently attended the Area of Concern (AOC) Partnership Summit in Toledo, a two-day event focused on Great Lakes AOCs. She echoed Ms. Davis' comments on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) and the Great Lakes Legacy Act Program, noting their significant contributions to Ohio AOCs. Ashtabula has been delisted, Black River is nearing delisting, while Cuyahoga and Maumee still have progress to make. She brought materials from the summit for Subcommittee members to review, encouraged signing up for the newsletter, and noted that the program will have a table at the Sewer District's Clean Water Fest September 20, 2025. Ms. Hall highlighted the exciting progress being made in the region.

Ms. Hall said the AOC Advisory Committee recently hosted a tour in Summit County, where the Cuyahoga River originates. The tour highlighted work at the Gorge Dam, including a large-scale sediment removal and dam removal project involving nearly one million cubic yards of contaminated sediment. She noted that construction teams are preparing to begin sediment removal and that attendees saw several other AOC projects. Ms. Hall emphasized the significant state, federal, and local investments transforming the river and appreciated the opportunity to share updates on AOC work.

Ms. Davis stated that the Gorge Dam project is one of the largest management actions in the AOCs, involving substantial funding. She noted that the Great Lakes Legacy Act addresses contaminated sediments resulting from past industrial activities.

Ms. Hall stated that the AOC Summit highlighted the large amounts of contaminated sediment needing removal and the challenge of finding beneficial uses, since open-lake disposal is no longer allowed. She offered to collaborate with other agencies on potential solutions.

Ms. Davis suggested exploring the use of sediment for lot filling and offered to discuss the idea further with Ms. Hall, noting the value of partnering to share updates on ongoing projects.

Ms. Davis continued her presentation on the following information:

- *Clean Water 2020 Work*
  - DMA Roundtable webinar – June 25, 2025
  - *Clean Water 2020* reformatting
  - Updated FPA Population Forecasts
  - Medina County Five-Year Update
  - FPA Consistency Review Maps

Ms. Davis said that the financial impacts are funded through Ohio EPA contracts and NOACA's local water quality dues. She added that, as next steps, NOACA staff will continue to provide quarterly updates on the Water Quality Planning Program to the Water Quality Subcommittee.

Mr. Klaiber said he had read an article about Campbell's and asked whether the company had its own sewage plant that was violating the permit, or if they were simply discharging at random.

Ms. Davis said she could provide the permit and that to her understanding Campbell's has both on-site wastewater treatment capacity as well as outfalls.

Mr. Akin said there have been internal discussions at the Division of Surface Water regarding the Campbell's plant. He noted that while more than 5,000 violations have been reported, Ohio EPA is unsure of the source of that number, though Campbell's acknowledged it in a lawsuit settlement. He added that the company has had significant violations, which may be laying the groundwork for a new wastewater treatment plant.

Ms. Davis said her understanding is that an assessment report from Campbell's last permit helped guide the development of its next permit, noting this was her interpretation and not an official Ohio EPA position.

Mr. Klaiber said he assumed Campbell's has a permit, since it submits test results monthly.

Mr. Akin clarified that Campbell's had several violations, but not 5,000. He said he had heard the number was over 300. He noted that EPA is aware of the situation and is working with Campbell's on a new plant but was not involved in the lawsuit.

Ms. Davis offered to send Mr. Klaiber the link to the permit page where she pulled all the information.

Mr. Klaiber said he was curious because the reported specifics, such as phosphorus and ammonia, are typically included in monthly permit reports to EPA if a facility has a treatment plant.

Ms. Davis said she had pulled a PDF showing one of the outfalls with all the chemicals and offered to share it.

In reference to her earlier comments on harmful algal blooms, Ms. Hall noted that while predictions estimated a 3 out of 10, current conditions indicate about 300 square miles of cyanobacteria. She asked how Ms. Davis would rate that now, for perspective on the difference between the prediction and the current situation.

Ms. Davis said she would send Ms. Hall a breakdown sheet, noting that bloom intensity, measured by cyanobacteria levels, is more important than size. She added that she would provide the Subcommittee with the final report in December.

Ms. Hall said that would be helpful, and asked Ms. Davis to bring up the slide showing 38 permits to install.

Ms. Davis clarified that NOACA does not issue permits; staff conduct reviews.

Ms. Hall then asked Ms. Davis to briefly explain what staff look for during those permit reviews.

Ms. Davis explained that staff geolocate permits using coordinates, addresses, or subdivision names to determine if they fall within facility planning area boundaries and flow to the correct wastewater treatment facility. Staff also check proximity to boundaries and wastewater prescriptions. If consistent—for example, in areas designated as “Currently Sewered”—the permit is acceptable. If inconsistent—for example, in areas designated for on-site systems—staff notify Ohio EPA, and the developer must work with the designated management agency to submit an FPA modification to adjust the boundary or prescription.

Ms. Hall said the explanation was very helpful and gave her, as a Water Quality Subcommittee member, a better understanding of what the Subcommittee is reviewing and advising on.

Ms. Davis said the same message will be shared with OTEC, noting that many engineers do not realize they should consult with the areawides before checking certain boxes on permit applications.

Mr. Akin added that under the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio EPA cannot issue a discharge permit that conflicts with a 208 Plan, whether NOACA’s or another areawide agency’s. He emphasized that NOACA staff provide critical institutional knowledge to ensure consistency, and EPA also reviews for compliance. The goal is to prevent conflicts that could result in permit revocations or lawsuits.

Mr. Klaiber said it is valuable that NOACA now reviews these permits, noting that in the past they were not thoroughly reviewed by either the Ohio EPA or NOACA, which, as Mr. Akin mentioned, sometimes led to lawsuits.

Mr. Sinko said that during the five-year FPA review, it can be difficult to track subdivisions that move from “Limited Sewers” or “Sewers Likely Within 20 Years” to “Currently Sewered.” He suggested establishing a mechanism to update prescriptions at project completion to avoid missing changes in the review.

Ms. Davis said staff discussed potential policy updates to Chapter 3 of the *Clean Water 2020* Plan, including allowing staff to update Facility Planning Area maps when areas designated as “Sewered” or “To Be Sewered” are developed, if notified by the DMA. She noted this could be a future discussion item at a DMA roundtable, with further conversation planned for December or March.

Ms. Hall asked if, within the NOACA counties, it is rare for areas designated as “Currently Sewered” to revert to another designation.

Ms. Davis said that in some cases, DMAs are adjusting plans based on capacity, topography, or pump station limitations, effectively “right-sizing” development to match the sewer system.

Mr. Akin said that about a decade ago, NOACA began updating maps to remove areas originally designated as “To Be Sewered” or “Sewered” based on realistic development expectations and noted that this remains an ongoing process addressed through the five-year updates.

Ms. Davis said the goal is to help health departments determine whether areas should remain on on-site systems or connect to available sewers, particularly for failing systems, making this a coordinated, three-way conversation.

## Reports/Updates

### Watershed Activities Updates (Roundtable Discussion)

- **Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District:** Mr. Jowett invited members to the Clean Water Fest September 20, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Environmental and Maintenance Services Center (EMSC) facility in Cuyahoga Heights, highlighting food, activities, lab tours, vehicle displays, and a tour of the Southerly Treatment Center, the largest wastewater treatment plant in Ohio.
- **Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conversation District:** Ms. Hall said the Cuyahoga County Soil and Water Conservation District will participate in the Clean Water Fest. She also highlighted the second annual Stormwater Run, a 5K and 1-mile family fun run October 5 at 8:30 a.m. at Clark Field Park in Tremont, noting group discounts are available. Additionally, the District will hold its annual meeting and first pancake breakfast October 18 at Masjid Bilal in Cleveland. She encouraged Subcommittee members to visit the District’s website for more information.
- **Ohio EPA:** Mr. Akin noted recent staff changes, including Mr. Mark Johnson returning to his role as Assistant Director and Ms. Ashley Ward serving as Acting Director of the Division of Surface Water. Mr. Akin thanked Mr. MacDonald and his staff, noting that NOACA is set to receive an additional \$5,700 through the Federal 604(b) program, a redistribution of unspent funds, in recognition of NOACA’s ongoing work on the 208 Plan and regional water quality. The funding has been submitted for the director’s signature and is expected by the end of the month.
- **Grand River Conneaut Partnership:** Mr. Warnock said activities have been quiet, but the organization is retooling to better respond to changes in funding, politics, and regulations. He noted that future updates will be provided.

## Old Business

### Resolution 2025-046: Geauga County Five-Year Facility Planning Area (FPA) Boundary and Prescriptions Update

Ms. Stanzi stated that the NOACA Board of Directors approved Resolution 2025-046 September 12, 2025. She is updating internal and external maps to reflect the changes, and the 208 Plan has been amended accordingly.

## New Business

No new business was presented at this meeting.

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Klaiber made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:52 p.m. Ms. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed by voice vote.

The next Water Quality Subcommittee meeting will be Friday, December 19, 2025, 12-1:30 p.m.

*Note: Additional information on the agenda items can be found on [NOACA's website](#) and [YouTube channel](#).*

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## 2025 Water Quality Subcommittee Attendance Record

Meeting Dates	3/21/25	6/20/25	9/19/25	12/19/25
<b>ADAMS, Mark</b> (Ryan Tristano, Alternate)	A	A	A	
<b>CARNEY, Ken P.</b> (Robert C. Klaiber, Jr., Alternate)	A	A	A	
<b>DEVER, Michael</b> (David Ray, Alternate) (Laura A. Weber, Alternate on 3/21/25)	A	A		
<b>DREYFUSS-WELLS, Kyle</b> (Jeff Jowett, Alternate)	A	A	A	
<b>DVORAK, James W.</b> (Andy Haupt, Alternate)				
<b>EXLEY, Alan</b> (Kirk Dimmick, Alternate)	X	X		
<b>GORRIS, Nick J.</b> (Carmella Shale, Alternate)	X	X	X	
<b>HALL, Kristin</b> (Jared Bartley, Alternate)	X	A	X	
<b>LOPEZ, Ryan</b> (David G. Hearne, Alternate)				
<b>SINKO, Jeremy</b> (Ben Romine, Alternate)	X	X	X	
<b>WARNOCK, George</b> (Allen Fazenbaker, Alternate)	X		X	
<b>Non-voting Member</b>				
<b>VANAH, Patricia K.</b> (Eric Akin, Alternate)	A	A	A	

X = Member present

A = Alternate present