

Monongahela Basin

Overflow Control Facilities Demonstration Project Monongahela Basin Working Group November 13, 2006

Attendees:

Michelle Buys, Allegheny County Health Department
Paul Eisworth, Pennsylvania DEP
Jen Novak, Pennsylvania Environmental Council
Frank Carr, Mon Valley Initiative
Larry Oleksa, Munhall Borough
Donna Dreshman, Munhall Borough
Ray Bodnar, Munhall Borough
Greg Scott, Chester Engineers/Munhall Borough
Jean Warren, Whitaker Borough
John Schombert, Three Rivers Wet Weather Demonstration Project
Janie French, Three Rivers Wet Weather Demonstration Project
Peter Wray, Sierra Club
Thomas Baxter, Friends of the Riverfront

Presenters:

ALCOSAN staff: Arletta Scott Williams
Dave Borneman
ALCOSAN consultant: Greg Heath, Metcalf & Eddy

Presentation Overview

- Arletta Scott Williams, Executive Director of ALCOSAN, welcomed the members of the Working Group, thanked them for their participation, and explained the purpose of the meeting. Ms. Williams invited participants to introduce themselves.
- David Borneman presented an overview of ALCOSAN. He explained that ALCOSAN provides wastewater treatment services to 83 communities, including the City of Pittsburgh, by way of a system of over ninety miles of interceptor sewers and over 300 Wet Weather Overflow structures. He explained that ALCOSAN's treatment plant is the largest wastewater treatment facility in the Ohio valley.
- Mr. Borneman outlined the key issues of the wet weather sewage overflow issue. He explained that combined sewer systems carry both sewage and storm water. During wet weather, excess water overloads the sewer system and results in sewage overflows into area creeks, streams and rivers. Sewage overflow must be controlled to ensure rivers that are safe for recreation and attractive for development as well as to comply with State and Federal environmental regulations. He explained that ALCOSAN and the communities served by ALCOSAN will be working together to address the issue. Fixing the combined sewage overflow problem will involve four strategies: increased conveyance; increased treatment; storage; and source control.
- Greg Heath, of Metcalf & Eddy, presented the consultants' approach to understanding the system and the site option

characteristics, explaining that both are integral to developing Overflow Control Facilities alternatives. He noted that system understanding is achieved through:

- Mapping the collection system;
- Performing site inspections;
- Monitoring and sampling flows; and
- Examining collection system models.

Mr. Heath explained that water quality sampling results showed that oxygen demanding and solid matter were at “typical” levels and bacteria levels ranged from “typical” to high. Bacteria are more likely to have an impact on the water quality, whereas solids are viewed as having a less significant impact. He explained the concepts of peak flow and volume and showed the modeling results for peak flow and volume during a typical rainfall year for the ALCOSAN outfalls within the Demonstration Project area.

Mr. Heath noted that Demonstration Project siting options were arrived at through field visits, community input, identifying possible impact on existing and future land use, and identifying buffering opportunities. Geographic Information Systems mapping was utilized to visualize the siting options. He presented a series of potential sites, located in the area of ALCOSAN outfall M-49, upland of outfall M-49, and across the river from outfall M-49.

Finally, Mr. Heath explained the next steps in the project. Through refinement of system understanding and siting options, the project team will be developing alternatives, to be presented to the Working Groups at a third round of meetings in early 2007. Finally, the evaluation and comparison of alternatives will be presented at a fourth round of Working Group meetings in the Spring of 2007.

- Arletta Scott Williams closed the presentation with a brief recap of the role of the Working Groups in ensuring meaningful public involvement at key points throughout the project. She then fielded the following questions and comments from the Working Group members.

Working Group Questions/Comments

Where will the money come from?

ALCOSAN consistently applies for any state or federal grants and has had much success. Case in point, Congressman Doyle provided a grant for a project involving several communities. Three Rivers Wet Weather Demonstration Program (3RWWDP) is the vehicle through which funding is provided to communities.

- What will the cost of the facility be in one location or another?

The cost of a similar facility in Rhode Island was \$14 million in 1991 and that is smaller than what we envision. In comparison, Boston’s cost was \$40 million to treat 228 million gallons per day (MGD), which is larger than we envision. All the factors developed for each potential location, including purchase, will be provided at the next meeting.

- Will this facility be employing “increased treatment?”

The facility could employ a combination of conveyance and treatment.

- If there are, say, 10 Overflow Control Facilities (OCF), how much will they solve the problem?

10 sites were part of the plan seven years ago to address all 10 overflows representing 40% capture and treatment. This is a demonstration project; the long term plan looks at overall solutions.

Why is there a difference in scale of the potential sites?

We are looking at the different technologies available which will require different sizes. Locations will also determine facility size.

- How much will satellite facilities contribute to treatment?
On the order of 40% of treatment.
- The circles are all different sizes, why?
The circles show opportunity, not solution.
- Is odor associated with these facilities?
Most facilities in other locations have odor control as part of the design. There are facilities in other locations that operate in close proximity to other uses without odor control. Odor control will be a key component of the project. Advances in odor control in the past 15 years have been significant.
- Should the criterion be, “would we put it in Fox Chapel?”
Yes, if there were a need.
- Assume that it wouldn’t block views of buildings since it’s largely underground.
- What about riverfront access?
We would blend it in and provide riverfront access.
- Are there plans for the property to the west of Marcegaglia, Inc.?
We have tried to locate the OCF near trunk lines.
- How much can you impact a commercial/industrial site versus a commercial site adjacent to residential?
We need an economic development impact analysis. County Economic Development needs to be involved with the decision. The OCF would be largely underground.
- Does “demonstration project” mean that it would be built and then not ultimately used?
We are looking for a long-term solution. We have to make responsible decisions.
- Munhall Borough is concerned about odor (the Borough dreams of river taxi service)
- Is ALCOSAN still on schedule to have the consent decree signed by the end of December?
The expectation is that it will be completed by December/January.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Nancy Barylak
ALCOSAN Manager of Public Relations
(412) 734-8353 direct
(412) 649-5019 pager