

Middle 3 Subwatershed Advisory Group

Members

City of Dearborn Heights, Chair	Wayne County
City of Garden City	Henry Ford Community College
City of Livonia	Friends of the Rouge
City of Westland	Central Wayne County Sanitation Authority
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality	Rouge Remedial Action Committee

Facilitator

Rouge Program Office

November 18, 1999

Mr. Roy E. Schrameck
District Supervisor
Surface Water Quality Division
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Southeast Michigan District Office
38980 Seven Mile Rd.
Livonia, MI 48152-1006

Dear Roy:

Enclosed please find the Public Participation Process (PPP) submitted by the Middle 3 Subwatershed Advisory Group (SWAG) to comply with our permit requirements as detailed in the Michigan Voluntary Storm Water Permit (Permit No. MIG610000).

The Middle 3 SWAG has realized that the most effective method for involving members of the public in the development of the subwatershed management plan will differ from community to community. Our PPP therefore includes four activities to bring together the subwatershed as a whole, while each community solicits input on the plan according to what will work best for that community. We will each share the results of our efforts at the SWAG meetings to identify the methods that seem to be the most effective, in an effort to learn from our experiences. We will also notify you of any changes in our PPP, as necessary, during the development of the subwatershed management plan.

We sincerely appreciate the effort that you and Cathy Bean have undertaken to work with us in developing this PPP, and look forward to this continued coordination.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kurt Heise, City of Dearborn Heights
Middle 3 SWAG Chair

Middle 3 Subwatershed Advisory Group

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Public Participation Process

Subwatershed: Middle 3

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Overview

The Michigan Voluntary Storm Water Permit (Permit No. MIG610000) requires the development of a subwatershed management plan. The stated purpose of this watershed management plan is to “identify and implement actions needed to resolve water quality and water quantity concerns by fostering cooperation among the various public and private entities in the watershed.” The permit also acknowledges that the watershed management plan should stress the mitigation of adverse “impacts caused by wet weather discharges.”

The permit also requires the development of a process to “facilitate the involvement of the watershed jurisdictions and the public” in the development of the watershed management plan. This Public Participation Process (PPP) needs to allow stakeholders – anyone who has an interest in, or will be affected by, decisions made in the subwatershed

management plan – an opportunity to assist in the development of the subwatershed management plan.

The Middle 3 Subwatershed Advisory Group (SWAG) has developed this PPP to involve its members and residents in the development of the subwatershed management plan, and submits the PPP to fulfill the permit requirements of its members.

Goals

The Middle 3 SWAG establishes the following goals for its PPP:

1. To adopt a subwatershed management plan that is endorsed by stakeholders and the SWAG members' governing authorities.
2. To establish a process by which members of the public, who affect or are affected by the subwatershed goals and objectives, may have an opportunity to participate in the development of the subwatershed management plan.
3. To work with the Friends of the Rouge (FOTR) and similar efforts as identified in each SWAG member's Public Education Plan to enhance public understanding of the condition of the subwatershed and various management options to meet goals and objectives of the subwatershed management plan.

Target Audience

The Middle 3 SWAG has initially identified a set of organizations to invite to participate in the subwatershed management planning effort. The SWAG will develop a mailing list of individuals and organizations for distribution of announcements, educational materials, and notices of availability of the subwatershed management plan. These invitees initially include:

Public Agency Representatives: The Middle 3 SWAG members will identify public agencies (e.g., planning departments, parks and recreation departments, departments of public works, fire departments, other community boards and commissions) to solicit participation in and feedback on its planning efforts.

Residents and Representatives of Community Organizations: The SWAG will contact individual citizens who are currently active in civic efforts within the subwatershed. The SWAG will also contact the directors/chairpersons of environmental (e.g., FOTR), recreational (e.g., fishing clubs, boaters), faith/religious, cultural, union, neighborhood associations, taxpayer organizations, service clubs (e.g., Kiwanis), senior citizen, or other organizations.

Elected Officials: The SWAG will invite elected and appointed officials (e.g., City Council members, Township Boards, precinct delegates) to participate in the planning effort.

Business Representatives: The SWAG will invite members of the business community within the subwatershed (e.g., local Chambers of Commerce, riparian business owners) to participate.

Riparian Landowners: The SWAG will invite any riparian landowners within the watershed to participate.

Floodplain Landowners: The SWAG will invite any floodplain landowners in the watershed to participate.

School Systems: The SWAG will invite public, parochial, charter, and private schools to participate in the planning effort. The SWAG will make a special effort to involve schools and students participating in FOTR activities and the Rouge Education Project.

As the SWAG undertakes its subwatershed management planning efforts, the SWAG will revise this list as appropriate.

Mailing List

The Middle 3 SWAG will develop a mailing list of the individuals identified in “Target Audience,” above, and will update it as needed to incorporate additional participants. This mailing list will be used for distribution of information on subwatershed-wide events and of notices of availability of the draft subwatershed management plan (see “Subwatershed Participation,” below). SWAG members can also use a subset of this mailing list for their own public participation activities (see “Member Participation,” below).

Subwatershed Participation

While the bulk of the PPP will occur through individual community activities, the Middle 3 SWAG acknowledges the importance of increasing awareness of the Rouge River and its watershed. Consequently, the Middle 3 SWAG plans on scheduling four events that would occur for the entire subwatershed:

- Subwatershed Meetings: The SWAG will host two subwatershed events in calendar year 2000 and one event in calendar year 2001 that will: (1) provide displays with information on the Middle 3 subwatershed and the subwatershed planning process; (2) introduce and solicit comment on the current planning effort in the subwatershed plan (as developed by the SWAG); and (3) request identification of others to add to the mailing list. The SWAG will invite local media to attend these meetings. The SWAG will publicize announcements of meetings by various means, such as cable television, announcements in local newspapers, newsletters or other mailings from the communities.
- Public Meeting: The SWAG will announce the availability of copies of the draft subwatershed management plan and will hold a public meeting in the early Spring of

2001 to solicit formal comments on the document. Opportunities for both written and verbal comments will be provided. The SWAG will either incorporate comments into the subwatershed management plan or document, in an Appendix, dissenting points of view (from the plan's recommendations).

Member Participation

The members of the Middle 3 SWAG will undertake a number of activities to solicit feedback on the components of the subwatershed management plan (i.e., watershed characterization; short- and long-term goals; assessment of management options; and recommended management actions). While the activities by one member will not necessarily be identical to the activities of another member, the range of options under consideration by Middle 3 SWAG members includes:

- Short articles in community newsletters that also request feedback on the ideas and concepts in the articles;
- Spots on local cable television discussing the subwatershed, the planning effort, and requesting feedback from viewers;
- Attendance at one or more of the regular meetings of community organizations (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, Homeowner Associations, Service Organizations);
- Organization of "focus group" meetings (e.g., land developers, lawn care companies);
- Presentations at City Council, Township Board, and/or County Commission meetings;
- Organization of meetings at public agency offices (e.g., department of parks and recreation, fire departments);
- Posting of information on the Internet. Findings, conclusions and recommendations from the general meetings will be entered on the Rouge River Website and included with public education efforts.

Evaluation and Revision of PPP

At each SWAG meeting, the SWAG will devote a portion of the time to discuss any subwatershed or community public participation events. The SWAG will consider whether the event was successful and its potential for success in other communities. Based on this evaluation, the SWAG will amend the PPP as needed.

Tentative Schedule

The Middle 3 will initiate its PPP according to the following schedule (subject to revision and notification to MDEQ as events progress).

Action Item to be Completed

Approx. Date of Completion

Creation of mailing list

January 2000

First subwatershed mailing

February 2000

Subwatershed Event

March 2000

Member Events
(As described above)

April 2000 – December 2000

Second subwatershed mailing

August 2000

Subwatershed Event

September 2000

Third subwatershed mailing

January 2001

Subwatershed Event

February 2001

Subwatershed Public Meeting

March 2001

Submission of Plan to MDEQ

May 27, 2001