



WATERSHED ORGANIZATION DRAFTING COMMITTEE

MEMBERS

James Anulewicz, Plymouth Township (Chair)

Thomas Biasell, Farmington Hills (Vice Chair)

Aaron Machnik, Canton Township

Kurt L. Heise, Dearborn Heights

Kelly Cave, Wayne County Department of Environment

Janis Bobrin, Washtenaw Co. Drain Commissioner

Philip Sanzica, Assistant Chief Engineer, Oakland County Drain Commissioner's Office

September 30, 2002

Dear Fellow Rouge River Permittees:

At Rouge Retreat 2 held on June 7, 2002, on the University of Michigan – Dearborn Campus, your Drafting Committee presented a May 2002, Draft Agreement for the Rouge River Watershed Local Management Assembly (Rouge River Assembly). The Drafting Committee solicited comments from affected communities and agencies through August 1, 2002 and considered those comments in developing a revised draft.

The Drafting Committee appreciates the extensive, constructive comments received and has incorporated revised language that reflects many of the suggested changes. Several of the comments were in the form of questions that we have attempted to answer in the attached summary. A few of the issues raised we believe are best deferred until the Rouge River Assembly itself is formed and begins to function.

At the Drafting Committee's meeting on September 11, 2002, we examined and discussed in detail the major issues raised and determined that we were on the right course with minor corrections and clarifications. It is the Drafting Committee's considered opinion that the September 11, 2002, Draft Agreement (attached) provides the best opportunity to initiate a watershed organization that can enhance communication and build trust among local agencies responsible for water management in the Rouge River watershed. With the experience gained through this initial organizational structure and the forum(s) it provides, the local agencies can determine what types of activities and actions are best and most cost effectively accomplished on a collective basis.

The Drafting Committee believes that it is appropriate to start the process now while federal funding is still available to assist our efforts. Our experience with similar locally based organizations that cross traditional jurisdictional boundaries indicates that we are on the right track by starting with a focus on a narrow set of issues that are common to all local agencies faced with storm water permitting requirements. We believe the downside risks are relatively small and that the potential benefits to all are significant.

All local agencies are facing severe budget issues and the Drafting Committee has taken these concerns into consideration with our proposed revised target date for implementation of the Agreement of May 1, 2003. We are also critically examining the proposed first year budget of the Rouge River Assembly, to make sure that the community contributions are indeed linked to the basic services needed by all communities to meet their permit requirements. The Drafting

Committee will have a recommendation prior to December on whether or not the tentative total of \$300,000 to be raised from local assessments can be lowered during the first year.

The Drafting Committee will host a workshop meeting on December 6, 2002, to discuss the attached proposal to give those affected another opportunity to obtain information or suggest changes before finalizing the Agreement. Prior to the meeting, the Drafting Committee will send you our recommendations concerning the first year budget of the Rouge River Assembly. Your attendance at the workshop is not required if your questions and concerns have been adequately addressed. However, if you have remaining issues, the Drafting Committee will be available on December 6 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the City of Livonia, Department of Public Works Conference Room (map attached).

The Drafting Committee has provided the attached responses to the comments received. We compiled all the comments into one unedited document and we have inserted our responses to major points raised. Since the Middle1/Lower 1 SWAG comments were so extensive, we have prepared a second document in which we summarized their concerns and provided our responses. I should note that we also reviewed comments received from the City of Troy and, because we found that they were identical to those raised by Rochester Hills and Southfield and included in our comments, we have not provided a separate response.

Your Drafting Committee has been working for more than a year and we believe it is time to move forward. We will offer one more meeting, the December 6 Work Shop, for those who believe they still have unanswered issues that need to be addressed by the Committee or in the Agreement. We will provide a revised budget for the first year of operation of the Rouge River Assembly to all concerned prior to the December Work Shop. We propose the following schedule to implement the Agreement:

- **Before December 1, 2002** – Drafting Committee distributes final first year budget for the Rouge River Assembly to Rouge watershed communities and agencies.
- **December 6, 2002** – Drafting Committee hosts Work Shop for Rouge watershed communities who have remaining concerns about Agreement.
- **Before January 1, 2003** – Copies of the following sent to Rouge River Watershed communities and the three counties (1) final Rouge River Watershed Local Management Assembly Agreement including first year budget and allocation of assessments and voting shares, and (2) copy of letter from each of the three counties indicating concurrence with the Agreement and list of county services that will be provided to assist communities in meeting their storm water permit requirements during the first year .
- **On or before May 1, 2003** – Local communities consider and adopt Agreement.
- **Following adoption of Agreement** – Communities provide copy of officially adopted, signed Agreement to Wayne County Department of Environment.
- **Following adoption by at least twenty (20) local agencies (i.e. communities and/or county agencies)** – Wayne County Department of Environment formally notices first meeting Assembly for a date not less than 60 days nor more than 120 days following receipt of twenty (20) signed Agreements.

Rouge River Watershed Organization Drafting Committee
September 30, 2002
Rouge River Permit Holders

Respectfully Submitted by

James D. Anulewicz (Plymouth Township),
Chair, Rouge River Watershed Drafting Committee

On behalf of the following Drafting Committee members:

Kelly Cave (Representing Wayne County Department of Environment)

Janis Bobrin (Washtenaw County Drain Commissioner)

Phillip Sanzica (Representing the Oakland County Drain Commissioner)

Aaron Machnik (Canton Township)

Thomas Biasell (Farmington Hills)

Kurt Heise (Representing Dearborn Heights)