



West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

June/July 2015

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WMSRDC enters into Formal Collaboration with Neighboring Regional Planning Agency

On June 23, 2015, the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (Region 14) and the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (Region 8) officially entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will allow for an increased level of collaboration and cooperation between the two agencies. Additionally, the two agencies formed an alliance to further enhance the communication and partnership between the regional planning agencies.

This alliance is being led by a six-member joint committee consisting of the chair, most recent past chair, and executive director from both of the regional planning agencies. The alliance was formed in early 2015 and has held several meetings leading to the development of the MOU. The committee is scheduled to meet between four and six times per year. In addition, the executive directors now attend each other's board meetings to further the effort of enhancing communication between the agencies. These efforts are in addition to the normal communications and collaborative efforts that have existed for decades amongst the agencies.

The MOU takes the efforts of the two regional planning agencies to the next

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Congratulations to Mary Seeger, WMSRDC Executive Assistant, on her Retirement

It is with great respect and warm wishes that WMSRDC announces the retirement of Mary Seeger, Executive Assistant, effective June 26. Mary's retirement marks the end of an era for WMSRDC. She has worked as executive assistant for WMSRDC for 30 plus years. Mary saw the planning process go from typewriter created documents and hand made maps to everything being computerized. Mary has been a huge asset to WMSRDC and her knowledge and organizational expertise will be truly missed. We are indebted to her vision and commitment for keeping WMSRDC orderly and running smoothly. Her work has assured WMSRDC's success into the future.

Mary was honored for her contributions in a farewell reception that was held at the WMSRDC office on June 25 followed by a staff dinner in her honor. We will miss you, Mary. May you be relaxed, happy, and healthy for years to come.



SPOTLIGHT PROJECT: Northern Exposure 2015 - Nuclear Device Detonation Exercise – Held in Michigan

Northern Exposure 2015 is a MING CBNR (Michigan National Guard – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear) consequence management exercise conducted from June 23-27 2015 throughout Michigan, which focused on the State, Regional, and Federal response to a complex catastrophic nuclear device detonation event in Northeast Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The scenario starts in January 2015, as members of a named International Terrorist Organization (ITO), EL Zahir (EZ) acquire and gather 22kg of weapons grade highly enriched uranium (HEU) in Albania. They plan construction of a ten kiloton improvised nuclear device with technical assistance from various individuals.

In May 2015, ITO EZ members utilize legitimate delivery routes to smuggle the device aboard a European flagged ship from Albania to Quebec, Canada. The ship docked in Quebec on May 12, 2015 and transported the device via cargo truck to Goderich, Canada on May 14, 2015 where they abandoned the cargo truck. The device was off loaded and transferred to a Canadian flagged fishing vessel and sailed to Muskegon, Michigan. On May 15, 2015, it was unloaded and further transferred via cargo truck and taken to a safe house in Ann Arbor, Michigan. In early June 2015, U.S. EZ cell members gather at the safe house to assemble the IND.

Then on June 2015, EZ operatives, while loading the ten kiloton improvised nuclear device into a rental box van to execute an attack, inadvertently detonated the device in a residential neighborhood in the vicinity of Palmer and Lafayette Avenue Northeast, near Palmer Elementary School, south of Briggs Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Initial estimates list 30,000 Northeast Grand Rapids residents as being dead and another 35,000 missing or unaccounted for in the wake of the attack. The radiation plume spreads from Northeast Grand Rapids eastward

to just north of the Saginaw Bay area. Immediately following the attack, U.S. intelligence agencies assess that there is a strong likelihood a second device – whereabouts unknown, may be used to target another U.S. city.

Damage resulting from the detonation of the 10-kiloton Improvised Nuclear Device in Metro Grand Rapids with a population of 750,000 would be the following: Severe Damage Zone in a 0.75 mile radius, Moderate Damage Zone in a 2.0 Mile radius, Light Damage Zone in a 4.0 mile radius. The after effects would be mass casualties, radiation exposure, physical trauma / thermal, psychological / worried well, secondary toxic industrial chemical / toxic industrial material (TIC/TIM) releases in light damage zone, terrorist threat (evolving threat), domestic criminal threat and civil unrest.

Participants in the exercise were the following: U.S. NORTHCOM, FBI, FEMA, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, US Army North, Michigan State Police, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan SAR Task Force 1, Kent County, Muskegon County, City of Grand Rapids, Kent County Sheriff, City of Battle Creek PD, Kent County Tri-Community FD, Muskegon Heights FD, Webb Chemical, Sun Chemical, and over 50 agencies and corporate partners.

The purpose of the exercise is to: (1) Confirm the readiness of Michigan National Guard (MING) units allocated to United States Northern Command (US NORTHCOM) CBRN Response Enterprise, (2) Confirm the readiness of MING units to provide capability and support for State civil support missions, (3) Increase MING interagency understanding and cooperation through incorporation of Military and Civil Federal, State and Local partners, (4) Exercise MING Dual Status Commander and Staff in employment of State (SAD/ Title 32) and Federal (Title 10) forces during a complex catastrophe, and (5) Conduct a Deployment Readiness Exercise Level III of select C2CRE-B TSF units.

West Michigan Watersheds Collaborative

The first meeting of the West Michigan Watersheds Collaborative (WMWC) was held on June 23, 2015 at Grand Valley State University Eberhard Center. Twenty-five participants, representing 10 Lake Michigan watersheds, discussed how collaboration could benefit Lake Michigan and the West Michigan Region. The planning meeting was convened by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, Grand Valley Metro Council and the Macatawa Area Coordinating Council (Regional Planning Organizations). The West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (WMPA) identified the WMWC as a priority West Michigan initiative under the State's Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI).

The focus of the WMWC is on watershed-based natural resource management plans and those who implement them. The Regional Planning Organizations will assemble a West Michigan Regional Water Quality Plan and hire a consultant to perform an assessment of potential funding opportunities. The initiative's long term measures of success are to improve natural resources and water quality, meet goals of the Lake Michigan Lake Action Management Plan and Michigan Water Strategy, and gain economic benefits from cleanup and restoration. The project budget is \$104,000, of which \$89,000 will come from the RPI. The project timeline is April 2015 - September 2016.

Phragmites - Regain Control: Participate in a Special Training Opportunity

Take advantage of a unique opportunity for landowners, educators, local governments, and concerned citizens in Muskegon County. You will learn how to recognize and deal with invasive plants in private and public coastal wetlands. Training will be provided in early detection / rapid response, identification, and monitoring of shoreline invasive species. Join us at North Muskegon's Waterfront Sports Park, July 21, 2015 at 4:30 p.m. and learn how to regain control of your shoreline. Training in treatment techniques is scheduled to begin in August. If you would like to participate or want additional information about this special opportunity, please contact Gale Nobes, Project Technician by email at gnobes@wmsrdc.org or by phone at (231) 722-7878 ext. 22. This special training opportunity is funded by WMSRDC and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (USEPA GLRI).

Don't Miss the West Michigan Green Infrastructure Conference *For management of stormwater and nonpoint source pollution*

August 4 - 5 at the Eberhard Center in Grand Rapids
Pre-conference activities: August 4 - afternoon tours of local GI projects and evening reception (including a tour of the Muskegon Lakeshore habitat restoration project).

More information and/or register at www.michigan.gov/deqworkshops

Stormwater Green Infrastructure Project

WMSRDC and the City of Muskegon received two state and federal grants to plan, design, and implement stormwater management through green infrastructure along Lake Michigan in the Muskegon Lake Watershed. A stormwater management plan is being completed for two critical sub-basins of the urban watershed. Preliminary engineering and eight conceptual plans will be developed. One of the eight plans will be fully engineered and constructed before June 30, 2017. The proposals were selected for funding by the Michigan DEQ Stormwater Asset and Wastewater grant program and the U.S. EPA Shoreline Cities Green Infrastructure grant program. Local project partners include Muskegon County, Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership, Great Lakes Dock and Materials, Verplank Trucking, and Consumers Energy. Private sector partners provided \$11,045 in cash match. Combined with grant funds, the total project cost is \$221,892.

Building Deconstruction Project Application

Like many older communities throughout the Midwest, thousands of buildings in Muskegon County are currently blighted or abandoned. Such properties can depress nearby property values, present public safety risks, and harm a community's image. On one hand, the cost and waste associated with removing them are often too great to overcome without outside assistance. According to the Genesee County Land Bank, the full cost of demolishing an average house is \$10,600. But on the other hand, many properties contain salvageable materials that could be "harvested" and repurposed; reducing waste, offsetting costs, and providing jobs along the way.

Muskegon County, WMSRDC, and the Michigan State University Center for Community and Economic Development (MSU) are teaming up to identify an alternative to demolishing and dumping blighted and abandoned properties. The team has applied for a Technical Assistance grant from the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) to fund a study that would determine the feasibility of creating and sustaining an innovative "building deconstruction" economic cluster in Muskegon County. If funded, the study would identify volume and availability of materials from abandoned properties locally and across the Midwest; identify private industries with the potential to maximize the reuse/repurposing of recovered materials; analyze the logistics of collecting, processing, and distributing deconstructed materials; and identify the skilled labor needs to support the economic sector.

CEDS Committee Restructure

In January 2015, the United States Economic Development Administration (EDA) instituted a number of regulatory revisions, many of which pertained to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process. The CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development, and is the result of a regionally-owned planning process designed to build capacity and guide the economic prosperity and resiliency of a region. As the designated economic development district for the counties of Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo and Oceana, WMSRDC is required to maintain and update the CEDS every five years.

The CEDS Committee, which is appointed by WMSRDC, is responsible for overseeing the development and revision of the CEDS. Due to the recent restructuring of the CEDS process, CEDS Committee membership requirements are now more flexible. The EDA requires that a CEDS Committee represents the main economic interests of the region (e.g., private sector, public officials, community leaders, private individuals, representatives of workforce development boards, institutions of higher education, and minority and labor groups). WMSRDC is currently engaged in restructuring the CEDS Committee under the new requirements. The Committee is expected to be in place by Fall of 2015, when the process of revising the CEDS document is scheduled to begin.

Port Tour

WMSRDC, along with community leaders from the Muskegon area, toured the ports of Cleveland, Ohio and Erie, Pennsylvania in early June 2015. The purpose of the tour was to see firsthand other working ports within the Great Lakes and to gather ideas and best practices to assist local efforts towards the development of the Muskegon Port as a regional logistics hub.

The Port of Cleveland is adjacent to the community's downtown and is very active. Participants in the tour were able to witness the unloading of a vessel that had arrived from Europe with cargo headed towards West Michigan. On the other hand, the Port of Erie is very similar to the Port of Muskegon where they have integrated sustainable practices amongst the port's many uses including industrial, recreational, environmental, and residential.

Unified Work Program

The Fiscal Year 2016 Unified Work Program (UWP) was recently reviewed and approved by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee. The work program is currently under review by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration. The document outlines the budget and activities for the MPO for the fiscal year. Budget estimates for the UWP are provided by MDOT.

The UWP is a federally required document, which is reviewed and approved by the MPO Policy Committee on an annual basis. Some of the key roles for the MPO that are outlined in the UWP include the Long Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Clean Air Action Program, transportation public involvement activities, technical assistance, data gathering, etc.

Counting Cars

WMSRDC recently contracted with the engineering consulting firm AECOM for traffic counting services, on behalf of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Muskegon/ northern Ottawa urbanized area. AECOM will be completing traffic counts at approximately 120 locations within the MPO boundaries.

In order to ensure the most accurate traffic counts available, AECOM will follow traffic counting guidelines prepared by the Michigan Department of Transportation. These include: avoiding times of increased tourism, avoiding holidays and festivals, avoiding areas affected by road closures, and counting when local schools are in session to avoid changes in traffic patterns. MPO's throughout the State of Michigan have been asked by MDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to expand their traffic count programs for non-trunkline federal aid roads. This data is necessary for a number of reasons. These include:

- Obtaining Federal Funds- Annual vehicle miles traveled (AVMT) is part of the federal funding formula. AVMT is derived from data supplied through the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) annual data submittal. This submittal includes all public roadway miles and traffic, with special emphasis upon the federal aid system.
- Maintaining Traffic Models- Traffic models are needed in order to meet FHWA requirements. These models require traffic data in order to function properly.
- Managing Transportation Assets- To properly manage our transportation assets, it is critical to know both the condition of all of our federal aid roads and the amount and type of traffic each road carries so as to best allocate limited transportation dollars.

Long Range Transportation Plan Complete

The 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Muskegon and northern Ottawa County urbanized area was adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee on June 17, 2015. The plan identifies the direction for the region's transportation system and serves as the framework for future investment in highways, bridges, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian paths and trails, and transportation-related air quality improvement projects. The 2040 LRTP assesses existing and projected transportation system capabilities, needs, and objectives and includes recommendations to meet these objectives through 2040.

The 2040 LRTP was developed with input from residents, businesses, and community organizations. The first round of public involvement was held in May 2014 to review and gather input on goals and objectives regarding transportation needs and opportunities in the urbanized area. A second round of public involvement was held in May and June 2015 to solicit comments on the Draft 2040 LRTP document. This included a public comment open house held at the WMSRDC office on June 1, 2015. The document can be viewed from the WMSRDC website.

FY 14 Grant Update

WMSRDC and Region 6 committees continued to make progress towards the completion of the Fiscal Year 2014 Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), which is required to be completed by May 31, 2016. Region 6 was awarded \$1,250,408 under the FY 14 grant and the four (4) committees are currently working on the following projects:

Critical Infrastructure Committee – The Critical Infrastructure Committee will focus on projects that will maintain existing target hardening equipment and systems. They will also invest in further security enhancements in select West Michigan communities.

Law Enforcement Committee – Projects which focus on law enforcement information sharing and dissemination are key components of the Law Enforcement Committee's priorities for the FY 14 grant. One such project is Project IGNITE #1 – Hosting and Maintenance (LETPA).

Operational Readiness Committee – The Operational Readiness Committee is currently working on projects, which support Region 6's Special Teams, such as Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), and the Regional Response Teams (RRT's).

Executive Committee – The Executive Committee will support a variety of County Allocation Homeland Security projects including: Ionia County – Forensics Computer Equipment; Isabella County – Active 911 Alert Notification; Kent County – Secured Cities Conference; Muskegon County – HazMat Team Sensors Sustainment; Oceana County – LETPA Night Vision Equipment; and Ottawa County – EOC Equipment.

WMSRDC is responsible for the management and administration of the homeland security program for the counties of Clare, Ionia, Isabella, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa.

New Reporting Requirements

The Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (EMHSD) Biannual Strategy Implementation Reports (BSIR) template has been modified to accommodate new reporting requirements implemented by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Beginning with the Fiscal Year 2014 grant cycle, all HSGP-related data must be collected and reported to FEMA on a project-level basis, rather than by investment. The Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD) enters all project level data into the federal reporting system during the first reporting period following receipt of the federal grant award.

In each subsequent reporting period, subrecipients must report on the status and expenditures of each project. A separate EMHSD BSIR template must be used for each grant year and grant program. Up to 12 projects from the same grant year and grant program may be included in each template. If a subrecipient has more than 12 projects within the same grant year and grant program, more than one EMHSD BSIR template should be submitted. However, multiple templates including reports on the same project(s) will not be accepted. These changes to the BSIR reporting process were originally announced at the Homeland Security Grant and Fiduciary Training in May.

Former Lake County Emergency Management Director Remembered

Michael Applewhite, former Lake County Emergency Management Director, passed away unexpectedly on June 11, 2015, due to complications from surgery. He resigned from his position for medical reasons in May 2015.

Applewhite served in the US Navy where he received the National Defense Service Medal and various other accommodations and medals. He retired from the US Postal Service and then served for two years as Lake County Emergency Manager and Director of Lake County's Homeland Security Management in Baldwin, Michigan.

He leaves a lasting impact and impression in the communities where he served - Baldwin and Lake County.

Muskegon Lake Vision 2020

WMSRDC kicked off the Muskegon Lake Vision 2020 planning process in June 2015. A strong public input component is helping uncover a shared community vision for the future use and development of Muskegon Lake and its shoreline. Four well-attended public forums were held at the GVSU Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center in June. Each focused on one of four lake-wide areas of interest: natural resources, outdoor recreation, port commerce and residential assets. Preliminary forum findings indicate that the community believes Muskegon Lake is a valuable economic resource for port-related commerce and a strong economic asset for recreation and natural resources. Some of the priorities to be sustainably integrated into future shoreline development plans include: improved public access to natural shorelines and recreational amenities, removal of hardened shoreline and installation of soft shoreline landscapes, maintaining and increasing scenic views of the lake, and more creative site-based development design that will incorporate the needs for human use while maintaining the ecological integrity of Muskegon Lake.

WMSRDC is compiling the results of the forums and will produce a document for additional community feedback in the summer/fall of 2015. Project partners include the Muskegon County Port Advisory Committee, Muskegon Area-wide Plan Advisory Committee, Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership, Muskegon Chronicle MLive, and others. The final document will be distributed to stakeholders and publicly available by December, 2015.

Regional Prosperity Initiative Update

The West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (WMPA) hosted its regular monthly meeting on Monday, June 22, 2015. The meeting was held in the City of Ludington (Mason County). The meeting was well attended by Alliance members, community leaders and elected officials. Lieutenant Governor Brian Calley and his wife Julie also attended the meeting. Julie Calley is Chairperson of the Ionia County Board of Commissioners.

During the meeting, representatives from three of the top projects identified and funded by the WMPA, gave an update on the progress of each project. The projects included Port of Muskegon Regional Logistics Hub, Connected Communities (Connect Michigan), and West Michigan Regional Watershed Collaborative. Following the presentations, Lieutenant Governor Calley addressed the crowd to discuss state and local initiatives.

The meeting was followed by a reception at the home of John and Audrey Weiss in Pere Marquette Charter Township. The next meeting of the WMPA is scheduled to occur during the month of July.

WMSRDC Under Construction

Construction is going on at WMSRDC both literally and figuratively. WMSRDC is in the process of expanding our conference room and changing the arrangement of our office reception area. Please pardon our dust (and noise) as we position WMSRDC to better accommodate larger meetings through the expansion of our conference room and update of our visual presentation tools and equipment.

Also WMSRDC has contracted with Revel, a local web developer, to update the WMSRDC website to better serve our local governments and the general public. The design stage is complete, and we are busy populating the website with pertinent information and expect to have its unveiling sometime this fall.

WMSRDC is excited to see these projects come to fruition.



Formal Collaboration continued from page 1

level in collaboration and creates opportunities for communities within both regions to benefit from the strengths of each agency. This type of collaboration also aligns with the Michigan's Regional Prosperity Initiative goals set forth by Governor Snyder, as well as the West Michigan Regional Prosperity Alliance (RPI Region 4).

Both Region 14 and Region 8 are state designated regional planning agencies, federally designated Economic Development Districts, and administer Michigan Department of Transportation programs in asset management, rural task force, and regional transportation. The agencies also provide planning technical assistance to member communities such as local government services (master planning and recreation planning) and special projects. Member communities for Region 14 are the counties of Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana. Region 8 boundaries encompass the counties of Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Mecosta, Montcalm, Osceola, and Ottawa.

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission is excited about the opportunity to work more collaboratively with Region 8. Stay tuned for more regarding this effort.

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission is a federal and state designated regional planning and development agency serving 120 local governments in Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties. WMSRDC is also responsible for the management and administration of the homeland security program for the counties of Clare, Ionia, Isabella, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa. WMSRDC is also the planning agency for the metropolitan transportation planning (MPO) program for Muskegon and Northern Ottawa Counties.

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