OHIO RIVER BASIN
ALLIANCE

# Abundant Clean Water

Approved by the

Ohio River Basin Alliance Steering Committee

on

27 July 2020

and

Amended 5 October 2020 as required:

(1) To match the language of the final Plan for the Ohio River Basin; and

(2) To include by reference to respective ORBA Steering Committee Minutes the names and affiliations of the working group members.

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## 1. Purpose

This Working Group is created by the ORBA Steering Committee (ORBA Bylaws VIII(a)) for the purpose of executing ORBA's role with respect to the Abundant Clean Water (hereinafter referenced as "Water") goal of the Ohio River Basin Strategy. This documents the Steering Committee's charge to the Working Group as required by the ORBA Bylaws VIII(d).

## 2. Working Group Leader

In accordance with ORBA Bylaws VIII(a)(2), the Steering Committee appoints Richard Harrison to serve for a period of two years, corresponding to the period of performance of this charter, as the Leader of the Water Working Group. The Working Group Leader is an ex officio voting Member of the ORBA Steering Committee during their tenure (ORBA Bylaws VIII(a)(2)).

## 3. Working Group Members

Working Group Members are ORBA Members meeting the qualifications of ORBA Bylaws VIII(a)(1) who are selected to serve a two year term (ORBA Bylaws VIII(a)) corresponding to the period of performance of this charter.

The Water Working Group Members are included by reference to the *List of Working Group Members Appointed by the Steering Committee* in the Steering Committee records.

## 4. Requirements for All Working Groups

Working Groups shall (Bylaws VIII(b - d)):

- Meet or conduct conference calls at the request of their Leader to study, advise, and report on the specific charges from the Steering Committee;
- Keep and submit within 30 days to the Steering Committee written minutes of meetings and conference calls;
- Report to the Steering Committee during monthly calls; and
- Execute the charge from the Steering Committee.

Note Bylaws VIII(c): All written reports shall be submitted to the Steering Committee and no report shall be published or released for public information without approval from the Steering Committee.

## 5. Charge from Steering Committee to Water Working Group:

The Water Working Group is charged with developing and executing a detailed action plan to accomplish the following strategic actions in the Ohio River Basin Strategy.

- Serve as ORBA's liaison to leadership of each strategic action for this goal, keeping the Steering Committee apprised of progress and opportunities for ORBA to be supportive of strategic actions.

Objective 1: Organizations and states, enabled by the Clean Water Act will work collaboratively to demonstrate an increased number of water bodies that meet the Clean Water Act's drinkable, swimmable, and fishable uses by 2030 as compared to 2020.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Secure financial and other necessary resources through an Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative and other appropriate funding mechanisms to support all Strategic Actions under this Objective (See Appendix 1). Examples of projects include: Water Control Manual Updates, Watershed Management Plans, and Environmental Infrastructure Projects.

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive Ohio River Basin geographic information system (GIS) platform to support Clean Water Act related initiatives such as water quality monitoring and assessment, location of critical assets, water quality standards attainment and other related initiatives.

- Support the actions of state, federal, interstate and other Ohio River Basin organizations to implement Clean Water Act designated use requirements through improved water quality standards attainment; Basin state water quality protection efforts; the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Compact; and Ohio River Basin watershed organizations' missions to improve water quality for water bodies within the Ohio River Basin leading to improved use attainment.

- Support state, federal, interstate and other strategic organizations' efforts to monitor and assess the presence and health risks of Contaminants of Emerging Concern, such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), mercury, microplastics, 1,4-dioxane and plasticizers.

- Stabilize and expand the installation and maintenance of USGS super gages for Ohio River Basin rivers, streams and critical watersheds to enable the ability to perform change analysis and support Clean Water Act related flow and water quality monitoring.

- Support the development of a Basin-wide GIS inventory of acid mine/rock drainage sites, coal ash ponds, and underground mine pools associated with active and inactive coal mines prioritized based upon risk of failure, and develop a reclamation strategy to address 10 inventoried, high priority locations.

Objective 2: By 2025, develop effective strategies which can support and enhance the individual utility source water protection programs to meet Safe Drinking Water Act

requirements as they are developed and use best practices from these strategies to build collaborative programs to help support Ohio River Basin drinking, industrial, surface and ground water organizations that do not currently have source water protection programs.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Secure financial and other necessary resources through an Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative and other appropriate federal funding mechanisms to support all Strategic Actions under this Objective.

- Develop and maintain data layers for inclusion in the comprehensive Ohio River Basin GIS platform to support source water protection related initiatives such as mapping source water protection areas, contaminant source inventories, contaminant spill locations, source water protection risk zones and other related initiatives.

- Maintain and expand ORSANCO's Ohio River Organics Detection System to help detect and respond to volatile and other organic compound spills and detectible emerging contaminants of concern both reported and unreported that may impact the Ohio River and its tributaries as a drinking and industrial water supply.

- Utilize ORSANCO's source water protection program template as well as other identified Basin source water protection templates to build collaborative source water protection strategies for all water bodies within the Basin that serve as a drinking or industrial water supply.

- Identify and expand existing source water protection collaborations within the Ohio River Basin to help ensure the protection of water supplies to drinking and industrial water customers.

Objective 3: By 2025, identify priority waters with high incidences of HABs and convene stakeholders to prepare an Ohio River Basin-wide strategy to help respond to HABs and that will result in measurable reduction in HAB occurrence by 2030 as compared to 2020 for priority areas.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Secure financial and other necessary resources through an Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative, and other appropriate funding mechanisms to support all Strategic Actions under this Objective.

- Develop and maintain data layers for inclusion in the comprehensive Ohio River Basin GIS platform to map water bodies that have HAB occurrence to support the Basin-wide effort to achieve measurable reduction in HAB occurrences.

- Support HAB monitoring and response strategies of state, federal, interstate and other Ohio River Basin organizations to maintain safe recreation and drinking water for Ohio River Basin citizens.

- Identify and inventory point and non-point nutrient sources, communicate and implement nutrient reduction best management practice strategies to support reductions in nutrient contributions for identified sources to Ohio River Basin water bodies.

- Support the December 2016 Federal Hypoxia Task Force Strategy as it relates to nutrient contributions from the Ohio River Basin, including advocacy for the Federal Hypoxia Task force to summarize literature and identify additional measurement and modeling needs on the general location and significance of nutrient sources in the Ohio River Basin, including both point and nonpoint sources contributing nutrients to particular tributaries and/or mainstem segments.

- Support existing market-based solutions (e.g., Electric Power Research Institute's Ohio River Basin Water Quality Trading Project, etc.) working across stakeholder groups to reduce nutrient loading to waterbodies from point sources and non-point sources.

Objective 4: By 2025, The Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission(ORSANCO) will convene water quantity managers Basin-wide such as USGS and Division of Water (DOW) to establish common goals directed at identifying Basin-wide problems affecting water quantity management and recommend strategies to address these goals.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Secure financial and other necessary resources through an Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative and other appropriate funding mechanisms to support all Strategic Actions under this Objective.

- Develop and maintain data layers for inclusion in the comprehensive Ohio River Basin GIS platform to support water quantity related initiatives such as mapping flood risk areas, drought mitigation planning areas, water supply deficit/surplus areas and related initiatives.

- Develop partnerships to leverage available funding streams to maintain and expand USGS Stream Gage network to be able to accurately measure flow in Ohio River Basin streams. Utilize this data to improve hydrologic and hydraulic models so as to test existing infrastructure resiliency as it pertains to expected climate changes.

- Build upon ORSANCO's water quantity initiatives developed through its Water Quantity Committee to convene Ohio River Basin Water Quantity Stakeholders to conduct discussions and long-term planning to develop strategies to address water shortages and other relevant challenges within the Basin related to climate change, population growth and other stressors.

- Collaborate with domestic and international water quantity-related commissions to share information, exchange strategies, incentivize conservation, and advance common goals directed at solving problems affecting water quantity and leveraging these strategies and goals as vital Ohio River Basin assets.

- Facilitate collaboration to pursue a focused water quantity study to follow on to the existing USACE study that specifically addresses climate change as it relates to water quantity impacts in the medium and long term (by 2040 and 2100, respectively).

Objective 5: By 2025, inventory drinking and wastewater system infrastructure needs for the Ohio River Basin and develop a strategy to maintain these systems Basin wide.

*Strategic Actions:*

- Increase financial and other necessary resources through the Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (WIFIA), State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF), and other appropriate infrastructure funding mechanisms to maintain aging drinking and wastewater infrastructure systems.

- Develop and maintain data layers for inclusion in the comprehensive Ohio River Basin GIS platform to inventory drinking and wastewater system infrastructure needs for the Ohio River Basin.

- Leverage the USEPA Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Needs Assessment Survey to develop a communication strategy for the need to address these aging infrastructure assets on an Ohio River Basin-wide basis that details the urgency associated with increased infrastructure failures.

## 6. Deliverables and Milestones

- Working Group teleconferences or face-to-face meetings
- Timely submission of minutes to the Steering Committee
- Report on progress at the Steering Committee teleconference - monthly

- Action plan, with tasks required to complete each strategic action, including responsible person, team members, deadlines and milestones, resources needed, and success metrics - January 1, 2021
- Milestones from the action plan are incorporated by reference into these “Deliverables and Milestones.”
- Timely advice to the Steering Committee of speakers, panels and breakout groups recommended for the summits, and symposia.
- Annual written report on progress for each strategic action including milestones, success metrics, and challenges July 31, 2021 and July 31, 2022.

## 7. Duration

This Working Group is scheduled to last 24 months, from August 1, 2020 through July 31, 2022.

## 8. Participation

Participation in Working Groups is open to ORBA Members (ORBA Bylaws VIII(a). To join a Working Group, an ORBA Member should submit an e-mail expressing interest to the ORBA Steering Committee Chairperson. The Chairperson will submit to the Steering Committee for consensus approval and, upon approval, will notify the ORBA Member and the Working Group Leader of their addition to the Working Group. Working Group Members are expected to participate in the teleconferences, meetings, and activities of the Working Group. The Working Group Leader may recommend to the Steering Committee the removal of inactive Members from the Working Group.