

MINUTES – ORBA Steering Committee Conference Call, 22 July 2019

1. **Call to Order** – 1:01 EDT

2. **Roll Call**

Steering Committee Members Present – Richard Harrison, Carey Johnson, John King, Chris Lorentz, Kari Mackenbach, Heather Mayfield, Robin Peak, Chuck Somerville, Mike Steinmaus, Jeff Thomas

Steering Committee Members Absent – Ron Brooks, Laurel Cornell, Brian Farkas, Marty Hettel, Sarah Hippensteel-Hall, Harry Stone

ORBA Advisors Present – Peter Cinotto, Charles Goad, Jim Lazorchak, Laura Mattingly, Michael Saffran

3. **Adoption of the Agenda** – CS recommended adding an item to Unfinished Business, just after updates on the PAS Agreement, an item on vetting recommendations on regional leader interviews. Adjusted agenda was adopted by consensus.

4. **Approval of the Minutes from the 10 June 2019 Call** – Two sets of minutes were distributed, the corrected minutes from the 22 April 2019 call, and the draft minutes of the 10 June 2019 call. The 22 April minutes had already been approved, and the edits were included in the distributed version. The draft minutes of the 10 June call required approval. No comments were heard on the 10 June minutes, so they were adopted by consensus as distributed.

5. **Report from the Chairperson (Chuck Somerville)**

a. **ORSANCO Study Focused Webinar #1** – first of the study-focused webinars will be held on the first of August at 2:00 PM EDT. The announcement was distributed with the materials for the conference call. Topics to be covered – flood risk and adaptive management. CS asked Laura Mattingly to comment – she noted that USACE was working to make this webinar more interactive and focused. She expected better attendance and participation. Invitees were selected by Laura and Harry Stone specifically for expertise in this area.

b. **Rivers of Opportunity Event** – scheduled in Pittsburgh area scheduled for July 31st and August 1st. Mike Saffran had previously asked if anyone from the Pittsburgh district was scheduled to attend; CS asked if there was any update on attendance by USACE Pittsburgh. Mike said that he would follow up with Pittsburgh District

- c. **Request for informational items for monthly update** – CS requested any information that SC members would like to send out to the ORBA membership. Asked Jeff Thomas for updates on EPRI research team.

6. Regular Reports from Other Committee Members

- a. **Financial Update (C. Somerville)** – ORBA does not have a standing treasurer, so CS handles the monthly updates. The ORBA balance as of 10 June was \$12,593.78 in the account managed by ORSANCO. [later in the call Richard Harrison mentioned that he had forwarded a financial report showing a somewhat lower balance than reported by CS, and that there were likely to be additional travel invoices submitted by HS related to his work on the PAS project. RH will provide a more complete, end-of-the-year budget update].
- b. **Update on Website/Social Media (John King)** – There has been discussion about leaving the website under USACE while the PAS process is continuing. ORBA was mentioned in a recent Twitter tweet, which mentioned a talk given by Harry Stone. Laura Mattingly mentioned having discussed the website with Katelyn Newton (USACE PR person), who said that it would be possible to add a link from the USACE site to an outside website, which could be updated by ORBA directly. John King mentioned that he had had preliminary discussions with Heather Mayfield about creating a site that could be linked to the USACE site. CS mentioned that he had not visited the USACE/ORBA website to see if information on upcoming webinars had been posted. Laura said that she would discuss postings on the site with Katelyn.
- c. **Update from the AWI Liaison (open position)** – no report at this time
- d. **Update from the ORBCRE Liaison (Chris Lorentz)** – CL reminded the committee about the upcoming Symposium to be held at Ohio University, Athens Campus, from the 2nd through the 4th of October. Chris requested that we send a reminder regarding the call for abstracts and symposium registration with the ORBA Chair Update for this month. CS encourage all SC members to help get people registered for the Symposium/Summit, which will be an important opportunity for basin stakeholders to provide input into the PAS project leading to the development of a strategic plan for the Ohio River Basin.

7. Reports from Working Group Leaders

- a. **Sustainable Growth & Competitiveness** – Harry Stone was out of town during this call. CS asked for any comment from the committee on activities from the group this month. There were no additional comments.
- b. **Water Quality, Availability, and Management (Richard Harrison)** – RH has been focused on the PAS process, and has discussed with Laura the flow of information

required to allow KY to provide matching funds. RH is working on a statement of needs for drinking water and clean water infrastructure in the ORB. RH noted that the biggest struggle at this time was in reaching out to the states and other stakeholders [e.g. USGS, EPA, NWF] in a way that creates the most efficient flow of information into the strategic planning process. RH also mentioned that there had been a good deal of misinformation coming out about ORSANCO's actions on water quality standards, and that he would be happy to talk to ORBA members about the issue at another time. CS noted that ORSANCO reach to stakeholders was of critical importance to the success of the PAS process.

- c. **Restoration and Protection** (Sarah Hippensteel-Hall/Chris Lorentz) SH was not on the call. CL reiterated that the National Wildlife Federation has expressed interest in becoming involved with ORBA. CS asked if there was any potential for conflict with ongoing work with the Fish Habitat Partnership, but CL thought that input from NWF and FHP would be complementary.
- d. **Enterprise and Infrastructure** (Kari Mackenbach) KM reported a discussion with ORSANCO regarding the PAS process, and expressed interest in the Rivers of Opportunity event in Beaver, PA. CS asked KM to spread the word about the PAS process while at the meeting. Attendees can provide input through the ORSANCO.USACE.army.mil email address.

8. Unfinished Business

- a. **PAS Agreement** – Harry Stone was not on the call, so CS called on Laura Mattingly for an update. LM noted that the first focused webinar was scheduled for August 1st, and that it would pertain to flood control and adaptive management. There will be a series of four webinars. The second webinar will be on August 7th, and it will focus on Transportation/Navigation, Economy and Watershed Planning. The third webinar will be on August 14th, and it will focus on clean water, ecosystems and ecosystem restoration. And the fourth webinar will be on August 21st, and it will focus on recreation, research and education. Laura and Harry are hoping that they will be able to refine the questions and get a good deal of information from the participants, which will leave only a few things that need to be refined for the development of the plan. These seminars will lead up to the summit at the beginning of October. Heather Mayfield asked for clarification on the date of the Research and Education Webinar, and LM responded that that webinar will be held on August 21st at 2:00 PM EDT. All webinars will be held for one hour. They will also have a chat-box open, all of the comments will be recorded, and participants will be directed to the email address for further input. Jim Lazorchak requested information on whether or not invitations had been sent for participation in the webinars. At time of this meeting, invitations had been sent for the first and second focused webinars. M. Saffran asked about the process for establishing invitation lists for the webinars. LM responded that she had worked with H. Stone to establish

the original lists, but that invitations could be forwarded to others who should be included. LM also asked to be updated on who should be included in participation lists.

- a/2. **(Added to the Agenda) Vetting of stakeholders to be interviewed by non-federal partner** – CS mentioned that H. Stone had provided the names of four organizations that he believed should be interviewed as part of the PAS process. HS/CS wanted to vet the list with the Steering Committee, and to ask for potential additions to the list. The list included: The Great Lakes Commission (Mike Donahue), Healing Our Waters (associated with National Wildlife Federation, Gayle Hess), the Chesapeake Bay Program, and the Pacific Northwest Waterways Association. C. Lorentz endorsed the list and offered to participate in the interview process. CS said that he would communicate with Harry about how to conduct the interviews. M. Saffron suggested adding the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, which was set up in the Great Lakes. It is primarily comprised of governmental organizations, but could be a good organizational model. MS indicated that he would provide a POC by email. Mike Steinmaus recommended the River Network, and MS offered to provide a POC. CS mentioned adding WV Rivers to the list.
- b. **ORBA/ORBCRE Meeting 2019** – no additional comments regarding ORBA/ORBCRE meeting in October
- c. **Social Media Presence** – no additional comments on Social Media
- d. **ORBA Reception/Event in Washington DC** – CS noted that on the last call, we had not had sufficient time to discuss an event in DC. CS had suggested at that time that he would set up an off-line conversation with H. Stone, M. Hettel, and R. Harrison to discuss options and estimate costs. CS will coordinate this activity prior to the next call. RH mentioned that he had had a conference call with the two co-chairs of the congressional caucus, and that they had drafted a Dear Colleague letter to be sent to all of the congressional delegation members within the extended basin. RH had discussed with HS options for a late fall, or early 2020 meeting. RH recommended a briefing update on the status of the PAS providing background on the PAS and the status of the planning. RH asked Laura if there would be any reason why the congressional caucus could not be asked for input into the strategic plan document. LM thought that this would be allowable, but wanted to check to be sure. Discussion about the event included whether or not it would be allowable for USACE personnel to participate in the briefing and discussion, since some discussions might be construed as lobbying.
- e. **ORBA Strategic Plan** – CS reminded the committee that the long-term strategic plan for ORBA is intended to address the role that ORBA will play in the basin beyond the completion of the PAS process. Harry Stone has drafted a plan, which has been previously distributed. No further report today.

- f. **ORBA Research & Education Working Group Charter** – Heather Mayfield indicated that the charter is ready for review, and asked that it be circulated by CS for Steering Committee review

9. New Business

- a. **Next SC Call** – Scheduled for 26 August 2019 at 1:00 PM EDT. Call-in information will be provided before the call.
- b. **Other** – C. Lorentz told the group that Rotary International will be bringing in a group of five Russian scientists to discuss watershed management in the US

10. Adjournment at 1:57 PM