

A UNIQUE APPROACH TO AN OLD PROBLEM

OHIO COUNTY ADDRESSES DITCH MAINTENANCE WITH WATERSHED PLANNING PRINCIPALS

Allen County, Ohio is breaking new ground with their holistic approach to the traditional petition ditch project. The petition to improve drainage in Little Riley Creek was amended six times before it passed at the first hearing in August 2001. Little Riley Creek originates in an agricultural area, and traverses almost 10 miles through both residential and commercial land use areas before its confluence with Riley Creek near the campus of Bluffton College. The creek is in the Blanchard River watershed, which ultimately drains into the Maumee River and then Lake Erie.

Almost 80 percent of Allen County is agricultural. Improving and maintaining agricultural drainage has been an important part of rural life for over 150 years, since the first homestead-

ers arrived in Northwest Ohio and began draining the vast wetlands. The Great Black Swamp, the nemesis of early travelers and settlers in Northwest Ohio, extended over some 1500 square miles, including parts of Allen County. Allen County's first ditch law was enacted in 1859 and was eventually replaced by Ohio's drainage laws. These laws provide the basis for petition ditch projects in Northwest Ohio.

Under present laws, a landowner can petition the County to make drainage improvements and place ditch sections on a permanent maintenance program. Assuming there is an acceptable cost/benefit ratio and the County Commissioners approve the project, the costs associated with the project are then assessed to all landowners that benefit from the project within the affected watershed. This assessment approach naturally leads to some controversy, because the costs and perceived benefits of drainage depend upon one's perspective.

Little Riley Creek's case is challenging. Farmers are interested in improving drainage while downstream landowners in residential and commercial settings want to reduce the potential for flooding. Many

people also perceive traditional ditch 'cleaning', or channelization, as unaesthetic and damaging to aquatic habitat and recreational values.

The County hopes to enhance the natural ability of Little Riley Creek to manage and convey stormwater and improve water quality by taking a watershed approach. This drainage project incorporates five

continued on page 2...

"It would be easy to go with the status quo and employ the traditional ditch improvement methods. But if we are going to do the best we can for all the parties impacted by the project, then we have to take a different approach".

*-Douglass Degen,
Allen County Drainage Engineer*

In This Issue

U.S. EPA Expands Brownfield Grants ... 2

Wave 2 VAP Changes 3

Hull Lab Provides New Soils Testing ... 3

Managing a Waste Disposal Service 3

Hull Expanded 4

SENATOR TOURS LAKEVIEW BLUFFS



Senator Mike DeWine (center) visits Lakeview Bluffs, a site soon to be undergoing redevelopment. Heavily industrial since 1912, but primarily vacant since 1976, Lakeview Bluffs has been considered Ohio's most complex and comprehensive redevelopment project in efforts to reclaim the natural beauty and value of Lake Erie's shoreline and scenic river corridors. Pictured with Senator DeWine are Craig Kasper (left) from Hull, and Todd Davis (right) from Hemisphere Advisors.

UNIQUE APPROACH... CONTINUED

interrelated components involving science, engineering and planning. The project entails hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, stream habitat assessment, funding, engineering and construction, and watershed planning. It will be a collaborative effort between the public

The Little Riley Creek project brings together multiple practices not typically used concurrently, and could provide a model for this type of project across the state.

and private sector, led by the County Drainage Engineer. Unique features of the project include incorporating the concepts of natural channel design and a watershed approach into a plan for

the improvement and maintenance of Little Riley Creek. Project managers plan to assess the Creek's hydrology, habitat and buffers on a segment-by-segment basis and recommend minimum engineering interventions that will still accomplish drainage goals.

The County hopes that this proactive, integrated approach will be well received at the second public hearing. "There is a definite benefit to having as many answers as you can before going to a public hearing," says Mr. Degen. "The more people understand how they will be directly affected by the improvements, the easier it is to gain acceptance."

A key goal is to achieve the greatest value for the least cost through selective stream improvements, while being sensitive to the multiple interests of county residents. It is too early in the project to predict how

this approach may affect overall costs. The County may seek external funding to complete some activities that further benefit water quality and wildlife habitat. The County, the land-



owners and the environment will all benefit from reduced long-term maintenance costs and preserving the natural character and functions of Little Riley Creek.

Hull's team includes Oxbow River & Stream Restoration, Inc. and Teater-Gebhardt, Inc. Questions regarding this project can be directed to Douglass Degen, Allen County Drainage Engineer at 419.228.3196 or Hugh Crowell, Hull's Wetland and Ecological Services practice leader, at 614.793.8777 or email: hcrowell@hullinc.com

U.S. EPA EXPANDS BROWNFIELD GRANTS

The Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfield's Revitalization Act authorized additional funding for the Brownfield Pilot Grants, and awards are expected in October 2003. The legislation that provided the funding can also establish some liability relief and new provisions for state response programs. Grants can help pay for assessment as well as clean up at redevelopable properties, including site contaminated by petroleum or a petroleum product (UST sites) and mine-scarred lands. \$200 million in grants are available to communities, with another \$50 million available for state programs.

The three primary funding sources include Site Assessment Grants, Clean Up Grants, and Brownfield Cleanup Revolving Loan Funds (BCRLF). In some cases, the grants may be applied to the 25% required match for leveraging Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund assistance, and could possibly help fund for sites not currently eligible under the Clean Ohio Fund.

The first round is currently under way. For more information, please contact Jane Dailey at jdailey@hullinc.com or 614-793-8777.

ACSM RESTRUCTURES

The American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM) has adopted a new strategy to accommodate more individualized needs. The "New ACSM" will have no members of its own, rather membership will be comprised of those belonging directly to their respective organizations. The intent is to have the flexibility to adjust to the needs of its members and to also address the changes specifically within each profession.

ACSM is made up of four member organizations: National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS), American Association of Geodetic Surveying (AAGS), American Cartographic Association (ACA), and Geographic and Land Information Society (GLIS) These organizations will now each be responsible for establishing their own membership requirements and services, as well as budgeting for their independent resources.

Although the current leadership of both the ACSM and the member organizations has initiated the new developments, restructuring plans must still be presented and voted upon by the full ACSM membership for a final approval. If new plans go as expected, they will be implemented in January of 2003.

FIVE YEAR RULE REVIEW - WAVE 2 VAP CHANGES:

Wave 2 revisions to VAP rules became effective in October. New rules include less restrictive eligibility criteria and streamlining of Phase II site assessments, risk assessments, and operation and maintenance procedures.

The number of generic numerical standards for direct contact soils has more than doubled, and generic standards are now available for construction and excavation activities. The VAP standards are considered more user-friendly, and petroleum standards will be more consistent with BUSTR underground storage tank regulations. The Urban Setting Designation (USD) criteria must now be verified periodically to ensure that the USD has not been impacted by any changes over time, considering population, groundwater use or special designations of local water resources.

Additional details of the rule changes can be found on the Ohio EPA's website, under "Proposed Five Year Rule Review" at <http://www.epa.state.oh.us/derr/vap/fiveyrrule/fiveyrrule.html>.

NEW SOILS TESTING SERVICES PROVIDED BY HULL LAB

Hull's Geotechnical Laboratory recently added Direct Shear of Soils (AASHTO T236/ASTM D3080) testing and additional concrete and asphalt testing to expand our long list of geotechnical testing services. Hull is accredited by AASHTO and prequalified by ODOT to provide these services. For a complete list of our AASHTO accredited tests, visit the Construction Services Practice page at: http://www.hullinc.com/secondary_page/construction.html, or contact David Baltzer, P.E. at 614-793-8777, email: dbaltzer@hullinc.com.

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS FOR COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS

U.S. EPA awarded grants to nine Ohio communities to complete vulnerability assessments for municipal water systems serving more than 100,000 people. Nationwide, U.S. EPA awarded \$53 million for large system vulnerability assessments, \$23 million is budgeted for smaller systems. As part of the new bioterrorism legislation, all community water systems serving populations greater than 3,300 must conduct vulnerability assessments and submit them to U.S. EPA by December 2003. For more information, contact Bill Burkett at bburkett@hullinc.com or call (419) 385-2018.

MANAGING A WASTE DISPOSAL SERVICE: THE CITY OF WILMINGTON

The City of Wilmington's sanitary landfill has serviced the Clinton County, Ohio area for almost 50 years. The City is dedicated to maintaining a viable and economic waste disposal service for its citizens. The wise management of this municipally-owned and operated landfill demonstrates that viable landfill operations can be managed in a low waste generation environment.

The Wilmington Landfill averages less than 100 tons of waste per day. Despite this low volume, the City is committed to operating the landfill because it gives them some economic control for their solid waste services. The City keeps a steady waste stream by managing its own hauling services.

The City of Wilmington is pursuing a permit to nearly double its current permitted capacity. The facility recently constructed a new disposal cell that will provide several years of service. They also recently capped approximately 15 acres of an old section of the landfill that will help the facility better manage surface water, methane venting, erosion controls, and site access.

Hull & Associates, Inc. has worked with the City of Wilmington since the mid-1980s, providing permitting, environmental monitoring, and input on daily operations. For more information, please contact Jim Pasche, Hull's Solid Waste Management Practice Leader, at 419-385-2018 or email: jpasche@hullinc.com

TAKE THE TMDL SURVEY

Industries and municipalities in Ohio are encouraged to participate in Hull's TMDL survey. Survey results will help us better understand program issues and concerns by the regulated community so that we can assist our clients and friends in meeting TMDL requirements. The survey is available on-line and we urge you to participate! Please go to www.hullinc.com, click on the "TMDL Survey Link" on the bottom left side of the page. *For those who wish to complete the form via fax, please contact Hugh Crowell at 614-793-8777.*

Results will be shared in a future issue of *Inside Hull*. To subscribe to our newsletter, or to receive the results, please send an email to [Jan Polak: jpolak@hullinc.com](mailto:jpolak@hullinc.com)

Hull

& associates, inc.

6397 Emerald Parkway
Suite 200
Dublin, Ohio 43016
<http://www.hullinc.com>

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Westerville, OH
Permit No. 475

INSIDE Hull & Associates, Inc. is distributed on a quarterly basis. It is not intended to provide legal opinions or other professional advice, but only to serve as a convenient summary of or reference to the issues presented. Comments and suggestions are always welcome, and can be directed to Jan Polak - Hull & Associates, Inc., 6397 Emerald Parkway, Suite 200, Dublin, Ohio 43016 (614-793-8777), E-mail: jpolak@hullinc.com.

HULL HAS EXPANDED

In 2002, Hull opened a new office in Indianapolis, Indiana and expanded two existing offices! Please note our updated list of office locations:

Columbus – New Location!

6397 Emerald Parkway, Suite 200
Dublin, Ohio 43016
614-793-8777

Cincinnati – New Location!

4900 Parkway Drive, Suite 100
Mason, Ohio 45040
513-459-9677

Indianapolis – New Office!

6330 East 75th Street, Suite 176
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250-2781
317-558-0562

Toledo

3401 Glendale Avenue, Suite 300
Toledo, Ohio 43614-2418
419-385-2018

Cleveland

6161 Cochran Road, Suite A
Solon, Ohio 44139
440-519-2555



Happy Holidays to All

***Hull & Associates, Inc. would like to wish everyone a safe,
happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year!***