**Public Participation Program for the**

**Huron River Watershed MS4s in Washtenaw County**

*Updated February 5, 2021*

The Public Participation Program is required by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) NPDES Storm Water Discharge Permit application.

The purpose of this Public Participation Program (PPP) is to facilitate the involvement of Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer Systems (MS4s) in the watershed, and the general public in the revision of MS4 Storm Water Management Plans (SWMPs). This PPP is designed to involve all entities in the watershed with the authority, ability, and desire to carry out the implementation of SWMPs in commenting and implementing those plans.

#### I. General Information

This Public Participation Program is submitted by the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) on behalf of the following Phase I and II MS4s within the Huron River Watershed:

City of Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor Public Schools

Barton Hills Village

City of Dexter

Eastern Michigan University

Pittsfield Charter Township

City of Ypsilanti

Ypsilanti Charter Township

Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner

Washtenaw County Road Commission

University of Michigan

VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System

#### II. Communication During the SWMP Revision Process

The MS4s listed in the previous section participate in a watershed group to draft and implement stormwater management plans. MS4s in Washtenaw County formed the Middle Huron River Stormwater Advisory Group (SAG) and Middle Huron Partners (MHP). HRWC facilitates this group. Significant effort was engaged by these entities previous stormwater permits to reach out to potential stakeholders and the public at large. Further, public involvement was considered in the development of a Watershed Management Plans. As part of these efforts and others, a number of on-going citizens groups have been formed. These include creek groups for a number of tributary drainages. The MHP will continue to participate with and recruit representation from these important citizens groups.

The practices listed in this section will be used to solicit public participation during the SWMP development process for each MS4. Public input shall be encouraged in all aspects of the storm water management program. The following minimum actions shall be taken to encourage public input:

1. The watershed permittees shall follow local public notice requirements, as appropriate, when notifying the public that a storm water management program must be implemented. Copies of the SWMP shall be available for public inspection, and the public shall be notified of when and where it is available.

2. The MS4s shall continue to participate in watershed groups that are open to public participation for the purpose of encouraging public involvement in all aspects of the storm water management program.

3. The MS4s shall cooperate with the HRWC, by informing them of activities under the storm water management program, providing copies of the SMWPs and pursuing input on the plans, seeking volunteer assistance including water quality monitoring assistance, and seeking ways to meet general permit requirements by assisting the local organizations with their ongoing programs for water resource protection and enhancement.

The following Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be carried out to meet public participation requirements:

**BMP 1.1**. **Public Notice**

*Description*: MS4s will provide electronic copies of draft SWMPs to HRWC to share with the general public. HRWC will notify the public that SWMPs were developed and encourage public input in the revision process. This will be done primarily through:

* Posting SWMPs on the HRWC website.
* Sending out an electronic notice to Huron River Watershed Council public contact lists.
* Publicizing the SWMP review process via the HRWC newsletter and press releases.
* Posting each SWMP on individual MS4 websites.

In addition, several other means of communication will be utilized for announcing progress and soliciting input. These may include any of the following:

1. Printing a notice in the local news media.
2. Announcements/updates to local boards, associations, and other interested groups by HRWC and watershed group members
3. Articles in local newsletters
4. Public meetings
5. Web site(s), RSS and social networking sites
6. Announcements at major public events

MS4s will follow any public notice requirements specific to their local jurisdiction. The same public notice procedure will be used following any major SWMP revision.

Timeline: Initial notice will be provided no later than 15 days following the release of a draft permit.

*Evaluation*: Publication of notice in news media, hits on main website.

*Responsible Parties*: Each listed MS4 will provide SWMPs and HRWC will notify the public within the watershed. MS4s will notify public in their local jurisdiction.

**BMP 1.2** **Public Access to Storm Water Management Plans**

*Description*: HRWC and the MS4s will publish and make available copies of the SWMPs on the HRWC website, MS4 websites and MS4 offices.

*Timeline*: Following review by EGLE and revision by MS4s. SWMPs will be made available when the draft permit becomes available for public review.

*Evaluation*: Number of views each of the plans get at each website

*Responsible Parties*: HRWC and individual MS4s

**BMP 1.3** **Watershed Groups**

*Description*: The Middle Huron Partners is a watershed implementation group that is open to and encourages public participation. This group meets three times a year (on average) on an as needed basis. Meeting schedules are shared via e-mail distribution lists. Meetings of this group will be the primary point of public input into SWMP implementation and provide feedback to MS4 representatives.

*Timeline*: on-going; start in year one of permit

*Evaluation*: Document MS4 representative and citizen participation;

*Responsible Parties*: MS4 representatives, HRWC

**BMP 1.4** **SWMP Review**

*Description*: Following public notice of the SWMPs, HRWC will share comments with MS4s and MS4s will accept and consider comments from the public and EGLE. After revising SWMPs, HRWC will post revised and final drafts of each MS4’s SWMP. Following initial implementation, feedback will be solicited through watershed group meetings. Toward the end of the permit cycle, MS4s will determine if a major revision of SWMPs are necessary. If so, the same public notice and revision process will be followed as with the initial draft and revision.

*Timeline*: Review completed following initial application and prior to permit issuance. SWMP revision considered by year 5 of permit cycle.

*Evaluation*: Comments from the general public.

*Responsible Parties*: HRWC and MS4s