

# Saginaw-Tittabawassee Rivers Contamination Community Advisory Group Charter

Adopted March, 2010  
Revised February, 2011  
Revised January 2016  
Revised November 2018

## I. Mission

The CAG shall assist in broad public awareness and input and provide advice and recommendations to the US Environmental Protection Agency and related organizations and agencies to help ensure an effective and timely cleanup and restoration of the Tittabawassee River, Saginaw River & Bay Superfund Site.

## II. Membership

The CAG membership shall consist of stakeholders who represent a broad range of interests and locales potentially affected by the contamination and cleanup of the Superfund site.

- **Individual service.** Members serve as individuals and not as formal representatives of any group or organization. No organization is provided a formal “seat” on the CAG.
- **Membership Terms.** All new members shall be appointed to renewable three-year terms. Renewing members are also appointed to new three-year terms, but may choose to fill remaining terms of members who resigned from the CAG during the previous year and who have additional years remaining on their terms.
- **Leadership Team.** The CAG shall be led by a three-person leadership team consisting of a President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Leadership positions will be filled by election of the membership and shall serve for renewable two-year terms. The leadership team will fulfill all required corporate functions, coordinate with facilitator, contractors and ex-officio agencies, and serve as spokespersons for the CAG.
- **Addition of members.** Membership shall be reviewed annually to ensure that all necessary interests are represented in consideration of those CAG members who have retired or resigned during that year. A nominating committee of the CAG shall be appointed to identify potential new members for presentation to and agreement of the full CAG.
- **Members (non-voting).** In addition to regular CAG members, key agencies and organizations involved in the cleanup and restoration process will participate in the discussions and operations of the CAG and shall identify an individual representative to participate in CAG meetings. Non-voting members will be included from the US Environmental Protection Agency, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Dow Chemical. Additional liaison agencies will be identified as needed.

## III. Member Expectations

All CAG members are expected to commit up to approximately 2 hours per month in support of CAG activities. Specific commitments will include:

1. Attend and fully participate in meetings of the CAG. Alternates may not be used.

2. Notify CAG leadership in advance of any absences, miss no more than two meetings in any year, and catch up on any missed items prior to the next meeting.
3. Arrive at all meetings prepared, having read through any background materials and the summary of previous meetings.
4. Serve on subcommittees as appropriate, and attend any special meetings or tours as scheduled.
5. Communicate regularly with neighbors and other stakeholders to keep them informed about CAG activities, invite them to CAG meetings and events, and to ensure that their issues and concerns are voiced at CAG meetings.

#### IV. Operations

The CAG will seek to create an open, transparent, and consensus-oriented process.

- **Consensus process.** The CAG will operate by consensus, fully vetting all ideas and viewpoints and seeking solutions that meet the largest set of needs while articulating and respecting minority opinions.
- **Open meetings.** All CAG meetings will be open to the public and all information openly shared. Meetings will be held at public venues located in the community. Time will be set aside at each meeting for broader public input.
- **Broad public input.** CAG members will work to ensure there is broad public input to and understanding of CAG issues and discussion. In addition to the efforts of individual CAG members, public workshops or events may be hosted at specific points in the process. If an important interest is not represented on the CAG and no representative voice from that community can be found, then the CAG will make every effort to reach out to that community and gather input to use in its deliberations.
- **Calendar.** The CAG will develop an annual calendar that outlines key topics and activities for meetings and broader public input.
- **Meetings of the full CAG.** The CAG shall meet at least four times per year on dates determined by the CAG. Meetings will be spaced throughout the year. Meeting dates can be added or adjusted by agreement of the members.
- **Meeting summaries.** The discussions and conclusions from all CAG meetings will be summarized in a public document and posted on line. To the degree possible, meetings may also be recorded via video or audio for posting on the web. Summaries will be provided to CAG members for review, comment, and approval prior to being made final.
- **Subcommittees.** Standing and special subcommittees shall be established as needed to conduct more in-depth study of specific issues. All conclusions and recommendations of subcommittees shall be brought to the full CAG for agreement. No subcommittee may act on behalf of the CAG without the agreement and express direction of the CAG. Subcommittees must be chaired by full CAG members, but may include additional members that are not members of the full CAG.
- **Technical, administrative, and facilitation support.** The CAG shall work cooperatively with Dow Chemical to identify resources to engage support services as needed.

- **Recommendations.** CAG advice and recommendations will be documented in formal transmittals to EPA including background and rationale. Any minority opinions will be identified in the same transmittal. A formal response to all CAG recommendations will be requested. All CAG recommendations and EPA responses will be made public.
- **Duration.** The CAG will continue to operate as long as in-depth community involvement is important to the cleanup operations of the Superfund site. The CAG will be dissolved upon agreement of the membership.
- **Annual review.** The CAG shall conduct an annual review of its operations at the first meeting of each year to identify strengths and challenges to its operations, sufficiency of membership, continuing relevance and purpose, goals and calendar for the coming year, and any adjustments to the Charter.

## V. Ground rules

In conducting the work of the CAG, members will:

- work cooperatively with each other, supporting agencies, and other stakeholders,
- be respectful of all participants,
- approach all issues and viewpoints with an open mind,
- work to ensure that their concerns and issues are articulated in a way that all stakeholders can understand,
- seek common ground wherever possible, and present and respect minority opinions where they exist.

### ***CAG Scope of Authority, from EPA CAG Guidance, 9/95***

A CAG should serve as a public forum for representatives of diverse community interests to present and discuss their needs and concerns related to the Superfund decision-making process with appropriate Federal and State/Tribal/ local governments. The CAG is designed as a mechanism for all affected and interested parties in a community to have a voice and actively participate in the Superfund process. However, it is important to remember that the CAG is not the only mechanism for community involvement at a site; as the lead Agency, EPA continues to have the obligation to inform and involve the entire community through regular as well as innovative community involvement activities.

EPA cannot, by law, abrogate its responsibility to make the final decisions at a site; however, by providing the perspective of the local community, the CAG can assist EPA in making better decisions. A CAG that is broadly representative of the affected community offers EPA a unique opportunity to hear—and seriously consider—community preferences for site cleanup and remediation. It is particularly important that in instances where an EPA decision and/or response differs from a stated CAG preference regarding site cleanup, EPA accepts the responsibility of explaining its decision and/ or response to CAG members.

A CAG allows the Agency to exchange information with members of the affected community and encourages CAG members to discuss site issues and activities among themselves. The CAG also can provide a public service to the rest of the affected community by representing the community in discussions regarding the site and by relaying information from these discussions back to the rest of the community. CAGs thus can be a valuable tool for both the Agency and communities throughout the cleanup process.