



A Proposal for a Tri-County Project Coordination Plan

June 17, 2003 DRAFT

Introduction:

The Saginaw Bay watershed, including the City of Midland and the Tittabawassee River into the Saginaw River, has been documented as displaying levels of sediment, flood plain, and upland soil contamination that are significant from the standpoints of both human and environmental health. Sediments and flood plain soils along over 40 river miles, passing through numerous municipal jurisdictions and three counties, are contaminated with a variety of man-made compounds including dioxins, furans, and pesticide residues. Upland soils in the City of Midland are similarly contaminated. Environmental sampling, while not comprehensive enough to map the distribution of these contaminants, has demonstrated levels in excess of health based criteria at numerous locations.

Currently, there is no integrated strategy to manage this extended area of contamination in order to minimize the risk of exposure to the various categories of potential human receptors. The development of a management strategy for these contaminated media is essential to minimize existing risk to human health, to prevent exacerbating the problem and to begin to develop a long term remediation strategy. Such a management strategy must include clearly defined roles and responsibilities for agency personnel, coordinate public outreach efforts and minimize risks associated with contamination in the area. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is in a unique position to propose, oversee and coordinate a unified approach for management of contamination within the Bay, Midland, and Saginaw Tri-County Area. The MDEQ should take the lead in developing an integrated and cooperative plan to that end. This is a proposal for the development of plan to coordinate the management of issues related to the contamination discussed above.

Steering Committee:

A Steering Committee would be created to act as the umbrella organization for development and implementation of a Tri-County Project Coordination Plan. The attached figure illustrates the proposed structure and functions of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee would consist of representatives from State and Federal agencies with authority over issues of human health and environmental protection. The Steering Committee would consolidate the requirements of the regulatory tools available (Part 111 Hazardous Waste Facility Operating License, NPDES Permit, etc.) to ensure that the management of the contamination addresses those requirements. These regulatory tools would also be potential vehicles for implementation and enforcement of components of a plan to manage the contamination.

The Steering Committee would be responsible for development, implementation, and coordination of a management plan for environmental contamination in the Tri-County area. The management plan for contamination must meet five objectives:

- 1) Minimize unnecessary human exposures to contaminants;
- 2) Contain impacts within their current areas;
- 3) Educate stakeholders so that 1 and 2, above, are most likely to happen;
- 4) Define roles and responsibilities for local governmental organizations: and
- 5) Determine whether other environmental impacts have occurred and if they should be addressed under the Tri-County Project Coordination Plan.

Community Advisory Panel:

A Community Advisory Panel would be formed to coordinate information to and input from stakeholder groups who do not have representation on the Steering Committee. The Community Advisory Panel would consist of one or more representatives of the Steering Committee and representatives from:

- 1) Residents of the City of Midland;
- 2) Residents of the Tittabawassee and Saginaw River flood plain;
- 3) Environmental Groups (Lone Tree Council, Tittabawassee River Watch, etc.);
- 4) Affected local governments (Cities of Midland, Saginaw and Bay City and Townships governing areas in the flood plain);
- 5) Local Health Departments;
- 6) County Boards of Midland, Saginaw, and Bay Counties;
- 7) Business interests;
- 8) County Parks;
- 9) Others as identified/needed.

The Community Advisory Panel would provide input to the Steering Committee on the various tasks involved in managing the contamination in the rivers, flood plain and City of Midland. The Community Advisory Panel would also act as a conduit of information from the Steering Committee to the stakeholder groups represented and would have a role in community information/public participation efforts.

Proposed Implementation:

A rough draft of a Project Coordination Plan would be prepared by the Steering Committee. This draft would include components on managing contamination in the City of Midland and in river sediments and floodplain soils, community involvement and outreach and education (the "Tasks" identified on the attached diagram). Input on the draft would be sought from affected local governments, through the Community Advisory Panel, and from a variety of stakeholder groups, through Public Participation/Public Involvement Meetings. Stakeholder groups include:

- 1) Residents.
- 2) Farmers.
- 3) Business.
- 4) Local Government (Township, Village, City).
- 5) County Government (especially Local Health Departments).
- 6) State Government [MDEQ, Michigan Department of Attorney General (MDAG), Michigan Department Community Health (MDCH), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDAG)].
- 7) U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (RCRA, GNLPO, CERCLA, TSCA).
- 8) U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.
- 9) U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (ATSDR).
- 10) Environmental Groups.
- 11) Developers.
- 12) Realtors.
- 13) Recreational Users.

The Community Advisory Panel and Citizen Information Meetings should be used to seek input from as many stakeholders as possible. The Dow Chemical Company, as a significant party to

be affected by this process, would have input through the conditions of their Hazardous Waste Facility Operating License and NPDES permits and through the Citizen Information Meetings.

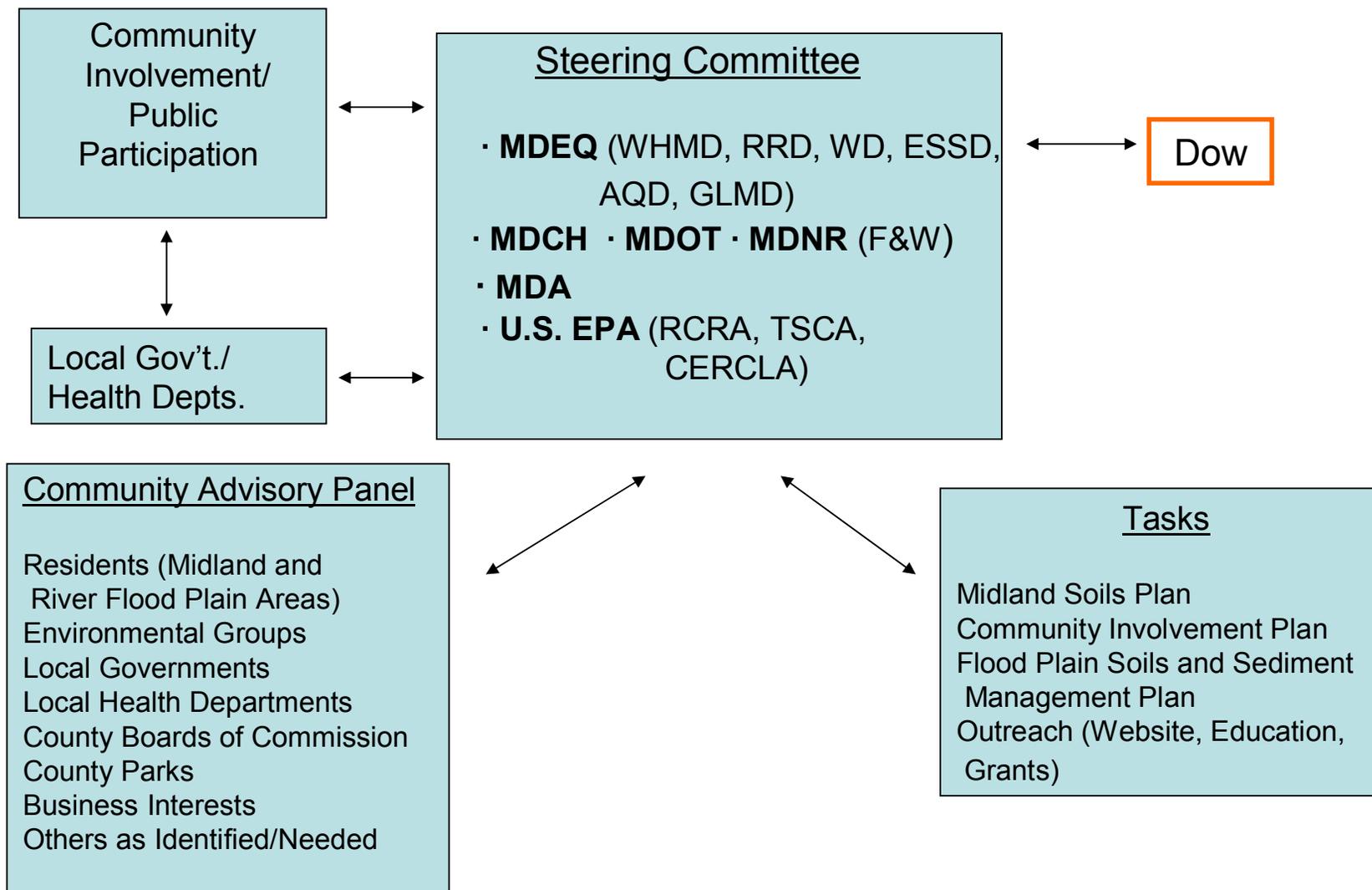
The Steering Committee would use the input it receives to refine the Project Coordination Plan. The final version of the plan would include, at a minimum, components for managing exposures to contaminated soils in the City of Midland, contaminated sediments and flood plain soils elsewhere in the plan area, outreach and community involvement. The community involvement portion would also involve feedback to the Steering Committee so that the Project Coordination Plan could evolve as needed. The outreach portion could include seeking grant funds to assist with the implementation of some components of the Project Coordination Plan.

First Steps:

The first step would consist of a meeting between all involved MDEQ Divisions/Offices [Waste and Hazardous Materials Division (WHMD), Remediation and Redevelopment Division (RRD), Air Quality Division (AQD), Water Division (WD), Geological and Land Management Division (GLMD), Environmental Science and Services Division (ESSD), and office of the Great Lakes (OGL)] and DAG to list Departmental concerns/requirements from statutory, regulatory and programmatic standpoints. The next step would be a similar meeting between all the entities identified as potential members of the Steering Committee. This would be followed by a meeting with representatives of all the stakeholder groups, preferably held at a central location within the area affected by the contamination. A working group (which would probably become the core of the Community Advisory Panel), consisting of members of the Steering Committee with input from as many stakeholder groups as possible, would then develop a Tri-County Project Coordination Plan with recommendations for implementation, including dissemination of information.

The MDEQ should also pursue funding from federal and/or private granting entities and, as appropriate, encourage other stakeholders to do the same, in order to develop and implement the Tri-County Project Coordination Plan.

DRAFT Tri-County Project Coordination Plan (Midland-Saginaw-Bay Counties)



DRAFT
Tri-County Project Coordination Plan
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN
March 26, 2003

As part of the Tri-County Project Coordination Plan, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) is a crucial element to facilitate public outreach/educational efforts and involve stakeholders in the decision-making process and to effectively implement the Tri-County Project Coordination Plan. The following outlines proposed community involvement activities to be conducted during investigative efforts associated with identifying the extent of the contamination and assessing public health and environmental impacts:

I. Highlights of the CIP:

The Steering Committee will be responsible for implementing a community involvement program designed to educate, inform, and provide opportunities for participation in the decision-making process regarding the site investigation and cleanup process associated with The Dow Chemical Company Midland facility. The Steering Committee should consider the following approaches:

- Enlist the support and participation of local officials in coordinating community involvement activities. Visible, trusted, influential, and well-connected community leaders need to help deliver the message to the community and monitor community concerns. They need to be informed regularly and fully of site investigations, activities, plans, findings, and developments. These individuals might include local government officials, and representatives of the media, environmental and civic groups, citizenry, schools, extension agents, and businesses.
- Provide follow-up explanations about sampling and test results to area residents. Concise and easily-understood information should be available to all residents on the schedule of technical activities, their purpose, and their outcome. In particular, owners of property where samples are taken should receive follow-up explanations of what was done and found on their land. Since the regulatory authority for corrective action rests with Part 111, Hazardous Waste Management, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (Act 451), the WHMD should be the lead division coordinating this project. A primary contact person should be established, as well as contacts for various issues, as no one individual can be knowledgeable about all aspects of the license or corrective action activities associated with the site.
- Education-Outreach: Provide education-outreach efforts to the community (e.g., measures to protect personal health) and all interested parties. A clear understanding of dioxin (all the who, what, when, where why, and how components) and proposed, interim, and final site-specific activities and actions need to be relayed.

II. Community Involvement Activities:

The following community involvement activities are suggested for the Tri-County area:

- 1) Identify Audience(s): Identify audience(s), including but not necessarily limited to residents (urban, suburban, and rural); businesses; local officials; legislators; community organizations, environmental groups, and citizen groups; and media representatives.

Consider what their level of awareness is; what information they are asking for; what information we need to provide to them; how to best inform them; how often to inform them; and how to empower them to stay involved and participate throughout the investigation/cleanup process.

- 2) Information Repository(ies): Establish information repositories to contain information on these projects. This can be a specific Website location(s) and/or one or more physical locations within the community or communities.
- 3) Press Conferences: The first press conference was held on August 27, 2002, at the MDEQ Saginaw Bay District Office, to announce preliminary results of the Phase II sampling and was well-received by the media. Others should be held, as determined in the Action Plan.
- 4) Public Meetings: Routine public meetings should be coordinated with the MDCH and MDA and local representatives to clearly communicate results of MDEQ sampling efforts; plans for future work; Part 111 of Act 451 regulatory actions being taken; work plans submitted by the licensee under review such as interim measures, remedial investigations, or proposed corrective measures; and environmental risks. It is suggested that meetings be held at the Tittabawassee Township Hall (capacity 180) and the Green Point Nature Center (capacity 60) and a third to-be-named facility (minimum capacity of 250) as possible locations. Generally, large numbers of people attend the first few meetings and then the number of people attending meetings thereafter drops to a core group of interested participants (e.g., Citizen Information Committee). Meeting notices would be sent to the various newspaper, TV, and radio media representatives and to select others (via phone/mail), including: petitioners; cities of Saginaw, Bay City, and Midland; townships of Saginaw, Tittabawassee, Thomas, James, Midland, and Ingersol; local health departments; local legislators and officials; as well as other persons specifically asking to receive such a notice. In addition, all notices should be placed on the MDEQ Website.
- 5) Community Group Meetings: Project managers and other staff may be asked to attend meetings held by local or regional community groups to discuss site actions and MDEQ investigation/cleanup policies. MDEQ staff's involvement with a community group may be limited to a one-time presentation of technical information or guidance on statutory requirements. A community group may also ask MDEQ staff to attend meetings on a regular basis.
- 6) Information Bulletins/Website: It is suggested that MDEQ Information Bulletins be published/distributed to routinely provide information regarding site activities. Current mailing lists kept by different Divisions need to be modified so we are using one mailing list to communicate about the project. Release of key findings/reports might be coordinated with the information bulletins and provided at corresponding public meetings, whenever possible, and placed on the MDEQ Website.
- 7) Press Releases: Prepared statements may be released to local papers and radio and TV stations to announce the discovery of any significant findings at the site during the site investigation/cleanup process or to notify the community of any public meetings, community group meetings, or press conferences. Keep citizens/media alerted in advance of field activities the MDEQ performs (arrival of field crews at scene, heavy equipment, and protective clothing) as community interest and concern peaks at times when these types of activities occur or when a decision for remedial actions takes place.

- 8) Fact Sheets, Brochures, Technical Summaries, and/or Reports: Fact sheets, brochures, technical summaries, and/or reports should be prepared on an as-needed basis, maintained on the MDEQ Website, and where possible, published to coincide with public meetings or mailings. Other avenues to “get the word out” might include: mobile traveling exhibits or tabletop displays, posters, regular radio/TV broadcasts, FAQs, videos, CDs, etc.
- 9) Meet With Local Officials and Telephone Them Periodically: Many local officials, media representatives, groups, and citizens may indicate they want to be informed about site plans and findings more frequently than indicated above. Meet with and/or telephone these individuals periodically. The support of these persons is needed, and they should be involved early on in the various site activities.
- 10) Funding: Research federal education/outreach funding availability.
- 11) Evaluation: We need to assess/evaluate our communication efforts. Questions that will need to be answered include: (1) Did we provide the message content necessary to inform the public?; (2) Did people express a need for additional information from the agency?; (3) Were recommendations considered feasible by the public?; and (4) Were people providing additional information for the agency to consider?
- 12) Establish Information Contact(s): Establish a list of key information contacts to ensure public interaction, i.e., address and phone/e-mail for MDEQ, MDA, MDCH, ATSDR, and other agencies.
- 13) List of Key Contacts and Interested Parties: Establish a list of key contacts and interested parties such as: (1) Federal Elected Officials; (2) State Elected Officials; (3) Local Officials; (4) State and Local Agencies; (5) Community Organizations; (6) Environmental Groups; (7) Citizen Groups; and (8) Media.