

Ohio Center for Wetland and River Restoration (OCWRR)
At the
Olentangy River Wetland Research Park (ORWRP)

date: 28 February, 2002

by
William J, Mitsch
Director, ORWRP

Note: When a consortium of Ohio universities, led by Ohio State University, received two grants in 1999-2000 from the Ohio Board of Regents to help construct a Wetland Research and Education Building at the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park, we pledged to develop an Ohio Center for Wetland and River Restoration if the building was ever built (and the grants accepted). As of December 2001, the building is finally going to be completed (even though there is no furniture yet!). So activities began in early 2002 to get this Center started and develop more formal rules for use of the ORWRP.

I. Recent Meetings

18 January 2002

Olentangy River Wetland Advisory Committee

We discussed the funding of the building, its status, and what needs to be developed yet (endowment, furniture for building, instruments (lab and field) etc. We also discussed the operating fee situation)

26 January, 2002

Planning Committee of the Ohio Center for Wetland and River Restoration
Committee Members (all attended except one on Jan 26):

Bill Mitsch, Director, ORWRP, Professor, Natural Resources, OSU
Li Zhang, Assistant Director, ORWRP, OSU
Jim Amon, Associate Professor, Wright State
Bob Deal, Professor, Shawnee State
Courtenay Willis, Assistant Professor, Youngstown State
Siobhan Fennessy, Associate Professor, Kenyon College
Dave Johnson, Professor, Natural Resources, College of FAES, OSU
John Harder, Associate Professor, EEOB, College of Biological Sciences, OSU
Bill Wolfe, Professor, Civil Engineering, College of Engineering, OSU
Frank Schwartz, Eminent Scholar and Professor, Geological Sciences, College of Math
and Physical Sciences, OSU

This was the inaugural meeting of this committee since it was determined that the Wetland Research and Education Building is in fact going to be built at the ORWRP.

The committee discussed the following issues:

STATUS OF WETLAND BUILDING
OPERATING COSTS OF BUILDING
ORWRP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL
SPECIFIC CONSORTIUM ACTIVITIES

By University—expected visits, equipment, lab needs, etc.
Non-visit connectivity—internet, home pages, hookups for Moonlight seminars, etc.
Meetings—our own, SWS, and/or OAS

The committee agreed to the following:

- We will charge annual “membership” fees to universities AND OSU colleges to use the facilities at the ORWRP to help defray expenses. Currently estimates being used \$1500 per year although there is discussion of \$2000 per year for OSU colleges and \$1,000 for our “charter” campuses who helped us get the building grant from Ohio BOR. These fees will allow faculty from those units to use ORWRP for teaching purposes and will allow some non-grant researchers (e.g. grad students, honors students) to use laboratory facilities as long as they are available.
- The committee agreed that **a substantial recovery** of indirect costs on any grants that use the ORWRP must occur. **This is the issue of greatest concern expressed by this committee.**
- If a faculty member wishes to use the site/building for research and/or teaching and their university/OSU college is not a member, then appropriate teaching and/or bench fees will be charged to the faculty member directly.
- The committee generally agreed to the following principles that will guide operation of the ORWRP and OCWRR.
 1. While our initial research will focus on research pertinent to Ohio, our goal is to provide basic and applied research for restoring, managing and repairing the entire riverine/wetland world.
 2. The 30-acre of wetlands, labs, and mesocosms at the ORWRP are window dressing, not the point of the OCWRR. We represent a great many sites (a map with pins will be in the lobby) and projects, eventually around the world.
 3. The ORWRP will be our Macy's window, providing a gigantic visible " kidney-shaped grant satellite dish" for helping people get grants, identify with a successful center etc.
 4. The ORWRP will work well for member institutions/colleges for unfunded graduate and undergraduate research, class use, etc. probably as much as it will for research projects. But just like the cyclotrons of physicists (they learned this trick a long time ago), it is our big symbol of big time research.
 5. All funded grants related to ORWRP and the OCWRR at OSU will have to deal with cost recovery of overhead if funded research.
 6. The OCWRR and ORWRP will not be running a charity (college fees, bench fees, class fees, overhead recovery on grants will all keep the place work).
 7. Eventually with zillions of dollars flowing through, we might become a charity (grad student and seed grant programs, etc.).

As soon as building is under way, we are going to send a questionnaire to all faculty we think might be interested in being members of the OCWRR. They will indicate their interest in using the site for teaching, under-funded research (e.g. undergrad honors) and funded research. We

will send a 2003 membership bill to each OSU college and Ohio institution that has interested faculty.

II. Building Progress

Bids were opened Dec 12, 2001

Cost of Building with Low Bidders	=	\$2,038,487
Cash at The Architects	=	\$1,710,697
OARDC loan (pay back by July 31, 2005)	=	<hr/> \$330,000
Pledges to repay loan		\$358,000
Other costs not yet covered:		
YSI instrumentation/displays		\$60,000
furniture, lab instruments etc.		\$500,000

Current state of affairs

- Contracts have been sent to successful bidders but University Architect miss 60 day state deadline, causing General Contractor to get out of his price; building cost going up as a result
- University Architect "lost" \$180,000, requiring SNR to back this amount from Board of Trustees 2000 grant
- Earthwork will start when things dry out; maybe April (depends on Univ Arch. getting contracts signed)

III. Operating Expenses

Starting point: The University, College, and Department are providing no support for operating the 30-acre site and the new research building. All must come from ORWRP Director.

The minimum annual operating cost of the ORWRP:

Building POM (est.)	\$50,000 per year
Site Operation (now)*	\$20,000 per year
Lab Technician + fringe	\$40,000 per year
Director Summer Salary	\$40,000 per year
Ethernet fee	\$ 5,000 per year
	<hr/>
	\$155,000 per year

* includes ORWRP site engineer

Staff Now Provided by OARDC:

Program Assistant Jan Thompson
Assistant Director Li Zhang

Sources that will provide annual income:

Overhead Return on Grants **imperative**
Grants (for technician/summer salary only) -- depends on grant success

Endowments (currently about \$8,000 per year cash flow)
Short Courses (variable)
Thanksgiving Mail Fundraiser (\$5,000 per year maybe)
Partial “matching support” (max of \$30,000 per year by OARDC and SNR for
3 years only)

Discussions are beginning on turning ORWRP to OARDC research station to avoid POM charges from OSU.

IV. Who Would Move to the Building Now (we are leaving Kottman Hall)

Director – Mitsch (full-time)
Assistant Director – Li Zhang (full-time)
Program Assistant – Jan Thompson (full-time)
Technician – Beth Sargent (full-time)
Lab Assistant – Julie Dempsey (undergraduate) half-time
Site Engineer – Michelle Guthrie (undergraduate) half-time
Post-Doc – coming in Dec 2002 (full-time)
Grad Students (3 to 5)

No other faculty members have been permitted to have full time office/labs at Wetland Research Building despite several obvious candidates (so that departments do not lose overhead recovery).

V. Proposals in Review (> \$2.7 million) (overhead recovery for ORWRP operation on these grants will be needed)

National Science Foundation. Biocomplexity Program (CBC)
“Hydrologic pulsing of riparian wetlands: Effects on nitrogen and carbon cycles at different river scales”

Amount requested: \$ 1,972,552 Indirects: \$309,032

P.I. William J. Mitsch (Nat Res). OSU participants: Li Zhang (Nat Res), Jay Martin (Ag Eng), Frank Schwartz (Geological Sciences)

National Science Foundation, Engineering Directorate (EEC)
“Ecological engineering curriculum development and research development: Embracing self-design to realize the benefits of biocomplexity”

Amount requested: \$262,534 (3 yr) Indirects: \$66,416

P.I. William J. Mitsch. Co-PI: Jay Martin (Ag. Eng.)

USDA NRI Program on Watershed Processes and Water Resources
“The photochemical transformation of agrochemicals in natural and constructed wetlands”

Amount requested: \$286,658 (3 yrs) Indirects: \$43,794

P.I.: Yo Chin (Geological Sciences) Co-PIs: William J. Mitsch (Nat Res) and Linda Weavers (Civil and Env. Eng.)

OARDC Payne Agroecology Program

“Effects of hydrologic pulses on the effectiveness of wetlands to control agricultural runoff: biogeochemical and economic modeling”

Amount requested: \$150,000 Indirects: N/A

P.I. William J. Mitsch (Nat Res) Co-PIs: Fred Hitshusen (Ag Econ), Frank Schwartz (Geol Sci)

NSF Field Station and Marine Lab Program, Division of Biological Sciences
Proposal for equipment if we are off-campus facility; due March 20

VI. Current research projects at the ORWRP

Ohio Department of Transportation

“Restoration of a Bottomland Hardwood Forest”

Amount: \$75,000 + \$70,000 endowment (5 yr) Indirects: \$15,090

P.I.: William J. Mitsch (Nat Res)

Sea Grant

“Developing a Spatial Watershed Model to Predict The Effects of Watershed Policies on Coastal Water Quality and Habitat Change.”

Amount: \$100,000 (2 years) Indirects: \$29,626

P.I. Jay Martin (Ag Eng), CO-PI: William J. Mitsch (Nat Res), Elena Irwin (Ag Econ)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

“Pre-restoration studies of the Upper Big Darby Watershed, Stream Quality Monitoring and Wetland Restoration Design”

Amount: (1st year): \$78,000 (total = \$204,000) Indirect (total): \$10,357

P.I.: William J. Mitsch (Nat Res)

Pine Grove Landfill, Inc.

“Monitoring of a mitigation wetland at the Olentangy River Wetland Research Park”

Amount: \$18,000 (6 months; 2002) Indirects: \$3,826 + \$6,033

P.I. William J. Mitsch (Nat Res)

Ohio Department of Development

“Use of clean coal technology products in the construction of low permeability liners”

Amount: \$480,738 (3 years) Indirects: \$122,758

P.I.: Bill Wolfe (Civil and Env Eng.) co-PIs: William J. Mitsch (Nat Res), T. Butalia, (CEEGS), Hal Walker (CEEGS), E Whitlatch (CEEGS)

Ohio Board of Regents --Hayes Investment Fund

“Ohio Center for Wetland and River Restoration”

Amount (2 grants) \$1,180,000 all for building construction

P.I. : William J. Mitsch (Nat Res) co-PI: reps from Kenyon, Shawnee State, Youngstown State, Wright State

VII: Summary of Big Issues

1. How to have wetland and aquatic scientists at the building full-time and with capability to generate overhead for running the building. Not popular idea with chairs.
2. Equity on users who are doing unfunded research or using the wetlands site for teaching.
3. Recovery of grant overhead to run the ORWRP.
4. Providing value to consortium universities so their Deans continue to want to belong.
5. How to get support for service component at the site which will be even bigger with building in place (now give 100 tours per year).