

INTRODUCTION

The Gulf of Maine Association (GOMA) in coordination with the Gulf of Maine Council Ad-Hoc Fund Development Group (Ad-Hoc FD Group) held a Fund Development Work Session (Work Session) on Wednesday, August 7th as a follow-up to the Fund Development Plan. The Fund Development Plan was completed in May 2013 and presented to the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (Council) on June 16, 2013. Attendees, contracted support, and teleconference participants are listed at the end of this Summary Report.

The chief purpose of the Work Session was to further explore and define clearly GOMA's relationship to the Council for the purpose of fund development. An over-arching theme of the Fund Development Plan was the need for GOMA, as the US non-profit/Canadian registered charity arm of the Council, to have a well-defined and articulated presence for purposes of pursuing and securing a number of different types of available funds - notably foundations and private sources, as well as some public, non-profit partnership funding sources. The Fund Development Plan noted that the Council's fundraising efforts have been hampered by the strong perception that the Council is solely a governmental body, which deters many funders, and by the lack of a well-defined web and administrative presence for GOMA.

Therefore, the Work Session team was charged first with evaluating and articulating how GOMA's purpose and operations could be reinvigorated, and its profile as an independent non-profit/registered charity effectively raised, to implement the Fund Development Plan's recommendations. Plan implementation involves many different tasks and different approaches based on the Council's and GOMA's recent activities, making it essential to address organization, contractor, messaging, and strategic issues at the Work Session.

The Work Session agenda (Attachment 1) was designed to yield four products: (1) a GOMA statement of purpose; (2) a "messaging" and public relations timeline and task list; (3) a list of GOMA, Council and Working Group decisions and actions needed to carry out action items; and (4) task proposals, work scopes, and timelines for fund development contracting for the remainder of the fiscal year. The outcomes of these discussions are contained in this Summary Report, chiefly in Tables 2 through 4. In addition, during the Work Session other specific tasks and resources needed to pursue funding from the International Joint Commission (IJC), Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF), and project-related mitigation funding were discussed and developed. This Summary Report also attempts to capture the many and diverse insights, direction and issues for future discussion that arose from the Work Session discussion.

As the Work Session progressed, participants noted that implementing the Fund Development Plan over the long haul, and strengthening GOMA's ability to raise funds for the Council, requires prompt and active consideration of the responsibilities, reporting relationships, and decision-making authority of contracted staff and volunteers alike. This Summary Report provides an overview of the discussion, but specific tasks and recommendations are only made where these have immediate bearing on fund development tasks and decisions. However, participants in the Work Session believe the Council and GOMA's important objectives will be well served by a thorough evaluation of options for carrying out the Council and GOMA's administrative, leadership, and executive functions.

1.0 GOMA ROLE & STRUCTURE IN FUND DEVELOPMENT

The first and principal task for the Work Session was to explore how GOMA could better be structured or positioned to raise funds more effectively. The Fund Development Plan addressed the need to make it clear to funders that the GOMA is a functional non-profit independent of the Council, which is widely perceived as a public, governmental body. At present, GOMA has a very limited presence on the Council's website, and in the wider environmental and NGO community. Since many funders do not support activities that are seen as principally government or public functions, giving the GOMA a clear and independent organizational presence is critical to fundraising.

1.1 GOMA STRUCTURE & RELATIONSHIP OPTIONS

The first question was what type of relationship GOMA should have to the Council. Work Session participants reviewed the structure of peer organizations that feature public and non-profit organizations working around a common water body or watershed. Each organization had some relevant features, and some significant departures, from the GOMA and Council context and needs. Participants considered several elements of these peer organizations:

- **Independent Fundraising:** Does the organization engage in independent fundraising vs. only managing public grants or having a fiscal agent role? What is the purpose of its fundraising activities?
- **Relationship to government counterpart:** Is there formal, informal, or *de facto* coordination with a government function, program or agency? Is its mission truly independent of and distinct from the governmental body? Are funds or project responsibilities shifted among or between the organization and its governmental counterpart or regional peers?
- **Advocacy and public policy roles:** What advocacy, policy development, litigation or lobbying roles does the organization play in the region? Is it regarded as a credible source of information on policy or technical issues in the region? Does it take an adversarial role or litigate regional issues?
- **Drivers:** Who makes the organization work? Is there a membership and/or volunteer component?

Peer organizations with different structures and relationships were reviewed as a means of structuring the discussion around specific activities and roles that GOMA could take on, the associated level of effort, and the impacts on its relationship to the Council. Table 1 below summarizes information on four peer organizations that were reviewed in depth.

TABLE 1. PEER ORGANIZATIONS REVIEWED

Non-Profit & Public Counterpart	Independent Fundraising Activities	Relationship to Public Counterpart	Advocacy Roles:		
			Litigation	Lobbying/ policy development	Technical Expertise & Knowledge
Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)/New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded by US Federal authorization (through Army Corps of Engineers) and provincial contributions from Quebec; Not expected to fundraise, but has secured IJC, mitigation, and some research funding; Coordinates with regional foundations and non-profits to avoid funding conflicts 	Work closely with NYS DEC, VT ANR to coordinate grants and programs; both states & PQ represented actively on technical committees, board	No	Yes; provide testimony on legislation; heavily involved in Lake TMDL	Yes; well respected Technical Advisory Committee
Chesapeake Bay Foundation/ EPA & USGS Chesapeake Bay Program	Active; uses membership model; actively seeks corporate and foundation donations	Opportunistic; work with the Program and state initiatives; occasionally coordinate grants and programs with government	All; mission statement is "Education, advocacy, litigation, restoration." Strong lobbying presence in state legislatures & US Congress. Perception of acting as a "watchdog," while collaborating with public sector on some projects		
Gulf of Mexico Foundation/ Gulf of Mexico Alliance	Sought corporate "memberships" starting at \$10,000/year; received NOAA NMF grant & oversaw grant program nearly identical to GOMA's	Alliance is closely comparable to Council; Foundation is member of the Alliance's NGO board with closely aligned mission, but does not fundraise for Alliance	No	Provided some policy development, technical knowledge on habitat restoration	

Non-Profit & Public Counterpart	Independent Fundraising Activities	Relationship to Public Counterpart	Advocacy Roles:		
			Litigation	Lobbying/ policy development	Technical Expertise & Knowledge
Laudholm Trust/ Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (Wells, Maine)	Trust has the explicit mission to raise matching funds for public grants for the Wells Reserve through memberships, events and other funding sources	Sole purpose is to support activities of the Wells Reserve, specifically by providing required match for public grants	No	Substantial role in education and outreach for the Wells Reserve; respected provider of information and programs	

1.2 ISSUES SPECIFIC TO GOMA

After reviewing these peer organizations and their roles, participants listed some of the unique features that affect how GOMA's role with respect to the Council should be defined.

Marine vs. Terrestrial/Marine/Freshwater Focus: The Council's focus on the marine environment sometimes leaves out terrestrial and freshwater habitats, both of which are essential to the health of the marine environment and to the Action Plan goals. GOMA as a non-profit has the ability to keep a strong geographic focus on the Gulf and watershed, and if messaged and defined properly, to expand the focus and fundraising approach to include terrestrial and freshwater environments.

Climate and ecological value as an organizing principle: The Gulf of Maine is a rich estuarine ecosystem whose integrity needs to be protected and restored where needed. While the Gulf does not have the water quality and pollutant-reduction focus that drives other peer organizations, restoration and protection have been hallmarks of the Council's work. The impacts of climate change are a more direct and pressing issue for the Gulf. US and Canadian Federal agencies have recognized the critical importance of the Gulf and its watershed for habitat and ecological resilience in a climate-stressed environment¹, making this a focus for project and fund development.

Scale and Decentralization: Despite the value of the Gulf and its watershed, its sheer geographic scale and large span of rural areas with low population density makes it difficult to build a membership organization. Moreover, the Council's distributed organization and decision-making process have made it challenging to respond to opportunities and communicate with potential funders outside active member agencies. The absence of a central staff point of contact for the Council is particularly challenging with respect to "messaging" and promoting the Council's work.

Organizational challenges in the Gulf: The scale and decentralization within the watershed, the plethora of other agencies seeking funding, and the sheer number of volunteers needed to maintain a non-profit make it highly unlikely that a foundation akin to the Gulf of Mexico Foundation or Chesapeake Bay Foundation could be built and sustained.

Convening and "messaging" as crucial central functions: GOMA as an organization can, if authorized and if a central "point of contact" for messaging is established, create more of a "center" for the Council's activities. Authorizing a central point of contact for messaging would help tell the Council and Gulf's story to a more diverse audience. This would strengthen fundraising potential by ensuring that potential supporters can be convened, and particularly by promoting a strong and consistent message about the Gulf of Maine, its watershed, and the organization's value in protecting these resources.

1.3 GOMA PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Given the factors above – notably the infeasibility of creating a new foundation or membership organization, the Council's recognized importance in an ecologically significant area, the need for communication about the Council and the Gulf, and the need to bring together different agencies and constituencies around climate and ecology - several key conclusions on GOMA's "best case" structure and purpose were made. The Work Session participants' consensus on the most appropriate and feasible role for GOMA is summarized as follows:

1. ***GOMA's explicit purpose as a non-profit should be to support the mission of, develop funding for, and facilitate (or enable) implementation of programs in support of the Action Plan, as adopted by the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment.*** GOMA should be a vital regional organization delivering high-quality programs, scientific

¹ In this context a designation for the Gulf of Maine and watershed similar to the US National Blueways System may be an organizing theme for approaching a US funding authorization.

information and capacity-building technical support throughout the watershed, with the Council developing, adopting, and implementing the strategic plan and objectives for the watershed.

2. *GOMA should promote the Council and its mission through strong messaging and communication with potential partners and especially funders.* An immediate focus should be on promoting the Action Plan with (1) new and existing audiences or constituents located throughout the Gulf, (2) the foundation and corporate community, and (3) relevant public agencies in the US and Canada.
3. *GOMA should, independently, offer its core staff and Board members as having independent and informed scientific and policy knowledge on Gulf of Maine issues.* GOMA can provide credible information on scientific, technical and policy issues. However, GOMA should not, as an organization, be engaged in litigation or project opposition.
4. *GOMA should pursue the full range of fund development options outlined in the Fund Development Plan, including soliciting corporate, foundation, and mitigation or supplemental funding,* with the purpose of implementing the Action Plan goals adopted by the Council. In addition, when appropriate, GOMA should be promoted as an organization that can hold and administer project mitigation and endowment funds as outlined in the Fund Development Plan.

1.4 OVERCOMING CONFLICTS WITH COUNCIL AGENCIES

Point #4 above is especially important for fund development. Fund development has been affected by concerns about potential conflicts of interest involved in seeking foundation, private sector, or project mitigation funding, given the participation of regulatory and public agencies in the Council. The conclusion that GOMA should be closely tied to the Council, with its fundraising and operational work focused on implementation of the Council's Action Plan, was to some extent a surprise to the Work Session participants because of these past concerns. However, all Work Session participants believed – and the experience of peer organization supports this conclusion – that GOMA can be defined as a non-profit organization separate from the Council, that supports its mission and the goals of the Council-adopted Action Plan. With this function and relationship clearly defined, GOMA can receive and administer private funds for initiatives that support the Action Plan, without creating regulatory or public agency conflicts².

2.0 MESSAGING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The priority “product” outcome from the Work Session is the direction (1) to prepare new, highly professional and engaging messaging materials for the Gulf of Maine; and (2) to prepare to conduct a messaging and public relations “tour” of regional and federal agencies, foundations, potential funders, and peer organizations on both sides of the border. With the 25th anniversary of the Council approaching in 2014 and the Council's support for a new GOMA-led effort to obtain a geographic authorization (discussed in Section 4.1), the timing for this effort is especially opportune.

2.1 MESSAGING WORK TASKS

The main work tasks for messaging and communications are:

- (1) Identify and convene a review committee, supported by core contractors (the Council Coordinator and GOMA Executive Director)
- (2) List key elements of the Gulf of Maine “story” and the Council's benefits to the region
- (3) Identify messaging targets for a public relations “tour” focused on fund development (Section 2.2)
- (4) Identify the products and support needed, and procure the services and products needed

² Work Session participants recognized that GOMA acts as the fiscal agent for the Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine (RARGOM) and the Northeast Regional Oceans Council (NROC), which occasionally are in a position of competing for funds with GOMA. If GOMA takes a leadership role in fund development, questions could arise whether GOMA staff and contractors should likewise be available to fundraise for the other organizations. The experience of New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC), which acts as the fiscal agent for the non-profit Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP), may be helpful in addressing this as GOMA moves ahead as similar conflicts and issues have occasionally arisen with the two organizations and their various member states and agencies. NEIWPCC and LCBP staff is happy to act as a resource to GOMA on this issue.

Identifying a supervising committee: A group comprised of Working Group members, core contractors, and possibly additional contractors will need to support and endorse the messaging materials developed. Options for this group could include a reinvigorated Outreach Committee (which could absorb or replace the focus on the Gulf of Maine Times publication) or a working group of the ad hoc Anniversary Committee plus others interested in supporting the messaging project.

Defining the Gulf of Maine “Story” and Council’s Benefits to the Region: Consistent with defining GOMA as the organization that raises funds for and supports implementation of the Action Plan, as adopted by the Council, a consistent and enthusiastic story of the Council and its benefits to the region must be developed. The “story” has to be aimed at funders and must demonstrate the value and visibility that results from investments in GOMA. Moreover, the Council’s signature accomplishments in convening dialogue, restoring habitat, and accomplishing trans-boundary, trans-disciplinary scientific work should be highlighted throughout in very concrete terms.

Identify the products and support needed: Table 2 lists the specific materials, products and support needed, which include (1) a strong and clear web presence for GOMA, outlining its role with respect to the Council; (2) ready-to-use power point presentations with a consistent and clear message about the Gulf, Council and GOMA, with “tweaks” for specific audiences on the PR tour (e.g. Canadian federal agencies, US state agencies, foundations, etc.); (3) written materials coordinated with the 25th anniversary program, including an “elevator speech” for funders with a rapid, clear picture of why funding GOMA will achieve results; and (4) consistent branding across all web and print products.

Additional notes: Work Session participants noted that all *materials must have a consistent visual quality and theme*. Work Session participants recommended using ESIP’s branding and carrying this scheme throughout, since this would be time- and cost-efficient and the branding has been well received on ESIP’s products. Moreover, it is critically important – given the scientific and technical capacity-building benefits of the Council being promoted – that *anyone with the responsibility to “pitch” the Council and GOMA be engaged in the technical work* in a meaningful way, with a strong understanding of the scientific and policy basis for the Council’s activities and the Action Plan goals. Finally, *materials must distinguish between the Council/GOMA, and other regional organizations* including the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC), the Northeast Regional Association of Coastal and Ocean Observing Systems (NERACOOS), and Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI).

2.2 MESSAGING TARGETS AND MEDIA CONTACT

The Fund Development Plan stressed the need to tell the Council’s story to a new and more diverse audience throughout the region. Work Session participants dubbed this effort the messaging and “PR tour” process. Presentations on the “tour” could take the form of Councilor or GOMA Board member presentations at different organizations, information sessions with key staff at an agency or foundation, or more informal meetings and discussions among Councilors and their peers.

The role of Councilors in the success of this effort cannot be overstated. By and large, target audiences represent higher-level agencies that could become GOMA funders, and that could facilitate development of project-based mitigation and endowment funds. Therefore, engaging Councilors to make a high-level introduction to each target agency, or to represent the Council at meetings of (as an example) a mayor’s or municipal managers’ organization or inter-agency meeting, is critical to success.

The key messaging targets for the “PR tour,” and notes regarding volunteer and Councilor responsibilities associated with a messaging tour, are listed in Table 2 below. Additional targets are likely to be identified, and will need to be prioritized by some combination of core and contracted staff, the GOMA Executive Committee or Board, and Councilors.

TABLE 2. MESSAGING AND PR TOUR TARGET AUDIENCES

Audience	Notes
Provincial and state regulators involved in supplemental environmental project/mitigation determinations	Important to promote GOMA’s ability to carry out effective, technically sound mitigation and restoration projects that are consistent with a Council-approved regional Action Plan
Wildlife agencies and foundations: US National Park Service, Parks Canada, National & Canadian Wildlife Federations, US Fish & Wildlife Foundation	Role of the Gulf as a “species cradle” and bird habitat in a changing climate, invasive species issues involve wider wildlife issues (terrestrial, fresh & marine) and a larger geographic scale that GOMA/Council cover effectively
Canadian & US Federal agencies, particularly Canadian & US Coast Guard, US FEMA, Canadian Department of Public Safety	Potential engagement with Coast Guards and safety/disaster management agencies noted in Fund Development Plan

Audience	Notes
Public utilities/Crown corporations involved in water and climate-related planning (e.g. Maritimes Energy Association, water/wastewater utilities, NEIWPCC)	Common issues around climate and scientific assessments of climate and marine receiving environment that Council is uniquely able to address; especially important in developing proposals for the Water Environment Research Foundation
Associations of mayors and other elected officials	Mayors are particularly effective and engaged in the Great Lakes; have not been approached formally in the Gulf
New England governors & provincial premiers	Governors & premier of Quebec have used Lake Champlain Basin Program as opportunity to convene discussions, “ribbon-cut”
Non-Governmental Organization networks	Coalitions of habitat and conservation organizations in the US are becoming more important in coordinating geographic funding and strategies
US Commissioner to Atlantic Canada (Based at US Embassy in Ottawa) & Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES)	Potentially important to IJC or trans-boundary funding, connection to new EU/Canadian/US Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance

“Briefing Up”: Another crucial responsibility for Councilors identified at the Work Session is to ensure that each Councilor takes responsibility for providing a briefing of Council activities and funding needs (or “GPINS,” discussed in Section 3.0 below) to their agencies, particularly to their own supervisors or directors. *Securing a geographic designation and funding for the Gulf of Maine absolutely will require visibility for the organization and its value at the highest levels of US and Canadian federal agencies active in the Gulf*, as well as with provincial and state governors, federal legislators, and agency leaders. Councilors are uniquely suited to increase the visibility of the Council; providing messaging materials that make this as easy and efficient as possible is a crucial goal for the messaging and PR tasks.

Media contacts: Media contact and story placement should be an integral component of the PR and messaging effort. Environmental issues in the Gulf of Maine have not been featured regularly in regional or affiliated media. As GOMA gains a presence as the fundraising and support arm of the Council, having radio, TV and print media-friendly materials and stories – particularly around the 25th anniversary – will be beneficial. Core staff should look at what media contacts were made previously by the outreach committee, and possibly add media outreach to a contracted services agreement (see Table 2). The specific target should be news sources that have focused on climate and ecological issues, and that are most likely to be reviewed by funders (e.g. NPR, CBC, Globe and Mail, Boston Globe, etc.). Sea level rise impacts and the Gulfwatch contaminants monitoring program have been noted as particularly compelling topics for media.

2.3 MESSAGING/PR CONTENT

While the specific content of the messaging products will be developed in coordination with the designated committee, Working Group members, and others, Work Session participants identified several elements that should be used as starting points and/or actively included in messaging materials. These are listed in summary form below. ***It is important to note that participants felt Gulfwatch should receive special attention for messaging development; this signature program of the Council would benefit substantially from increased and more consistent funding, but needs a compelling “story line” developed and communicated to potential funders.*

GOMA Supports the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment’s Accomplishments in:

- Habitat restoration
- Coastal and marine environmental health
- Understanding and managing climate change impacts
- Convening regional, trans-boundary dialogue
- Developing trans-disciplinary science and data

Possible themes for messaging:

- The Gulf of Maine: an ecological treasure
- Building on existing protection and quality, and preparing for the future
- A coastal treasure: The Gulf of Maine
- Voices of an ocean: The story of the Gulf of Maine

3.0 GREAT PROJECT IDEAS NEEDING SUPPORT (“GPINS”) DEVELOPMENT

A key action item from the Fund Development Plan, outlined further in the work Session, is to translate Action Plan goals and Committee workplans into fundable, specific project concepts. This effort was dubbed the “Great Project Ideas Needing Support” or “GPINS” effort. This effort is needed in order to accomplish multiple goals: (1) to better link Action Plan goals to available funding opportunities; (2) to ensure that the Council and GOMA have projects in mind when public or foundation grant opportunities are announced; and (3) to help shape requests for proposals and scopes for future fund development contractors (and possibly core staff) around specific funding opportunities and projects. Another purpose is to help the Council and GOMA move away from working to maintain funding for previously-defined products or initiatives, such as the Gulf of Maine Times, that may or may not warrant continued investment.

The action item from the Work Session relative to this topic is for the Working Group, Working Group Chair, GOMA ED and Council Coordinator to hold a “GPINS exercise” with each Committee – or a consortium of committees - before the December Council meeting. The specific steps that should be included in the “GPINS exercise” are:

1. Prior to the exercise, the GOMA will create an internal document with a summary of past and ongoing projects and their funding sources
2. The Council Coordinator will speak with Working Group and Committee chairs to identify specifically what each Committee would like to carry out in the next two to three fiscal years, and how each Committee can integrate climate and particularly the “species cradle” idea into their work. Ideas that involve (or could involve) the St. Croix River watershed, particularly less coastal or marine environment-oriented work, also should be noted as possible IJC cooperative projects (See Section 4.2). The outcome of this will be a list of “GPINS” prepared by the Council Coordinator.
3. The Council Coordinator will work with the Working Group and Committee chairs to select specific project topics as the subject of meetings and discussions with Councilors. The GOMA ED would lead the effort to connect the “GPINS” with potential funding within Council agencies.
4. The Secretariat Team will decide what assistance and support is needed and on what topics or issues to develop workplans and grant or funding applications for the “GPINS.”

4.0 ESTABLISHING TEAMS & TASKS FOR SPECIFIC FUNDING SOURCES

This section summarizes discussion on four potential funding sources identified in the Fund Development Plan: (1) geographically-based US Federal funding support, with a coordinated effort in Canada; (2) securing project mitigation payments for projects or to establish an endowment; (3) working with the International Joint Commission (IJC); (4) and developing a project with the Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF). For each funding source, the task for GOMA and the Council is to establish a small “SWAT Team,” including core staff and (as needed) contracted staff support, which will have the responsibility and authority to carry out the steps needed to develop projects and secure funds.

To this end, it is important that GOMA be charged formally with leading the fund development effort, coordinating with the Working Group on project and workplan development (as discussed in the “GPINS” section above), and ultimately, receiving and administering funds. In this model, the Council’s role is to set the goals of the Action Plan, and to convene the Working Group and Committees to develop project concepts. GOMA’s role is to identify the funder and opportunity, promote the value of the work to be done, adjust workplans as needed to ensure a project is fundable, lead the work (in coordination with the Committee) once funds are received, and administer the grant and project. The Council and its Committees thus are advisors shaping the workplan and project effort, while GOMA secures funds, coordinates the project, and administers funding.

4.1 SECURING DEDICATED GEOGRAPHIC FUNDING

The most substantial fund development effort proposed, with the greatest potential for multi-year funding, is securing a US Federal appropriation for the Gulf of Maine. In the best case, this action would have a corresponding designation and funding proposal in Canada, recognizing the inter-dependence of the Gulf ecosystem. On the US side, securing designation of the Gulf of Maine as a specific geographic area (e.g. a “Blueway,” “Ocean Treasure,” “Cradle Habitat” or similar designation) with significance for climate change planning and resilience would most likely be accomplished via an Executive Order rather than Congressional appropriation. The timeframe for such a designation to yield funds for GOMA would be, in all likelihood, Fiscal Year 2016, if efforts begin shortly. On the Canadian side, designation for the Bay of Fundy as a “national wonder”

(which was proposed in the past) or similar could be sought; alternatively, the recent example from Ontario where a group of NGOs approached the Ontario Legislative Assembly with a proposal to coordinate funding around the Great Lakes may provide a model and vehicle to coordinate policy and funding around the Gulf³.

Specific Steps: The specific steps in developing an appropriation or designation proposal, as outlined by the Work Session participants, are listed below. It is important to note that these tasks (particularly Task 1 and Task 3) overlap substantially with the “PR tour,” since briefings of many federal agencies in particular will be focused on securing a designation or appropriation.

1. *Developing messaging* as outlined in Section 2.0, with products to include a PowerPoint and written material specifically aimed at possible Federal funders. The presentation should be strongly visual and present a compelling story of the region’s geography, its role in a changing climate, the value created by the Council, and how funding will promote resilience and environmental quality in the future.
2. *Securing Canadian leadership and assistance with a geographic designation.* There is an immediate need for greater Canadian involvement in GOMA and in fund development, which also is discussed in Section 5.1 below. In addition, assistance from Tides Canada, Canadian Councilors, and GOMA Board members will be needed to identify leaders in Atlantic Canada on climate. Contacting the Ontario NGOs involved in the Great Lakes Protection Act (which may be done by core staff or later by contractors) also will be beneficial.
3. *Securing consulting help as needed for developing the US Federal request.* As noted in Table 4, GOMA Board members and core staff will discuss what type of consulting assistance would best advance a US Federal request. This will be part of the plan developed in the fall of 2013 for contractor support on various tasks.
4. *Contacting regional NGOs to develop contacts and potentially partnerships in support of a request.* A team led by Don Hudson, coordinated by GOMA ED, should meet with key NGO leaders in the region (including the Trust for Public Land, National/Canadian Wildlife Federation, and The Nature Conservancy) to explore options for coordinating efforts and funding around the Gulf of Maine and its watershed. This discussion also may explore what regional projects could yield mitigation funds for use in protecting the Gulf of Maine and its watershed.

Staff and Support Considerations: Securing a US and Canadian federal designation is a politically sensitive matter that requires specific political and communication knowledge, strong communication, and a working understanding among GOMA and Council members on the nature and timing of the request. Work Session participants articulated four working principles for this process:

1. While a US Federal request was made in the past, *a commitment must be made to a multi-year effort directed by skilled, experienced leaders within GOMA and allied organizations who specialize in this type of process.*
2. GOMA and the Secretariat should *agree to a plan for GOMA to take the leadership role* in developing the recommended plan for meetings and approaches, and securing contracted assistance; in addition, a plan must be agreed to for the Council Coordinator to be fully engaged with the work, and to have the responsibility to brief the Council Chair and Working Group Chair frequently on progress.
3. The *Council Chair and Working Group Chair should formally review and sign off on any scope of work or RFP for contracted assistance, as well as any reports* on this effort. While the contractor would report to the GOMA Board of Directors, there should be regular review of planned and completed work by the Secretariat team to ensure that neither GOMA nor the contractor can be perceived as going “off message” during this process.
4. It is recommended that the GOMA ED, Executive Committee (as possible) and Council Coordinator *meet in person with the Council Chair and Working Group Chair with a more detailed proposal* for this effort prior to the December Council meeting, so that the Council Chair can brief the Council at the meeting.

4.2 PROJECT MITIGATION/ENDOWMENT FUNDING

Pursuing a key recommendation of the Fund Development Plan – positioning GOMA to secure project-specific mitigation funds and to establish a long-term endowment – is directly tied to the messaging and PR tour work outlined in Section 2.0. GOMA must be presented as a credible, non-adversarial, and effective organization that can carry out mitigating projects and

³ Bill 6 2013, An Act to protect and restore the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin, is pending in the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

activities in the region, both to the regulators who review and act on environmental assessments and permit applications, and to others involved in negotiating major projects. Recipient organizations also must be flexible and willing to tailor projects to particular situations, which speaks to the need to have a variety of “GPINS” available when different opportunities arise. The Council’s track record of high quality science, technical support, and collaboration, particularly in habitat restoration, is an excellent foundation for securing this type of funding.

Promoting GOMA as a recipient of project-specific funds requires the clear separation and definition of functions between GOMA and the Council as outlined in Section 1.0 of this report. Carrying out the “PR tour,” particularly meetings with state and provincial regulators and federal agencies involved in defining mitigation requirements, is the main task for this funding source. As part of selecting and prioritizing “PR tour” meetings and audiences, key regulators and agencies must be identified, and messages tailored to highlight GOMA’s suitability for mitigation projects. In addition, the longer-term federal designation work in Section 4.1 also can provide a means of identifying regional projects that may spin off mitigation fees.

4.3 INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION/ST. CROIX BASIN

There are definite opportunities for GOMA to coordinate with the International Joint Commission (IJC) on projects within the St. Croix River basin. The IJC’s International Watersheds Grant Initiative program provides funding up to \$50,000 per project, with a rolling deadline, and funding rotating between the US and Canada in alternate years. Because of the IJC’s focus on freshwater issues, including anadromous fish habitat, a project proposed by GOMA will need to be within the IJC Board’s focus areas of watersheds, mapping/GIS, fisheries, or Alewife management and research.

At this time, the recommendation is for the Council Coordinator to bring forward any particular projects from the “GPINS” exercise (Section 3.0) to Lee Sochasky as the point of contact for the IJC, at which time GOMA’s ED and the Committee can evaluate how a request can be made through GOMA’s fund development contractor resources. As noted at several points in this report and in the task list, it is essential for GOMA to have a structure in place for short-term grant opportunities and grant writing, as noted in Section 5.2 and Table 3.

4.4 WATER ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH FOUNDATION (WERF)

This is an opportune time to pursue a partnership between GOMA, the Water Environment Research Foundation (WERF), and coastal water/wastewater utility providers in the Gulf of Maine watershed. WERF recently executed a first-of-its-kind agreement for information sharing and coordination among US and Canadian research teams as part of WERF’s Trace Organics Challenge⁴. A solicitation will be issued in 2014 for further research on the receiving environment, and a project drawing on the Council’s scientific and collaborative reach could be particularly compelling.

The next steps in pursuing this funding source are to convene a small brainstorming group of GOMA, Working Group or Committee members with an interest in the marine receiving environment, and to identify utilities in the region that could be contacted as partners. Peter Wells would be particularly important to this effort, as an academic partner is typically involved in WERF projects. There is an opportunity to meet with WERF research staff at the Water Environment Federation conference in Chicago in October 2013 to further refine a proposal. It will be beneficial as well to identify possible utility partners and include these as “PR tour” audiences as early on in the effort as possible.

5.0 GOMA CONTRACTOR, STAFF AND DECISION-MAKING

As noted in this report’s introduction, a number of staffing and organization issues will need to be worked through in the course of making GOMA a stronger fundraising partner to the Council. None of the issues described in this section of the report was worked through to the point of a recommendation or specific action item at this stage; however, several initial steps, such as a compilation of the GOMA Executive Director’s and Council Coordinator’s responsibilities and levels of effort spent on various tasks, are specifically recommended as short-term steps.

⁴ Please see <http://ww2.werf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&CONTENTID=17450&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm>

5.1 STAFFING AND DECISION-MAKING CONSIDERATIONS

The list that follows highlights particular issues or aspects of how Council and GOMA volunteers, core contractors (GOMA ED and Council Coordinator) work that may need to be revisited as work moves forward, particularly after the 2014 fiscal year.

Increased Canadian involvement: As noted in the above discussion of securing an appropriation, there is a pressing need to increase Canadian representation to and engagement with GOMA. While every organization has challenges seeking volunteer support, having a stronger Canadian presence and voice on fund development and particularly in messaging efforts is essential to the credibility and reach of any messaging and public relations tour. Ideally, new members will be drawn from the private sector as well as organizations or interest groups focused on terrestrial and freshwater habitats, Crown corporations, and municipalities. A request should be presented to Councilors, Working Group members, and GOMA members to engage and enlist new members as the messaging or communications committee is formed.

Central point of contact for GOMA and the Council: It has been noted throughout the Fund Development Process and in the Work Session that the absence of a conventional Executive Director or CEO role in the Council/GOMA structure presents challenges for messaging, communications, and organizational efficiency. Where a peer organization with a volunteer board made up of multiple public agencies and interests often will delegate many responsibilities (including public communications and fundraising) to a staff member in a CEO role, GOMA and the Council have not done so. Deciding how to structure staff leadership for greater efficacy in fund development and communications is a crucial decision for GOMA and the Council. This discussion is to begin with an assessment by the current GOMA ED and Council Coordinator and their Contract Managers of their roles, responsibilities, allocation of time, and other insights on the current structure.

Implementation and decision-making structure: Following from the central point of contact or directorship issue is the Council's present model of having a dispersed group of contractors report to and carry out decisions made by committees or groups. Committee decision-making and contractor actions both are largely independent of any central oversight, which can lead to "organizational sprawl" inefficiencies, and at times competing interests among independent committees and their contractors. As the "GPINS" are developed and different funding options are identified, different points where designated contractors or staff could make decisions on (as examples) pursuing a grant or altering a contractor's workplan, rather than requiring a committee process, should be identified. Specific and clear identification of what decision-making responsibility can be given to core contractors/staff also should be undertaken. Keeping a running list of organizational and committee decisions (who makes the decision, with what input, how long it takes, for what level of funding or duration of activity, etc.) may help make this situation more concrete and enable clearer decisions on what authority should be delegated.

Committee staffing: Throughout the Fund Development Plan process and Work Session, participants stressed that having a designated staff person available to support each of the committees (in addition to ESIP and Habitat Restoration) would greatly increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization as a whole. Committee staff could be especially productive if they can help translate Action Plan goals into fundable workplans, in coordination with GOMA fund development leaders. It was also noted that existing committee contractors may have a better work experience, and work more efficiently, if a central reporting point is set up to enable them to work more as team with other contractors. Determining the best way to fund, allocate, and supervise committee coordinators over the long term is an important part of the structure and staffing discussion.

Committee performance and "sunset" option: Another issue for committees is their overall level of activity and performance. As the Council and GOMA evolve, both organizations should re-evaluate how committees are performing relative to their workplans and Action Plan goals as well as what changes in structure or focus are beneficial. In particular, there is a need to define an exit or "sunset" option for committees whose work either is no longer relevant or needed (i.e. project-specific committees or those whose products have been phased out), or who are not able to carry out the basic work expected. The Fund Development Plan noted that effort should not be spent seeking funding for products or committees simply because these products have been done in the past, if there are new and more productive focus areas to pursue.

Staff and contractor evaluation: In addition to looking at committee performance, there is an expressed need to re-evaluate GOMA and the Council's contractor evaluation process and policy.

5.1 NEXT STEPS FOR EVALUATING STAFFING AND DECISION-MAKING

During the Work Session, participants agreed that the following specific tasks will be undertaken to start to work on staffing and decision-making issues. These tasks are repeated (in slightly different form) in Table 3. The experience with this process and outcome of these tasks can help direct further discussion and work on organizational development.

1. The GOMA ED and the Council Coordinator will *evaluate their contracted positions and responsibilities* (e.g. tasks, hours, level of effort, etc.) in coordination with their respective Contract Managers (the GOMA Board of Directors Chair and Working Group Chair respectively). The GOMA ED will put together an options document for review by the Management Finance Committee and for decision by GOMA Executive Committee
2. The GOMA ED and the Council Coordinator jointly will develop a *plan for preparing the messaging materials* recommended (website update, Gulf introduction power point, talking points or “elevator speech,” 25th anniversary summary, and new branding using the ESIP logo), whether this will be done by a contractor or by existing contracted staff, and the estimated cost associated with each item
3. The GOMA ED, in coordination with the Council Coordinator and associated Contract Managers, will develop a *plan for allocating labor and work tasks among existing contractors and any additional contractors needed on the messaging and PR tour*. Tasks involved will include working with Councilors and others to identify individuals who should attend meetings or give presentations; coordinating Councilors’ presentations; determining the content and messaging materials to be used; and making needed changes (e.g. adding slides or information on scientific work, projects, funding needs, past achievements, climate-related initiatives, etc.).
4. The Working Group, in coordination with the Council Coordinator, will *complete the “Great Projects In Need of Support” (“GPINS”) exercise* (outlined in Section 3.0 of the report). This entails identifying and developing brief write-ups for fundable projects that would support Action Plan implementation, and be easily “pitched” to a funder as a discrete project.
5. The GOMA ED will verify FY 15 funding options for the ESIP Coordinator, and funding needs for the Habitat Restoration Coordinator and Gulfwatch Coordinator. The ED will work with Committee Co-chairs and contractors (as relevant) to address immediate needs for a Fund Development contractor to prepare a plan for *how the ESIP, Habitat Restoration and Gulfwatch coordinator positions can receive more consistent funding and greater organizational support*. One objective of this Plan is to better integrate the coordinators’ efforts and address the “decentralization” issue as additional funds are secured and GOMA is further developed.

6.0 FUND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AND INVESTMENTS

6.1 FUND DEVELOPMENT TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The specific work tasks in Table 3 below are intended to be complete before the Council meeting in December.

TABLE 3. TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES THROUGH DECEMBER 2013

Task	Detail	Responsibility
1. “GPINS” Exercise	List of potentially fundable projects, including climate focus, derived from Committee workplans (Section 3.0)	Council Coordinator/Working Group Chair & Committees
2. Contracted staff job descriptions, contracting proposal & organization options	List of GOMA Executive Director and Council Coordinator roles, responsibilities, levels of effort (See Section 5.2); proposal for GOMA Executive Committee to approve additional contracting for messaging, fund development (Section 2.0); outline of longer-term organization and staffing options, including bringing coordinators into a staff/team environment, contracting for GOMA and GOMC administrative assistance, giving more responsibility to Finance Manager (Section 5.1)	GOMA Executive Director: Prepare in coordination with Working Group Chair, GOMA Chair (with feedback from Council Coordinator and Finance Manager as needed) for advisory review by Management and Finance and approval by GOMA Executive Committee
3. Complete background messaging and “PR tour” tasks	Develop workplan with estimated levels of effort to develop messaging and carry out PR tour; convene a committee (either ad hoc or a revamped outreach/publications committee) to support and review messaging and PR products, focusing on the 25 th anniversary of the Council in 2014; <i>**Engage Councilors in PR/messaging work as soon as possible. Note: Throughout the report, GOMA and GOMC have been used separately, together with a forward slash (/) between them, and at times interchangeably. It will be crucial with messaging to delineate GOMC and GOMA roles and increase messaging for both organizations.</i>	Council Coordinator & GOMA Executive Director/Working Group Chair, Committee Chairs
4. Create task list and RFPs (as needed) for messaging materials and secure contractors	Develop specific task and product list, indicating outside support needed, for website, power point, “elevator speech,” other messaging and branding (building on ESIP logo); research materials possibly available through Councilors; secure services as appropriate	Council Coordinator (develop list) & GOMA Executive Director (prepare plan to secure services as needed)/Working Group Chair, Outreach Committee (see #3), GOMA Executive Committee
5. Work to increase Canadian representation in GOMA and Council	Send an “all points bulletin” to Councilors, Working Group members, and GOMA Committee members seeking Canadian volunteer nominees, to increase geographic representation, engage freshwater and terrestrial organizations, and involve private sector	GOMA Executive Director & Executive Committee/Working Group Chair, Secretariat, Council Coordinator
6. Form teams for funding objectives	Identify a small ad hoc team and a leader for pursuing US Federal/CDN geographic appropriation; mitigation/endowment funds; IJC cooperative work; WERF.	GOMA Executive Director/Working Group Chair, GOMA board members, Councilors as needed

Task	Detail	Responsibility
7. Plan and execute next steps on fund development	Identify staff/contractor needs for remainder of fiscal year, including support for federal approach and “grant scanning”; develop short-term contingency plan for grant writing (including support for IJC); assign responsibilities & initiate messaging and PR tour; secure contracted services as needed.	GOMA Executive Director / Executive Committee, Working Group Chair (incorporates tasks 3 and 4 above prepared with Council Coordinator)

6.2 POTENTIAL FUND DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES

To carry out the work listed in Table 3 above, some expenditures will be needed within Fiscal Year 2014. It is very important to note that these steps will entail, in all likelihood, several different contractors whose scope and specific responsibilities may evolve. In Table 4 below, these needs are described more in terms of roles than specific deliverables. As outlined below, these needs may be met through a combination of contracted services done through RFP, changes to existing core staff and contractors’ agreements, collaborative work through upcoming Council projects, and in-kind contributions from GOMA and Council members and agencies. *Actions such as pursuing a messaging “tour” and long-term endowment funding will require ongoing services and some flexibility for GOMA in defining scopes of work, rather than defining work in terms of specific and limited responsibilities.* Flexibility, along with some delegation of authority to core staff and the GOMA Executive Committee, will be needed to accomplish this work effectively.

TABLE 4. POTENTIAL FUND DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES

Item	Notes
Messaging	
Website update to highlight GOMA, Council accomplishments, fundable projects, climate focus, Action Plan goals	Pending NRCAN grant and NOAA funds for climate-related portions of the website
PowerPoint, talking points and “elevator speech” for messaging and PR tour	Visual and written materials must be pulled together; councilors may have existing materials, presentations to mine; all materials must be coordinated with 25 th anniversary work
Branding	Using the recent design and available resources and materials applied to the ESIP portion of the website.
“PR tour” support	Must include responsibility to contact and cultivate media in the region; may be structured as consulting role and/or combined with appropriation and endowment task below
Grant Opportunity and “GPINS” Development	
Staff or contracted support for developing a grant opportunity scanning process, list on continuous basis	Should look on a 3-5 year basis as well as current openings; must coordinate with Working Group chair (who will coordinate with Council Coordinator and Committee chairs) to provide feedback into workplan and project development. Council agencies may have staff persons doing this type of scanning who could help jump-start the process
Develop long-term grant foundation fundraising strategy.	Identify, evaluate and prioritize potential funding sources. Includes research and initial outreach to foundation staff to determine level of interest and potential likelihood of funding. Product would recommend foundations to approach for funding, recommend ‘ask’ range, match with potential projects, and include details such as timing of proposals and recommended steps.
Grant writing on an as-needed basis throughout year	May be combined with ESIP/Habitat/Gulfwatch coordinator fund development work. **Must clarify process for obtaining letters of support!
Contracted foundation expert to identify and introduce GOMA/Council to foundation staff	Likely a limited, consulting role but should be considered. This task could be combined with development of the long-term grant foundation fundraising strategy.

Appropriation and Endowment Development

Contracted support to ED and Council Coordinator and teams on specific funding options (IJC, WERF, project-specific mitigation)

May be structured as consulting role to existing staff; should include coordinating work on the St. Croix watershed with the IJC.

Staff and/or contracted work with Councilors, GOMA Board to identify and connect to funders, agencies on geographic appropriation, designation options

Messaging specialist for federal agencies

May be specialist in limited, consulting role; possibly combined with foundation expert depending upon audiences

ESIP, Habitat, Gulfwatch and Climate Network Funding

Assistance identifying and securing funding

Consider adding designated coordinator for Climate Network; this role may be combined with as-needed grant writing and grant “scanning” roles

WORK SESSION PARTICIPANTS

Participants & Contractors On-Site in Augusta, ME	Teleconference Participants
W. Donald Hudson	Sophia Foley (Skype)
Lee Sochasky	Rob Capozzi
Susan Russell-Robinson	Rebecca Newhall
Prassede Vella	Bruce Carlisle
Joan LeBlanc, Council Coordinator	J. Ruairdh Morrison
Cynthia Krum, GOMA Executive Director	Jack Wiggin
Juli Beth Hinds, Facilitator	Betsy Nicholson