**Steering Committee Conference Call: April 23, 2013**

**Participants**

Heather Breeze (DFO), Jim Cradock (GOMC), Adria Elskus (USGS/U Maine), Jawed Hameedi (NOAA), Jim Latimer (EPA), Matt Liebman (EPA), Abe Miller-Rushing NPS), Susan Russell-Robinson (USGS), Marilyn ten Brink (EPA), and Christine Tilburg (GOMC).

**1. Report from BoFEP health meeting**

Both Christine Tilburg and Heather Breeze attended the BoFEP Health Index Meeting April 3 in St. Andrews, New Brunswick. Approximately twenty individuals attended with everyone (excluding Christine) from Canada. The meeting lasted most of the day and discussion focused on whether it is possible to use an index or rating system to describe the condition (the group did not like the term “health”) of the Bay of Fundy. In the end, the group decided to have further discussion and to look in detail at the Ocean Health Index (OHI) (<http://www.oceanhealthindex.org/>). The group also agreed to run a case study around the Passamaquoddy region. Christine stated that most of the group was intrigued/excited about attempting to use the OHI. Heather has some concerns about some of the OHI indicators (example includes the attainment of ‘maximum sustainable yield’ for a given species produces a “higher” rating). Christine wondered who funded the original meeting and Heather confirmed that Environment Canada funded most of the meeting with some DFO additional funds. Further information on the OHI can be found at:

Halpern et al (2012) An index to assess the health and benefits of the global ocean. Nature. Volume 488. Pages 615-621.

**2. Annual meeting plans**

The Mariner’s House (<http://www.marinershouse.org/>) has been reserved for June 10 for our annual meeting. Christine asked who will be attending with most individuals on the call stating that they will be attending. She also wondered who might need a room blocked out for them. Adria Elskus stated that she needs two nights. Abe Miller-Rushing and Jawed Hameedi each need one. Christine will call the Mariner’s House and block out 4-5 rooms and then send information to the Steering Committee regarding making reservations. ***(Action to be taken: Christine needs to take further steps for the annual meeting accommodations).***

**3. What is hot on the ESIP webpage right now?**

Christine updated the Steering Committee on ESIP journal entry activity. Susan Russell-Robinson asked if linkages between the journals and Gulf of Maine Times have been made. Christine agreed to connect with Nancy Griffin. Susan also wondered if there is a way to track click-throughs if Jim Cradock sends a message regarding the ESIP journals to the broader GOMT lists. Jim Cradock replied that this is possible. He also stated that it is possible to see who accesses the ESIP journals through the GOMT links. ***(Action to be taken: Christine needs to follow up with Jim C. on these topics and make certain to add these to the monthly web hits).***

**4. Webpage redesign**

The group then discussed the ESIP redesign Jim Cradock prepared at: [http://dev.yellahoose.com/yh/gomc+esip/.](http://dev.yellahoose.com/yh/gomc%2Besip/.Christine) Christine began the discussion by stating that she and Jim had both been displeased with the functionality of the ESIP webpages as they had become cluttered and unwieldy with too much information. The Steering Committee reacted very favorably to the new design. Adria stated that she liked the new visuals; esp that one photo with menu tabs remains on every page, no matter where you move to. She also liked the use of a photo with caption and date for each ‘story’ as used on the Ocean Health Index site that J. Craddock pointed us to (www.oceanhealthindex.org). Susan stated that she liked that she could browse and see it all without constant scrolling. Jim Latimer stated that he likes it a lot. Christine agreed that she likes it but also likes that the lists are still provided at the bottom. She particularly likes the fact sheet questions and answers ***(Action to be taken: Christine does need to get these answers to Jim C. in May)*** on the right side of the page. Susan mentioned that these “answers” also should point to the State of the Environment Reports and Hilary Neckle’s (USGS) primers (i.e. other GOMC products) when appropriate. Susan suggested to Heather that the SOER materials should also point to ESIP whenever possible too.

**5. What else is on the ESIP webpages?**

There have been several new individuals that have joined the Steering Committee recently. In addition, there have been a few requests for “refreshers” on various aspects of the ESIP webpages and webtools. Consequently, Christine would like to take the end of the next couple of Steering Committee calls to remind everyone of some of the ESIP webpage (or collaboration webpage) functions. Matt Liebman asked that we start with a minitour of the ESIP Planning Site (www2.gulfofmaine.org/esipplanning). Although Matt wasn’t on the April call Christine led the group through a minitour of the ESIP Planning webpage – reminding the group that the ESIP Planning site really functions as a library for ESIP’s documents.