**Steering Committee Conference Call: August 23, 2016**

**Participants**

Heather Breeze (DFO), Adria Elskus (USGS), Al Hanson (ECCC), Jim Latimer (EPA), Pete Murdoch (USGS), and Christine Tilburg (GOMC)

**Discussion of ESIP Pilot Project**

The ESIP Steering Committee agreed to dedicate all of the August Steering Committee call to a discussion of the ESIP 2.0 pilot project. The Gulf of Maine Council (GOMC) previously determined that the following two topics were of particular importance for the Gulf of Maine and Bay of Fundy:

1. Coastal Resiliency / Vulnerability of Coastal Infrastructure to Extreme Weather Events (drivers include rain and temperature)

2. Links between Changing Climate, Ocean and Ecosystem Health, and Sustainability of Coastal Resources such as Sustainable Fisheries, Migratory Birds, and Wetlands

The group discussed pros and cons of each of the two pilots above. Jim Latimer stated that the first topic is much more focused on human infrastructure. He agreed that this topic is very important and driving a lot of work with respect to sustainability and resiliency but not as related to ESIP’s past as the other topic. He did point out that the first topic might be much easier to monetize.

The group also discussed how the second topic might be easier to transfer from ESIP 1.0. Jim pointed out that some of ESIP 1.0 indicators are actually FEGS (Final Ecosystem Goods and Services). The group agreed that by definition ecosystem services are very human oriented.

Christine Tilburg stated that there are already working groups in the region that are working on quantifying how vulnerable coastal infrastructure is. She mentioned that NERACOOS and NROC have some projects already moving forward on that topic. Marilyn ten Brink had previously emailed that she prefers option 2 as it will be less redundant with other efforts.

Heather Breeze stated that she had not weighed in on ESIP 2.0. From her perspective DFO’s work is very ecosystem service oriented. In addition, DFO looks at climate drivers as related to ecosystem services. One area she feels is not covered as well by DFO is the coastal system, particularly on the small scale. Jim agreed that DFO is in a better situation with respect to ecosystem services. In his opinion EPA doesn’t generally focus on ecosystem services. The closest alignment with past EPA effort is linked to aquatic life use. Adria Elskus stated she doesn’t think USGS has developed much with respect to ecosystem services. The closest thing she can think of is efforts to restore fish passage.

Al Hanson mentioned that one thing that is not covered well by the various organizations is educating people about stewardship roles and ecosystem services. Adria stated that this is a great role for ESIP as past ESIP involves a lot of information transfer through different methods. She suggested that one of the focal points of the pilot should be educating the public about ecosystem services. Christine thought a video (less than 2 minutes) on the ESIP Facebook page (under development) might be a good first step. (Possible idea: group that did green crab video).

With respect to moving the project forward, the group spent some time thinking about short term goals (video and fact sheets – perhaps focused on beneficiaries) and long term goals (database with FEGS that are developed).

Jim walked the group through some of EPA’s beneficiary list with respect to coastal and estuarine areas (note that there is an environmental subclass for wetland (#12, see Landers and Nahlik, 2013, link below, from which we can expand our beneficiaries list). Jim went through 12 potential beneficiaries:

* People who care (non-use)
* Residential property owners
* Recreational extractors
* Recreational viewers
* Water contact risk
* Waste water treatment operators
* Electric and other energy generators
* Commercial extractors
* Spiritual beneficiaries and artists
* Aquaculture
* Food subsisters
* Food pickers and gatherers.

Adria worried that ESIP’s efforts might be redundant to EPA’s effort. Jim stated that the EPA effort is at the national scale, so there are no real redundancies. The agency is not interested in one small estuary, or even region; but in fact, EPA is very interested in our work as a real world example of FEGS indicator development. Al stated that one of the important parts of the ecosystem services equation is the beneficiary. When thinking along lines of clams and mussels there are both the individuals collecting the clams and mussels AND the hunters interested in waterfowl that are also eating the clams and mussels.

**Next Steps**

Christine suggested that she put together some slides with Jim’s help recapping this discussion. Pete Murdoch has the show and tell presentation at the start of the next conference call. The ecosystem service pilot conversation would benefit from hearing about some of the projects that Pete is aware of from the Hurricane Sandy funds. He stated that a lot of the work he is thinking of is a hybrid of Theme 1 and Theme 2. Jim added that he’ll arrange to have Adobe Connect for the next call.

**FMI, from Jim Latimer**

<https://www.epa.gov/eco-research/final-ecosystem-goods-and-services-classification-system>

<https://cfpub.epa.gov/si/si_public_record_Report.cfm?dirEntryId=257922&CFID=139720405&CFTOKEN=59303549&jsessionid=cc303f3c529fb2342dd56e52d7c80353e2a2>