**Steering Committee Conference Call: February 28, 2017**

**Participants**

Heather Breeze (DFO), Jawed Hameedi (NOAA), Jim Latimer (EPA), Matt Liebman (EPA), Peter Murdoch (USGS), Kathryn Parlee (ECCC), Susan Russell-Robinson (Advisor), and Christine Tilburg (GOMC).

**1. GOMI Update**

Christine Tilburg updated the Steering Committee on the water sampling and lab analysis that is being completed for the Gulf of Maine Initiative. This is the third year that samples have been collected and analyzed for salinity, dissolved oxygen, saturated oxygen, Secchi, temperature, pH, chlorophyll *a*, total phosphorus and total nitrogen.

The group on the call also discussed the team that has been put together to look at the sediment results from prior GOMI sampling. Matt Liebman mentioned that he was very interested in comparing PAH results from the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership to the Bay of Fundy results. He added via email: “Casco Bay Estuary Partnership just finished synthesizing Casco Bay sediment data collected over a 20ish year period (three sample events) and the report will be out soon. The report compares Casco Bay sediments to Gulf of Maine data as a whole, based on results from the National Coastal Condition Assessment. It's in final review. There will be a short fact sheet available for the public also.”

**2. Funding and Business Plan**

Christine updated the group on work Jim Latimer, Kathryn Parlee, and Lee Sochasky have done to develop a business plan for the ICUC project. Jim mentioned that once past the first year the project will actually self sustain. The group discussed how the project might support ESIP. Christine reminded the group that the Program Manager position is not funded past the end of May. Susan Russell-Robinson wondered what the GOMC Working Group has said about ESIP’s issues with respect to funding. Kathryn stated that the Working Group has been very silent when she brings the topic up at meetings or in one on one conversation. Peter Murdoch stated that he wants to still be a participant in conversations about potential funding for ESIP.

**3. GeoTour and ICUC**

Susan Russell-Robinson asked Kathryn Parlee if she is still having participants in the GOMC 25th anniversary GeoTour. Kathryn said there have not been any participants since about November. Christine asked if there are ways to reengage individuals with the GeoTour. She wondered if there was a way to have the GeoTour highlighted. Susan suggested that the coin be made available to participants that visited specific sites EVERY season (spring, summer, fall, winter).

**4. Miscellaneous**

Heather Breeze mentioned that individuals in DFO are interested in ESIP’s sediment results from the Bay of Fundy. She wondered if someone could present preliminary results to DFO either in person or via a webinar. She thought it might be a good way to introduce people at DFO to ESIP’s efforts. Christine asked about the time frame Heather was thinking about. Heather thought a presentation in the next three months would be very helpful.

In addition, Kathryn mentioned that she is putting together a meeting to highlight projects funded through the Gulf of Maine Initiative. ESIP will be invited to participate in that meeting also. Both of these efforts could highlight ESIP’s important work.

 **Next Steering Committee call March 21, 2017 at 10:00 AM ET**