

GULF OF MAINE COUNCIL ON THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

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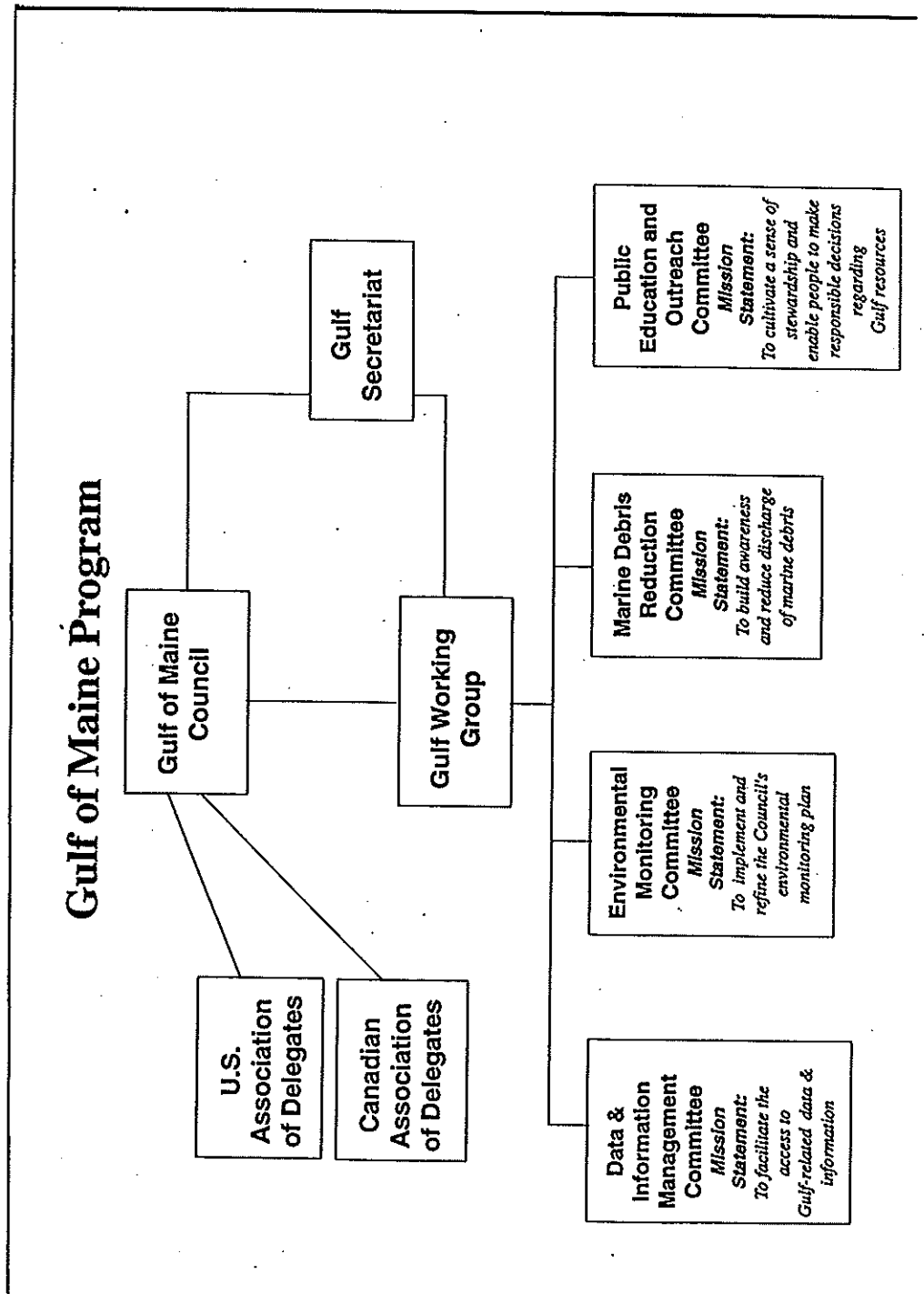
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2a / Organization Chart



2b / Operating Guidelines

Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment Operating Guidelines

WHEREAS the Government of Maine, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, New Hampshire and Nova Scotia have established the Gulf of Maine Council on the *Marine Environment* to Article I and II of "An Agreement on Conservation of the *Marine Environment* of the Gulf of Maine", and

WHEREAS it is desirable that the terms of reference and operating guidelines for the Council be clear, the members of the Gulf of Maine Council on the *Marine Environment* agree to the following:

Title

1. The name of the Governors' and Premiers' Council shall be the Gulf of Maine Council on the *Marine Environment* (the Council).

Mission, Goals, & Objectives

2. The mission of the Council on the *Marine Environment* is to sustain and improve the Gulf's ecosystem through cooperative efforts.

The goals of the Council are to:

- a. Coordinate conservation of the Gulf's ecosystem - establish a long-term, cooperative environmental management strategy and promote a framework to unite the protection efforts and responsibilities of the bordering states and provinces;
- b. Promote sustainable development - promote the sustainable development and management of the Gulf's marine and coastal resources;
- c. Promote public awareness - improve stewardship of the Gulf by increasing public awareness about its resources, management issues, and ways the public can become involved; and
- d. Foster marine research - improve management of the Gulf by promoting research on the structure of the Gulf ecosystem as well as the effects of pollution, habitat loss, and other stresses.

Approved: July 1994
Amended: June 1996

To implement its mission and goals, the Council will pursue the following objectives:

- a. Gulf Action Plan - Develop and implement a 10-year Action Plan for the Gulf of Maine that provides specific strategies to sustain and improve the Gulf;
- b. Gulf-wide Environmental Quality Monitoring Program - Develop and coordinate implementation of a marine environmental quality monitoring program that will provide critical information on the Gulf's health to decision-makers;
- c. Public involvement and Awareness - Provide opportunities for all sectors of the public to understand and address critical resource issues confronting the Gulf;
- d. State - Provincial Agreements - Develop inter-jurisdictional agreements that support Council initiatives including consistent regulatory, enforcement and management programs;
- e. Federal Involvement - Provide opportunities for substantive and frequent interaction with appropriate federal agencies involved in protecting and managing programs;
- f. Marine and Estuarine Research - Develop and promote scientific and other research programs necessary for sound decision-making by all entities involved in managing the Gulf; and
- g. Funding - Assure that continued, consistent, and adequate funding is available to support Gulf management needs.

Membership

3. The Council shall consist of Governors' and Premiers' representatives from each of the parties to the Gulf of Maine Agreement.
4. Unless otherwise indicated by the appropriate Governor or Premier, the members of the Council will consist of one non-government individual from each state and province appointed for 2-year renewable terms, as well as the holders of the following positions:

Maine	Director, Maine State Planning Office Commissioner, Dept. of Environmental Protection
Massachusetts	Secretary, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs Asst. Secretary, Exec. Office of Environmental Affairs

New Brunswick	Minister, Department of Environment Minister, Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture
New Hampshire	Director, Office of State Planning Commissioner, Dept. of Environmental Services
Nova Scotia	Minister, Department of Environment Minister, Department of Fisheries

5. To initiate staggered terms, the first terms of non-government members appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts and the Premier of New Brunswick will be for three years each.

Gulf of Maine Working Group

6. The Gulf of Maine Working Group (the Group), consisting of one person appointed by each Council member and one co-chair from each committee, will provide support to the Council. The Group will meet at least quarterly and have the following responsibilities:
 - conduct daily business for the Council;
 - prepare policy options for Council consideration;
 - develop annual work programs and budgets for Council action.

Canadian and U.S. Associations

7. The Canadian Association of Delegates to the Gulf of Maine Council and the U.S. Association of Delegates to the Gulf of Maine Council shall exist as not-for-profit subsidiaries of the Council in order to further the goals of the Council and develop support in their jurisdiction.

Gulf Action Plan

8. The Council shall adopt a 10-year Gulf Action Plan that seeks to sustain and improve the Gulf's ecosystem. It will identify specific strategies, time frames, and budgetary needs for implementation. Progress in implementing the Plan will be reviewed by the Council every two years and the Plan will be updated every five years.

Host Jurisdiction

9. Each jurisdiction shall serve as secretariat for the Council for one year on a rotating basis. The host jurisdiction shall be responsible for the following:

- hosting of Council meetings;
- preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes;
- collection and administration of the Council's annual budget; and
- preparation and distribution of the annual report of the Council.

Membership Fees

10. In order to defray some of the costs associated with providing secretariat services to the Council, each jurisdiction will contribute the sum of at least \$5,000 *annually* to the host jurisdiction. In addition to secretariat costs, fees will be collected to support projects that implement the Gulf of Maine Action Plan.

Meetings

11. The Council will meet at least semi-annually at a location and place to be determined by the Council.

Decisions

12. The Council will develop as necessary a unified consensus on policies and programs affecting their mandate. (The Council may decide to vote on specific issues but the results are non-binding on members that oppose or abstain from the decision.)

Committees

13. The Council may establish such committees as it deems necessary to fulfill its mandate.

Annual Report

14. The Council shall prepare an annual report and submit it to the Governors and Premiers in June of each year.

Administration

15. The Council may approve such administrative procedures:
 - (a) as are required for the management, administration and conduct of the affairs of the Council; and
 - (b) respecting any matter or thing that is necessary to effectively carry out the mandate of the Council.

2c / Committee Roles and Terms of Reference

General Operating Principles of Committees of the Gulf of Maine Program

To be a Formal Committee

Although study groups and ad hoc committees may be organized around specific issues, a committee will generally not be formalized until such time that:

- 1) There is a source of funds for the activities around which the group has been assembled and the committee has a role to play in determining the expenditure of such funds; and,
- 2) There are enough people interested in serving on the committee such that the formalized committee shall have representation from all the states and provinces and from those sectors necessary for the work of the committee.

Committee Terms of Reference

- 1) All formalized committees must have written Terms of Reference, first approved by the Working Group and then approved by the Council.

Membership in Committees

- 1) Members of all committees shall be appointed by the Working Group.
- 2) Generally, membership shall be geographically balanced among the states and provinces.
- 3) An updated list of committee members shall be available at each meeting of the Working Group and Council.
- 4) Participation in committee deliberations is always open to interested individuals beyond the stated membership.

Meetings of Committees

- 1) Committees shall set their own schedule for meetings.
- 2) Although there is not a strict quorum requirement, committee meetings should include representatives from around the region and should be balanced between U.S. and Canadian representatives.
- 3) Meetings may be held by conference call and other means.
- 4) Meetings are open to the public.

Approved: August 5, 1994

Responsibilities of Committee Chairs

Among other responsibilities as determined by the committees, chairs should at least be responsible for:

- 1) Setting meeting agendas.
- 2) Notifying the membership of upcoming meetings.
- 3) Producing and distributing minutes from meetings.
- 4) Ensuring that a committee member is available to report on committee activities and participate in each Working Group.
- 5) Notifying appropriate Working Group members if committee members are not participating effectively.

Gulf of Maine Working Group Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Working Group serves the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment. It is responsible for:

- developing annual work programs and budgets for Council consideration;
- managing annual work elements of the Gulf of Maine Program;
- conducting strategic planning and preparing policy options for Council consideration; and
- overseeing committee operations.

Organization

- a. **Membership.** State and Provincial members and Federal observers of the Council will appoint one member each to the Working Group. Members will serve at the discretion of Council members and Federal observers. Council may appoint additional members as it so desires by majority vote of its membership. Each committee appointed by the Working Group shall have one of the committee co-chairs be a member of the Working Group. The Executive Directors of the Canadian and U.S. Associations will be ex-officio members of the Working Group and Management Committee.
- b. **Chairman.** The Working Group will be chaired by a member from the host jurisdiction in which the Council Chairman is located. The chair will be decided by the Working Group members from the host jurisdiction. The chair, in consultation with the Secretariat and the Management Committee, will set meeting agendas and conduct other business as appropriate.
- c. **Meetings.** The Working Group will meet at least four times annually. Two of these meetings may be coincidental with the Council's biennial meetings. Locations of the meetings will be rotated to the member jurisdictions. The role of a meeting facilitator may be delegated by the chair to another member. The Secretariat will coordinate the preparation and conduct of meetings with the assistance of Working Group members from jurisdiction where the meeting is to take place.
- d. **Decisions.** Decisions will be made by consensus.

Support Services

- a. **Secretariat.** The host jurisdiction will serve as the Secretariat. It will support the Council, Working Group and Management Committee, and may have additional responsibilities as assigned to it by the Council.
- b. **Management Committee.** The Management Committee shall be composed of five Working Group members, including: one member from the host jurisdiction, one member from the host jurisdiction immediately preceding the current year, one member from the host jurisdiction immediately succeeding the current year, and the Executive Directors of the Canadian and U.S. Associations. Working Group members of the preceding and succeeding host jurisdictions will choose among themselves who will serve on the Management Committee. The chair of the Working Group will chair the Management Committee. The Committee will assist in setting Working Group meeting agendas, advise the Secretariat on budgetary and work program matters in the interim between Working Group meetings, and prepare and recommend budgets and work programs for consideration by the Working Group.
- c. **Committee Appointments.** The Working Group will make committee appointments. Nominations for appointments will be forwarded by Working Group members from respective jurisdictions to the Working Group for appointment. Consideration will be given to the nominee's particular qualifications for membership.
- d. **Committee Coordination.** The Working Group and the Secretariat will be responsible for overall coordination of the committees established by the Council. Minutes of meetings will be shared among the committees, Working Group and Council. Recommendations will be made for inter-committee cooperation.

Gulf of Maine Data and Information Management Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

To serve the data and information needs of the Gulf of Maine Council, Working Group and its Committee structure; and to facilitate access to data and information related to the Gulf of Maine by government, the research community, non-profit organizations and the public of the Gulf of Maine region.

The Committee will:

- represent the interests of Council on the Committee established to develop the **Gulf of Maine Information Management System** proposed by the Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine, Regional Marine Research Board and the Council;
- coordinate the ongoing data and information needs of the Council, its Working Group and Committees; and
- support the production and maintenance of data and information Directories.

Meetings

At least once every year, the Committee will meet to:

- recommend individuals to serve as Co-Chairs (one from each country);
 - review accomplishments of the previous year;
 - establish priority work tasks for the following year; and
 - establish the annual budget.
- a) Meetings will be announced 30 days in advance to all committee members, and normally will be held concurrently with Working Group meetings.
 - b) A minimum of two agencies from each country plus one of the Co-Chairs will represent a quorum.
 - c) Conference calls, and possibly E-mail conferences, constitute meetings if all members have the ability to participate and a quorum is achieved.
 - d) Decisions will, by preference, be by consensus. If a vote is necessary, a majority of those present is required. Each jurisdiction will have one vote.
 - e) Meetings will be open to all interested parties.
 - d) Minutes of all meetings will be distributed to Committee members by the Co-Chairs and to the Gulf of Maine Working Group through the Secretariat.

Membership

At least one individual will be appointed to represent each province and state government (alternatives will also be appointed). Each department or agency on the Working Group and Council can, if they so choose, nominate a person to serve on the Committee. Committees will strive to achieve a balanced representation from among government departments/agencies and non-government organizations from each country. Appointments will be made by the respective Working Group members in each jurisdiction.

Chair Responsibilities

- set the agenda for meetings;
- chair meetings;
- publish and distribute minutes of meetings;
- speak on behalf of the Committee; and
- direct the expenditure of funds on behalf of the Committee and the Council.

Gulf of Maine Environmental Quality Monitoring Committee Terms of Reference

Mandate

The Environmental Quality Monitoring Committee will implement and periodically refine the Council's Gulf-wide Environmental Monitoring Plan.

Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the Monitoring Committee is to oversee and coordinate implementation of the Council's Monitoring Plan. In the process it will perform the following tasks:

- prepare and submit to the Working Group by March of each year an annual work plan and budget for the Committee;
- conduct the work necessary to implement the annual work plan once a budget is approved by the Council and adequate funding provided. (Proposed significant changes to the work plan or budget require approval by the Working Group and/or Council);
- coordinate and promote the exchange of information between ongoing and proposed monitoring programs in the Gulf.

Membership

Committee members will be appointed by the Working Group. Each province and state will be represented by at least two individuals.

Each department or agency represented on the Council can, if they so choose, nominate an individual to serve on the Committee either as an observer or as a full participating member. Committees will strive to achieve an equal and balanced representation among government departments/agencies and non-government organizations from each country.

Member Responsibilities

Members are responsible to:

- attend and contribute to Monitoring Committee meetings;
- provide technical and financial resources to the Committee;
- disseminate information on the Gulf program; and
- work with agencies and others to promote Monitoring Plan objectives.

Committee Chairs

Two chairs of the Monitoring Committee, one each from Canada and the U.S., will be appointed by the Committee for a two year, renewable term. Duties of the Chairs include:

- setting meeting agendas;
- notifying membership of upcoming meetings;
- producing and distributing minutes of meetings;
- ensuring that a Committee member is available to report on Committee activities and participate in Working Group meetings;
- managing Committee funds (U.S. accounts by the U.S. Chair, Canadian accounts by the Canadian Chair)

Meetings

The Monitoring Committee shall meet at least once a year. More meetings may be held as deemed appropriate by the Committee. The Committee shall set its own schedule and all meetings are open to the public.

Gulf of Maine Habitat Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

To support the protection, restoration, and enhancement of regionally significant habitats.

The Committee will:

- implement a systematic approach to the identification, classification and protection of regionally significant habitats;
- identify actions to protect, recover, and manage fish and wildlife habitat including vertebrates, invertebrates and plants in the Gulf of Maine, and identify agencies willing to undertake or continue these actions.

Meetings

At least once every year, the group will meet and:

- select individuals to serve as Co-Chairs, to be recommended to the Gulf of Maine Working Group for appointment;
 - review accomplishments of the previous year; and
 - establish priority work tasks for the following year and approve the annual budget.
- a) Meetings will be announced 30 days in advance to all committee members, and normally will co-occur to Working Group meetings.
 - b) Eight individuals with at least two individuals present from the U.S. states and two from the Canada provinces constitutes a quorum.
 - c) Conference calls, and possibly E-mail conferences, constitute meetings if all members have the ability to participate and a quorum is achieved.
 - d) Decisions will, by preference, be by consensus. If a vote is necessary, a majority of those present is required. Each jurisdiction will have one vote.
 - e) Meetings will be open to all interested parties.
 - d) Minutes of all meetings will be distributed to Committee members by the Co-Chairs and to the Gulf of Maine Working Group through the Secretariat.

Membership

Committee members will be appointed by the Working Group. Each province and state will be represented on the Committee by at least two individuals.

Each department or agency represented on the Working Group and Council can if they so choose, nominate an individual to serve on the Committee. Committees will strive to achieve an equal and balanced representation among government department/agencies and of non-government organizations from each country.

Co-Chairs

There shall be an American and a Canadian Co-Chair. The members from each nation shall recommend a co-chair for approval by the Working Group. Duties of the co-chairs are to:

- set the agendas for meetings;
- chair meetings;
- publish and distribute minutes of meetings;
- speak on behalf of the Committee; and
- direct the expenditure of funds on behalf of the Committee and the Council.

Gulf of Maine Marine Debris Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

To build awareness and reduce discharge and inadvertent release of marine debris and other contaminants into the Gulf of Maine.

The Committee will encourage local groups to:

- identify their most critical marine contaminants and pollution issues and develop strategies to effectively address these issues;
- incorporate perspectives from all interested parties who have a stake in the health of the marine environment;
- work closely with municipal and state officials;
- encourage volunteerism;
- share experiences with other similar groups; and
- secure financial and other resources from public and private organizations.

Meetings

At least once every year, the Committee will meet and:

- select individuals to serve as Co-Chairs, to be recommended to the Gulf of Maine Working Group for appointment;
- review accomplishments of the previous year; and
- establish priority work tasks for the following year and approve the annual budget.

- a) Meetings will be announced 14 days in advance to all committee members.
- b) At least two individuals present from the US and two from Canada constitutes a quorum.
- c) A conference call constitutes a meeting if a quorum is on line.
- d) Minutes of all meetings will be distributed to Committee members by Committee Co-Chairs and to the Working Group through the Secretariat.

Membership

Committee members will be appointed by the Working Group. Each province and state will be represented on the Committee by at least two individuals.

Each department or agency represented on the Council can, if they so choose, nominate an individual to serve on the Committee. Committees will strive to

achieve equal and balanced representation among government departments/agencies and of non-government organizations from each country.

Additionally, representatives from organizations involved in marine debris reduction are encouraged to participate in meetings and advise the committee.

Functions

The Committee will recommend the expenditure of funds granted to the Gulf of Maine Council, or either of the Council's non-profit associations, for the purposes of addressing marine pollution or marine debris from either federal government, state, or provincial governments, individuals, non-profits, corporations and foundations.

The Committee will serve as network and clearing house for information on marine pollution and marine debris throughout the Gulf of Maine.

Co-Chairs Appointment

The Working Group will appoint an American and a Canadian Committee Co-Chair based upon a recommendation of the Marine Debris Committee. Duties of the Co-Chairs include:

- set the agendas for meetings;
- chair meetings;
- publication and distribution of minutes;
- speak on behalf of the committee to the public and to the Council; and
- direct the expenditure of funds on behalf of the committee and the Council.

Gulf of Maine Public Education and Participation Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

To cultivate a sense of stewardship among the citizens of the Gulf region and to enable them to make responsible decisions regarding the uses of the resources of the Gulf of Maine.

Responsibilities

The Committee will implement, and periodically refine, the Council's Gulf wide public education plan. In the process it will perform the following tasks:

- prepare and submit to the Working Group by June of each year an annual work plan and budget for the Committee;
- conduct the work necessary to implement the annual work plan once a budget is approved by the Council and adequate funding provided (Proposed significant changes to the work plan or budget require approval by the Working Group and/or Council); and
- develop and promote strategies for educating the public about the Gulf of Maine and encouraging public participation.

Membership

Committee members will be appointed by the Working Group. Each department or agency represented on the Council can, if they so choose, nominate an individual to serve on the Committee either as an observer or as a full participating member. Committees will strive to achieve equal and balanced representation among government departments/agencies and of non-government organizations from each country.

Membership responsibilities

Member responsibilities include:

- attending and contributing to the PEP Committee meetings;
- providing financial or writing, editing, or graphic services, organizational information/education or other similar in kind support to the Committee;
- disseminating information on the Gulf Program; and
- working with agencies and others to promote PEP Plan objectives.

Committee Chairs

Two chairs of the PEP Committee, one each from Canada and the US, will be chosen by the committee for approval by the Working Group. Duties of the Co-Chairs include:

- setting meeting agendas;
- notifying membership of upcoming meetings;
- producing and distributing minutes of meetings;
- ensuring that a Committee member is available to report on Committee activities and participate in Working Group meetings;
- managing Committee funds (US accounts by the US Chair, Canadian accounts by the Canadian Chair); and
- coordinating subcommittee assignments and disseminating subcommittee reports to the Committee.

Meetings

The PEP Committee shall meet at least twice each year. More meetings may be held as deemed appropriate by the Committee. The Committee shall set its own schedule and all meetings are open to the public and other council committees.

Conference calls, and possibly E-mail conferences, may constitute meetings if all members have the ability to participate, and a quorum is achieved.

Decisions will, by preference, be by consensus. If a vote is necessary, a majority from each country is required.

Meetings will be open to all interested parties but participation may be limited to committee members, alternates, and persons invited for special knowledge or expertise.

Canadian and U.S. Gulf of Maine Association Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Associations are tax-exempt, not-for-profit organizations created in both the United States and Canada by the Gulf of Maine Council to facilitate the Council in achieving its short and long-range agendas.

Organization

- a. **Membership.** Gulf of Maine Council governmental and private delegates from Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts are the Directors and currently sole members of the U.S. Gulf of Maine Association. Gulf of Maine Council governmental and private delegates from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are the Directors and sole members of the Canadian Gulf of Maine Association. The Directors of the U.S. Association may establish other membership criteria at their discretion and according to their by-laws. Under Canadian Association by-laws, membership criteria cannot be changed.
- b. **Officers.** The Directors of the Canadian Association elect or appoint a Secretary-Treasurer from among their Association membership. The Secretary-Treasurer has custody of Association funds and securities, and authority to disburse funds as directed by the Association. Other officers may be appointed by the Directors. A Chairperson is chosen by the Directors for each meeting. The Directors of the U.S. Association elect or appoint a President and other officers from among the Association membership. The President of the U.S. Association sets meeting times and agendas, supervises their Association's Executive Director and oversees the management of Association projects and funds.
- c. **Executive Director.** The Executive Director of the U.S. Association is appointed by the Directors of the U.S. Association, and is responsible for the daily management of Association business. The Executive Director of the U.S. Association and the appropriate staff officer of the Canadian Association are *ex officio* members of the Gulf of Maine Council Working Group and the Working Group Management Committee.
- d. **Meetings.** The President of the U.S. Association may call meetings as he/she deems necessary, and in compliance with Association by-laws. Meetings are usually held semi-annually coincident with Gulf of Maine meetings. Meetings for the Canadian Association may be called at any time by the Directors or the Secretary-Treasurer. At least one meeting of Directors must be held each year.

Responsibilities

Fiscal management - The U.S. and Canadian Associations are responsible for the fiscal management of programs for which:

- 1) program funding has been secured by that Association;
- 2) program funding has been legally granted to that Association (including federal, state or private funding or contracts; or
- 3) the Gulf of Maine Council requests the Association to perform this function.

The Associations must provide financial reports on programs that they manage to the Council at its semi-annual meetings, as well as to various funding sources. The Council Working Group, Working Group Committees and Secretariat must provide financial information necessary to successful completion of these reports to designated Association representatives in a timely manner.

Adherence to Conditions - Once conditions associated with funding a program have been accepted by the Gulf of Maine Council, the appropriate Association is responsible for ensuring compliance with those conditions. The Council Working Group, Working Group Committees and Secretariat must take appropriate actions to meet those conditions in a timely manner at the request of designated Association representatives.

Technical Assistance - Association representatives provide technical assistance (e.g. policy formulation, project development) directly to the Council, the Working Group, and Standing Committees.

Resource Development - The Associations assist the Council in reaching out to interest group, businesses and other constituents in the Gulf's watershed. Their focus is to help develop resources to fund Council-sanctioned programs. They also seek to involve the Council in constructive partnerships, in which the priorities of both the Council and potential program supporters are addressed.

Gulf of Maine Secretariat -- Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Secretariat is responsible for the following:

- organizing Council, Working Group and Management Committee meetings
- preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes
- collection and administration of the Council's annual budget
- preparation and distribution of the annual report of the Council

Organization

Each jurisdiction will serve as Secretariat for the Council for one year on a rotating basis.

The Secretariat consists of the Working Group Chairperson, the Coordinator and other staff hired to complete the duties of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat, Working Group and the Management Committee are chaired by the member of the Working Group from the host jurisdiction where the Council Chairperson is located.

Support Services

The Secretariat rotates from year to year among the five jurisdictions. As the supporting service, this body assists in ensuring that the annual processes of the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment are effectively carried out with the input and participation of the appropriate people from within the organization. Although most of this is accomplished through the efforts of various factions of the group, the Secretariat oversees the completion of many tasks pertinent to the group as a whole.

One of the objectives of the Secretariat is to facilitate communications among the Council, Management Committee and Working Group members. An important part of this task is to update mailing lists and changing memberships within the group as well as the maintenance of other files that enable the Secretariat to function properly year to year with a smooth transition from one jurisdiction to the next.

The Secretariat prepares and coordinates annual events such as Council and Working Group meetings, Management Committee activities, RFP processes and the solicitation and preparation of the Visionary Awards sponsored by the Gulf of Maine Council. The Secretariat also attends the meetings of the Working Group and Council, is responsible for taking the official meeting minutes and may be required to perform certain tasks resulting from these meetings, as specified by the Working Group. Minutes from meetings are distributed by the Secretariat prior to the next scheduled meeting. While in attendance at these meetings, the Secretariat is required to maintain a position of neutrality on all issues brought before the Working Group so that each issue will receive unbiased treatment in processing.

There is also the role of distributor of informational documents pertinent to the Gulf of Maine region. These documents are shared within the Council, with government agencies, non government organizations, community groups, schools, municipalities and special interest groups. As a liaison between the Council and the public, the Secretariat is an information source for public inquiries regarding the Gulf of Maine Council, its activities and objectives.

The Secretariat will support the Council, Working Group, Committees and Management Committee, and may have additional responsibilities as assigned to it by the Council.