**ESIP/EPA/MassBays Call: September 3, 2015**

**Participants**

Pam DiBona (Massachusetts Bays NEP), Jim Latimer (EPA), Christine Tilburg (GOMC), and Prassede Vella (Massachusetts CZM)

**1. Reminder of process**

Prassede Vella opened the call with a reminder of the discussion from the previous call. Pam DiBona mentioned that she would find it easier to accomplish things between calls if the group determines what an appropriate project or deliverable might be from the conversations

**2. End Point**

Christine Tilburg stated that in her opinion most important outcome is that through conversations the group can get an idea of what datasets are available in the EPA-ORD, ESIP, and MassBays efforts. It seems likely that the MassBays project has uncovered information that could be of great use to the EPA-ORD project and vice versa. The group agreed. Pam mentioned that datasets that MassBays include recent and revised eelgrass information. In addition, MassBays recently received funds to determine where tide gates are in the Massachusetts coastal zone. Christine stated that both of those datasets would improve indicator information for the Aquatic Habitat ESIP committee.

Jim Latimer stated that he is currently putting together a table that has all of the parameters that the EPA-ORD team has been able to locate. Jim also summarized his effort to track down QAPPs for the various datasets. Christine stated that she imagines that ESIP can add to the table and then MassBays could update the table further. Prassede mentioned that they have also been thinking about bringing citizen driven efforts into the MassBays effort and have been concerned about the quality of those datasets. Pam mentioned that one of the projects in the current NERACOOS proposal (for $4 million) involved bringing together the various coordinators of citizen science groups and discussing quality assurance and sampling efforts. MassBays is teaming up with NERACOOS and GMRI to submit a proposal for funding this project in response to EPA’s [Exchange Network RFP](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=exchange%20network).

**3. Other Massachusetts Project**

Both Christine and Jim were concerned about duplication of effort with the Massachusetts – EPA effort currently under the guidance of Galen Kaufman in collaboration with Kim Groff and others at MA DEP. Pam stated that MassBays is somewhat informed about that project but would like to know more. Everyone agreed that there would be value in having a joint conversation with that team also.

**5. Eelgrass**

Prassede then updated Christine and Jim on current efforts with respect to eelgrass mapping. She mentioned that there has been concern about the accuracy of various techniques used over the years by MA DEP to analyze aerial surveys .as technology changes and there is a current effort by MA DMF to reanalyze some of the surveys. Jim stated that he is very interested in the results from this project as he has noticed odd values for some of the eelgrass in various embayments. Christine stated that she does not have Massachusetts information on eelgrass extent for the second part of the 2000s. Pam and Prassede stated that there was an aerial survey in 2006 and again in 2011 and 2012.

**Actions Needed:**

* **Prassede: Set up a conference call with the Mass DEP individuals.**
* **Jim: Complete inventory of variables EPA-ORD & ESIP have brought together and forward to Christine and Prassede for further input.**
* **Pam: Send to group a brief document about the eelgrass effort.**
* **Jim: Send Christine recent eelgrass information.**
* **All: Next call September 24 at 11:00 AM ET.**