



**Gulf of Maine
Council on the
Marine Environment**

Working Group Briefing Packet

Version 1

Portsmouth, New Hampshire • December 8-9, 2009



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Working Group Agenda

Tuesday, December 8, 2009, Wentworth Coolidge Mansion, Little Harbor Rd (off US Route 1A, Portsmouth)

9:00 AM	<p>Welcome, introductions, and overview and objectives for the meeting <i>Ted Diers, NH Department of Environmental Services and Chair, Working Group</i></p>
9:10 AM PAGE 4	<p>Accept consent agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working Group October 2009 meeting summary ▪ Committee and Subcommittee reports
9:15 AM PAGE 11	<p>The Gulf of Maine Institute: Community based Stewardship <i>Theresa Torrent-Ellis and John Terry, President of the Gulf of Maine Institute</i></p> <p>Background: Introducing the Gulf of Maine Institute, our new partner on the Outreach Committee and their unique programming to enhance community based stewardship of the Gulf of Maine. The Working Group will discuss ways that their program will enhance GOMC objectives in education and stewardship.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: The Working Group will understand the GMRI and their relationship with the GOMC.</p>
9:30 AM PAGE 12	<p>Gulf of Maine Communications Toolbox <i>Theresa Torrent-Ellis and Peter Alexander, Executive Director of Talking Conservation</i></p> <p>Background: The new toolbox, which is currently being developed for the Maine Coastal Program, will be unveiled. This toolbox will have overarching messages for coastal Maine and will be the cornerstone of values based marketing needs of a number of educational and conservation programs in Maine.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Does this toolkit and set of messages relate to program / project work in the action plan? Does the Council wish to promote this tool for GOMC communications? Does the Working Group wish to send this to the Council for adoption?</p>
10:00 AM	<p>Celebrating 20 years of the Council: Oceans Day 2010 <i>Theresa Torrent-Ellis, Maine State Planning Office, GOMC Outreach Committee co-chair</i></p> <p>Background: Theresa will bring to the Working Group the plans and the partners that are in place for WOD and Council recognition event.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: There will be details in the presentation that will need Working Group input and direction.</p>
10:30 AM	<p>Break</p>
11:15 AM PAGE 12	<p>State of the Gulf of Maine Report <i>Jay Walmsley, Chair, Ad Hoc Task Group on State of the Environment Reporting</i></p> <p>Background: The Task Group has developed a workplan for a State of the Gulf of Maine Report that is due to be launched at the 2010 20-year celebrations. The final workplan will be presented and a call for theme paper authors made.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Acceptance of final workplan for SOER to be presented to Council.</p>
11:45 AM	<p>Lunch provided by the New Hampshire Coastal Program</p>



<p>1:30 PM PAGE 14</p>	<p>A “working session” for securing resources for Council priorities <i>David Keeley, Gulf of Maine Council Fund Development Coordinator</i> Background: The Council and its committees have established annual fund development priorities and are working to secure the necessary resources. In November, several committee co-chairs met with the Secretariat Team by conference call (e.g., ESIP, climate change, <i>Gulf of Maine Times</i>, etc.) to further transition funding needs and concepts into discrete, fundable projects. It is timely to take the next step and further refine these emerging projects. <i>Session format</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ground-level insights (thirty minutes) – Two nonprofit development staff will share their perspectives on the changing climate for foundation giving and respond to Q&A. ▪ Work session (two hours) – The Working Group will break into three concurrent facilitated sessions to contribute ideas and suggestions related to climate change, ecosystem indicators and the <i>Gulf of Maine Times</i>. <p>Outcome/desired actions: Specific project proposals that be presented to funders via letters of intent or full funding proposals.</p>
<p>4:30 PM</p>	<p>Recess for the day</p>
<p>5:30 PM</p>	<p>Meet in lobby for group supper in downtown Portsmouth</p>

Wednesday, December 9, 2009, Portsmouth City Hall, City Council Chambers, One Junkins Av, Portsmouth

<p>9:00 AM</p>	<p>Time for unfinished business from Day 1</p>
<p>9:30 AM</p>	<p>New Brunswick Regional Adaptation Collaborative <i>Rob Capozzi, NB Department of Environment</i> Background: Atlantic communities are already experiencing the effects of climate change and this is expected to intensify in the future. Communities will need tools to make informed decisions and policies to strengthen their resiliency. The Atlantic Regional Adaptation Collaborative (RAC) is a cooperative undertaking of the four Atlantic Provinces, with funding from Natural Resources Canada, designed to build supportive frameworks and resources to help incorporate adaptation into policy, planning, and operations. The Atlantic RAC is designed to improve the adaptive capacity of vulnerable Atlantic coastal and inland communities; build on existing knowledge and modify tools to meet community needs; mainstream climate change adaptation considerations into land use planning and development, infrastructure design and placement and water management policies; and promote meaningful regional collaboration, coordination and sharing of good practices on integrating climate change into policy planning. The RAC will emphasize working with willing communities to develop adaptation tools. Outcome/Desired Action: The Council is kept aware of the RAC and any collaboration opportunities.</p>
<p>10:00 AM PAGE 18</p>	<p>Northeast Regional Ocean Council - Gulf of Maine Council Memorandum of Understanding <i>Betsy Nicholson, NOAA</i> Background: Much discussion has occurred around the relationship between the NROC and the GOMC in terms of membership, priority focus areas, geography and funding opportunities. In order to clarify the relationship and articulate the possible ways each group can benefit from working closely with the other, the WG decided at its October meeting to draft a MOU between the two entities for review in Dec. Particularly in light of the large role NROC will be taking on to implement coastal and marine spatial planning and possible funding associated with this endeavor, the GOMC could benefit from having a more formal agreement in writing to take advantage of partnership opportunities. Outcome/Desired Action: A draft MOU will be circulated and discussed at the meeting. GOMC WG gives verbal and written comments for revisions and eventual submission to the Council.</p>



<p>10:30 AM PAGE 19</p>	<p>US Ocean Policy Task Force developments as they impact the Gulf of Maine Council <i>Betsy Nicholson, NOAA</i> Background: The U.S. Ocean Policy Task Force will be submitting a National Ocean Policy and a Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Framework to President Obama on December 9th. These deliverables will be implemented in the New England region beginning next year, and will require action on the part of federal agencies, states, and tribes to develop a comprehensive coastal and marine spatial plan within five years. Discussion will cover how GOMC can benefit from these activities, including a Canadian partner being invited to serve as an ex officio member on the regional ocean planning body that will oversee these marine spatial planning efforts. Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group is up to speed on Task Force developments and understands how the GOMC could both become involved and benefit from these activities.</p>
<p>11:00 AM PAGE 20</p>	<p>Gulf of Maine Conservation and Restoration Initiative <i>Theresa Torrent Ellis, Slade Moore, and David Keeley</i> Background: At the October 2009 meeting the Working Group discussed the evolving Gulf of Maine Conservation and Restoration Initiative and developed recommendations to Council on the role it might take in this effort. A revised briefing memorandum was then prepared and provided to Management and Finance for their consideration in November. The intent of the Working Group was to convene a conference call of interested Councilors prior to their December meeting to further explore possible Council roles. In addition, on November 20th the Initiative's ad-hoc steering committee convened a meeting in Gloucester, Massachusetts of public, private and non-profit stakeholders to discuss both the framework for a GOM Conservation and Restoration Plan and advocacy efforts to promote implementation of that plan. Desired Outcomes: Develop further clarity of what the Initiative is and it's relation to the Council's 2006-2011 Action Plan; obtain support/commitments from the provincial, state and federal agencies to implement the November 20th "next steps"; ensure the Initiative is bi-national and clarify the parallel processes needed in each country to develop the Conservation and Restoration Plan; and finalize Working Group recommendations to Council.</p>
<p>11:30 AM</p>	<p>Wrap up and time for unfinished business</p>
<p>12:00 PM</p>	<p>Adjourn for lunch (on your own)</p>

Consent Agenda

October 2009 Working Group Meeting Summary

Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment Working Group

Meeting DRAFT Summary

*St. Andrews Biological Station, Department of Fisheries and Oceans • St. Andrews, NB
October 5, 2009*

Working Group members present

Rob Capozzi, NB Department of Environment; Paul Currier, NH Department of Environmental Services; Ted Diers, NH Department of Environmental Services; Jennifer Hackett, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Tim Hall, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Russ Henry, NB Department of Agriculture and Aquaculture; Justin Huston, NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture; Gary Lines, Environment Canada; Betsy Nicholson, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Kathryn Parlee, Environment Canada; Ann Rodney, US Environmental Protection Agency; Susan Russell-Robinson; US Geological Survey, Department of Interior; Jack Schwartz, MA Division of Fisheries; Theresa Torrent-Ellis, ME State Planning Office; and Peter Wells, Dalhousie University; Anita Hamilton, Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Others present

Paul Boudreau, COINAtlantic; Heather Breeze, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Danielle Cossarini, Dalhousie University; Jill Harlow, Gulf of Maine Research Institute; Adrienne Harrison, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; David Keeley, Development Coordinator; Cindy Krum, US Gulf of Maine Association; Michele L.



Tremblay, Council Coordinator; Jay Walmsley, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; David Keeley, Development Coordinator; and Matt Wood, GOMC Administrative Assistant from NH Department of Environmental Services.

*via conference call or video conference

Consent Agenda

Decision: The Working Group accepted the consent agenda.

Action Plan Work Plan status: TAPAS

Ted and Michele gave an overview of the status of TAPAS and informed the group that they will coordinate conference calls with Committee and Subcommittee chairs at which time they will remind them to make sure that their respective TAPAS are up to date to ensure the Working Group has the most up-to-date information for its work plan discussions and decisions.

Michele informed the Working Group that the Council requested a reporting mechanism for progress reporting. The use of an online reporting mechanism was discussed but there is not enough money to do that right now. In the interim, Michele has created an Access database. The Council would like to see some type of progress report on the GOMC's work by December. One suggestion was that spreadsheet could be sent to Committee and Subcommittee chairs with the task outlined in TAPAS, these could then be filled in with status updates.

Justin commented that keeping it simple was the best way to go. Not all the deliverables are fleshed out enough to report on. Additionally, some committees have done work that is not in TAPAS, but should be captured.

David inquired about funding and how one could get that information out of the TAPAS reports. David would like to hear from the Committee and Subcommittee chairs regarding what they would like to look into and what proposals might need to be written, currently TAPAS does not provide enough info to get that information.

Cindy informed the group that they could refer to the online TAPAS for a few additional changes. The primary change wise that the congressional request was deleted out of TAPAS for all programs except for indicators.

David commented that the group needs a mechanism to help write proposal for the funders forum. Ted commented that the proposals need to be specific in regards to how the proposal will demonstrate results and impacts for the specific region in which the proposal was submitted.

David commented that the Council needs to stop going after the small pots of money and instead request larger amounts. It takes the same amount of time to write the proposal and to administer a small pot of money as it does a larger amount.

Action: Michele and Ted will schedule conference calls with the Committee and Subcommittee chairs to discuss TAPAS and way in which to report on work progress.

The Council as a Facilitator: A Renewed Vision

Ted gave a presentation of the history of the GOMC and opened up a discussion to talk about where he/others think the GOMC should head in the future. He noted that this topic has been discussed many times over the years. However, because there is a cycle of people and organizations in and out of the Council as well as continual funding changes it is appropriate that the working group keep revisiting this topic.

Three of the key points Ted brought up for discussion were:

1. How do we consolidate events to maximize effectiveness?
2. Recently there has been a major reduction in resources and capacity.
3. Council's concern about feeling disconnected from the working group and committees.

Some of the improvements seen in recent years were TAPAS, the restructuring of committees and roles, frequent management and finance meetings, attempting to have closer ties to the committee chairs, and the focusing of funding priorities.

Despite these improvements, there are still some problems:

1. The group does have several contractors but the majority of the GOMC is still run through volunteers.
2. It is hard for volunteers to find the time needed to devote to the GOMC.
3. Current capacity is unsustainable

Where do we go from here? What does the GOMC have to offer the Gulf of Maine? Funding is back down around 2001 levels, conversations have changed from how are we going to spend money to where are we going to get money. How important is it to have a fundraising option on the Council? Committees will need to help themselves more.

What the GOMC has to offer are: A facilitator for activities, a venue for international policy conversation, an organizer of people, a promoter of ideas, a convenient place to store information, a convenient place to learn about activities (*Gulf of Maine Times*), a banker to the region (having one place to administer projects and spend money across international boundaries and jurisdictions is very important, no one else have this), and fund development assistance.

One suggestion posed by Ted was to no longer coordinate projects because it is a drain on resources. Derrick asked how ESIP fall into this and commented that the group is doing coordination if ESIP falls into this category. Ted responded that ESIP does fall into this category.

Ted proposed that unless there are some strong opinions to keep coordinating projects other than what is currently being done, that the working group no longer take on project management roles. The exceptions would be is a committee wanted to take something on (e.g. Gulfwatch).

Justin wanted to make sure the working group doesn't set up operational standards now, which might limit the organization in the future.

Jay asked if there has ever been some type of comparison on competitors. Michele answered her question by mentioning a similar look (needs assessment) was completed in the past. Susan asked the group to consider whether a new needs assessment might need to be conducted.

Ted continued his discussion by asking the group, how do we make our basket of good sustainable to support our champions of projects?

Justin commented that the GOMC has been able to provide these goods because of our credibility and if we change our structure we may lose that. People need to recognize the GOMC. Our stamp/logo needs to be put on as much as possible. If we contribute money to a project, we need to require the Council's logo to be placed on it.

What does this all mean and questions to consider?

1. The next action plan is coming due – a decision needs to be made when this is written if it will contain what GOMC will do or ought to be done in the GOM.
2. What does the organization do if money falls from the sky?
3. Should dues be raised to continue same level of capacity?
4. Can the Council find ways to catalyze good ideas and find champions?
5. Solidify GOMC rolls in NEG/ECP, NROC, Great waters, etc..
6. Should we try to work on these questions and re-launch ourselves at the 20-year celebration?

Within the next year all of these questions should be crafted and packaged to formalize what we are moving towards. Justin commented that it is important too differentiate between what we are doing and what we ought to do. It is not necessarily an "or" statement but an "and" statement.

Action: Michele will put Ted's presentation on the website so that people can read through it, think more about the topics, and start to consider where the Council should be headed for future discussions.

Great Waters Initiative Update

David gave an overview of the Great Waters Initiative. Great Waters is a bi-national Gulf of Maine Conservation and Restoration Initiative being advanced by state, provincial, federal, and nonprofit interests—many of whom are represented on the GOMC. This initiative aligns itself nicely and addresses priorities in the Action Plan and will advance several of the Council's fund development focal areas. The Great Waters initiative has the potential of raising lots of money for the GOMC's restoration funding. Currently there is a lot of interest in restoration nationwide. Gulf of Maine is not currently included in the Great Waters and there has been some effort to get it included. What big thing that is missing and that which is needed is a plan. If there is a plan, the delegation would back the GOMC. Parts of the Great Water initiative align with the Council's restoration initiative however, there are also items beyond the scope of the Councils in the restoration initiative.

What role does the Council feel it should play?

Opt 1. Regional Convener – the Council will take a lead role, which means the Council members would need to provide their time.

Opt 2. Regional Facilitator – act as a neutral facilitator in the planning process.

Opt 3. Regional Participant – similar to what Paul Currier does with the Ocean Data Partnership.

What does the working group want to recommend to the Council?

Justin voiced the concerns from the Canadian side indicating that a careful look needs to be taken to see how their action plans align and to be aware that the political advocacy is not present in the Canadian side. Justin wanted to make sure that a shift in focus is not lost, which has already been established. If the Council decides to enter into this, the GOMC needs to make sure that there is flexibility to stay independent and go in our own direction if that is the desire. It is impossible to shift where the priorities of one country are directed so that they align with other countries.

Theresa commented that there are substantial values added that would help the Gulf Of Maine even if the initiative doesn't parallel Canadian priorities, and that it may be worth it. Justin pointed out that the Council needs to make sure Canada is on board in case match needs to come forth. Ted commented that before there is any money the Council needs to get a restoration plan and to understand what it might cost throughout the region to combat different priorities. Is it a good idea to develop this idea? Justin commented that we couldn't call it a plan, last time it was an

initiative because we couldn't name names. Specific areas cannot be called out so that it doesn't appear that one region is being favored over another. Ted commented that we can still be vague but specific enough to be able to assign dollars to tasks. We can conduct a broad scale inventory (i.e. number of miles of shoreline in a particular basin that need stabilization) and determine what the costs associated to that activity might be. Jack asked the group if it could start with a use attainability assessment.

Ted summarized that it was the consensus that the GOMC should not be a flagship entity, there was not a lot of confront from the Canadian side. David made the comment that the federal agencies would not be involved with option two, it would be the NGOs. Ted commented that it would be useful to have a broad action plan that has a public component, what would not be useful would be advocacy around issues and dollars. Do people want the Council to be associated with this action?

David pointed out that we need to be careful that once we set this up we might be turning the gun on ourselves down the road. The government may try to make the Council do things and be accountable. David also commented that it might be better to lead than to just be a facilitator. So that we have control where it goes, which would be shared between Canada and the States. David summarized that appeared that there is not a consensus, and suggested a poll be conducted. Which option would people (in their own opinion) vote for? The results were:

- Opt 1. Regional Convener – 7
- Opt 2. Regional Facilitator – 10
- Opt 3. Regional Participant – 1

Ted commented that what is needed is some blend of option 1 and 2. Everyone agreed.

Action: David will work to combine options one and two so that the concerns of the working group are addressed.

David will present this new hybrid option to the working group (via the listserv) for consideration by the Council.

Action: The Working Group will work to refine the GOMC's role in Great Waters over the next four weeks and hold a Council call sometime in November.

Action: Present the Council's decision during the December meeting.

Northeast Regional Ocean Council Update

Betsy started her presentation by giving an update on the Ocean Policy Task Force and then provided an update on Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC). Betsy informed the working group that the Ocean Policy Task Force was established in June 2009. The task force had three measures due in 90 days and one in 180 days. The status of the task force is that the interim report was released for comment, public engagements were conducted and spatial planning work is now underway. The interim report included a Federal Government framework for coordination: national ocean Council. It established a governance advisory committee and lays out nine priority objectives for consideration and implementation strategies. Our of the priorities align with that of the GOMC.

1. Ecosystem based management
2. Coordination and support
3. Resiliency and adaptation to climate change and ocean acidification
4. Regional ecosystem protection and restoration

NROC still has a lot on momentum but no funds. There is quite a bit of overlap between GOMC. Ted Diers will be co-chair, which provides an opportunity for integration. **Redefining partnerships**
Appropriation request will be started with David Keeley.

How can we better integrate the two groups (NROC and GOMC)?

1. Overlap of people and issues. Nothing is formalized – idea of a resolution with explanation of differences.
2. More formal MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) including what can NROC gain from GOMC.
3. Workplans – no reason why the GOMC could not be leading an issue.
4. GOMC being involved in the new appropriation request.

Ann asked the group who would sign an MOU between NROC and GOMC; would a resolution be more appropriate? Ted commented that the group uses an MOU as a template for the resolution. Use the MOU to cover the next year and while that is in place it could be further fleshed out into a more formal resolution.

Action: Betsy will provide a link to the Ocean Policy Task Force interim report via the Working Group listserv.

Action: The Working Group will craft language for an MOU between the GOMC and NROC.

Action: Betsy will provide the appropriate Committee and Sub-Committee Chairs the NROC workplan so that they can see what they might be able to implement.

Action: People that have workplan ideas should forward them to the appropriate committee chairs.

Ocean Data Partnership and Information Exchange Network updates

Paul Currier gave an overview of the Ocean Data Partnership and the Information Exchange Network. GOMOSE is being transferred to the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. The Ocean Data Partnership has been working to get

metadata registered nationally so that searches can be done on GOMC data. Partnership sought EPA grant funds to create an Ocean Data Partnership Exchange Network. IT Committee is developing a consensus-based schema so that the data can be standardized and shared. Gulfwatch data are the pilot dataset the GOMC is using. There is a lot of work to do on the data before it can be shared, part of which is compiling the metadata. Hope to have the Gulfwatch data completed soon so that as money winds down for funding the data can still be used and have a place to be housed (online). When data is now referenced in reports, it would be Northeast Ocean Data Partnership Exchange data. The advantage of this network is that data from multiple committees and organizations can be published which will allow the data to be assessable and searchable to a wide variety of individuals (public and organizations).

Paul Boudreau commented that there is a similar system (mapping standard) in place for mapping data collected in Canada, web-mapping service. GOMC has been instrumental in getting this up and running. Makes mapping data available to the masses without needing to know or understand what is in the background (metadata).

The one challenge has been working with the data owners to get all the metadata needed. It takes a lot of work to get most of this data. The goal of the partnership is provide the tech assistance to get organizations data into the correct schema so that the data can be used and shared. It is free to join and use, you just need to endure the work of getting it in the correct format. Jack commented that his (MA) Gulfwatch data will be coming shortly.

Gulf of Maine Research Institute Overview

Jill gave a general overview of the Gulf of Maine Research Institute which included a brief history, some of their current projects, and a future perspective of where they would like to go.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Our Work

Ann gave an overview of the past work we have done on evaluating the effectiveness of our work. The Secretariat Team will ask committee chairs how to best evaluate the work they are doing. Adrienne gave an evaluation update of the logic model. The tasks that have been completed to date are:

1. Initial focus on restoration goal 1
2. Revised outcomes

The next steps to take are:

1. Restoration committee will develop a set of questions
2. Implement a practical pilot of implementation measures

The Evaluation Team will be asking the Restoration Committee to answer the questions they come up with so that a presentation can be given at the December meeting. If this process proves to be beneficial, the Evaluation Team will look at expanding this process to the other committees. Ted commented that the Habitat Restoration Subcommittee got overwhelmed a few years ago in the number of projects they were managing/passing money through to. The committee has since cleared that backlog and if they had had a process suck as this that may not have happened. This is something that should be put on the Restoration Committee's next agenda to look into.

Action: Michele and Ted will schedule conference calls with the committee and subcommittee chairs to discuss TAPAS and ways in which to report on work progress.

Action: Add a discussion on the logic model onto the Habitat Restoration Committee's next agenda.

Quantifying and Documenting In-Kind Support

Ted led the discussion from the measuring the effectiveness of our work into a further discussion of quantifying and documenting in-kind support. Ted commented that part of measuring our effort and a measure of our effectiveness is being able to measure when the GOMC get together at meetings or for conference calls. It was stressed that everyone needs to start using the various listserves created for the GOMC. This will provide a centralized archive or correspondence and help track the number of meetings and products traveling through the Council.

Cindy discussed the current in-kind form that is used to track people's time and how it has been relatively unsuccessful. Meeting times are also being tracked for those that have meeting attendance records and summaries, but many of the other meetings are not being documented. Counselors have asked for a summary of the organizations time at their June meeting. Michele commented that there is a lot of in-kind match that we are missing and using the listserves is one painless way to get at this info. Cindy asked the group for ideas that they think might work to track this information and mentioned that once obtained this info could help when filling out proposals. Ted commented that he was able to ask the NHDES IT people to calculate all the time he tagged as GOMC on his timesheet for last year. He was then able to send that record to Cindy. Ted suggested that others that use an outlook calendar of similar scheduling tool look into a similar export. Justin asked Cindy how specific people need to be. Justin experience with other organizations has just been using an estimation of the percentage of his time. Cindy replied that that level was sufficient if that was all that was able to be generated. Justin made the suggestion that individuals who submit their in-kind documentation to Cindy be entered in a prize drawing, to encourage people to do it.



Cindy asked the group if they would find it easier if she e-mailed out a quarterly questioner that could easily be filled in and mailed back. The blanks would include:

1. How much time did you spend in the quarter?
2. What is your time worth?
3. Any other associated costs for the quarter?

Cindy commented that she was still unsure if people would return them. The group felt people would be more likely to return them if they were sent out quarterly. Peter commented that he is able to use his personal scheduler much like how Ted uses his outlook calendar. He was just unsure if he could export the information. Michele commented that she does the same and there is a way to export the needed information.

Action: Individuals will start using the listserves for communication and scheduling of meetings.

Action: Ted, Cindy, and Michele will hold a discussion to determine who will receive the in-kind documentation forms (Working Group, Committee Chairs, etc...).

Action: Cindy will begin sending out a quarterly e-mail requesting in-kind documentation along with a summary of the results from the previous quarter.

Gulf of Maine State of the Environment Reporting: The Task Group's Progress to Date

Jay Walmsley gave an update on the progress of the environmental reporting. There are now 21 perspective topics for papers and Jay would like to use the time today to whittle that down. Ted suggested that once Jay has a chance to incorporate the group's comments and comes up with a new list of prospective paper topics that the group tries to schedule a conference call to take a look at the list prior to the next meeting in December. If a meeting can't be scheduled, the group is on a good track and seeing another summation at the December meeting is fine. Jay asked the group if they have anyone in mind that might be interested in working on one of these papers that they contact Jay.

Action: Jay will contact the Working Group (via the listserve) once she has a chance to incorporate the group's comments in order to schedule a call to summarize the new list of prospective paper topics. If a time cannot be coordinated, Jay will give another summary presentation at the December meeting.

Unfinished Business

Ted commented that the GOMC was at the end of money for *Gulf of Maine Times* (GOMT). The next issue will be the last one and it will be electronic. The big cost associated with the GOMT is the editor and layout. The Outreach Committee estimates it will be approximately \$4,000 per year per jurisdiction, approximately \$20,000(+/-) for this budget cycle to continue publication. Ted emphasized that if the group are not going to do it right it should not be done at all. Tim asked for clarification on how much of the money was for the editor. Cindy clarified that the majority of it goes to the editor, who then pays for layout among other things. Susan asked the group if additional money was needed for IT support. Michele responded that part of Jim Cradock's web service contract included this support. Justin made the suggestion that the issue of continuing the GOMT needs to be presented back to the Council, so that they can make the decision. The group has the info to inform Council what direction the publication is headed and how much it will cost to continue. Let the counselors decide if this is something the Council still wants in their arsenal. Susan asked the group if she can come up with federal money would \$3,000 per year per jurisdiction be more palatable. Paul asked the group whether the GOMC would want to move to a newsletter if the GOMT is no longer published. The mailing list is important and should not be lost. Russ commented that his Councilor will want to know where the group is going with this beyond this year. Is this a short-term fix or a long-term one? Ted commented that this was a valuable discussion on the subject and he and Michele will discuss it further during their Council calls. **SOMEONE** commented that one option is to increase the dues to cover the costs. Theresa suggested that the group identify who their partners are that might want to see the publication continue and want their organizations name on the document and see if they will help fund it.

Action: Ted and Michele will schedule calls with the Councilors and discuss the future of the Gulf of Maine Times.

Action: Working Group members will come to the December meeting with resources in mind or in hand to fund the publication. Once the new material/resources are presented a decision will be made to continue the publication or end it.

Prepared by Matt Wood, NH Department of Environmental Services and Administrative Assistant for the Council

Climate Change Network: Event and Activities Status

Background

- At the October 2009 meeting, Climate Change Network updated the Working Group on continuing efforts to develop funding plans for the Network
- As well, via the last Briefing Note, the Working group was advised of the Climate Change Network Event that was planned to take place that week at the St. Andrews Symposium.

Climate Change Network Event:

At the Gulf of Maine Symposium, a **Climate Change Network Event was held on October 7th**.

The purpose of this session was to advance the level of interaction among its GOM constituents and to share information about specific climate adaptation programs and projects at the state, provincial, and federal level. The session consisted of a series of presentations followed by facilitated discussion.

The **first session** focused on sharing experiences in developing climate adaptation policies for the Gulf of Maine. Presentations were given by:

- Municipal representative – John Charles, Halifax
- State representative – Lisa Rector, NESCAUM
- Federal representative – Ellen Mecray, NOAA; Don Forbes, NRCAN (GSC)

Discussion provided insights into the role of each level of government. That included the comment that the continuing evolution of the federal role in climate adaptation is moving towards support for pilot projects on impacts, adaptation options, and facilitating policy and planning.

The **second session** focused on specific examples of climate adaptation projects in the Gulf of Maine. Presentation by:

- Atlantic Regional Adaptation Collaborative – Dean Munde, NB Dept of Environment, Climate Change Directorate
- StormSmart Coasts Network – Adrienne Harrison, NOAA.
- ESIP Climate Indicators – Susan Robinson, GOMC/USGS
- NS Climate Change Centre – Janelle Frail

The **final session** focused on opportunities for regional coordination of climate adaptation activities. Information provided by Lisa Rector and Dean Munde on the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers Climate Change Committee's efforts to set an adaptation agenda was discussed.

An evaluation was done following the session and comments were gathered. While comments varied, the vast majority of attendees recommended another session as a follow-on to this one. Most participants also saw a role for the Network in facilitating, or being the "venue" by which province/state and federal agencies can meet to discuss and move issues of climate change adaptation forward.

Notes were taken at the sessions and a summary has been compiled. As well, the presentations given have been collected. The Network is planning to post both these items on the GOMC CCN webpage as information items.

Many thanks go out to the organizers of this event, including Ellen Mecray, Adrienne Harrison, Gulf of Maine Symposium organizers including Lara Cooper and all the participants who made the event such a success.

Proposed Next Steps

1. Continue efforts to finance Network.
2. Start planning for next CCN event next fall.

*Submitted by Gary Lines
13 November 2009*

Gulfwatch Contaminants Monitoring Subcommittee Update

The Gulfwatch Program completed the 2009 field season. Samples were delivered to the Environment Canada Laboratory in Moncton for organics analysis with results expected by March 31, 2010. Samples destined for metals analysis were archived due to the lack of funds. Field teams reported a significant decline in mussels of the required size and abundance at several stations.

The 2007 and 2008 Gulfwatch annual data reports were completed, and their corresponding contaminant data was delivered to Jim Craddock, GOMC data manager, in the format prescribed by Jim. The 2007 and 2008 data reports were made available to the public on the Gulfwatch web page. Additionally, all annual data reports missing on the web page from prior years were located and added to the web page. Thus with the completion of the 2008 activities, Gulfwatch has provided all contaminant data it produced to the GOMC data manager, and disseminated all annual data reports to the public that were issued since the program's inception.

In November a meeting of the Gulfwatch Contaminants Monitoring Subcommittee, chaired by Dr. Gareth Harding, was convened at the St. Andrews Biological Station. The Subcommittee agreed to explore funding opportunities through Environment Canada to complete metals analysis for the 2009 samples. With the looming scarcity of funding, the Subcommittee felt it was most important to collect samples in 2010 even if they were only to be archived until funding materialized. The spatial and temporal distribution of certain analytes has not changed over extended periods of time and therefore the committee agreed that these categories do not need to be analyzed more than approximately once every five years. PCBs and organochlorine pesticides fall into this category. Regular sampling for PAHs should continue since they continue to be produced from crude oil and/or petroleum products/byproducts and because Gulfwatch has the ability to distinguish natural, i.e. fires, from anthropogenic sources, i.e. fuel combustion/production. The Subcommittee also decided to add new categories of so-called contaminants of emerging concern to the Gulfwatch Program for which methodologies are currently under development at the Environment Canada Laboratory in Moncton.

*Submitted by Jack P. Schwartz, Ph.D., US Co-Chair
November, 2009*

The Gulf of Maine Institute: Community Based Stewardship

ABOUT US

The Gulf of Maine Institute (GOMI) is dedicated to touching, moving and inspiring people to become involved in promoting and taking action in healthy stewardship for the Gulf of Maine and its watershed. Founded in 1997 by a dedicated group of community-based environmental activists, educators, and scientists from Atlantic Canada and New England, and directed by Dr. John Terry, we believe that youth need to be engaged today--as involved citizens, future scientists, decision makers, and cultural transmitters--in the preservation of the Gulf of Maine and its watershed.

GOMI's Student Goals Include:

- Exposing young people to environmental sciences through community-based, experiential programming
- Promoting idea exchanges among members of community-based projects across the watershed to help ensure the vitality of the Gulf of Maine and its watershed.

GOMI's Educational Goals Include:

- Training educators and community leaders in program delivery, action planning, organizing, marketing, and fundraising to grow and sustain this initiative
- Providing a replicable educational model

GOMI's Community Goals Include:

- Increasing public awareness of the Gulf of Maine and its watershed throughout the bio-region via the Internet and our publishing program
- Creating community support by publishing a controlled circulation, youth-authored, scientific, print, and electronic newsletter
- Developing a replicable and sustainable stewardship model

Achievements

Among its programmatic achievements, GOMI has demonstrated that:

1. Teams composed of youth and adults eager to investigate local and regional watershed issues can successfully be assembled from across the Gulf of Maine bioregion
2. Elementary, middle, and high school youth can learn and build community together along with their adult partners
3. Urban, suburban, and rural young people and adults can work together in common cause
4. Education projects based on a CYD approach are powerful, viable, educationally sound and community-beneficial approaches to learning

Gulf of Maine Communications Toolbox

One of the invaluable lessons learned from the experiences of other regional ecosystem restoration and conservation efforts is the need for effective, shared communication tools and strategies among participating agencies and organizations. Nowhere has this been better organized than in the Great Lakes, where a series of generous grants from the Joyce Foundation has funded extensive public opinion research and the development of key messages and other communication tools. These tools have been put to good use in raising public awareness and concern about the restoration and conservation needs of the Great Lakes, and have been extraordinarily effective in educating elected officials at all levels of government and motivating them to take action.

For the past 2-1/2 years the Maine Coastal Program, with additional support from the US FWS Gulf of Maine Coastal Program, has been working with Peter Alexander (DBA "Talking Conservation") to develop a similar set of tools for our region's conservation community. Activities to date have included:

- 1) Collected and analyzed existing public opinion research and produced written report with preliminary communication and messaging recommendations.
- 2) Conducted interviews with 20+ conservation and environmental groups and agencies to identify specific communication needs that would inform a new body of public opinion research. (Produced report).
- 3) Currently developing a "Communications Primer" that provides a strategic framework for individual and shared communications efforts, and draft messages specific to a number of conservation programs, including the Gulf of Maine Restoration and Conservation Initiative.

This work integrates closely with and can support the needs of the GOMC's Outreach Committee, and at the Working Group meeting in March 2009, the WG informally "adopted" the program. It is anticipated that significant foundation funding will eventually be acquired to support a new body of public opinion research for this initiative, as well as an ongoing training and implementation effort to ensure that participating groups are making the best use of the new tools and resources. In this case, it may be useful to have the US Gulf of Maine Association serve as fiscal agent.

For more information please contact Peter Alexander at (802) 380-3080 or crisobl@myfairpoint.net.

State of the Gulf of Maine Report

The *Ad Hoc* Task Group for State-of-the-Environment Reporting was established following the Council meeting in June 2009. The main objective of this group until December 2009 has been to finalize the workplan for the *State of the Gulf of Maine Report*. The workplan is based on the premise that the first version of the *State of the Gulf of Maine*

Report will be ready for the June 2010 celebrations of the 20-year anniversary of the Council. The development of the report will be ongoing incrementally after that.

The workplan has been tabled as a separate document. A summary is provided below.

General

The *State of the Gulf of Maine Report* will be a modular document. The main products are: 1) a context document; 2) theme papers, and 3) a website. A wiki will not be established for reporting purposes yet, although the need will be re-evaluated at a later stage.

Context Document

The context document will be a relatively static document that provides an introduction to the *State of the Gulf of Maine Report*. A contractor, Colleen Thompson, has been hired by DFO to develop a first draft of the context document by early December 2009. The document is currently under review.

Theme Papers

The theme papers will provide an evaluation of priority issues that are of interest in the Gulf of Maine. An incremental approach will be taken to develop the theme papers, with the first three theme papers ready for publication on the website by May 2010.

A short list of theme papers, based on the six ESIP priority areas, has been identified by the Task Team and Working Group (Table 1).

Table 1: Short List of Theme Papers for State of the Gulf of Maine Report

Priority Area	Theme Paper
Climate Change	Climate Change and its Effect on Humans
	Climate Change and its Effect on Ecosystems, Habitats and Biota
Fisheries and Aquaculture	Aquaculture in the Gulf of Maine
	Commercial Fisheries and Fish Stock Status
Coastal Development	Land Use and Coastal Development
Contaminants	Toxic Contaminants
	Microbial Pathogens and Toxins
Eutrophication	Eutrophication
Aquatic Habitats	Coastal Ecosystems and Habitats
	Offshore Ecosystems and Habitats
	Watershed Status
Other	Invasive Species
	Species at Risk
	Emerging Issues
*Note: Titles provided are not final	

Recommendations from the task Group are that authors for theme papers should be technically competent (having some recognized expertise in the subject matter) and have the ability to write well. Institutional authorship will not be encouraged, with the exception of GOMC committees. GOMC member organizations and committees have been requested to identify possible paper authors, and any resources that they are willing to commit to the process.

A review process will be in put place to ensure that the theme papers are of the highest technical quality; that language used in the papers is appropriate for the target audience, and that the publication requirements of the GOMC are met. One or more peer reviewers will be chosen for each paper. Peer reviewers will be chosen as leaders in their field.

The structure for the theme papers will be the Driving Forces-Pressures-State-Impacts-Response (DPSIR) framework, as recommended in the Scoping Document. Jay Walmsley will assist authors with the development of the table of contents of each paper, which will be reviewed by an editorial committee before writing commences.

State of the Gulf of Maine Web Portal



The development of the web portal is critical to the distribution of the *State of the Gulf of Maine Report*. The Maine State Planning Office has offered to include the design of the website in a current contract with Jim Cradock (Yellahoose), who is designing the GOM Times website. A draft design will be available at the end of 2009. Website development will also be through Jim Cradock.

Budget

A three-year budget has been provided in the workplan. We currently have tentative financial support for the project that will allow the first version of the *State of the Gulf of Maine Report* to be developed for June 2010.

Request to Working Group/Council

The Task Group requests the Working Group and Council to consider progress thusfar, and:

- 1) Approve the workplan for further development of the *State of the Gulf of Maine Report*.
- 2) Support the establishment of an Editorial Committee by the current Task Group for the period from December 2009 to June 2010, for the development of version 1 the report.

*Submitted by Jay Walmsley, PhD
Chair Ad Hoc Task Group on State-of-the-Environment Reporting
November 2009*

A “working session” for securing resources for Council Priorities

Project concepts for the Gulf of Maine Times

Status -- For over fifteen years the Council has produced the [Gulf of Maine Times](#) as a service free of charge. The *Times* is an unbiased source of information about research and happenings in the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy. It helps people understand, appreciate and preserve the diverse and complex Gulf of Maine watershed and marine environment. The hard copy version was distributed to over 12,000 readers throughout the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy watershed and beyond. They are involved in legislation, policy, enforcement, industry, commerce, education, conservation, science, recreation, and health.

In the fall of 2009 the Council reduced the costs of the *Times* by 50% by discontinuing the hard copy tabloid in favor of an on-line version. (It costs \$10,000/on-line edition.) Some Council agencies have agreed to provide funding as have 50+ subscribers that have made donations.

Issue -- At this time the Council needs to secure ongoing funding to produce the *Times*, retain current readers and to dramatically increase the number of readers.

Questions/issues for the Working Group

Instructions: Please brainstorm the following questions.

A. Learning from others

1. Are there some organizations that produce applicable, on-line editions of newspapers or newsletters that may offer distribution or funding ideas we should know about?
2. Where should the Council look to uncover best practices concerning on-line distribution techniques that could be applied to the GOM Times?

B. Raising funds

1. The intent is for the *Times* to be produced 3-4 times a year (and ideally in hard-copy and on-line). What creative funding ideas do you have that the Council should consider for the *Times*?
2. How can we increase in-kind services and donations? What are ways to reach out to science writers/public relations professionals in our Gulf of Maine family? What about sources of free or donated photos?

C. Recruiting new readers

1. How can the Council more effectively use the e-mailing lists of its member agencies to notify these people of the GOM Times and to dramatically increase the number of readers visiting the GOM Times web site? (We could take the approach of adding people and making it easy for them to unsubscribe if they wish.)



3. How might we approach non-profits and agencies outside of the GOM Council family to notify their readers/members about the Gulf of Maine Times?
4. How can we get more Council agencies (and others) to have a "hotlink/button" on their web site that connects their viewers to the GOM Times site?
5. Would it be reasonable to ask WG members to send 20 names of people/organizations in their jurisdictions to the editor.
6. Could WG and Committee members take sign-up sheets to coastal conferences and workshops that request people to provide their email address (so they can receive notices of when a new edition of the Times is available)? Standard post cards/notices could also be distributed at the registration desk.

D. Expanding the content

1. An on-line paper offers the opportunity to more frequently engage the target audiences. This means that content needs to be continually refreshed. How might we economically keep the content attractive to our readers?

Climate Change Project Concepts

1. Adaptation workshop(s)

Develop economic impact materials of hazards on employment, properties, infrastructure, and commerce

- a. Status – The EPA Environmental Finance Center at the University of Southern Maine is developing a new tool that helps towns evaluate, for any adaptation scenario they might consider, what the upfront costs are versus the range of likely damages will be for real estate in town, under various sea level rise and storm surge scenarios over the next century. The tool (COAST, or Coastal Adaptation to Sea level rise Tool), has been piloted in Old Orchard Beach, Maine, is being refined in other New England towns. A second phase will analyze SLR costs and adaptation costs. Other tools exist in Canada.
- b. Possible workshop purposes/goals – Accelerate discussions about the economic impacts of climate change and possible policy responses; distribute the tool and obtain feedback on its functionality and other climate change needs by the target audience(s); learn of other tools available; develop a distribution/rollout strategy for tools and existing policy development activities;
- c. Possible workshop outcomes and deliverables – Participants are able to take new actions that better respond to climate change; workshop materials are subsequently refined and distributed to target audience(s);
- d. Possible interim steps needed, timeframes and range of products to be produced – Determine who can assist in developing and hosting the workshop (e.g., Gulf of Maine Council Climate Change Network, Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management, NRCAN/RAC, NOAA Coastal Services Center, National Estuarine Research Reserves Coastal Training Program, etc.); identify complimentary workshops/sessions proposed; develop invitation list (audience by types of affiliations); identify materials required and process to obtain them; determine desired timeframes; develop budget; ...
- e. Identify key organizations that should contribute resources and possible funders – Create a list of funders and resource people that should be engaged in the project.

2. Enhanced web tools for decision-makers

Gulf-wide Storm Smart Coast web presence

- a. Status -- As one part of the StormSmart Coast Network the NE states are using a common template and assembling state pages that share adaptation approaches, strategies, and methods. Massachusetts is completed and the other state pages will be uploaded in late winter. <http://stormsmartcoasts.org> The network site is interactive and enables states to ask each other questions or discuss various policies and adaptation strategies. The NS Climate Change Centre and the NB Climate Change Hub are two natural partners that have advanced web sites. We intended to arrange a conference call with them shortly.
- b. Purposes -- Provide community-level public officials and decision-makers with information to better prepare and recover from natural disasters such as storms and sea-level rise; serve as a communication hub for GOM climate change activities, efforts, regulations, and case studies; share hazards resilience and vulnerability assessment information with communities and their neighboring provinces/states; display best practices and lessons learned; assess natural resources economic impacts and impacts on economic sectors; the costs and opportunities of a changing climate; producing



- alternative future scenarios for GOM region (e.g., SLR, increased precipitation; facilitate a tool exchange – get experts together on SLR and inundation visualization; demonstrate how to communicate risk; coastal vulnerability assessment tools and techniques; provide updates on regional issues and activities related to climate change;
- c. Possible outcomes/deliverables -- community-level public officials and decision-makers have more ready access to climate change information and successful approaches;
 - d. Possible interim steps needed, timeframes and range of products to be produced next – Engage provincial authorities (e.g., Will Green - Climate Change Directorate Nova Scotia Environment and Dean Mundeel - Climate Change Secretariat, NB Dept of Environment); determine if and how comparable sites can be developed for the provinces; identify and support rollout strategies to bring traffic to the sites; develop protocols and processes to keep the sites current/fresh so that users return often;
 - e. Identify key organizations that should contribute resources and possible funders – NOAA/CSC, Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers, NRCAN,

Project concepts for another day

Strengthening coastal restoration decision-making – Restoration programs are making shoreline environmental improvements that may be submerged with rising sea level. This activity will prepare regional criteria that identify coastal habitats at risk from sea level rise and other climate change impacts. It will then disseminate it to coastal habitat restoration advocates and “doers” and provide technical assistance to help them apply the criteria in their decision-making.

Status – The Climate Change Network had contract staff Kyle McKenzie prepare some materials on restoration. (Susan Horton) These materials sit on the CCN site. (Briefs were also prepared on invasive species and coastal hazards mapping.) A starting point would be to speak with Slade and restoration committee leads. Identify restoration programs not involved with GOMC restoration.

Support Provincial/State Climate Change Action Planning – Engage leaders of these efforts to learn of regional activities that would advance their specific needs.

Regional adaptation framework that fosters interstate, cross-sector communication and coordinated policy recommendations. It would work to achieve broad consistency in the region around key climate impacts and appropriate adaptation planning strategies, especially sea-level rise. (sounds like CCN);

Status – Conversations are already occurring (e.g., CSO, NESCAUM, NEGC/ECP Climate Change Steering Committee, etc.)

Develop shared messaging and communication materials to engage communities and media that communicate the benefits of taking actions today, even in the midst of a tough economic climate. Specifically, help the Council, its Working Group and various committees to incorporate climate change consideration into Council decisions (and those of their respective organizations). Document and describe existing educational efforts aimed at this user group. Develop and provide print and web information about mitigation and adaptation responses. Provide this information in engaging ways with multiple partners that the users rely currently on for information (e.g., workshops, seminars, annual conference, speakers bureau, knowledge bases, etc.)

Status – CCN newsletter has been discussed but a stand alone version may not fly. A mechanism to promote information sharing is needed (e.g., StormSmart sites, etc.). GOMT presents some communication opportunities.

Setting regionally appropriate policy and planning targets

Status – need to get some information together for the next CCN event. Getting information to decision-makers is the intent.

ESIP Project Concepts

Background – Products and Audiences

Significant data discovery and data management progress has been achieved in each of ESIP’s focal areas (e.g., aquaculture, aquatic habitats, climate change, coastal development, contaminants, eutrophication, fisheries). The ESIP monitoring map (find and query monitoring programs) and the ESIP reporting tool (find and query datasets and layers) are on-line and continue to evolve.

The key audiences for ESIP are federal, provincial, state and local government representatives with statutory/legal, planning and policy development mandates to:

- Manage fresh, estuarine and marine water quality; and
- Manage coastal and marine resources/environments (e.g., fisheries, land use, etc.)

Secondary users include other government representatives, non-governmental organizations and scientists/academia conducting research related to the coastal and marine environment.

ESIP seeks to assist its target audiences perform three duties. The first is to assess and monitor the “health” of the Gulf to understand human impacts and natural variability. The second is to educate the public and create support for policies, programs, and investments. The third is to advise government and others regarding policies, investments, and programs.

Disseminate ESIP tools and products

1. *Evaluate ESIP tools with Listening Session attendees*

- a. Status – In the fall of 2005 four, three-hour listening sessions were held in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and Moncton, New Brunswick. Three sessions, one each on coastal development, contaminants, and fisheries indicators were held in New Hampshire on October 18th and 19th. On November 21st, a single session that covered all three themes was held in New Brunswick. Overall, 36 people participated in one or more listening sessions or responded to a pre-session survey. About a third (34%) of the participants were decision makers, 9% were planners, and 25% were scientists. The remaining third were users of the resource (9%) or had “other” interests in the Gulf of Maine (22%). Participants represented national agencies or organizations, state/provincial organizations, sub-regional organizations, local organizations, and other interest groups from the public, private, and non-profit sectors. During these sessions they identified their data management and indicator needs. In essence, these representatives helped to define what ESIP should be.
- b. Possible purpose(s) – Reengage “listening session” participants to determine how effective the ESIP products are in addressing their indicator needs and identify needed adjustments;
- c. Possible evaluation outcomes/deliverables – Affirm current direction; identify needed adjustments in indicator delivery; target audiences feel validated/listened to;
- d. Possible interim steps needed, timeframes and range of products to be produced – Review participant lists in *Final Report of Listening Sessions (2006)* and reconnect with participants to learn if they are still working in the field and would be willing to participate in a mini-evaluation and assessment; prepare evaluation curriculum/materials and delivery strategy (e.g., personal e-survey form, group e-session by audience/target group; conduct review and assess results;
- e. Identify key organizations that should contribute resources and possible funders – Listening session participants; GOMC Evaluation Team including CSC evaluation personnel;

2. *Organize, convene and report on user workshops*

- a. Status – ESIP has participated in numerous workshops and conferences (e.g., Estuarine Research Federation, Massachusetts Ocean Plan Indicator Workshop, Gulf of Maine Symposium, etc.) and prepared materials describing ways ESIP can contribute to decision-making (e.g., ESIP’s Potential Contributions to a State of the Environment Report, etc.). Each of these events has informed ESIP product development and delivery.

ESIP has also submitted several unsuccessful competitive grant proposals (e.g., Mass Environmental Trust, NOAA Climate Change Office, etc.) seeking support to prepare materials and conduct outreach via user workshops. During this time ESIP focus has become even more precise. Funding proposals now seek to target specific audiences in each jurisdiction and to host workshops that present ESIP tools, offer training and obtain beta-feedback.

- b. Possible workshop purposes/goals – Inform and train specific, priority audiences about the ESIP tools and maps; receive feedback on the Indicator Reporting Tool User’s Guide; beta-test and receive feedback/suggestions for improvements and additional tools needed;
- c. Possible workshop outcomes/deliverables – Users are better able to perform their jobs; ESIP gets valuable feedback and counsel on current products and insights into future user needs;
- d. Possible interim steps needed, timeframes and range of products to be produced – identify specific, priority audiences (e.g., water quality managers, climate change professionals, etc.) and create workshop invitation lists; assess user preferences regarding workshop delivery options (e.g., electronic, freestanding workshop, associated with other event, etc.); determine workshop logistics for each option (e.g., distribution, locations



and timing in GOM watershed, # of people, electronic delivery tools & management, etc.); identify IT and communications needs;

- e. Identify key organizations that should contribute resources and possible funders – Coastal Training Programs/NERRs, jurisdictional –based funders (e.g., Mass Environmental Trust, Maine Outdoor Heritage, NB Environmental Trust, etc.); funders with an issue focal area (e.g., build capacity to address climate change, marine water quality, habitat restoration, etc).

Other Project Ideas

1. ESIP 2.0 – Either augment indicators in the six original theme areas or pursue other issues identified in 2004-2006 planning workshops and reports. (Pursue funding opportunities through FGDC/Geoconnections, and others.)
2. Support ESIP's on-going role in SOE Reporting – Identify, organize and provide Gulf-wide data needed for effective SOE reporting.
3. Support and demonstrate ESIP applications – Organize and support case studies that show how ESIP can be used (from planning to environmental outcome). Examples of candidate sub-regions that ESIP might work with include the Southwest New Brunswick Marine Planning Initiative, the Massachusetts Ocean Management effort, a National Estuary/Atlantic Coastal Action Plan site, etc.
4. Implement March 2008 Communications Plan – In March 2008 aCreative LLC prepared an ESIP communications plan that contained three purposes:
 - An outreach campaign for lawmakers and adults living in the Gulf's watershed to provide information about priority contaminants and the effects of lifestyle choices on the condition of the marine environment;
 - Increase understanding of coastal lawmakers, decision-makers, and managers working at the Gulf of Maine about how to apply ecosystem-based management to conserve and protect Gulf of Maine habitats and resources;
 - Educate legislators and their staffs on how to use the web based Indicator Reporting Tool to assist them in more easily obtaining data on the Gulf of Maine ecosystem to use in supporting legislation that will aid in preserving and protecting the Gulf of Maine habitats and resources.

Northeast Regional Ocean Council – Gulf of Maine Council Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

Northeast Regional Ocean Council &
Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment
December 2009

Parties

The Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) is a state and federal partnership with the goal of engaging in regional protection and balanced use of ocean and coastal resources. NROC's coordinated approach reaches across state boundaries from Maine to Connecticut to find and implement solutions to the region's most pressing ocean and coastal issues.

The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (GOMC) is a U.S.-Canadian partnership of government, non-government and for-profit organizations working to maintain and enhance environmental quality in the Gulf of Maine to allow for sustainable resource use by existing and future generations.

Overview

Our organizations have a shared interest in the wise management of coastal and ocean resources for the benefit of current and future generations. Further we have a common geographic focus around the Gulf of Maine and shared priorities around a healthy and resilient coastal and ocean ecosystem. As such we have a strong interest in collaborating with each other and leveraging human and financial resources to the benefit of our shared ecosystem.

Methods of collaboration

Our organizations agree to partner on the following:



1. Coordinated policy development – As each organization prepares and/or updates its long-range plans it will ensure strong consultation occurs to capitalize on opportunities and minimize redundancies. We understand how our missions are intertwined and will work cooperatively to implement them. We commit to substantive and ongoing dialogue. We will be mutually supportive, responsive to requests for assistance and solicit advice from each other as needed. In this way we will sustain a durable and effective working relationship.
2. Ecosystem Health Activities – Healthy ecosystems is a shared priority for both GOMC and NROC. On an annual basis the organizations will assess their planned ecosystem health activities and identify a point of contact (POC) for purposes of maintaining communication and sharing information and lessons learned. The designated POCs will identify opportunities for collaboration in the Gulf of Maine region as well as opportunities to transfer ideas to their broader geographies of Southern New England and the Canadian Maritimes.
3. Climate Change Activities – The economic, social and environmental effects of a changing climate are another shared priority.. Both organizations are working on climate change policy, communications and technical assistance. On an annual basis our respective committees (NROC’s Hazards Resilience Committee and GOMC’s Climate Change Network) will identify opportunities for collaboration in the Gulf of Maine region as well as opportunities to transfer ideas to their broader geographies of Southern New England and the Canadian Maritimes.
4. Joint projects – SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE FUNDING, the organizations will jointly support projects of shared interest that are identified during the development of each organization’s annual work plans.
5. Progress reports – The organizations will periodically report to their respective boards on progress in implementing this MOU and solicit suggestions for other collaboration opportunities.
6. Fund development and management – When appropriate the organizations will work cooperatively on Congressional funding requests to ensure an integrated, seamless approach. In addition, the US Gulf of Maine Association, when requested by NROC, will assist NROC by receiving, disbursing and accounting for funds that organization receives.

Duration and termination of Agreement

The duration of the agreement will be for one year. Renewal will be automatic unless specifically cancelled. Termination of the agreement may be initiated by either party in writing with a notice period of 30 days.

Northeast Regional Ocean Council

Date

Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment

Date

US Ocean Policy Task Force developments as they impact the Gulf of Maine Council

The U.S. Ocean Policy Task Force will be submitting a National Ocean Policy and a Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Framework to President Obama on December 9th. These deliverables will be implemented in the New England region beginning next year, and will require action on the part of federal agencies, states and tribes to develop a comprehensive coastal and marine spatial plan within 5 years, reaching from the mean high water mark to 200 miles offshore.

We will discuss potential benefits this new initiative can bring to the Gulf of Maine and what role the Council may play as it unfolds.

Potential roles for GOMC:

- A Canadian partner has been invited to serve as an *ex officio* member on the regional ocean planning body that will oversee these marine spatial planning efforts in NE waters. The GOMC could nominate that individual with the intent that this person can continue to assist with finding symmetry between US and CA efforts in this region.



- Much of the science, data management and decision analysis products that will be developed have multiple applications beyond marine spatial planning. The GOMC can determine how this work matches up with similar work going on in Canadian waters so that the combined information can be used to benefit GOM projects.
- The Gulf of Maine science and management community are well aware of existing and completed work in this region that should be used to inform this new initiative. The GOMC could serve as a conduit to discover this contributing work to ensure that duplication is avoided and important gaps are filled with resources available.

Gulf of Maine Conservation and Restoration Initiative

A Priceless Ecosystem at Risk

The greater Gulf of Maine—with the coastal shorelines of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and the Canadian Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia—is vital to human health and the region’s economy: millions of people depend on the Gulf of Maine watershed for food, recreation, transportation, and drinking water. It is a unique ecosystem, whose beauty and biological diversity enrich the lives of all who live, work and visit here. Yet each day, the greater Gulf of Maine—its streams, lakes, bays, and beaches—is damaged by untreated sewage, toxic pollution, invasive species, loss of wildlife habitat, abandoned fishing gear and other human-caused impacts. The problems are serious and many of them have reached or are reaching crisis proportions. There are manageable solutions—some already in various stages of implementation—but if we don’t move quickly the problems will only get worse and the solutions more expensive.

A Comprehensive Framework

The *Gulf of Maine Restoration and Conservation Initiative* is a collaborative effort focused on developing a strategic framework for a unified and comprehensive restoration and conservation strategy for the bi-national Gulf of Maine.

The framework identifies seven key “issue areas,” including:

- 1) Coastal Fish and Wildlife Populations and their Habitats
- 2) Coastal Water Quality
- 3) Invasive species in the coastal and marine environment
- 4) Abandoned fishing gear and other debris
- 5) The impacts of climate change
- 6) Long-range planning, science, and communication in collaboration with states, Tribes, NGOs (Non-governmental Organizations) and other stakeholders
- 7) Measuring and monitoring improvements (or declines) over time.

Federal Funding Required

The scale of funding needed to address the many problems impacting the Gulf of Maine watershed is far beyond the means of states, provinces, municipalities, NGOs and the philanthropic community, and far above historical levels of federal investment in regional restoration and conservation programs on both sides of the border. Although there is good work underway, truly significant progress will require substantial increases in federal funding. Numerous other regional aquatic ecosystems in the US have had considerable success in procuring increased federal funding by organizing and advocating around “comprehensive” restoration strategies. The 2010 Interior Appropriations Bill provides \$641 million for the implementation of restoration plans for the Great Lakes, Everglades, Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, Coastal Louisiana, San Francisco Bay, Gulf of Mexico, and several others. Of those funds, \$475 million alone is dedicated to restoration of the Great Lakes, the result of a well-funded advocacy campaign by the Healing Our Waters®--Great Lakes Coalition (a coalition of over 100 zoos, aquariums, conservation, business and environmental groups). Unfortunately, there is no funding in the bill for the Gulf of Maine. The reason for this, as explained by congressional staffers, is that until now there has been no “Comprehensive Plan” for the Gulf of Maine, and no advocacy effort except for individual programs and organizations.¹ That is now changing.

Questions and Answers

1. How does this initiative relate to the current habitat and other restoration work already planned or

¹ This year the National Wildlife Federation convened an “America’s Great Waters” program to bring all the individual regional restoration advocacy campaigns together for a more effective presence on Capitol Hill. Although the Gulf of Maine is nominally a part of this program, the lack of a formal comprehensive plan and a viable coalition for the Gulf of Maine has so far prevented the region from receiving federal “Great Waters” restoration funding.

underway in the Gulf of Maine?

The *Gulf of Maine Ecosystem Restoration and Conservation Initiative* builds on the good work already underway by numerous agencies and organizations active in the Gulf of Maine. It seeks to bring many diverse efforts under a single “comprehensive plan” on a scale similar to what is already in place for other “Great Waters” ecosystems, including the bi-national Great Lakes, Chesapeake Bay, Everglades, Louisiana Coast, and Puget Sound. The main benefits of such a plan are 1) to eliminate redundancy and ensure that efforts are coordinated for maximum efficiency, and 2) to ensure that the Gulf of Maine region gets equal consideration with the other large aquatic ecosystems for US (and Canadian) federal funding for ecosystem restoration. The US budget contains \$671,000,000 for restoration of the Great Lakes and other Great Waters and provides a powerful example of the importance of having a comprehensive plan in place.

2. How will the comprehensive plan be used?

Once the comprehensive plan has been completed², Gulf of Maine stakeholders will work together to ensure that federal, state, and provincial governments provide sufficient funding to fully implement it over time. This will require a very significant education and outreach effort similar to that undertaken for the Great Lakes restoration strategy by the Healing Our Waters®--Great Lakes Coalition. It is a process in which private citizens, foundations, NGOs, and businesses will play a major role.

3. How were the “Issue Areas” determined?

In the spring of 2009 a Steering Committee formed to take on the tasks of determining the need, scope, and scale of a “comprehensive strategy” and to design an inclusive process by which the strategy would be developed. The group started with the creation of the Table of Issue Areas relevant to the Gulf of Maine. Through an iterative process the Issue Areas were refined with broad stakeholder input. The current version (see below) incorporates the work of seven “Issue Area Strategy Teams” at a second major planning meeting in November 2009. Additional stakeholder input, including a broad public engagement effort, will inform the final Table of Issue Areas.

4. What is the makeup of the Steering Committee and Strategy Teams?

The Steering Committee is composed of state and federal agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations throughout the Gulf of Maine states, with “observer” participants from Canada. The 40+ members of the Strategy Teams include representatives from the Maine Coastal Program, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, the Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (Division of Ecological Restoration), the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, the US Fish and Wildlife Service Gulf of Maine Coastal Program, the US Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Restoration Center (Gloucester MA), the National Wildlife Federation, the Ocean Conservancy, the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, the New England Ocean Science Education Collaborative, Friends of Casco Bay, Conservation Law Foundation, Talking Conservation, Gulf of Maine Research Institute, Mount Desert Island Biological Lab, Casco Bay Estuary Program, Sierra Club, Society for the Preservation of New Hampshire Forests, Ocean River Institute, Biodiversity Research Institute, and others.

In addition, there are numerous organizations that have been involved in an advisory capacity, including the Maine Environmental Funders’ Network, The Nature Conservancy, and others. The Steering Committee and Strategy Teams are not intended as exclusive groups, and the process of completing the comprehensive strategy is open to all stakeholders.

Gulf of Maine Restoration and Conservation Initiative Table of Issue Areas.

The following issue areas, including the “examples and responses” are not listed in order of priority. Broad stakeholder and public input will help inform the final version.

Protect and Restore Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Populations	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
Many commercial fisheries are in poor condition and as a result the resilience of coastal economies and ecosystems is threatened.	Drawing from principles of ecosystem based management, marine spatial planning, and other best practices, assist managers and stakeholders in developing recovery alternatives that facilitate economic and ecosystem resilience .

² It is contemplated that there will be parallel plans and processes on each side of the border, and that implementation of the two plans will be integrated and coordinated.

Thousands of barriers to prime aquatic habitats hinder fish restoration efforts and degrade aquatic ecosystem health.	Develop aquatic habitat restoration strategies that fully assess/prioritize regional impacts and implement corrective actions in an integrated fashion.
Coastal development and habitat loss imperils plant and animal populations.	Assess, regulate and negotiate land protection and acquisition as needed to protect priority habitats, including the coastal upland buffer zone.
Salt marsh ecological functions and services to people are degraded.	Restore natural hydrology, morphology, and control invasive plant and animal species. Use acquisition, regulation, and other means to protect adjacent uplands.
Better data and planning are needed to ensure efficient and adequate restoration and conservation of fish and wildlife habitat, including the following:	Determine needs and conduct appropriate research and planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information on the amount and distributions of nearshore subtidal habitat is lacking. 	Develop a gulf-wide program to comprehensively map nearshore subtidal habitats.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Few protocols exist for assessing improvements to fish and wildlife populations resulting from habitat restoration efforts. 	Develop and implement ecologically relevant goals and protocols for measuring and monitoring success of fish and wildlife restoration programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Location and siting of offshore wind energy operations may exacerbate habitat loss 	Coordinate offshore energy planning with long term marine planning effort and land acquisition planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marine fish spawning grounds need special protection. 	Map and work to protect all spawning ground habitat used by fish in the Gulf
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ecological function and ecological services value, as well as economic value of restored and conserved ecosystem need to be established. 	Commission study on economic value of ecosystem services, and economic impacts of restoration and conservation efforts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need to focus on critical assessment of fish and wildlife habitats and develop priority list of most sensitive areas 	Effort should link mapping and critical assessment efforts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build upon/refine existing data sets e.g. Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, Essential Fish Habitats, Bird conservation regions designated area. 	Need support for large scale synthesis of existing data sets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordination and standardization is needed for data collected by community groups. 	Work with community groups to establish additional shared criteria and standards for collecting and sharing data.

Remove Marine Debris	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
Abandoned fishing gear is hazardous to living resources and fishermen.	Remove gear on sea floor & in water column.
Debris along shorelines is hazardous and represents public health and ecological risk.	Remove and dispose of debris; Target debris abatement at its sources.

Assess and Reduce Toxic Pollution	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
Contaminant levels in the environment exceed levels warranting public health and ecological concern.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and remediate toxic hot spots • Facilitate safe disposal of toxic materials (e.g. waste oil from fishing/recreational vessels) • Reduce atmospheric and other diffuse sources of toxic contaminant releases
Toxic contaminant concentrations, spatial distributions and health/ecological effects are not sufficiently understood to confidently assess their implications on human and ecosystem health and guide corrective actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the geographic range and frequency of sampling • Expand the range of species and sampling media used • Explore trophic linkages between species to confidently characterize human health/ecological risk • Prioritize regionally relevant chemicals of concern with attention to "emerging" contaminants • Refine tools for understanding risk to human and ecosystem health
There is insufficient progress in abating regionally important airborne toxic contaminants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop policy tools to effectively address diffuse sources of toxics

Prevent and Control Invasive Species	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
Protocols are needed for early detection, eradication, and control of invasive species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support research into efficacy of known control measures • Develop and implement risk assessments for existing and incipient introductions as well as known transport vectors • Improve monitoring for early detection
Enhanced regulations and enforcement are needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop science-based policy recommendations and enhance the capacity of states to minimize introduction through enforcement action
Need to prevent transport and dispersal of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support on-the-ground efforts to restore degraded systems • Support early detection and eradication efforts • Minimize disturbance that facilitates the spread of AIS Support research into the role of activities and industries in reporting AIS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Commercial shipping --Recreational boating --Fishing and aquaculture --Research and education --The pet trade

Improve Coastal Water Quality (Water Quality is the basis for restoration, and protection)	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
Improve water quality for impaired waters. Maintain water quality for non-impaired waters. Is the Clean Water Act enough? We do not know the water quality of the Gulf of Maine from a system perspective	Create water quality goals that are relevant to the range of ecosystem/human needs and are informed by historical baselines. TMDL areas need to be more comprehensive. Clarify Anti-degradation policies, and implement policies.
Ecologically comprehensive water quality assessments and monitoring are lacking.	Collect needs assessments from the states (SRF, 319, storm water MS4's, stimulus monies), town plans; review for comprehensive data coverage; and design assessments for "missing" data. Develop comprehensive monitoring plans at all levels of geographic scales.
Failing residential septic systems contaminate local waters and shellfish beds.	Implement correct site selection; identify non-compliant systems; repair systems; maintain systems; improve technology; expand municipal sewage treatment infrastructure.
Inadequate municipal sewage treatment and combined sewer outfalls discharge pollutants into aquatic resources.	Upgrade systems based on ecologically appropriate standards (nutrient remove). Advance technology to improve the unintended results of higher energy consumption. Increase funding for SRF.
Non-point source pollution, including air deposition, impairs coastal, near waters, and blue water ecosystem function.	Identify, correct and prevent non-point sources. Identify sources, develop additional sources (cranberry farms, horse farms, etc.). Gather current comprehensive data sources, and supplement that data. Review current management practices (land use), and supplement these practices. Implement management practices and assess progress. Understand the link between estuarine and blue water.
Sewage discharges from vessels degrade coastal water quality.	Increase infrastructure of vessel sewage disposal, designate and enforce "no discharge zones". Improve Marine Sanitation Device (MSD) Type III technology, revise standards.

Promote Ecosystem Resilience to Climate Change	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
There is no coordinated establishment of climate change readiness priorities/policies.	Reassess state & provincial programs/policies in light of climate change projections.

Data and standardized methods for vulnerability assessments of at-risk coastal natural resources and infrastructure are lacking.	Design vulnerability assessments, collect baseline data; implement monitoring and modeling.
There are no adaptation or resiliency plans for natural resources important to human communities.	Prioritize at-risk resources for acquisition and regulatory protection to facilitate resiliency in coastal ecosystems and economies.
Climate-driven geographic shifts in plants and animals threaten ecosystem integrity and coastal economies.	Reduce stressors to species such as overexploitation and habitat loss.
Land-use guidelines do not yet adequately consider climate change projections.	Update zoning, flood maps, open space ordinances.
Storm intensity/frequency is projected to degrade water quality.	Reassess stormwater discharge guidelines.

Long-range planning, science, and communication	
Examples of Issues	Potential responses
Existing sub-regional plans for habitat restoration and conservation were developed independently by various public and non-profit organizations, at different times and for different purposes.	Gather seminal plans and synthesize key results and recommendations. Contact lead organizations and document plan development and implementation lessons-learned. Inquire how organizations can improve collaboration and communications.
Messages by public and non-profit organizations about restoration and conservation are sometimes confusing or contradictory.	Develop shared communications tools, resources and messages; provide communications training as needed to participating organizations.
Numerous aspects of the coastal and marine environment remain unexamined by science, and their implications and interactions little understood.	Engage academic and research institutions, user groups and managers in a concerted effort to secure resources to address priority science gaps.
Restoration and conservation efforts are accomplished on a site-by-site basis do not explicitly address broader ecosystem management considerations.	Choose one or more geographic regions and over 2-3 years demonstrate how a more integrated investment strategy can produce greater environmental results. (e.g., sewage upgrades, remove abandoned gear, install boat pump-outs, address non-point sources that close shellfish flats, etc.)
The public and decision-makers are not sufficiently aware of the region's restoration and conservation needs nor of the benefits (e.g., economic, social, environmental) when restoration or conservation is performed.	Identify priority audiences and learn of effective messaging. Provide educational and outreach opportunities to increase public and decision-maker understanding of coastal resources and the need to conserve and/or restore them.
Staff capacity in municipal, provincial, state, and federal agencies is insufficient to manage increases in funding for restoration and conservation in the Gulf of Maine.	As funding levels for restoration and conservation increase, appropriate staffing levels for planning, implementation, oversight, and evaluation need to be determined and put in place.

Canadian Background Experience from Great Lakes Initiative

Recent conservation efforts in the Great Lakes provide important examples for the Gulf of Maine conservation community as we organize to prepare a comprehensive restoration and conservation plan. A key question has been what parallel efforts are underway on the Canadian side of the Lakes that could serve to inform a similar approach for New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

There are four important documents that could eventually inform a comprehensive Canadian Great Lakes restoration and conservation strategy. The first is a collaborative "blueprint" for restoration created by a number of NGOs including Ecojustice, Environmental Defense, Canadian Environmental Law Association, Great Lakes United, Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, and Sierra Club of Canada. The blueprint includes recommendations that have been made in numerous other documents and by many other groups. It focuses on the

following policy recommendations. (These are closely related those in the Great Lake Regional Collaborative Strategy that is a US document.)

- 1) Improve Governance
- 2) Enable Effective Public Participation
- 3) Connect Water Quality and Quantity
- 4) Practice Ecosystem-based Stewardship
- 5) Eliminate Pollution
- 6) Upgrade Sewage Infrastructure
- 7) Halt Aquatic Invasive Species
- 8) Protect Water Levels and Flows

The second document is from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources entitled “Healthy Great Lakes, Strong Ontario.” It outlines five broad goals for the region:

- **Resilient ecosystem:** The Great Lakes can respond to changes and stresses without losing important species, ecosystem functions and amenities
- **Human health and well-being:** Ontarians enjoy safe Great Lakes beaches, drinking water, food and fish, and recreational, cultural and spiritual benefits
- **Green, diverse economies:** The Great Lakes Region is a centre of economic activity and its quality of life attracts and keeps the workforce for a vibrant and innovative economy
- **Sustainable natural resources:** Resources like fish and wildlife, water quantity and energy generation potential are sustained over the long-term
- **Strong communities:** Great Lakes’ communities are thriving and attractive, and practice good stewardship of the lakes

It also contains nine proposed Strategies aimed at achieving the five Goals:

- 1) Clean up Great Lakes Hot Spots and the Legacy of Past Pollution
- 2) Protect Human and Ecosystem Health from Toxics and Pathogens
- 3) Restore Great Lakes Habitats and Protect Biodiversity
- 4) Adapt to Climate Change
- 5) Understand and Deal With Ecosystem Change
- 6) Influence the Bi-National Agenda
- 7) Enhance Lake-Based and Watershed-Based Planning and Action
- 8) Increase Appreciation and Stewardship of the Great Lakes
- 9) Develop Sustainable Great Lakes Economic Opportunities.

Third is the 2007 Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA), which is intended to “help meet the challenges presented to the Great Lakes by a growing population as well as continue cleaning up the legacy of past pollution.” The 2007 COA is the seventh such agreement to be signed by the governments of Canada and Ontario since 1971. Through the COA, the governments pool their resources and funds to work with a variety of partners at the local level in the Great Lakes community with the goal of restoring and maintaining the health of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

The 2007 COA builds on achievements under the 2002 COA, as well as previous agreements, to continue efforts at reducing pollution, cleaning up degraded hot spots, dealing with invasive species and protecting the biodiversity of the Great Lakes Basin, which contains 180 fish species. COA also includes two entirely new areas – determining the impacts of climate change and protecting sources of drinking water.

The 2007 COA has been signed by the Ministry of the Environment with the Ministries of Natural Resources and Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, and six federal departments and one federal agency. The Ontario Government has committed more than \$32 million to COA from 2007 to 2010.

Finally, a (2007) report by McAllister Research, summarizing a body of public opinion research about Canadian attitudes towards the Great Lakes shows a remarkable depth of support for federal and provincial investments in restoration and conservation activities. Among some key findings:



“Over three in four Ontarians describe the Great Lakes as vital to our survival (78%), vital to quality of life (74%), a place of beauty (72%), and an economic resource (71%). Ontarians tend to express a stronger sense of connection and pride regarding the Great Lakes than Quebecers, and older men 55+ in particular, tend to think of the Lakes as a national treasure (68%).”

“Asked specifically whether they favour or oppose spending two billion dollars per year over 10 years to clean up the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence, a strong majority of three in four (78%) Great Lakes residents say they are in favour, while just 16 percent are opposed and six percent are undecided. Provincially, 75 percent of Ontarians and 81 percent of Quebecers say they are in favour of such spending. Montreal residents are slightly more likely than other Quebecers to express strong support, while in Ontario, there are no major regional differences. “

Conclusions:

Funding for environmental restoration and conservation activities in Canada traditionally comes from a mix of municipal, provincial, and federal sources. However, the recent change in federal administration has taken some momentum out of Great Lakes cleanup efforts, and there is currently not a cohesive or sufficiently funded effort underway. However, the Canadian Great Lakes NGO community is hopeful that the significant commitment on the US side (\$475 million this year from the federal government for Great Lakes restoration and conservation activities) will provide an added incentive for a parallel commitment on the Canadian side of the border.

As in the Great Lakes region, a bi-national Gulf of Maine restoration and conservation plan will need to engage municipal, provincial, and federal governments. Though the political process differs substantially in the two countries, many of the issue areas, goals, and tactics contained in a comprehensive plan for Canada and the US will likely be similar.

Further information about Canadian Great Lakes conservation initiatives is available from any of the organizations cited in this paper, or from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment Sharon Bailey, Director of the Land & Water Policy Branch (sharon.bailey@ontario.ca) / Carolyn O'Neill, Manager of the Great Lakes Office (carolyn.oneill@ontario.ca) at <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/water/greatlakes/index.php>.

- Canadian Environmental Law Association: www.cela.ca
- Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy: www.cielap.org
- Ecojustice: www.ecojustice.ca
- Environmental Defense: www.environmentaldefence.ca
- Great Lakes United: www.glu.org
- Sierra Club: www.sierraclub.org

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Working Group Recommendations to Council

Background

A project steering committee was formed in early 2009.³ It consists of more than twenty US and Canadian representatives of leading non-profit organizations and the public agencies often responsible for regulating, funding and/or conducting coastal conservation projects. This initial collaborative approach to priority setting has established the need to pursue two inter-related paths.

Path One: Making the case -- organizing a bi-national Gulf of Maine conservation and restoration initiative

The steering committee has discussed a series of steps to create the initiative including:

- Engage key stakeholders throughout the Gulf of Maine to determine priorities. Examples of activities include: assessment of existing conservation and restoration programs (e.g., frequency and methods to identify priorities; interaction with program staff, assessment of funding sources, etc.); understand current and prospective roles of

Conservation and Restoration Initiative

A bi-national partnership working to make on-the-ground improvements to coastal fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, coastal water quality, invasive species in the coastal and marine environment, abandoned fishing gear and other debris and address the impacts of climate change on the region's ecosystem. It has three inter-related phases:

- Initiative development;
- Advocacy & outreach; and
- Implementation

³ Individuals participating in this initiative and the GOMC include: Mel Cote, John Catena, Eric Hutchins, Ted Diers, Slade Moore, Anita Hamilton, Hunt Durey, Stew Fefer, Peter Lamb, Kathleen Leyden and Diane Gould.

local/state/provincial/federal governments and non-profit environmental organizations in conducting conservation and restoration, etc.).

- Identify the desired scope of conservation and restoration activities. Collect and analyze data regarding conservation and restoration projects that are underway or planned.
- Identify gaps in planning, implementation, or funding.
- Prepare implementation strategies, including legislative remedies, benchmarks, and measures.

Deliverables: A consensus document articulating the region's conservation and restoration needs and strategies to address those needs and secure the funding required.

Path Two: Creating an informed constituency -- facilitating the creation of a sustainable gulf-wide alliance

While effective restoration and conservation advocacy exists in pockets around the Gulf there is no concerted and sustained advocacy for these issues in the bi-national Gulf of Maine. This advocacy effort needs to engage non-profits, government, foundations and the business community. (It should be highlighted that the immediate need for an informed constituency relates to conservation and restoration. However, once in place it is expected the alliance will address other issues.) Specifically, we need to make opinion leaders, decision-makers and others more aware of the region's restoration and conservation needs. Key steps may include:

- Describe the organizational options for a sustainable Gulf of Maine alliance, identify and engage initial participants, and create the alliance.
- Assess public perception related to conservation/restoration, their awareness of the GOM ecosystem, and determine messages that elicit the desired responses.
- Develop outreach materials and use them to communicate the region's needs.

Successful restoration alliances and campaigns (e.g., Great Lakes, Puget Sound, Chesapeake Bay, etc.) were started with multi-year support from the philanthropic community. The considerable success they have all had in procuring US federal funding for restoration activities demonstrates that such investments are effective and are highly leveraged. It appears the minimum start-up time is about three years. Proponents of this effort in the Gulf of Maine are acutely aware that while seed funds may be available to form the alliance they need to actively consider ways to sustain such an effort. One promising opportunity is to partner with the business community (e.g., engineering and design firms, construction companies etc.) that will perform the actual restoration work. (Rebuilding and upgrading water infrastructure is the single greatest cost item for the ecosystem restoration efforts around the country. The EPA estimates that nearly \$400 billion is currently needed nation-wide to fix aging waste and storm water systems.) We have initiated conversations with the business community and the results are encouraging. We will explore other approaches as well.

Deliverables: Creation of an alliance supported by its members and outreach materials

Options for the GOMC: How it wants to participate

The Gulf of Maine Council can participate in a variety of ways in the development and implementation of the GOM Conservation and Restoration Initiative. (Development of the strategy will occur in 2009-2010. Simultaneously an advocacy effort will work to secure *significant* new resources to implement the strategy via existing state/provincial and federal programs and/or new programs.)

Option One: Regional Convener

Act a bi-national regional convener of the planning process that brings together public, non-profit and private interests to develop the Gulf of Maine Conservation and Restoration Initiative. As a convener it takes leadership in guiding a bi-national steering committee. Representative tasks that contract staff will perform on behalf of the committee include developing agendas and supporting materials, conducting outreach and inviting participants, chairing meetings (both physical and teleconferences), performing networking within and outside the region, preparing meeting summaries and identifying next steps, and managing contracts (e.g., opinion polling, message development and communications, research and synthesis of existing US/CA conservation and restoration programs, Congressional outreach, etc.).

Implications

1. The Council takes an active role, likely for 12-18 months, as a leader of the Initiative. In this context a Councilor from each country (or Working Group members) will commit the time (e.g., multiple hours/week) to assume the visible role of convener.
2. The Council provides directly or secures from other sources the funding (e.g., \$50,000 to \$75,000/year) to support contract staff that will perform the work described above.
3. Acts as fiscal agent (through US GoM Association) to provide the resources needed to perform the work.
4. The Initiative development process would be "an activity of the Council" and the Council embraces the highly collaborative, public & non-profit partnership needed to make the Initiative a success.

Option Two: Regional Facilitator

Act as a facilitator of the planning process that helps public, non-profit and private interests understand their common objectives and assists them in achieving those objectives without taking a particular position in the discussion. The Council will assist the group in achieving a consensus on any disagreements that preexist or emerge in the development of the Initiative.

Implications

1. As an entity, the Council facilitates the discussion and is viewed as a bi-national leader of a highly collaborative initiative. (Its members are able to participate as they choose.)
2. The Council designates one or more members to represent Council interests and to report back on progress/issues.
3. Council participation is contingent on resources being secured
4. Acts as fiscal agent (through US GoM Association) to provide the resources needed to perform the work.

Option Three: Regional Participant

Join with others as an interested participant in the planning process to create the Initiative.

Implications

1. One or more representatives would be designated by the Council to participate on its behalf. In this capacity these representatives would bring information and advice to the Initiative and report back to the Council.

Working Group recommendations

1. The Council should work in a highly collaborative manner with public, non-profit and business interests as an active, regional facilitator (option #2).
2. The initiative should be consistent with the Council's Action Plan and build on existing Council priorities (e.g., water quality, monitoring and indicators, habitat restoration, etc.).
3. The initiative should establish conservation and restoration priority themes and identify desired representative activities. It should not identify specific candidate sites
4. The Council should identify complementary Canadian and US programs and work to ensure they are involved.
5. Land conservation, although not a Council priority, is an activity many Council member agencies are involved with. Given the NEG/ECP September 2009 land conservation resolution and formation of a standing committee the Council should engage that committee.
6. The Council should continue to work with others to secure and manage the planning and constituency building funds needed to perform the two paths described above.
7. The Council should understand that political support for major new conservation and restoration investments at the national level in each country are different. Further, that the capacity of current organizations to address the possible breadth of issues in the initiative varies greatly.
8. The Council's deliberations and actions should ensure that federal agencies are not perceived as advocating for or lobbying for increased federal funding.
9. Implementation funding for the initiative should be managed by the federal agencies through established competitive processes and programs.
10. The Council should document lessons-learned concerning the role of Ontario and the Canadian federal government in the Great Lakes Healing our Waters.

Gulf of Maine Action Plan and GOM Habitat Conservation and Restoration Initiative: Visualizing the similarities and differences

Background synopsis

- The Gulf of Maine Action Plan (GMAP) was created by the Gulf of Maine Council in 2006. It contains measurable goals and objectives. It is preceded by three other 5-year Action Plans. Focal areas are coastal and marine habitats, ecosystem and human health, and sustainable communities.
- The Habitat Conservation and Restoration Initiative (HCRI) began in 2009 by US and CA organizations (and individuals) involved in the Council as well as many others. It is working to make on-the-ground improvements to coastal fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, coastal water quality, invasive species in the coastal and marine environment, abandoned fishing gear and other debris, address the



impacts of climate change on the region's ecosystem, and advance long-range planning and communications.

Similarities & Differences

Content/issue areas	GMAP	HCRI
Watershed, coastal and marine habitat restoration	x	x
Watershed and coastal land conservation/acquisition		x
Ecosystem-based approaches to management	x	x
Water quality protection and monitoring	x	x
Manage invasive species	x	x
Support vibrant coastal communities	x	
Manage effects of marine debris and fishing gear		x
Address effects of climate change on the environment and people	x	x
Advance long-range planning and communications	x	x

Geography	GMAP	HCRI
GOM watershed out to the 200 mile limit	x	x
United States and Canada jurisdictions in the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy	x	x

Governing Board & Participants	GMAP	HCRI
Governor designated representatives and federal agencies	x	
Public, non-profit and for-profit representatives that choose to participate		x

Please note that more than 50% of the people/organizations participating in the Habitat Conservation and Restoration Initiative (HCRI) are active in the Gulf of Maine Council and its committees.