

**Great Lakes Restoration and Protection Plan: Coastal Health Strategy Team
December 3, 2004
Chicago, Illinois**

Co-chair:

Marcia Jiménez, Commissioner, Department of Environment, City of Chicago
Gerald F. Mikol, Regional Director, Region 9, New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation

(Peter Johnson, Senior Council, Great Lakes Council of Governors, filled in for Mr. Mikol
on 12/3/04).

Introduction:

The Great Lakes Restoration and Protection Plan was discussed this morning, and the Framework for the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration provides background information, so this meeting will be a working meeting.

Goals:

- Develop a Great Lakes Restoration and Protection Strategy building on existing collaborative efforts already in place.
- Serve as a forum to address near term regional issues.
- Create an oversight forum to coordinate and enhance implementation of strategy.

The Group's diversity will inform the strategic plan for the Great Lakes' Coastal Health.

Three overarching issues:

1. Human Health
2. Tribal Interests and Perspectives
3. Research and Monitoring

Strategy Description (From Framework, Page 8, item 4) (h):

Although human health will be explicitly addressed, as appropriate, in each of the Strategy Teams, there are several specific coastal issues that can very directly impact human health.

(i) Addresses Governors' Priority: "Promote programs to protect human health against adverse effects of pollution in the Great Lakes ecosystem."

(ii) Issues to be covered include, but are not limited to: Beach Closings, CSO/SSO's, bacteria and pathogen contamination.

Participants (Name – Affiliation – Issue):

Michael Fisher, Friends of the Chicago River. How to implement and integrate federal rules with Clean Water Act (and with State regimes)

Paul Horuatin, USEPA GLNPO. Great Lakes monitoring, data reporting, ecosystem, indicator

Lee Botts, Lake Michigan Federation, IN Dunes Environment.. Since 1970, researching history of experience under G. L. water quality improvement

Keith Linn, NE Ohio Regional Sewer District. CSO monitoring

Elaine Marsh, Ohio Greenways. Safe recreational use of GL and waterways
Erv Ball, Cuyahoga County Health, Cleveland Ohio. Fish consumption advisories; public health
Victor Marcado, Detroit Water and Sewer. Own and operate potable water for SE Michigan
Gary Fujita, D. Director Detroit Water and Sewer. Long term CSO protection program; Long term abatement program
Susan Evans, Canadian Consultant. Federal/Canadian bi-national representation
Mark Wagstaff, Montgomery Watson Harza. Implementation of coastal health strategy.
Jordan Lubetkia, National Wildlife Federation. How to participate
Mike Shriberg, PIRG. CSOs and public health
Toby Frevert-IEPA. Permitting and oversight of CSO in state of Illinois
Stephan Brandt, NOAA-GLERL. Aquatic ecology and how it relates to public health Ann Arbor. Great Lakes human health forecasts on beach closures and algal blooms.
Dale Bryson, Lake Michigan Federation.
Christopher Glanz, USACOE Great Lakes and Ohio. Plan and implement around Great Lakes
Roger Gauthier, USACE Great Lakes Comm. Data and info; system wide hydrology, coastal dynamics, geomorphology
David Rockwell, USEPA GLNPO. Beach closure surveys and interpreting for SOLAC; data analysis and interpretation
Mary Beth Murphy, Lt. Gov. Pat Quinn's office.
Beth Murphy, USEPA. Environmental health, Great Lakes monitoring
Brian Smith, Citizen Campaign for the Environment. Policy implications; SSO
Jacki Fisher, USEPA. Environmental health coordinator; network of several government agencies.
Peter Swensen, USEPA. NPDES permit program, SSOs, CSOs for IL.
Cheryl Mell, Shedd Aquarium. Public communication and outreach.
Lee Loomis, Center for Environmental Information. Advocacy group in NY. Lake Ontario Coastal Remediation study. Interested in what else is going on in Great Lakes.
Public utility
Richard Greenwood, USFWS GLNPO. Great Lakes wide coastal habitat initiative to help support fish and wildlife.
(Phone) Jeff Roiter, Ohio Sea Grant, National Association of Marine Labs.
(Phone) Janet Vail, Co-chair of USEPA Lake Michigan Forum.
(Phone) Scott Hicks, National Park Service. Indiana lake shore water quality issues
Margaret Wooster, Friends of Otto Niagara River
Tim Williams, Water Environment Federation
Frank Beaver, Little River Band Ottawa Indians
Dale Bryson, Lake Michigan Federation

Purpose- Develop G.L. Coastal Health Strategy:

Build on expertise have already.
Coordinate and enhance the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Coastal Health strategy.
Compile decades of research and science into four to five page document.
Address what near term accomplishments possible through this collaboration.

Represent three overarching goals. (Human Health; Tribal Interests and Perspectives; Research and Monitoring)

Observation: no one from the Tribal community.

Purpose of Today:

Start a dialogue and collect info on who is participating on this team. (Please sign in so we can be in touch with you).

Conference call before end of the year.

Solicit ideas and information.

Goal: writing group to put together 4-5 page Coastal Health strategy (plus support materials) document by June of next year.

Define overarching themes

Structure:

I. Declaration.

Purpose- declare broad support for the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration.

II. Framework

Purpose - process document that explains how we are going to gather all of this information and knowledge and channel it into something that is useful and constructive: Who, How, When.

Three overarching issues:

- Human Health;
- Tribal Interests and Perspectives;
- Research and Monitoring

Eight strategy teams focused around the eight strategies created by Governors and adopted by Mayors.

Process: Conference Calls

Writing teams for overarching themes. By winter of '05 strategy committee will draft this for action by Congress.

Role of Executive Committee: Ensure that what strategy teams are coordinated and that there is minimal overlap and gaps: Governors, Mayors, Cabinet officials, Tribal leaders, Congressional delegation. Coordinate development of strategy, encourage stakeholder participation, raise issues to GLRC members as necessary, make recommendations to Members, propose and ratify any necessary changes to the Framework. Ensure political leaders are behind this.

Consensus: If Strategy co-chairs determine they cannot get consensus, they can elevate issue to the Executive Committee for discussion.

Question and Answer:

Q: Modeling on the existing legislation?

A. No, based on preexisting institutions.

In steering committee structure in restoration bills.

Q: Where are the NGOs on the Executive Committee?

A: Great Lakes Executive Committee represent the members (the elected officials). NGOs can be participants in strategic issue teams.

Q: (Lee Botts) What is the definition of coastal health - Ecological health, habitat, physical factors?

Q. Micheal Fisher: Subtopics are fairly explicit. However, there is overlay with other working groups. E.g. non-point source stormwater runoff and nutrients. What will be the intermingling across the subcommittees groups?

A: Executive Committee will be conference calling, strategy team Chairs will be part of the call and will discuss coordination, overlap and balance.

Discussion, What do we mean by Coastal Health?

- Lee Loomis: Not just water quality, but also physical issues wetlands, creeks, streams, inlets etc. suffering: e.g. owners of marinas, owners of coastal properties.
- Elaine Marsh - If dilute issue to include a lot of habitat issues we may loose focus on problems related to bacteria in sewage infrastructure- CSO, SSO, etc. This is where focus should be on these critical, costly, and complicated issues.
- Sustainable Habitat strategy session will be looking at shorelines. (But should not drop between two committees).
- Roger Proctor: bayments, interconnecting waterways, and (most problematic) tributary streams that are both sources and problem areas should be included. Will be difficult to define how far upstream we define Coastal Health.
- Beth Murphy: Human Health to link back to fish advisories.
- Erv Ball: Bathing beaches impacted by water quality along the shore. Persistent Bioaccumulation Toxics Reduction Strategy Team is working on that, therefore this is not the public health (fish advisories) group.
- David Rockwell: Surveys that have been conducted on beach closures: 20% have been associated with CSOs and SSOs. 80% are not. There are still other things that need to be considered. Currently are looking at more rapid methods of testing that get away from E-coli. Need to broaden the scope to the 80% that have no relationship to CSOs and SSOs.
- Dale Bryson: Okay, but let's not walk away from some obvious issues that need to be fixed (e.g. CSOs). Need to focus on the priorities to get to a 4-5 page strategy. Goals include large scale funding. The more focused we are, we will be able to reach this goal.
- Toby Frevert. With IEPA- Should address ecosystem health in addition to public health and major initiatives by USEPA. Address national issues like CSOs. I.D. why the Great Lakes is unique and should have a specific strategy. Need to give ourselves a unique identity. Wetlands e.g. are some very specific identifying issues for Great Lakes.

- Michael Fisher - Specific application as it relates to their subcommittee topic. E.g. Restoration of wetlands is one of many we should include in the context of how they relate to coastal health. So look at some land use issues too.
- Margaret Wooster: If you live in a Great Lake City, you encounter the CSO issue all the time. For Great Lakes, this is our collective drinking water supply. Lake Erie related to deadzone, phosphorous. Woodlawn beach is closed regularly with 4 feet of sewage discharge.
- Richard Greenwood – Regional Collaboration framework was developed on Governors’ nine priorities. One is to restore coastal habitat, the other is the human health priority. Thus the strategy could be called “human health” strategy.
- Roger Gauthier: Should include definitions of source water protection. Many in takes of many communities. Adding to this definition. Issue of hazardous material fate and transport. Bioterrorism as another consideration.
- Keith Linn: Address: whether or not human contact with coastal waters is safe. Ecosystem and fish edibility can be addressed by other groups. Include drinking water to the extent that it is not included in the address by other teams.
- Dale Bryson: Will the Strategy Paper go to Legislatures, Governors? Who is going to read this and say Yes – this is a good document and let’s do something? How do we make this not another global platitude. E.g. CSOs have laws that say what should and shouldn’t happen. These are something that governments can address (but lack of funds at local level). Should fund these programs in a tight budget, make this important at a local level.
- Commissioner Jimenez: Cities who deal with the coastal health of the great lakes deal with it on the daily basis. She is willing to put the resources in to make this an action document. Needs to end up in congressional, national, bi-national hands to make action and result in resources to protect our great lakes. It is a road map to action, and things need to be done. Needs to address the real life issues of every mile of coast along the Great Lakes. This process should result in a document that convinces policy makers that the money it requests is well spent so that we get action on Coastal Health – Ecosystem Health. If it is good for human health, it is good for the ecosystem. Groups are not satisfied that this drag on forever. It has to be now. Long term large scale funding of an action plan. The political leadership is behind this process. This is who we are hoping will be signing off on this. All 8 governors get behind legislation for this additional authorization, we are putting up some resources ourselves. Mayors, tribes, federal agencies and members of the congressional delegation.
- Elaine Marsh: Our discussion of clean enough: make a statement: it is not okay to discharge to surface or groundwater in the Great Lakes basin inadequately treated human waste. This should be not tolerated at local, state and federal levels. (and we should have the money, the policy and the resources to have zero discharge). It is okay if we are taking the lead for an issue that is bigger than the region.
- Toby Frevert: Powers believe that they have dealt with this. But it has been dealt with inadequately. We must deal with existing situation: we want something new, better, stricter, quicker.

- Margaret Wooster: Statement of this group: articulated statement that this is intolerable and is not working for human health, and we had some sense of the cumulative impact, we could come up with a dollar figure. But we also need a policy/regulatory issue. So, come up with a directive on Coastal Health – asking for money, but also talking about the policy change and the enforcement of the regulations
- Commissioner Jimenez: Strategy Team’s recommendations for action will include call for resources to back recommendations. Need policy and regulation behind it to make it enforceable, otherwise it is a temporary fix.
- Human health, ecosystem protection are both a part of the definition statement.
- Lee Loomis: City upstream with no sewage treatment (City sewage goes to River). City’s sewage closes beach in Rochester 3 of 7 days every week of the summer and causes weeds.
- Michael Fischer: Land use is part of the Coastal Health discussion. Wetlands and sustainable development – in as much as they deal with stormwater sequestration that decreases the CSOs or the amount of raw sewage in our rivers- reduce amount of water going into our CSOs.
- Peter Swensen: If human health is the obvious charge, if we expand it further, we should list areas of concern beyond human health related pathogens and overflows. The chairpeople can help decide what subcommittee should deal with. I.D. other areas of ambiguity to ensure that they are going to be handled by one group or others (e.g. wetland
- Paul Hurvatin: Other strategy teams are looking at the delisting of the Areas of Concern. E.g. beneficial use impairments. Has to meet nutrient control, algal blooms, common threads of this discussion. Liaisons between the different strategy team leaders will help prevent overlap.

Follow-on:

Will receive email describing how to dial into conference call for third week in December. Will also receive summary of today’s discussion.