

## **Sustainable Development Team**

### **Notes from conference calls of January 7 and 10, 2005**

The Sustainable Development (SD) Strategy Team of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration (GLRC) had two conference calls on January 7 and 10, 2005 to provide information about the Team and discuss the proposed work plan for the Team in the Organizing Concepts white paper (draft 3). Approximately 25-35 Team members participated on each call.

Both calls began with background information provided by the co-chair, Jan Miller. This information is summarized:

Team Business. The co-chairs of the SD Team are Jan Miller of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Mayor Gary Becker of Racine, Wisconsin. Membership of the Team is over 175. New members will be accepted for another few weeks, but not after January.

Support. Arrangements for logistical and administrative support to the GLRC are being developed. Teleconferencing support is in place (through EPA) and Workgroups may use this for conference calls. Web sites for each Team to share information and drafts are being developed by the Great Lakes Commission.

Meetings. Expect that the Team will perform its work through conference calls and email communications. The only meetings anticipated are the Summit I (Summer 2005) when the draft Strategy is presented for public review and Summit II (December 2005) when the final Strategy is released. The Executive Committee will have meetings with the Strategy Team co-chairs. Workgroups of the Team may decide to have in-person meetings, and the co-chairs will work to provide meeting space.

Charge and Schedule. The charge of the GLRC to all Strategy Teams is contained in the Framework document ([www.epa.gov/glnpo/collaboration/](http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/collaboration/)). The Team is responsible for developing a report to the Executive Committee on the SD issue with actions recommended to address the issue. The executive summary of the Team's report (4-5 pages) will be included in the Strategy for Protection and Restoration of the Great Lakes (assume the entire Team report will be an attachment). The current schedule of the GLRC is to release the Strategy for public review this Summer, incorporate comments in the Fall and release the completed Strategy in December. Based on this schedule, the SD Team needs to have a draft of its report ready by the end of May to allow for review by other Teams and the Executive Committee. The work load for Team members is expected to be highest during the next five months, then drop to a lower level while the Strategy is under review, and pick up again in the Fall.

Work Plan. A draft paper titled "Organizing Concepts" lays out a work plan for the Team to meet its charge within the schedule and resource constraints. The plan assigns tasks to Team members, promotes diverse points of view and provides a path for meaningful recommendations. The process outlined in the paper is to divide the Team into workgroups aligned with natural resource use categories, and task each workgroup to develop a portion of the Team report that addresses the following:

- describe current uses and future trends
- identify options for sustainable use practices
- evaluate feasibility of options
- recommend actions to promote desired practices

The remainder of the conference calls was used to answer questions and discuss the proposed work plan for the Team. A cursory summary of the feedback in these two calls and emails from members is provided:

Communications with other Teams. Several members noted the logical connections between the use-based Workgroups and other Teams (for example between the Invasive Species Team and the Transportation Workgroup). It was recommended that the methods for sharing information and drafts between Workgroups and other Teams be developed. It was suggested there be liaisons designated (members serving on a Workgroup and another Team). In some cases, the efforts of a Workgroup and that of another Team may be so parallel, that a different relationship may be called for (for example the Agriculture/Forestry Workgroup and the Nonpoint Source Team).

Communication between Workgroups. The need to ensure the Workgroups operate in synchrony, to avoid conflicting recommendations was raised. A related issue was how the reports of the Workgroups would be integrated. Periodic calls between the leads of Workgroups and Team co-chairs will be a starting place. General guidance to direct the Workgroups would be another tool. It is expected that the integration of Workgroup reports into a single Team report will be done by the Workgroup leads and Team co-chairs.

Social Issues. How and when to address the third leg of the SD stool to incorporate social capital and trends was discussed. It was suggested that all recommended actions must include a discussion addressing all three stool legs (economic, environment, social).

Climate Change. Although the draft paper recommends the Workgroups evaluate use trends for a limited future (20-50 years) because of the schedule constraints, members asked not to be limited from addressing climate change issues.

Workgroup Makeup. The number and scope of workgroups in the draft plan was a compromise between coverage and limiting the number of groups. One member recommended recreational boating be a separate workgroup. Another suggested recreational fishery be included in the Fishery Workgroup. It was suggested that Water Supply Workgroup include water use and infrastructure. It was also suggested that a new workgroup be created to address management, communication and sustainable funding.

The conference calls were concluded with a request to all Team members to send an email to co-chair Jan Miller identifying their preferred Workgroup assignment, and an alternate, as well as the level of effort they could commit to.