

Work Plan

Charge to Team. This Team is responsible for creating the component of the Great Lakes Restoration and Protection Strategy dealing with sustainable development. This paper presents a draft plan on how to organize our task so that it might be accomplished in an accelerated manner. In order to have a draft Strategy ready for public review in early July 2005, we must have a draft of our portion ready for review by the Executive Committee and other Teams in mid May.

All Strategy Teams will be addressing issues where natural resources have been altered or degraded in some way and considering actions to restore and protect the resource. For the most part, other Teams will focus on the natural resource to view the impacts of past and present human activities. In contrast, the Sustainable Development Team will focus on the current and future human activities to view their impacts on the natural resources and the economic and social well-being of the human community.

For each category of human activity there are a number of questions we will need to address:

- 1) What is the current state of use of natural resources in the Region to support this activity (including its contribution to the economy and social structure of the Region/Nation) ?
- 2) What are projected trends in these activities and their contributions?
- 3) What are the principles of sustainable development?
- 4) What practices demonstrate these principles in action?
- 5) How are these practices being applied in the region?
- 6) What is limiting more extensive application of these practices?
- 7) What actions can be taken to overcome these limitations?
- 8) Who should lead these actions?
- 9) How can we prioritize the actions to enhance sustainable development?

These questions are generally consistent with the outline provided to the Teams for their strategy reports. In order to answer the above questions, the Team will need to describe current uses of the natural resources including existing infrastructure, evaluate trends and future demands, consider sustainable practices that will meet future uses, and make recommendations of actions and resources required.

Organization. To answer the above questions and provide meaningful recommendations in our report, recommend that the Team be divided into working groups aligned with the following categories of uses of the region's natural resources:

- Land use and development (urban, commercial, residential)
- Agriculture and forestry
- Transportation (navigation, intermodal, and others)
- Industrial activity (manufacturing, energy production, etc)
- Water supply and use (potable and other uses and returns)
- Recreation, tourism and fishery (boating, swimming, sport, commercial and subsistence fishing, other)

Each workgroup will have a co-leads assigned and members from the Team. Ideally, each workgroup will have diverse representation, including participants from each of the following areas:

- Private sector (business/industry)
- Public sector (federal, state, local and tribal)
- Non-profit sector (NGOs, etc)

Workgroups may solicit support from outside experts, as needed, and are encouraged to develop liaisons with other Teams dealing with related issues.

Process. Workgroups should approach the above questions in three basic steps:

- Use description and trends
- Sustainable practices
- Recommendations

The use description and trends step will address questions 1) and 2) by providing background on current uses of natural resources and provide a critical view toward future uses and trends. The term “natural resource use” is intended in a very broad context, including uses that impact the water directly and indirectly. Workgroups should evaluate changes or projected trends in uses from a variety of factors, including (but not limited to):

- Global market/trade agreements
- Infrastructure condition (all types)
- Education
- Energy demand and costs
- Changing demographics in Basin
- Adaptability to new markets and technology
- Tax laws/policies

Recommend the future use trends consider a limited future time horizon (say 20-50 years). This information will support our subsequent evaluations of sustainable practices and will also provide input to the other Strategy Teams on uses and trends that might impact their evaluations of specific issues. It is intended that the written products of workgroups on use description and trends be provided (in draft form) to all other Strategy Teams at the end of February.

Recommend that question 3) be addressed by adopting the definition of sustainable development of the UN Brundtland Commission as “... development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Workgroups should apply the information on use trends and projections in formulating specific goals for each use category.

The sustainable practices step will address questions 4) and 5) by developing a list of options available, including practices that are already in place within the region, others applied outside the region, and some that are still conceptual. In order to organize this evaluation, recommend the workgroups consider practices appropriate to each of the following lines of responsibility: (individual/household; private sector; public sector; non-profit sector). The feasibility of

practices should be evaluated with consideration of their economic, environmental, and social impacts.

The recommendations step must address questions 6), 7) and 8) to establish the information needed to describe the actions (and resources) that will form the recommendations of the Team to enhance sustainable development in the region. This evaluation should define the obstacles to more widespread use of sustainable practices and identify the actions needed to overcome these obstacles. This effort must produce something more substantial than just a wish list. Ideally, information on the costs, impacts and benefits of actions should be presented to build the justification for any new resources or funding required. If this kind of information is not available, a process for developing that information should be outlined as one of the recommendations.

Other Issues. There are four overarching issues that each Team is asked to consider as part of its process (human health, tribal, research, and indicators). Recommend all workgroups capture their consideration of these issues.

Report. Each workgroup will produce a report. Additional guidance on the workgroup reports will be provided. The workgroup reports should conclude with a prioritized list of recommended actions. The workgroup leads and the Team co-chairs will be responsible for integrating the workgroup reports into a draft Team report. The target length for the Team report is around 50 pages. The 4-5 page executive summary of the Team's report will be included in the strategy of the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration.

Schedule. As mentioned above, we need to develop a draft of our portion of the Strategy in less than five months. To meet this schedule, propose that workgroup assignments be made in mid-January. Workgroups should target completion of the steps as follows:

Use description and trends	February
Sustainable practices	March
Recommendations	April

The draft products of all workgroups must be completed by April 20 so they can be reviewed by the entire Team and discussed at a Team meeting on April 28-29 (location TBD). The integration of the workgroup reports, as well as the distillation of final recommendations will be made during this review. The Team co-chairs and workgroup leads will be responsible for the final editing of the Team report to be delivered to Executive Committee by mid-May. The reports from all eight Strategy Teams will be reviewed by the Executive Committee with input from the Team co-chairs in late May to early June.