



**GREAT LAKES REGIONAL COLLABORATION
FEBRUARY 19, 2008 PUBLIC CALL SUMMARY**

1. **Call Participants:** The following members of the GLRC Executive Subcommittee, stakeholders, contractors and others participated in the call. Approximately 60 people participated in the call. Not all call participants identified themselves, so the listing below does not include all participants.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: Vicki Thomas, Macara Lousberg, Tony Kizlauskas, James Schardt, Rita Cestaric, Ted Smith
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Bob Krska
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: Mary Baker
Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission: Reggie Cadotte
Great Lakes Congressional Delegation: Jonathon Levy (Congressman Emanuel's office), Matt Reiffer (Congressman Ehlers' Office), Joy Mulinex (Senator Levin's Office)
Governors: David Naftzger, Lisa Wojnarowski (Council of Great Lakes Governors), Ken DeBeaussaert - Michigan
Mayors: David Ullrich, Melissa Soline, (Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative)
Stakeholders and Other Organizations: Mark Richardson and Dan Keifer (Clinton River Watershed Council), Gildo Tori, (Ducks Unlimited), Chris Grubb (Healing Our Waters Coalition), Cheryl Mendoza (Freshwater Future), Marc Hudon (Nature Québec), Sanjiv Sinha (ECT), George Kuper and Dale Phenicie (Council of Great Lakes Industries), Mark Burroughs (International Joint Commission), Jim Ridgeway
Call Facilitator (Contractor): Tom Looby (EMA Inc.)
Note-taker (Contractor): Maggie Clary (IEc)

2. **Purpose of Call:** The purpose of the call was to hear progress reports on five Great Lakes implementation initiatives currently underway in the region and to build on a November 27, 2007, conversation with stakeholders about implementation ideas offered on the following four themes:
 - Communication/ Transparency
 - Tracking Progress
 - Building Collaboration/ GLRC Strategy Implementation
 - Other

3. Reports

A. Great Lakes Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Initiative : This initiative commenced in Spring 2007. An intergovernmental workgroup has developed a communication protocol and identified points of contact (POC) at various levels of government. The workgroup has determined that it is not viable to develop a response plan for every potential AIS scenario so a communications-based approach has been pursued. A mock exercise is being planned for the Spring/Summer of 2008 to test the communications protocol.

B. Clean Boats Initiative : The focus of this initiative is on boater education. The upcoming Clean Boats Day was highlighted, as well as efforts to develop a boater education web site and to prepare boater education materials. Anyone interested in serving on a steering committee for Clean Boats Day should contact Lisa Wojnarowski at the Council of Great Lakes Governors at lwojnarowski@cglg.org.

C. Toxic Substances Initiative : The initiative includes five projects:

- (a) Mercury product and waste phase down strategy – Convened in May 2006 to address the top 5 products and sectors concerning mercury and come up with recommendations to phase out mercury in products and waste by 2015. 47 sets of comments have been incorporated into the final draft of the strategy; now are going through final review; and, are on the GLRC Website.
- (b) Mercury emissions reduction initiative – Now assembling federal/state/local and tribal participants. Plan to have draft strategy by Spring 2009. Will include burn barrel education and outreach activities to address dioxins; a conference in 2008; and, development of a tool kit to put on the GLRC Website.
- (c) Pharmaceutical waste disposal – Includes education and outreach to local officials and consumers on how to safely collect and dispose of leftover medications.
- (d) Electronic waste disposal – Includes education and outreach on proper disposal of electronic devices. Webpage developed- www.ecyclingtools.com Already has 35,000 hits.
- (e) Great Lakes Sport Fish Consortium – This is a fish consumption advisory group led by Wisconsin. It has developed a uniform mercury advisory protocol which includes a toolkit with different educational aids. Each component will be evaluated for effectiveness.

D. Habitat and Wetlands Initiative : The Great Lakes Habitat Initiative and the Wetlands Initiative have now been consolidated. The initial goal is to protect and restore 200,000 acres of wetlands. In addition to other efforts, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has developed a database with 200 potential restoration projects. (See www.glni.org). An inventory of potential funding

sources is being developed to help accelerate implementation of the projects. A *Call to Action* report is being drafted to highlight progress to date.

E. Beaches Initiative : This initiative entails efforts to focus on Great Lakes Coastal Health as a high priority. There is a workgroup consisting of federal, state, tribal, local and beach association representatives. They are focused on the identification and remediation of contamination sources; development of a standard sanitary survey for use in the Basin; and, drafting a plan to pilot the approach at 60 beaches on the Great Lakes.

4. Discussion. The next part of the call focused on reviewing results of previous discussions with stakeholders related to the four themes described below. Following each update, an opportunity to provide comments was given to stakeholder participants.

A. Update on Improving Communications and Increasing Transparency

- A comprehensive Communication Plan has not been developed. The current focus is on enhancing outreach and communication through project-specific initiatives as described above.
- Postings of information to the Website are being used more.
- The Executive Subcommittee has not yet decided whether to add outside observers.
- The Executive Committee has also not yet determined whether to post meeting summaries but are trying to publicize any decisions that are made.
- The GLRC is using list servers, both GLIN and Great Lakes News to improve information dissemination.
- The Executive Committee is continuing with these Stakeholder Outreach Calls, and are anticipating them to be held quarterly.

B. Update on Building Collaboration

- The Executive Committee is still trying to gather ideas on the best ways to reach out more broadly and to gather best practices.
- A “Give Us Feedback” link on the web site has been created to allow comments or report on activities on an ongoing basis.

C. Update on Tracking and Assessing Progress

The GLRC Subcommittee has not yet developed a comprehensive implementation plan, feeling that focusing on implementation efforts rather than plans might be most productive, but the Subcommittee would like to hear from more stakeholders.

D. Other Updates

- One idea offered was to examine regional governance capacity. There are mixed views about the need for a regional governance structure. Meetings have been held with stakeholders to discuss opportunities.

- Great Lakes Day (2/28/2008) will have many featured elements including a Great Lakes Commission meeting, Congressional visits and a reception at the Canadian Embassy.

4. **Next Steps:** The following next steps were identified:

- GLNPO will arrange for a summary of the call to be developed and will share it with participants.
- The GLRC Subcommittee will brief the Executive Committee on the ideas offered by the stakeholders both today and on November 27, 2007.
- These calls will be continued to allow the Subcommittee to engage with stakeholders.