



Notes

Attendees:

RCC members: Chris Winslow, Carl Platz, Debbie Lee, Dale Hoff, Jennifer Winter, Jason Borwick, Lynn Bouvier, Michael Twiss, Ram Yerubandi, Rebecca Rooney, Sergio Paulo, Val Klump

Staff: Lizhu Wang, Heather Stirratt, Matthew Child, Rachel Wyatt, Rajendra Poudel, Mark Burrows, John Allis.

1. Welcome, roll call, approval of agenda, and approval of last RCC meeting summary.

- Co-chairs provided a warm welcome to the two new RCC members. The two new members bring a wealth expertise and experiences to the Committee. Members had a roundtable introduction.
- Draft agenda was approved with an addition of a discussion regarding if we need to include an external presentation for the SAB meeting agenda.
- December 2023 RCC Meeting Summary was approved.

2. New project ideas for 2024 funding cycle

- **Work plan guidance**

The Great Lakes Board Co-chairs had a meeting to discuss the Work Plan Guidance developed by the GLRO. The Guidance consists of key considerations for project nomination and selection, including (1) consistent with the advisory mandates of the Board and the IJC and within the purview of the GLWQA; (2) will provide substantive and meaningful advice to the Parties that can support their achievement of GLWQA objectives, and/or improve assessments of progress towards the objectives; (3) extent of alignment with and/or support of existing and future TAP reports; (4) extent of alignment with Commission priorities; (5) draws on and takes advantage of the independent voice and capabilities of all board members; (6) addresses emerging issues/gaps in knowledge that might not be addressed by others; (7) avoids duplication and adds value to on-going work or builds on previous work of others; (8) advances development of advice to the Parties that is management and policy relevant; and (9) focuses on timely or urgent issue(s).

The final work plan is due by March 15 of each funding cycle.

- **GLEWS Pilot project**

The Great Lakes Early Warning System (GLEWS) framework was developed in two phases. Phase-1 developed an organizational structure and Phase-2 developed a deci-

sion pass-way framework. Phase-2 recommended to initiate a pilot project to implement the GLEWS decision framework that would focus on potential threats in a manner that allows for the process of threat evaluation and reporting to be tested for efficacy.

A draft GLEWS Pilot project work plan has been developed. This work plan proposes to use two stressors to test the GLEWS decision framework. One of the stressors is Nitrogen, a suspected threat that is believed to be imminent, with a high potential for long term impacts on water quality and a lesser threat to humans. The other stressor is Antimicrobial Resistance, a suspected threat that poses a high risk to humans and livestock and a lesser threat to ecosystem health. The project will not need a workshop but will need a presentation at the end of the project with extensive consideration on temporal and spatial scales.

The work plan is seeking input from SAB and the other Great Lakes boards, especially HPAB.

The deadline for RCC members to provide input on the work plan is March 8th.

- ***Climate Migration and Its Impact on the Great Lakes Ecosystem***

Objectives of the project are to review current literature on climate migration, identify factors that could drive or limit migration in the Great Lakes region, identify vulnerable geographies for degradation of water quality due to climate migration, and identify predictive and planning tools and information to inform impacts of migration on Great Lakes water quality and gaps in tools and information.

The work plan has received comments and gone a significant reiteration to focus on the work that we would like to do. The work plan has received some comments from some RCC members, liaisons, and HPAB Co-chairs. The feedback has been mostly incorporated.

Staff also reached out GLAM Co-chairs for input. They expressed interest but indicated that they are too busy with the Plan 2014 reevaluation and do not have time to participate, but they would like to hear the progress and outcomes of the project.

The work plan was also discussed during the last SPC meeting. The SPC is supportive of the work moving forward and would like to participate in the work group of the project.

It was suggested that the work plan lead to contact Annex 9. Debbie has volunteered to reach out to Annex 9 Co-chairs.

The deadline for RCC members to provide input on the work plan is March 8th.

- Others

- HPAB work plan-Knowledge Translation – This work plan has been distributed to RCC members previously. There is not further input at this time.

3. On-going projects progress update

- ***Great Lakes Early Warning System***

Project report has been approved by the Commissioners and is waiting to be submitted to the Parties. Once it is submitted to the Parties, the report will be put on the SAB website and outreach activities will follow.

The work group leads are also working on a manuscript, which will be submitted to an appropriate journal for publication.

- ***Microplastic Monitoring and Risk Assessment***

The project has three objectives, including (1) synthesizing recent advances and knowledge in plastics science relevant to the Great Lakes through events that bring together researchers to share the latest information on plastics, (2) developing a framework for monitoring microplastic pollution in the Great Lakes that would support its use as a *Toxic Chemicals* sub-indicator for *State of the Great Lakes* reporting, and (3) developing a risk assessment framework for microplastic pollution in the Great Lakes focused on ecological effects that would contextualize the results of a monitoring program.

A literature review and two in-person workshops have been carried out to achieve these three objectives. The project has identified knowledge and technical gaps in sampling and studying microplastics, developed sampling protocols for ambient waters and sediment, and identified tentative water ecosystem health risk assessment thresholds for ambient water and sediment microplastics.

It has been a great experience in working alongside efforts at the Chesapeake Bay Plastic Pollution team and the Southern California Coastal Wetland and Coastal Water Research Project.

It is anticipated that the project report will be completed by the end of April.

- ***Great Lakes Winter Science***

The project had two virtual workshops and one in person workshop. Workshop-1 identified winter science gaps, needs, and science priorities. Workshop-2 assessed the needs related to winter science infrastructure, training, and coordination amongst management agencies to meet the science priorities identified in workshop #1. Workshop-3 utilized information gained from workshop-1 and workshop-2 and literature review to develop recommendations for sustainably meeting winter science needs.

Several preliminary recommendations are that we need better infrastructure and a number of different platforms; we need better education, education programs for people to learn about winter and winter science, and we need to get CSMI more integrated with winter science or vice versa.

Contractor report is expected to complete by the end of April.

- ***Great Lakes Science Plan***

This is the second phase of the project. The first phase developed the Science Strategy for the Next Decade. This second phase is to implement the strategy by developing an operational Science Plan. The development of the Science Plan will be driven by a Collaborative through carrying out six workshops.

So far, the Collaborative has been established and has had two meetings (one virtual and one in person). The work group is in the process of planning the first workshop.

- ***Great Lakes Community Science***

This project is to develop a Community Science Guidebook and a recommended data-information repository platform for the Great Lakes ecosystem. Since October 2023, a contractor team has been retained and had the first workgroup calls yesterday. The project progressed as planned. This project is expected to complete in late 2025.

- ***Great Lakes Environmental Atlas***

This project was approved by Commissioners in September 2023. Due to budget limitation, this project has been postponed to use 2024 Canadian FY budget. It is in the process of completing the RFP, getting the RFP approved, and being ready to be send to potential vendors.

4. Agenda items for April RCC in-person meeting

- If include a presentation during SAB meeting
 - SPC Co-chairs proposed to have presentation and is looking for RCC input.
 - A SPC member, Drew Gronewold, suggested we consider a speaker from the Coordinating Committee on Great Lakes Basic Hydraulic and Hydrological Data, who can speak to water quantity, levels, and flows.
 - Chris Winslow suggested to invite someone from the congressional office.
 - Jason Borwick and Rebecca Rooney suggested to spend more time to dive into board specific advice to the Science Plan.
 - RCC decided to spend more time during SAB to discuss the Science Plan instead of inviting an external presentation.
- Staff has developed a two-pagers that helps promote the board projects. When they are ready, they will be shared with the RCC members.
- It was suggested that RCC may consider involving more young scientists in its work plans and work groups.

5. 2024 IAGLR presentation abstracts

- The Science Plan Session at IAGLR 2025 has received 9 presentations. They are all accepted. Among those, five presentations have RCC members' involvement.

6. Other topics

- April Semi-Annual meeting at Washington DC
 - Hotel reservation and RCC meeting schedule have been shared with the RCC members.

- There will be an optional Indigenous competency training to be held from 1:00-4:15 pm on Tuesday April 9.
- RCC secretary transition - Lizhu Wang, with assistance of John Wilson, will continue to serve as RCC secretary until April 15. After that, John Wilson will take over the role RCC secretary with assistance from Lizhu Wang until July 31.
- Next RCC meeting – April 10, 2024.

7. Adjourned at 2:30 AM