# Breakout Session Reports

# Coastal/Lacustrine Breakout Session Report

**Facilitator: Marcia Damato**

**Rapportuer: Jill Wingfield**

# Presentations

Restoring Coastal Margin and Nearshore Habitats in Urban Areas, Dr. Scudder Mackey, University of Windsor

Fish Habitat at Navigation Structures, Dr. Phil Moy, Wisconsin Sea Grant

Great Lakes Urban Habitat Restoration: Design Constraints and Opportunities, Bill Weaver, AECOM

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) Role in Improving Aquatic Habitat along the Toronto Waterfront, Gord MacPherson, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Giving Consideration to Biodiversity Significance in Urban Habitat Restoration, Mary Lammert Khoury, The Nature Conservancy

# Q1: Elements and Tools of Successful Initiatives

- Effective communication to all stakeholders
  - Sell the project: “universal currency of fish”
  - Expectations
- Useful repository of data
  - Do your homework!
  - Centralized sampling/reporting format
- Collaboration
  - All agencies and stakeholders

# Q2: Major Obstacles

- Budgetary philosophies
- Unclear responsibilities
  - Can lead to “turf” wars
- Lack of data
  - Needed for effective communication (success)
- Inconsistent criteria and practices
  - Sampling, monitoring, reporting, evaluating
- Ineffective communication strategies
  - Intricacies, benefits

# Q3: Improve Communications

- Establish a governance infrastructure
  - Consistent conservation approach
  - Project-specific, local, regional, basin-wide basis
  - Determine necessary communication strategy to engage partners
- Promote Effective Data and Technology Transfer
  - Share applicable lessons between communities
  - Translate/extrapolate information (to a degree)

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

- Promote projects that incorporate “incidental habitat” and “incidental environmental impacts”
  - Identify how structures can be modified without jeopardizing primary purpose
  - Build this concept into project proposals
- Require some degree of long-term monitoring for project approval
  - Standardized, spatially and temporally appropriate, inclusive, comprehensive, complementary

# Riverine Breakout Session Report

**Facilitator: John Perrecone**

**Rapportuer: Brendan Daley**

# Presentations

Lessons Learned from Soft Engineering of Detroit River Shoreline, Dr. John Hartig, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge

Restoration of Fish Spawning Habitat in the Detroit River, Dr. Bruce Manny, U.S. Geological Survey

Replacing Incised Headwater Channels and Failing Stormwater Infrastructure with Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance, Joe Berg, Biohabitats, Inc.

Habitat for Hard Places in the Cuyahoga River, Jim White, Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan

The Grand River Lake Erie Connection: From Individual Mandates toward Cooperative Management, Warren Yerex, Grand River Conservation Authority

# Riverine Session Overview

- Scale
  - Whole watersheds to micro-projects
- Riverine Systems
  - Straight channel to riparian zones

# Q1: Elements and Tools of Successful Initiatives

- Depends on the project scale
- Soft shore engineering
- Native plants on shoreline
- Green marinas / attractive waterfronts

# Q2: Major Obstacles

- Funding for projects, maintenance and monitoring
- Available land / land ownership
- Public perception
- Functional partnerships / lack of common goal
- Regulatory issues and permitting
- Overcome obstacles by engaging the public for support

# Q3: Improve Communications

- Can’t work in isolation from the general public
- Use internet tools: social networking sites, blogs, listserves, webcasting
- NGOs and “Friends of” groups can help push government agencies to get our work done

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

- Develop plan for entire watershed

# Wetland Breakout Session Report

**Facilitator: Joel Weiner**

**Rapportuer: Marc Gaden**

# Presentations

Urban Wetlands: Harmonizing the Natural and Human Landscapes, Dr. Greg Smith, USGS National Wetlands Research Center

Wetland Restoration in Urban Areas of the Great Lakes, Dr. Doug Wilcox, SUNY-Brockport

63rd Street Beach Habitat Restoration, Zhanna Yermakov, Chicago Park District

Restoration Strategies in Cootes Paradise Marsh: Making a Difference with Carp Exclusion, Jennifer Bowman, Royal Botanical Gardens, Ontario

Toleston Strandplain Macrosite, Paul Labus, The Nature Conservancy

# Q1a: Elements and Tools of Successful Initiatives

- Money
- Getting everybody at the table
- Using organizing frameworks like RAPs, LaMPS, and other mechanisms
- Educate the public
- Attract and maintain volunteers
- Use *Society for Ecological Restoration Guidelines*

# Q1a: Elements and Tools of Successful Initiatives

- Maintain connection to watersheds but manage the comings and goings of species
- Harvest / control of invasive species (plants and animals)

# Q1b: Elements and Tools of Not-so-successful Initiatives

- Burning invasive plants
- Setting goals too high
- Floristic Quality Assessment
- Exclusive reliance on the Index of Biotic Integrity
- Freelancing:  Plunging in without proper planning
- Trying to outsmart mother nature
- Cookie cutter approaches

# Q2: Major Obstacles

- Lack of money
- Funding cycles
- Lack of professional standards and common language
- Legacy contaminants
- Legacy infrastructure
- Dysfunctional government/NGO relationship
- Dynamic memory loss

# Q3: Improve Communications

- Systematize at the conceptual stage the integration of all perspectives and disciplines needed to ensure the success of a project
- Develop a common language
- Community outreach
- Use e-technology to maintain and update connections

# Q3: Improve Communications

- Identify and attribute specific elements of success to specific partners
- Make the time!
- Learn from each other and others
  - Urban Habitat Journal:  Open access e-journal focusing on current research in biology of urban areas
  - UK website:  Bill Sutherland

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

- Educate and engage local community
  - Goal:  Buy-in and manpower
- Develop approaches for multi-year funding.
  - Adapt to funding cycles of practitioners
- Don’t use cookie cutter approach to grant applications.
  - Conditions and criteria are usually site specific.
- Develop regional standards

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

- Apply RAP approach to urban habitat community
  - Capacity
  - Development of standards
  - Community of practice
- Have patience
  - Agency need to measure progress is often on a different timeline than the NGOs
  - Practitioners need to know there is light at the end of the tunnel

# Planning and Implementation Breakout Session Report

**Facilitator: Dale Burkett**

**Rapportuer: Joel Brammeier**

# Presentations

Eugene Field Park Riparian Restoration, Frank Veraldi, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Implementation Elements of Wetland Restoration, Gildo Tori, Ducks Unlimited

Morgan Shoal:  Planning for a Sustainable Ecosystem & Shoreline Protection for Lake Michigan, Rob Rejman, Chicago Park District

Planning and Implementation of Urban Habitat Restoration in Hamilton Harbour, Brenda Axon, Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan, Ontario

Funding Urban Habitat Work Along the Great Lakes: Opportunities and Criteria, Todd Hogrefe, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

# Q1: Elements and Tools of Successful Initiatives

- High visibility and public access
- Well-informed, involved project champions, both for planning and ongoing stewardship
- Up-front community involvement with awareness of community benefit to achieve buy-in
- Aggressive and creative non-federal funding recruitment with job creation
- Level of analysis commensurate with level of risk – don't over plan
- Monitoring from beginning to end
- Provide ancillary benefits to community such as education, outdoor recreation and stewardship

# Q2: Major Obstacles

- Emphasis on continuously changing short-term social preference can impede long-term ecological vision
- Difficult to quantify results in terms of conservation of valuable species
- High cost per unit
- Level of risk analysis inappropriate for restoration projects
- Lack of restoration permit process increases cost, causes delays and creates confusion and makes it easy for agencies to say “no”
- Difficult to define the economic value of the project, including ecological service values

# Q3: Improve Communications

- Work with respected community members to translate benefits to the community
- Ensure direct communication between experts and community members
- Avoid creation of new organizations and networks, but discover and make good use of existing communication pathways

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

Restoration projects are hindered because they are held to the same standards as projects that degrade water and ecological integrity

- Policy guideline or directive: Streamline permitting and approvals for restoration projects
- Implementation needs:
  - Separate restoration permits from NEPA process
  - Invoke categorical exclusion options
  - Examine permitting authorities and policies that may need exemptions or new authorities
  - Identify and include stakeholders and practitioners in conversations with regulatory authorities to provide opportunities to collaborate to streamline permitting processes

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

Human use and the population served needs to be reflected in project priorities

- Policy guideline or directive: Establish cost per person benefited

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

The economic value of the project needs to be developed, including ecological service values, and the benefits must be effectively communicated to appropriate officials

- Policy guideline or directive: Require consistent, criteria-based standards for defining and including benefits of ecological services

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

Federal economic stimulus project spending should be tied to sustainability

- Policy guideline or directive: Require demonstration of restoration benefits for new projects prior to project approval
- Implementation needs: For previously approved shovel-ready projects require subsequent mitigation of impacts

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

New revenue streams not tied to federal requirements need to be developed

- Policy guideline or directive: Modify existing tax-based or other-source funding streams to provide funds for restoration projects
- Implementation needs:
  - Establish tax credits for creation of ecological services (e.g. based on carbon credits)
  - Establish set-asides from tax base, or other revenue streams such as lottery funds, for restoration (e.g. MN sales tax increase)
  - Capture civil penalties stemming from environmental harm as a revenue stream

# Q4: Broad Lessons, Policy Guidelines and Directives

Non-restoration project authorities, such as transportation, sewage, infrastructure, need to be used to create secondary restoration benefits and pool impacts to achieve regional goals


Thank you for your participation!

# Facilitated Discussion

Is there anything left unsaid? Any additional thoughts or recommendations that we need to capture?

# Facilitated Discussion

Is there anything here that appears contradictory or unclear, or simply ill-advised?

# Facilitated Discussion

How do we turn these recommendations into actions? How do we make sure that our work here is more than just a conversation?