

Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team Outreach Committee FY 2003 Action Plan

Team Priority: Outreach and Communications

Team Goal: Develop and execute a plan to communicate key Great Lakes conservation messages to the media, the public and stakeholders through various products.

Actions:

1. Complete a number of unfinished outreach products and distribute to team members and Great Lakes partners as appropriate.
2. Develop a long-term communication strategy for the overall team (first priority) and for committees.

Products/outcomes:

GLBET Islands Conservation Outreach/Communications Plan

Summary: Led by communications consultant Dr. Darryl Armstrong, a multi-agency team initiated an Outreach and Communications Plan Model at December's Great Lakes Islands Conservation Workshop. After an Islands Conservation Communications Plan is developed, the model could be used as tool for creating a communications plan for the team as a whole, and for other subcommittees.

Status: Step One of Dr. Armstrong's strategic planning model is research and fact-finding—determining the issue, problem or opportunity at hand and the interests, issues or problems of all stakeholders (internal and external). At the December meeting the outreach team asked that the Islands Conservation Team consider the island conservation issues and key messages and themes that we want to communicate. We also got input from those present about what they perceive as key stakeholder interests.

Next steps: Prioritize island conservation issues/threats and stakeholders, evaluate our communications efforts to date, continue to engage in research to evaluate our communications efforts to date, continue to engage in research in order to focus future efforts on the appropriate audiences using the proper tools and messages.

Contacts: Rachel Levin, Fred Caslick, Islands Workshop outreach team, Dr. Darryl Armstrong (consultant—volunteered follow-up services for free for 1 year after December workshop)

Date to be completed: Ongoing

Great Lakes Islands Conservation brochure

Summary: Produce a 2-sided color 8 ½” x 11” fact sheet *or* full-color tri-fold brochure to educate and inform recreational users such as boaters and hikers about the significance of Great Lakes islands and the need to conserve them. Brochure will be posted on team Web site and could be adapted as needed, used and distributed by the Service and partners (including Canadians) who are involved in island conservation.

Status: Text needs to be edited and finalized; illustrations need to be chosen; and decision needs to be made regarding fact sheet vs. tri-fold brochure format.

Proposed dates for completion:

Approved copy and photos—June 30

Design—July 30

Printing/distribution—September 1

Responsible parties: Rachel Levin, Leslie TeWinkel, Megan Seymour

Outstanding issues:

Where will funding come from?

Will this be an FWS publication or will other agencies contribute funding?

GLBET display

Summary: Complete Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem Team display so that it is ready to use at conferences and other exhibit opportunities.

Status: Need to obtain a few more photos representing Service interests and priorities in the Great Lakes, as well as a team identification banner. Assistance is needed in preparing the exhibit for upcoming DOI Conference (May 13-15).

Dates for completion:

Photos collected—April 25

Ready for shipping to DOI conference—May 8

Responsible parties: Rachel Levin, Jim Hudgins, Cyndi Duda

Outstanding issues:

Have specific photo needs been determined?

Has team identification banner been designed yet?

Who will fund production of banner and any photo reproduction costs?

GLBET website

Summary: Need a Regional Office point of contact for greatlakes.fws.gov Web site. Primary duties would be helping to identify existing items that need to be updated or posted, and posting them in a timely manner. Point of contact could also work with team leader and committee chairs to post content to the various sections of the site, including Outreach, Invasive Species and GIS-Decision Support. Contact will also post Asian Carp fact sheet or information and Great Lakes National Wildlife Refuge fact sheet to Web site. These products are not yet developed; because Asian carp in particular is a hot topic these days, it is suggested that information should be developed and posted to the Web site ASAP, without waiting for a printed fact sheet.

Status: Volunteer needed, or a member of the R3 RMT or R5 REAT should appoint someone.

Date to be completed: ASAP

Responsible parties: GLBET Team Leader should encourage managers to appoint someone.

Outstanding issues: What will the relationship be between this person and current Web contact Anjanette Bowen?

USFWS Great Lakes video

Summary: Need script review and editing for team-supported video on the Service's role in the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem.

Status: Contractor has done much of the shooting for the video and a script has been developed. Need to determine what further footage is needed (i.e., interviews w/Region 5 project leaders). Also need to ensure proper authorization has been obtained from Washington Office External Affairs in the form of a signed DI-551 "Audiovisual Production Authorization Request," since FWS funds are being used for this production.

Date to be completed: Ideally for next full team meeting, scheduled for October 21-23, 2003. Timetable depends on how far along video is.

Responsible parties: Rachel Levin, Doug Spencer, Emily Mattison (contractor), Cyndi Duda.

External Affairs Assistance in distribution of Team products

Summary: EA will assist with distribution of printed, audio-visual and other products to the field and the public. May include distribution of team video, workshop CD's, fact sheets, display, news releases, etc.

Status: Ongoing

Responsible party: Rachel Levin

Lake sturgeon brochure reprint

Summary: Field stations are running low on the popular “Lake Sturgeon: Giant of the Great Lakes” brochure. A re-print is needed.

Status: Funds were obligated last year in External Affairs to pay for a re-print, however, the team overspent its limit on this funding before the lake sturgeon brochure re-print request came in, and EA was unable to fulfill the request. At this point, EA does not have funds to cover a re-print at all.

Next steps: Team needs to determine whether funding a re-print is a priority and discuss how to pay for it.

Responsible parties: Rachel Levin, Tracy Hill

GLBET Outreach/Communications Committee

Summary: Confirm chairs and committee members. Determine needs for additional membership, support needs.

Status: Current members include: Rachel Levin, Fred Caslick, Cyndi Duda, Jim Hudgins, Darryl Armstrong (adviser), other partners from Island Conservation Workshop. Kate Beardsley, an outreach specialist and new GLNPO liaison from Indiana Sea Grant, may be interested in joining (Rich Greenwood will provide contact information). Have completed list and contact information posted on team Web site outreach section.

Date to be completed: April 15

Responsible party: Rachel Levin, Rich Greenwood, Web site contact

Other issues identified:

GLBET fact sheet

Summary: Last fall, Chris Castiglione created a GLBET fact sheet for the purposes of handling SOLEC. The fact sheet covers the ecological significance of the Great Lakes ecosystem and describes the ecosystem team and its various goal – islands conservation, lake sturgeon restoration, etc.

Status: It has been suggested that this fact sheet be updated with information on new initiatives such as endangered species and invasive species. First priority would be to update it for the purposes of briefing the new R3 RD Robyn Thorson. Other uses include posting on the Web site and as a handout at meetings and conferences.

Date to be completed:
Update for new R3 RD – ASAP
Post updated version to Web site – ASAP

Responsible parties: Rachel Levin, Rich Greenwood, Chris Castiglione, Anjanette Bowen (or RO Web contact)

New product development

Summary: Several new products have been mentioned including:

- Asian Carp Fact Sheet that can be distributed in print to appropriate audiences and posted on the Web site.
- Great Lakes National Wildlife Refuges Fact Sheet for Web site that promotes our Great Lakes Refuges as “a window to Great Lakes wildlife” for the public, and celebrates the Refuge Centennial.
- “Great Lakes Coastal Birding Trail” linking our NWR’s to also celebrate/promote the Centennial.

Status: Team needs to determine which of these are top priority and whether funding exists to complete them. Then writing and other tasks need to be assigned. Consider these lower priority than existing, uncompleted products.

Date to be completed: TBA

Responsible parties: Rachel Levin, Nita Fuller (NWR fact sheet and birding trail), Anjanette Bowden, Outreach Committee