

**BoFEP Working Group on Salt Marsh and Restricted Tidal Systems:
Draft Minutes of 2nd Meeting
June 7th, 2001, CWS Headquarters, Sackville, NB**

Present:

Denis Haché [DFO]
Peter Hicklin [CWS]
Lee Swanson [DRNE-NB]
Kim Hughes [NB DELG]
Hélène Dupuis [DFO]
Tony Bowron [Ecology Action Centre]
Claude Robichaud [NB DAFA]
Jean-Guy Deveau [Environment Canada]
Janice Harvey [CCNB]
Daniel LeBlanc [Petitcodiac Riverkeepers]
Andrew MacInnis [DU]
Jeff Ollerhead [Mount Allison U.]
Al Hanson [CWS]
Jon Percy [BoFEP]
Zsofi Koller [CCNB]
Jean-Guy Deveau [Environment Canada]
Robin Davidson-Arnott [U. Of Guelph]
Katy Haralampides [UNB Civil Engineering]
Alison Evans [Dalhousie U and Marine Resource Centre]
Jon Carr [Atlantic Salmon Federation]
Andrea Locke [DFO]

Meeting Chair: Jeff Ollerhead, Mount Allison University

Welcome: Jeff Ollerhead welcomed the participants and described the working group's focus on salt marshes and tidal barriers.

Introductions, overview, regrets, and agenda check: Jeff Ollerhead explained the diversity and the history of the BoFEP working group. It was stressed that a focus for the group is needed, as well as a priority for the budget. The minutes from the last BoFEP meeting (March 16th, 2001) were circulated and approved.

Funding: Led by Daniel LeBlanc. He proposed a quick discussion on funding before the first agenda item. Four areas for potential funding:

- ? Habitat Stewardship Program
- ? Youth at Action Programme
- ? Gulf of Maine Council
- ? Wildlife Habitat Canada

Potential government programmes in New Brunswick:

- ? Environmental Trust Fund (which will soon announce grants)
- ? NB Wildlife Trust Fund
- ? NB Department of Transport and Agriculture
- ? This does not include other possible foundations and NGO's.

Suggestions from group: TD Green Fund, and Youth Stewardship Council. Jeff added that as a group, BoFEP might not have the proper structure to apply for grants. This might be best left to the affiliate groups that are a part of BoFEP, which will then use their grant money to support BoFEP's goals. The difficulty of keeping on

top of rapidly changing funding opportunities was also addressed.

Research and Monitoring Needs Led by Jeff Ollerhead (with supporting notes from Peter Wells and Danika von Proosdij).

Description of the research issue was broken into three parts:

- ? Long-term monitoring
- ? Restoration
- ? Fundamental research

Who is monitoring long-term discussion? At this point, it is not clear. It was noted that small projects are best to tackle first. An example of this is the Tidal Barriers Audit. Janice Harvey described the Tidal Barriers Audit background and methodology, and CCNB's project this year. Tony Bowron then described the Ecology Action Centre's salt marsh restoration project including the 2001 tidal barriers audit. The goal of this audit is to gain base-line information of the tidal barriers in the Bay of Fundy region.

Daniel LeBlanc: Not only tidal barriers severely impact an estuary-river system. Non-tidal barriers can be just as disruptive, but the audit might overlook that point.

- Long-term monitoring: simple measurements of three aspects to gather long-term data can be done on a wide scale by community groups and NGO's:

- Profile of features
- Erosion rates
- Sedimentation

Framework for long-term monitoring: Global Programme of Action Coalition for the Gulf of Maine (GPAC) protocol for salt marsh monitoring and restoration. Should the BoFEP group host a one-day symposium to adapt the Global Programme document to the upper Bay or Fundy?

A discussion on the difficulty of accessing high-quality data products followed. Should the Chairs write to government to raise the issue of access to data?

- Fundamental Research: three main items to consider.

- Role of remote sensing in ecosystem health (algorithms not established for Fundy marshes).
- Role of marshes in wave attenuation (might be considered as coastal protectors)
- Role of ice in marsh ecosystems

- Potential directions for the Working Group:

- Modify the Global Programme of Action salt marsh monitoring protocol through a one-day workshop (weak support)
- Hold a one-day work-shop on methodology for long-term monitoring (weak support)
- Goals should include bridging the gap between scientists and citizens (good support)
- Identify site specific restoration projects to get involved with (strong support). This direction was determined as the highest priority for the group.

Working Group Structure: led by John Percy.

- Name of new group merger between the salt marsh and tidal barriers working groups:

• "Salt Marsh and Restricted Tidal Systems" [SMARTS] Working Group was agreed upon.

- Definitions/Scope/Mandate.

- John will email copies of the proposed scope and mandate to the group members for approval
- Key points included:

- ? to collect, review, and summarize info on tidal barriers and salt marshes
- ? to encourage research and conservation on tidal barriers and salt marshes
- ? to study tidal barriers and salt marsh functioning
- ? to foster meaningful participation from communities

✍ Suggested: the group should expand more to include social and economic analysts
 ✍ A vision statement and a preamble were suggested additions to the mandate.

Dyke, Aboiteaux Repair and Maintenance: led by Claude Robichaud.

- Dykes play critical roles in current land use:
 - ? protect towns/development.
 - ? potential value in Heritage Dykes
 - ? the decision to repair or not repair the aboiteaux is site-specific. Land-use is the basis for deciding how or if dykes should be repaired.
- Fish Passage Issues
 - ? trying to provide a solution for fish passage through the dams; try to gauge fish management through the barriers
 - ? 5 sites under consideration for fish passage improvement:
 - ✍ Shepody Dam
 - ✍ Tantramar Dam -improved gate management; an increase of gasperau and shad
 - ✍ Memramcook Dam -most stakeholders are farmers
 - ✍ Palmer's Creek -opening up the gates has been well-received by the public
 - ✍ Breau's Creek (sp?) -the piping is full of rock. Nobody wants to repair this because its too expensive; however, there is potential for a major accident here.

Afternoon Session

Valuation of coastal/estuarine/wetland landscapes and ecosystems as an aid to conservation/restoration: led by Denis Haché

- Need to establish a value for salt marsh and estuaries based on their own merits
- There is an inherent difficulty in the restoration/consultation process, because restoration is automatically determined a negative process. This is because consultants look only at the negative impacts of restoration.
- Action plan: get consultants to use different terms of reference
- GPI Atlantic is a non-profit Halifax group which could frame terms of reference for valuation exercise, on a project-by-project basis
- Ultimately, communication is needed between groups, and communicating in fiscal terms is useful because it is understood by everyone.
- a workshop on this issue was proposed.

Gulf of Maine Action Plan: led by Kim Hughes

- How does this relate? Tidal barriers and salt marsh restoration is a major part of the Gulf of Maine action plan.
- Major focus: Habitat Restoration
- Goal: Interested people were encouraged to join smaller working groups

2001 Tidal Barriers Audit: led by Janice Harvey

- Important changes made to this year's audit to adapt methodology to macrotidal regime.
 - ☞ Visual evidence will be given more importance
 - ☞ Changes in measuring protocols
 - ☞ If there is clear visual evidence of restriction, then it will be deemed a restriction

problems with this: what is the definition of a restriction? (eg. what if it happens only once a month?)

value judgement must come in to determine what is important

- Data sheets were described
 - important to note more than just GPS coordinates if locations overlap
 - be useful to include a map with the report indicating the exact location of the barrier
- Tony Bowron and Zsofi Koller (CCNB tidal barriers audit coordinator 2001) added comments, noting that Phase II measurements won't answer questions, but will only give more information about a restricted site.
- The importance of field partnership with Dept. of Transportation was noted.
- the group decided that conducting visual assessments at low tide would be most beneficial

Inner Bay of Fundy Species Restoration Process. Led by H el ene Dupuis.

- recovery team set up for salmon
- the infrastructure for this restoration process is confusing and overlapping
- too much emphasis on a few issues of salmon recovery, although several issues have been identified

Progress Updates from Participants

- Al Hanson: showed the new Salt Marsh Conservation Site (www.ns.ec.gc.ca/wildlife/salt_marsh)
- John Percy: DU is putting a freshwater impoundment in Annapolis (?) which is connected to a salt marsh; this could include a salt marsh interpretative centre in the future.

Future Goals for the BoFEP working group

- Scope and mandate should be established for next meeting
- BoFEP can provide support for Claude's work on dyke repair
- Everyone was encouraged to send criticisms on the data sheets for the tidal audit
- Everyone was reminded to contact Kim Hughes to get involved with the Gulf of Maine working groups if interested
- With respect to research, group members were encouraged to be on the look-out for specific projects to involve BoFEP.
- With respect to the \$5000 budget, it was proposed to hire GPI Atlantic to establish terms of reference for valuation for restoration. It was also proposed to have a workshop to evaluate the intangible benefits of salt marsh / estuary restoration, by setting aside a budget of ~\$2000 and fundraising more. Potentially, this workshop could be attached to a BoFEP meeting next spring.

Next meeting:

Sometime in September.

Adjourn.