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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II

DATE: APR 13 1992

SUBJECT: EOWG Stewardship Indicator Subcommittee, Developments & Meeting

FROM: Joel O'Connor

TO: Subcommittee Membership

I understand that all of us can attend the next Subcommittee meeting on Tuesday, June 16, 10:00-3:00 at the Airways Hotel, Buffalo (adjacent to the Buffalo Airport). Scheduling conflicts made it impossible to choose the "best dates" indicated by everyone. If anyone has a serious problem with June 16, please call me immediately -- there is still time to change.

I would like to accomplish three things at this meeting:

- * review progress toward fully documenting the indicators we have individually committed to complete (I believe the most productive format is: each member (or lead author) mail/fax his/her indicator draft to the membership in advance of the June meeting, 15 min indicator presentations at the meeting, followed by suggestions for refining/completing documentation of each indicator.)
- * review and refine completed proposals for resources needed to document specific indicators. (See below and see attached Progress Report.)
- * Plan a workshop, to be conducted collaboratively with Great Lakes United, to gain more objective knowledge of what the public needs from stewardship indicators.

Most of the meeting will be devoted to reviewing and improving upon first drafts of indicators distributed in advance. I understand that commitments have been made to fully document specific indicators as indicated on pages 1 and 2 of the attached Progress Report. Note that the authors of indicators have been added to your Progress Report (pp. 1-2, in parentheses), for the benefit of members only. The Progress Report sent to others does not include names after the indicators. Please call me immediately if I have misrepresented anything. I hope that we can all make individual commitments, well before the June meeting, to document a particular indicator(s) individually or with a small group. I encourage you to work on the indicator that you know best and are most enthusiastic about, and commit to one or two indicators -- no more. I violate my own advice only because I view each of the indicators # 1, 5 and 6 as fundamental to embrace "stewardship" in any sense. (A similar "fundamental" case could be made for any of the first seven.) Also, I expect to relinquish lead responsibility for Indicator # 5 to a legitimate economist as soon as possible.

You should have my guidance on indicator scope, format, etc. this month, allowing at least one month to outline on paper why your indicator(s) is important, what it will look like, how it will be supported by evidence/data, and how it will be completed by October.

I am very doubtful that most of the indicators can be fully documented without expending more time than most of us have, and gaining some outside expertise that none of us have. Consequently, **we also need a short but fully explicit proposal for any EOWG resources needed to fully document your indicator, before the June meeting.** I have tried to anticipate these needs in the attached Progress Report to EOWG. The proposals outlined in the Progress Report must be in final form at the June meeting.

Please draft such a short proposal if needed to complete the indicator to which you are primarily committed. All uncertainties should be resolved by phone and fax prior to the meeting. The meeting will allow time only for unforeseen proposal refinements.

Philip Weller, Executive Director, Great Lakes United, is kind enough to attend the June meeting to help us plan a Nov 1992 workshop. The workshop, as suggested at the March EOWG meeting, is to help us clarify what the actual users of indicators really want. Several of us are convinced that useful clarification requires response to real indicators, hence the scheduled November workshop date. Please consider before our June meeting the kinds of most appropriate participants and the best workshop format. It has also been suggested that we arrange to inform and get reactions of obviously important users of indicators who can attend the meeting. I do not believe that we can afford more than one hour on this topic. I would then like to ask 2-3 members to work closely with GLU in further workshop planning.

Please let me know if anyone sees problems with my attached Progress Report to EOWG. I tried to gain as much input and review as was possible prior to my deadline.

Jim Ransom and I are happy with the attached Recommended Changes in Lake Ontario Stewardship Objective Statement of EOWG. (Recommended changes are in bold, except for the Objective, per se, which is unchanged.) Please let me know before the June meeting if you wish any changes/refinements to this Statement. Given your approval, I expect to send the revision to EOWG as a Subcommittee recommendation after the June meeting.

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I am sorry to report that Dennis King and John Maher have had to withdraw from Subcommittee membership, because of insufficient time and moving to Vancouver, respectively. We will miss both of them. I am working quickly to find replacements with similar expertise. Any early suggestions would be welcome.

Attachments

cc: Paul Bertram, GLNPO
Trefor Reynoldson, CCIW
Susan Bloss, EPA, Niagara Falls
Philip Weller, GLU

Joel O'Connor

March 16, 1992

Recommended Changes

in Lake Ontario Stewardship Objective Statement of
Ecosystems Objectives Work Group

Objective [unchanged]: Human activities and decisions shall embrace environmental ethics and a commitment to responsible stewardship.

The ability of human society to profoundly affect the ecosystem, together with our dependence on it, requires that we regain an environmental ethic to guide our society's activities. Our tendency to consider ourselves separate from, and in control of, the ecosystem has greatly contributed to the degradation of Lake Ontario. The Lake has long been taken for granted and exploited rather than valued. It is now evident that these practices can not be sustained, we must recognize and reconcile ourselves to dependence upon finite ecosystems. Other cultures respect, indeed revere, the earth which sustains all life -- we must regain a similar sense of community with the Lake and its basin. Recent dominant perceptions that society depends upon relatively unfettered environmental exploitation is not "human nature." These perceptions can change, as views have changed through history, when they conflict with new knowledge and experience. We must accept responsibility for maintaining the ecological processes and components of Lake Ontario, preserving its biological diversity and following the principles of sustainable use of resources. Responsible stewardship includes: educating society about current resource uses and practices which jeopardize ecosystem integrity; advocating environmentally sustainable behavior in individuals and institutions; and changing the economic incentives which degrade the ecosystem. Many issues, such as achieving zero discharge of persistent contaminants, and the introduction of exotic species, will be more easily resolved with such an approach.

file: STEWOBJ

Progress Report April 1992

Lake Ontario Responsible Stewardship Subcommittee

Progress through March 1992

Membership of the Stewardship Subcommittee has been tailored to capture as much as is feasible of the diversity in cultures within the Lake Basin. The membership lists are Attachment 1. The Subcommittee has met twice, on Jan 9 and Feb 20, 1992. The EOWG Objective Statement provided to the Subcommittee has been reviewed, and some changes to the supporting statement, but not the Objective, will be recommended by the Subcommittee. The Subcommittee has agreed upon procedural issues, including criteria and a strategy to help select the most appropriate and useful indicators.

Members have submitted and discussed 16 possible stewardship indicators. These indicators are now only partially defined, and all require more compelling justifications. The Subcommittee has found it difficult to decide which indicators could be most useful, given only broad outlines of the candidate indicators and little evidence of what the intended users need most. These uncertainties seem likely to persist until we have more detailed information: more complete definitions of the indicators, evidence that supporting data are adequate or not, evidence that supporting data are available or not, perceived utility of actual indicators, etc. Consequently Subcommittee members have been asked to commit themselves to fully documenting the one or two indicators about which they are most knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Individual Subcommittee members have committed themselves to documenting the first seven of the following indicators, as indicated within parentheses, assuming that nominal supporting resources (see Budget) are available.

1. **Most important fluxes of water:** Basin input, Basin consumption, engineered transfers into and out of the Basin. (Sage, O'Connor)
2. **Degree of public access to governmental decisionmaking** (access to information, lobbying channels, etc. -- at Municipal, Provincial/State and Federal levels). (Knox, Sage)
3. **Municipal behavior** (planning, operations, land use, etc. [including some elements of indicators outlined below]). (Miller)
4. **Environmental volunteerism** (voluntary time, effort devoted to stewardship) (Lerner)
5. **"Defense expenditures,"** the costs of defending ourselves against our lifestyle (costs of pollution control, prevention and remediation; pollutant-induced health costs; limitation and remediation of habitat degradation; etc.). (O'Connor)

6. **Population density:** on margins of Lake and tributaries, and rest of Basin. (O'Connor)
7. **Public perception of public health issues.** (Rae)
8. **Water use:** per capita use by municipality, summed over the Basin; industrial use by municipality, summed over the Basin; water cost/m³.
9. **Meaningful Environmental Audits** (corporate pollution prevention activities: their openness to public, expenditures, and measures of success).
10. **Degree of public access,** to Lake shore and tributaries.
11. **Resource use:**
Annual energy use (1960 to present): per capita, by industry, residential, transportation, total.

Annual energy production: natural gas, other fossil fuels, hydro.

Food: quantities produced within Basin, imported, and exported.
12. **Land use:** on margins of Lake and tributaries (green space and developed area); rest of Basin (green space and developed area).
13. **Budget Assessment** (governmental decisions at all levels as reflected in environmental allocations, tax policy, subsidies, etc.)
14. **Environmental values** (characterize values, on recognized scales, in children (5-7 yrs) and adults, in municipalities vice rural areas).
15. **Household Environmental Audits** (water usage, energy usage, % food grown within Basin, etc.).
16. **Toxics Release Inventory** (public reporting on quantities of point-source and total pollutant releases to the Basin).

Proposed Work Plan for FY92-93

The following Work Plan has not yet been agreed to in its entirety by the full Subcommittee, but it has been developed with Subcommittee participation. The Plan assumes that Subcommittee members can devote about three work days per month* to documenting indicators, from May through October 1992. Two additional, Nov-Dec 1992, presentations and resulting indicator refinements are scheduled.

Schedule - FY 1992

- April Chair provides guidance re "fully documenting" a stewardship indicator
- Submit proposals for FY92 assistance in documenting specific indicators. (See FY92 Budget.)
- Apr-May Feedback/improvement of above "guidance."
- Define commitments and strategies to fully document particular indicators, including proposals for FY92 and 93 resources needed (see Budget below).
- June Third Subcommittee meeting, to (1) review and assist progress toward fully documenting a few stewardship indicators, (2) review and refine proposals [outlined in Budget below] for resources needed to document specific indicators, and (3) plan a workshop, to be conducted collaboratively with GLU, to gain more objective knowledge of what the public needs from stewardship indicators.
- Chair submits above proposals.
- August Fourth Subcommittee meeting, with selected invitees, to review and assist progress toward fully documenting a few stewardship indicators, and complete plans for a workshop to be conducted collaboratively with GLU.

* Assume 18 full work days (excluding time of assistants) are required to fully document an indicator, present it at two meetings, and incorporate refinements from peer reviews. Given indicator "completion" in Oct 1992 (see Schedule), the May-Oct (6 mo) effort requires 18d/6mo = 3 work days per month.

Schedule - FY 1993

Oct Complete indicator documentation and formal presentations.

Nov Subcommittee/GLU workshop. The workshop would solicit reaction of presumed indicator users to presentations of fully worked out indicators.

Benefiting from workshop, refine indicators and their presentations.

Dec Submit text/graphic versions and make formal presentations to EOWG of (1) the "final" indicators and (2) strategies and costs for monitoring and disseminating indicators.

Incorporate EOWG improvements to indicators and monitoring strategies; submit final report for publication and implementation.

Budget - FY 1992

Existing Travel Budget

February travel allocation (EPA, NFPO)	\$ 3.0 K
Feb Subcommittee Meeting	<u>1.2</u>
April Balance	\$ 1.8 K

Requested Budget

Additional travel request (one Subcomm. mtg and consultation with experts on Indicators 1, 2 and 5).	\$ 8 K
Proposal for two Atlantic States Legal Foundation interns (summer 1992) to assist authors of Indicators # 1, 2 and 3.	4 K
Proposal for summer 1992 student to seek and summarize Environmental Volunteerism data (Indicator # 4)	2 K
Proposal for consulting with two (U.S. and Canadian) government economists to seek and summarize "Defense Expenditures" (Indicator # 5)	6 K
Proposal to assist in drafting and evaluating questionnaire (Indicator # 8)	<u>4</u> K
FY92 Total (Request only)	\$24 K

Budget - FY 1993

Subcommittee meetings and travel	\$ 5	K
Proposal for Subcommittee/GLU workshop (Nov 1992)	<u>10</u>	K
FY93 Total	\$15	K

file: PROGREPT