



Summary Notes of an Investigational Meeting for a Great Bay Estuary Restoration Partnership May 16, 2007

Sponsored By

*Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, New Hampshire Coastal Program,
New Hampshire Estuaries Project, The Nature Conservancy*

Attendees

Ducks Unlimited: Craig Ferris

Great Bay NERR: Kathy Mills, Rachel Stevens, Peter Wellenberger

NH Coastal Program: Ted Diers, Beth Lambert

NH Estuaries Project: Jennifer Hunter, Phil Trowbridge

NH Fish & Game: Cheri Patterson, Bruce Smith

NH DES: Steve Couture, Grace Levergood, Deb Loiselle, Kevin Lucey

NOAA (Coastal Restoration Center): Eric Hutchins

The Nature Conservancy: Tom Haas (Guest), Ray Konisky, Tiffany McKenna, Mark Zankel,

UNH CICEET: Rich Langan

UNH Jackson Laboratory: Dave Burdick, Alyson Eberhardt, Ray Grizzle, Fred Short

USDA NRCS: Susan Hoey, Don Keirstead

US Fish & Wildlife Service: Eric Derleth

Purpose of the Meeting

The meeting sponsors believe that a new approach to estuarine restoration may be beneficial for the Great Bay estuary; one that is more collaborative and coordinated, more ambitious, larger scale, longer-term, and ecosystem-based. This meeting will investigate the possibility of formalizing a public-private estuary restoration partnership focused on Great Bay.

Expected Meeting Outcomes

Participants in this forum will contribute toward 1) a collective vision of estuarine restoration for Great Bay, 2) an identification of primary obstacles and barriers, and 3) an assessment of the public-private partnership model as a strategy for achieving success.

Agenda

- 9:30 Welcome to Great Bay NERR & Hugh Gregg Center – *Peter Wellenberger (GBNERR)*
Introduction to meeting sponsors, purpose, & agenda - *Ray Konisky (TNC)*
- 9:40 Why We Need Substantial Restoration in Great Bay - *Phil Trowbridge (NH Estuaries Project)*
Select findings from the 2006 State of the Estuaries report
- 10:00 A Regional Perspective on Estuary Restoration - *Eric Hutchins (NOAA Restoration Center)*
Regional trends in estuarine restoration and funding priorities
- 10:20 Discussion Topic 1: Impediments to Enhancing the Scope, Scale, and Pace of Restoration
Group whiteboard discussion on obstacles, barriers, and challenges
Facilitated by Beth Lambert (NH Coastal Program)
- 11:00 Discussion Topic 2: Restoration Partnership: How It Adds Value; How It Might Look
Group discussion of other successful restoration partnerships, our possible members and roles
Facilitated by Ray Konisky (TNC)
- 11:40 Summary and Next Steps *Facilitated by Ray Konisky (TNC)*

Summary of Barriers to Enhancing the Scale, Scope, and Pace of Restoration Identified as “most important” by workshop break-out groups

1. Lack of public understanding of, and support for, restoration
 - Public doesn't see and understand the need; no apparent crisis or sense of urgency
 - Public doesn't know what restoration means
 - Need “social marketing”
2. Lack of funding
 - Particularly for project development
 - Restoration is expensive, especially for subtidal
 - Few sources of federal match
3. Lack of capacity
 - Leadership at the highest levels
 - Coordination of a common vision and consensus on goals and plans
 - Lack of local capacity to partner on, develop, and implement projects
 - No clearly established “go to” teams that are ready to move a project forward
 - Lack of technical expertise and people power to get work done
 - Lack of experienced project managers
4. On-going impacts to the estuary
 - Growth and development
 - Increasing demands on freshwater supply
 - Severe storms degrading water quality
 - Climate change (a big unknown)
 - Disease and invasive species
5. Regional policy and legal framework
 - Regulations and enforcement are weak (wastewater treatment, stormwater, buffers)
 - Cumbersome permitting process for restoration projects
 - Private ownership of dams and access points
6. Lack of integrated, watershed-based approach to restoration planning
 - Need ecosystem based approach – more data on interactions and connections (science)
 - Lacking valuation of ecosystem services and human dimensions
 - Pollution-prevention needs to be considered as a complement to restoration activities
 - Need to focus on best opportunities for restoration, not solely historic distributions

Notes on Open Discussion of Partnership

1. Scope of potential partnership might be expanded to:
 - Army Corp of Engineers
 - Maine-based organizations

- State Departments of Transportation
- Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- FEMA – ties into potential benefits of improved storm/erosion control
- Local watershed and community-based groups
- Legislators
- Climate advocates as potential outreach partners

2. Scale of potential partnership might be:

- Regional watershed-scale focus (including Maine interests)
- Inclusive of Hampton/Seabrook Estuary

Next Steps

1. Distribute summary of the meeting to all invitees

2. Re-convene organizers at earliest opportunity to:

- Assess meeting outcomes
- Strategize for overcoming barriers identified by attendees
- Consider developing a survey to poll and engage stakeholders
- Discuss scope and scale of potential partnership

(Note: organizer meeting will take place on June 6, 2007)

3. Work to assemble regional steering team or teams to develop:

- A shared vision across agencies and interests
- Goals of partnership
- Priorities for restoration habitats
- Identification of potential target areas for next projects
- Proposals for funding

As a restoration partner participant, you can expect to hear from the organizers following June 6th for a summary of the meeting and for specific requests of assistance with information gathering and team development.