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## **Climate Sub-Committee Recommendations for Charge Question 1, Climate Change**

Deadline: July 23<sup>rd</sup> GLAB Meeting

Charge Question 1:

*Currently climate change impacts and adaptation are not explicitly included in the Action Plan. Should the connection between the Action Plan focus areas and the protection of the Great Lakes from the impacts of climate change be expressed more clearly in the next Action Plan? If so, how?*

### **DRAFT Recommendations**

- The subcommittee feels there was agreement of the GLAB that the GLRI Action Plan should acknowledge climate change.
- The subcommittee agrees with EPA's findings and conclusions that climate change is occurring and is negatively impacting the Great Lakes.
- The subcommittee believes that the pertinent area of climate change issues as it relates to the GLRI are climate adaptation practices. Furthermore, the subcommittee believes it could bring unwanted attention to the GLRI if a discussion of mitigation is included in the document. Therefore, the subcommittee recommends that the issue of climate mitigation not be included within the GLRI Action Plan.
- The subcommittee recommends that the executive summary and introduction of the Action Plan be amended to include language that acknowledges climate change is impacting the resiliency of the Great Lakes, including their ability to withstand the major threats identified in the Great Lakes Regional Collaboration Strategy. Furthermore, that climate change impacts are threatening the success of restoration work being done through the GLRI now and into the future. And that, in order to ensure the federal investment being made in the GLRI is not wasted by impacts from climate change, it is necessary for the program to integrate climate adaptation practices into applicable projects within the GLRI.
- The subcommittee recognizes the need to strike the right balance within the Action Plan to acknowledge and adequately incorporate climate change impacts into the work of the GLRI while not allowing the Action Plan to become solely a vehicle for climate adaptation work within the Great Lakes.
- The subcommittee does not believe climate adaptation should be included as a separate focus area within the GLRI Action Plan. We would be concerned that separating climate into a separate focus area could result in climate adaptation practices being underfunded or under-prioritized. In addition, we do not want the GLRI to become a lightning rod for a climate debate, and believe that incorporating climate adaptation practices throughout the program in manageable ways is the best approach.

- To make the GLRI program as efficient as possible, agencies should take climate change implications into account when setting the Goals and Objectives under each Focus Area of the Action Plan and when designing GLRI Requests for Proposals.
- The subcommittee recommends that for all GLRI funding being released through a competitive grant process, points be assigned within the Request for Proposals/Applications for incorporating climate adaptation actions into restoration projects. Projects that do not include climate adaptation actions would not be deemed ineligible.
- The subcommittee recognizes that climate adaptation practices must be tied with ecosystem protection efforts in order to help build the resiliency of the Great Lakes system and therefore recommends that a portion of resources within the GLRI go toward ecosystem protection efforts that are able to demonstrate their contribution to helping the Lakes adapt to a changing climate.