

Niagara Lake Erie Community Coastal Collaborative (NCCC)

Terms of Reference

May 2018

Background

Swimming, fishing, industrial activities, and drinking water are just a few of the social-economic benefits we gather from the nearshore waters of the Great Lakes, making them immensely valuable. They also contain invaluable ecosystems, providing habitat to many species, including elusive or rare species at risk. Due to the intense use, the nearshore waters are also highly susceptible to degradation. The governments of Canada and the United States have developed an approach to address ongoing and emerging challenges to the nearshore waters of the Great Lakes. The Nearshore Framework is a systematic, integrated, and collective approach for assessing nearshore health and identifying and communicating cumulative impacts and stresses.

A pilot project led by Environment and Climate Change Canada applied the nearshore framework in the Eastern Basin of Lake Erie and identified the stretch of coastline between Crystal Beach and Fort Erie as having the poorest nearshore quality. There are currently many local groups working along the Niagara coast of Lake Erie who have significant knowledge of the local coastal environment, its uses, and its stressors. Great efforts are being made to more thoroughly understand causes of degradation and future impacts of increasing stress. There is an opportunity to align efforts and optimize activities to maximize the results of these local efforts.

Purpose of the Collaborative

Optimize and expand **local action** to build a **healthy** and **resilient** Lake Erie **coastal ecosystem** that supports the community's economic, recreational, and spiritual needs.

Geographic Scope

The scope will include the Niagara Peninsula portion of the Lake Erie coast with acknowledgement that the **area that influences** this coast will likely originate outside this geography and may include the watersheds to the entire lake.

Goals of the Collaborative

- Local stakeholder groups have a venue for collaboration in building a healthy and resilient Lake Erie coastal ecosystem
- The actions of local stakeholder groups are mutually reinforcing towards building a healthy and resilient Lake Erie coastal ecosystem

- Local stakeholder groups have sufficient technical and scientific information to identify causes of impairment and take effective action
- Community members are aware of the importance of a healthy and resilient Lake Erie coastal ecosystem, potential threats, actions underway, and opportunities for involvement
- Activities of the local stakeholder groups are aligned with broad Lake Erie basin wide ecosystem management

Organization Structure

- Collaborative Chairs: provide the logistical support to the Collaborative; organizing and conducting meetings, facilitating communication among the Collaborative, and keeping meeting records. Environment and Climate Change Canada has offered to chair the collaborative in its outset, with the intent of establishing a self-sustaining program.
- Collaborative Members at Large: attend meetings and share news about local actions and new emerging potential threats for consideration among the larger group. It is also an opportunity for members to identify areas for involvement. The membership will be made up of academics, government, industry, local stakeholder groups.
- Coordinating Committee: work with the Collaborative Members to develop work plans and track progress. It will involve regular interaction with the Technical Subcommittee on these matters and bring the results of the technical discussions to the Collaborative Members. The Coordinating Committee works with all members to identify areas for collaboration and leads attempts to align efforts including drafting joint funding proposals. The coordinating committee may lead outreach to the broader coastal community on the activities of the Collaborative. The Coordination Committee is to be determined by the Collaborative Members but will likely include government and local stakeholder groups.
- Technical Subcommittee: Assist in developing the scientific and technical requirements of the Collaborative. Activities may include completing scientific or technical tasks requested by the Coordinating Committee. The team may consist of members of the Collaborative and external people when required. Membership can include any necessary expert but mainly local academics, government, industry, and local stakeholder groups.
- Ad-hoc Teams: temporary groups of people established to complete a specific task which disbands upon completion of that project or piece of work. Teams may be made up of Collaborative Members and external people as needed.

Meeting Frequency

The Collaborative will meet at least once every three months (quarterly) with more frequent meetings when required. The Coordinating Committee will meet at least once a month to

remain aware of partner activities. The Technical Subcommittee and Ad-hoc Teams will meet as seen fit by the members.

Membership

Starting Members (see ongoing membership list)

Albert Garafalo
Alison Thomson
Amy Parks
Amy Roebuck
Annie Michaud
Beth Palma
Bill Fryer
Bob Highcock
Cesar Moldonado
Nadine Litwin
John Litwin
Cheryl Schonewille
Diane Stemerding
Don Lubberts
Erika Froese

Felix Barbetti
Gary Stemerding
Ian Twyford
Jean Hempson
Jim Merrick
June Chipp
Marcia Caryln
Marie Janicke
Rick Froese
Rick Stockton
Tim Seburn

Agency Members:

- *Ontario Ministry of Natural Resource:*
Mike Rose
- *Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change:*
Cherienne Vierra
- *Environment and Climate Change Canada:*
Janette Anderson
Jody McKenna
Julia Hatcher
Luca Cargnelli
Pete Zuzek (Zuzek Inc.)

New Membership

New interested individuals or groups are always welcome to join The Collaborative, and should have be eager to work with a committed group with a common interest in improving the health of the Lake Erie Coast within Niagara.

Glossary:

Coastal Ecosystem: areas where land and water join to create an environment with a distinct structure, diversity, and flow of energy. Examples in the Great Lakes include: coastal wetlands, river mouths, embayments, and high energy open coast.

Healthy & Resilient Ecosystem: an ecosystem which is able to absorb disturbance and reorganize while still retaining its structure and function over time and maintain the ecological resources and ecosystem services it provides.

Local Action: action taken by local stakeholder groups or individuals to change the environment in order to create a desired environmental state

Mutually Reinforcing Actions: actions that are not necessarily the same but which contribute to a common end goal

Zone of Impact: the location where the problem manifest itself

Zone of Influence: the location where a problem originates (can occur up in the watersheds removed from the lakes themselves)