

GIT 1/GIT 4 Collaboration – Land Use

3/27/12

In Attendance: Peyton Robertson, Mark Bryer, Tom O'Connell, Daniel Baldwin, Bruce Vogt, Mike Fritz, Anna Stuart Burnett, Andrew Turner, Adam Davis

Background:

In early March, the Fisheries GIT reached out to the Watersheds GIT with some ideas for collaboration (below) and they responded with an interest discussing potential cross cuts.

1. Have the watersheds team advise the Fish GIT on how to best engage in the WIPs process. We have talked about commenting as a GIT on the WIPs but are not sure where to start. I doubt we would comment on each WIP but putting forward a set of blanket comments highlighting Fish GIT priorities may not be influential. As Phase II WIPs are completed this month, what is the most effective and efficient way for us to ensure fish issues are incorporated?
2. Targeting of TMDL implementation. Can we work with WQ and Watersheds GIT to identify areas where nutrient loads may not be the highest but living resource potential is high (i.e. nursery habitat)? Would states be willing to make tradeoffs that may not mean the biggest load reductions but may have significant/positive living resource impacts?
3. Fish GIT work with Watersheds GIT to develop a 'How To' manual for getting citizens/stakeholders involved in local land use planning decisions. At our December meeting, Mattawoman creek was raised as a success story, where local citizen groups were able to halt the highway project by raising science based concerns on the impact to living resources. It sounded to me that this group, although successful, had to learn as they worked through the process. I wonder if some guidance on how the planning process work, when to get involved, what information to have in support of your case, etc, would help groups on the Mattawoman better organize and bring living resource issues to the forefront. The guide would be for any person but we might target an audience of recreational and commercial fishermen who have a direct stake in seeing sustainability issues considered.

GIT 4s Top Priorities:

- GIT 4 provides a forum for localities to share their preservation plans and discuss improvements
- Create a framework for tracking healthy watersheds and identify what factors maintain their health.
 - What reasonable assurance do we have that they will stay healthy?
 - Plan:
 - a) Framework for tracking and Identification of the healthy watersheds
 - b) What is being done to maintain them? (i.e. land acquisition, local zoning, anti-degradation act)
 - c) Communication strategy for protection being the priority over restoration
 - Restoration is far more expensive than protection
 - Document and value BMP benefits and figure out how to provide incentives

Meeting Notes:

- The Clean Water Act (CWA) is designed, or can be understood as, a binary key where watershed protection and restoration are emphasized.
 - Within the CWA, current TMDL addresses restoration
 - CWA has little influence on protection or preventing watershed degradation nor is it representative of the value of prevention versus restoration.
- The TMDL was designed to take into account living resources and their temporal habitat needs.
 - Although not completely representative, this inclusion could serve as the driving force behind a more in depth analysis of TMDL impacts on fisheries.
 - This inclusion could also be a limiting factor because TMDL and WIPS feel that they are assessing and including ecological considerations with existing provisions, modifying vs. developing.
 - GIT 4 is pushing for a staged implementation of TMDL practices under the goal of protection and restoration
- Idea to blend communication strategy with living resources for better impact (w/ geographical representation)
 - “Have to protect it in order to keep it.”
 - Understand growth will happen; now how do we support it?
- **Action Item:** GIT 1 and GIT 4 should develop a strategy to achieve mutual objectives
 - Goal to eventually pitch these ideas to the Management Board
 - Looking into maps, land management, and options
- States will have to offset future developmental impacts
 - How can we direct those offsets to better habitats and fisheries?
- Can we layer on multiple goals to reach the highest living resource outcomes possible?
 - Without additional efforts/costs
- Critical Areas Law + Threat Analysis → how to manage future growth
- **Action Item:** Make sure fishermen and community members (i.e. stakeholders) know about the ecological importance of and the specific locations of critical areas
 - Arm them with the knowledge to be informed about where these areas are and what factors are threatening them
 - Tell them how to get involved and make beneficial changes
 - Blend current public communication pieces w/biological research. Let users know what's happening in these tributaries
- **Goal:** Develop an economic assessment of money lost if a fishery or habitat is degraded or lost
- Need to identify our “local champions” so we can connect them to their resources and impacting factors to get increased productivity
- **June GIT 1 Meeting Workshop Activity:**
 - Go through a region and try to look at future developmental impacts and how to classify possible courses of action for preservation
 - a) Start to sketch out the most meaningful questions and then who can answer them
 - b) Convey to the angling community, what form, who, and how?
 - c) Convey to the planning community, what form, who, and how?
- **Next Steps:**
 - June GIT 1 meeting discussion and land use workshops
 - Develop a set of agreed upon principals by the ‘Triumvirate’
 - a) Triumvirate would consist of the Fisheries, Habitat, and Watersheds GITs
 - Develop a focused communications strategy for anglers and stakeholders
 - Pilot locality analysis → proposed location was Deer Creek