GRAHAM
SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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Great Lakes Water Levels Integrated Assessment (IA) Planning Grants
Webinar Questions & Answers

Q: Are there any specific locations/municipalities that you could provide as possible examples?

A: Rather than providing example locations, we suggest that teams think about locations where data are available and impacts are occurring (due to high, low, or both high and low water levels), as well as who you know in those communities and how those communities are representative of similar communities in the region. One purpose of the planning grant phase is to provide time to identify what information is available and explore what might be done, as well as build and enhance connections with local partners. It would be good to see teams building on existing work, but that's not a requirement.

Q: Where can we look to see work that has already been done on this topic?

A: Two relevant binational studies conducted under the auspices of the International Joint Commission (IJC) include the Levels Reference Study from the 1990s and the International Upper Great Lakes Study (IUGLS), out of which came recommendations for adaptive management and the kind of options we envision being explored through the integrated assessment.

Links to the Levels Reference Study report and IUGLS webpage are provided under the "Related Links" on the Water Levels IA webpage (http://graham.umich.edu/knowledge/ia/water-levels).

Q: What is the role of the Advisory Committee with regard to proposal review? Would it be possible to include a member or members of the Water Level Integrated Assessment Advisory Committee as part of a planning grant team?

A: We have assembled an advisory committee for the project that includes representatives from state and provincial regulatory agencies, environmental organizations, and industry. For a complete list of members and general description of the committee's role, refer to the Water Levels Integrated Assessment Plan on the Water Levels IA webpage (http://graham.umich.edu/knowledge/ia/water-levels).

Based on questions we have received since the release of the planning grant request for proposals (RFP) we'd like to provide some clarifying language on the role of advisory committee members and plans for the review of proposals. The goal of providing this clarification is to maintain a neutral environment for proposal development and review, while continuing to use our advisory committee members' expertise as we move forward in the IA process.

- The advisory committee was formed to direct broad stakeholder and decision maker input to the overall integrated assessment. As such, advisory committee members should not be included on specific proposals. Once planning grant teams are in place we strongly encourage those teams to contact advisory committee members to take advantage of their wealth of knowledge, ideas, connections and data.
- Advisory committee members are encouraged to share the planning grant RFP broadly but should refrain from working with specific teams developing proposals. Questions regarding the development of proposals should be directed to John Callewaert, jcallew@umich.edu, 734-615-3752.
- A separate review panel of experienced researchers and administrators from both countries will be assembled to review the planning grant proposals based on the review criteria listed in the RFP. The reviewers will provide their input to Graham Institute staff who will make the final

funding decisions. If a clarifying question arises during the proposal review process that an advisory committee member is well-suited to answer due to his/her work or affiliation, Graham Institute staff may contact him/her to help answer the question.

Q: Will grant recipients be expected to share data used in the grant with the Graham Institute?

A: Integrated assessments typically rely on existing, often publicly available information. They do not often generate new data, although they may include new analyses of existing data. In any event, we expect that the information used and work done by funded teams would be shared with the Graham Institute and made available as part of the larger IA project. We can talk through the possibility of holding information for a limited period of time if the investigators need sole access to it while completing work, but ultimately the information would be made publicly available.

Q: How will the planning grant reports be used?

A: The goal is for the planning grant reports to help inform the overall Integrated Assessment including work across funded teams. For instance, we expect that planning grant teams will share information with each other and that planning grant findings will be used by various analysis teams during the integrated assessment.

Q: How might teams change after the planning grant phase?

A: It is possible that some teams may merge after the planning grant phase when applying for an integrated assessment grant.

Q: Following the planning grants, are there multiple integrated assessments or is it one integrated assessment?

A: The answer is both. During Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Integrated Assessment, analysis teams will analyze the status, trends, causes and consequences of water level fluctuation in a particular location and identify and evaluate potential adaptive policies and activities. During these two stages, the analysis teams will, for the most part, be working separately with their respective local partners, as though there were multiple integrated assessments happening simultaneously. This work would not, however, be entirely independent, as the Graham Institute will help promote information sharing and collaboration among teams to enhance the work and prepare for Phase 3.

Phase 3 will bring together the separate analysis teams to work collaboratively with each other and Graham Institute project personnel to develop one final comprehensive Integrated Assessment report of select options. The final report will integrate the findings of the various analysis teams and stakeholder input to identify opportunities across impact areas and for application more broadly throughout the region. It will address jurisdictional considerations, uncertainty, implementation strategies, and performance measures. During this stage, it will look more like one, single integrated assessment.

Q: Can you please provide the emails of attendees on this call for potential team coordination?

A: In the webinar follow-up email, we will ask webinar registrants to opt-in to having their name, email address, and affiliation shared with other webinar registrants.