

Operational Principles for the Lake Michigan Ecosystem Modeling and Forecasting Working Group

Purpose

The Lake Michigan Ecosystem Modeling and Forecasting Working Group (from herein, the Working Group) will work to address modeling and forecasting needs identified by existing management priorities, modelers, and resource managers. The Working Group will provide leadership to the Lake Michigan Modeling and Forecasting community, and work in partnership with relevant entities to facilitate implementation of ecosystem-based management, coordinate and integrate modeling activities, and bring together model users and developers to improve model development and product delivery.

Intended Outcomes of the Working Group are to:

- Improve decision-making by meeting information needs of resource managers.
- Increase the capacity for the modeling and forecasting community to address lakewide issues.
- Improve the usefulness and functionality of models and model products.
- Advance the modeling and forecasting field by creating standards, integrating best practices and sharing resources.

The Working Group will:

- Encourage the collaboration and coordination of modeling and forecasting efforts by federal, state, and tribal agencies along with other key partners to assist with development and implementation the models and forecasts necessary to facilitate the management of Lake Michigan.
- Identify and assess the availability of the appropriate input data for models and forecasts.
- Determine the most effective approaches to model and forecast the critical needs identified by the Working Group.
- Help to ensure that relevant modeling and forecasting tools are accessible to relevant resource managers and policy makers.

Vision: The modeling community contributing to a healthy Lake Michigan watershed through proactive support of ecosystem-based management.

Mission: The Working Group will help to meet lakewide management goals and resource management needs through partnership, collaboration, sharing resources, and advancing modeling and forecasting in the Great Lakes.

Guiding Principles

Interagency communication, coordination, and collaboration: Effective interagency communication, coordination, and collaboration are vital to the effective and efficient management of Lake Michigan. Planning, implementation, and evaluation of Working Group activities will be highly transparent to the membership.

Consensus-based decision-making: Future activities will be based on actions and the collectively identified needs and capabilities of the community. The Working Group decisions represent a consensus and are supported by all members.

Respect: Mutual respect for the differences in the individual member agencies' responsibilities, missions, and capabilities is of the utmost importance.

Leadership: Effective ecosystem-based management is the result of leadership and teamwork from all entities and sectors, therefore we will promote leadership and teamwork in all Working Group activities.

Membership and Participation

The Working Group will function as an independent body with support from federal and state agencies, tribal organizations and regional coordinating entities. The membership of the Working Group shall consist of volunteer representatives from Agencies or Organizations that want to participate in the activities of the working group.

Participation

All Members to the Working Group are expected to participate, as appropriate, in an equitable manner in Working Group activities and assignments. Participation in the Working Group activities and assignments shall be reflective of the Member's expertise and consistent with their respective agency's or organization's interest in the particular issue being addressed.

Stakeholder/Manager Advisory Committee: The Committee provides a venue for closer interaction among State/Tribal working group representatives to complete relevant tasks and develop recommendations for improving management decision making. All state and tribal representatives on the Working Group are members of the Advisory Committee.

Secretariat

The Working Group shall have an official Secretariat including a Chair, a Coordinator, and a Steering Committee. The Secretariat will assist the Chair in carrying out all activities necessary to fulfill the Working Group's mission; such as planning meetings, soliciting new members, and any other activities as directed by the Chair. The nature, staffing, and funding of the Secretariat shall be defined and approved by the Working Group, and be reevaluated every five (5) calendar years to ensure its effective operation.

Chair

The Chair is the presiding officer and is expected to oversee Working Group activities. Chairs will be elected every two years by a majority vote of Working Group members present at the election meeting.

Coordinator

The Coordinator shall provide assistance to the Working Group by facilitating and coordinating meetings and providing support to group activities, as appropriate.

Steering Committee

A subset of members selected by the Chair and approved by the Working Group. They provide support and advice to the Chair.

Working Group Decisions and Activities

Meetings

It is expected that the Working Group shall hold at least one (1) general meeting every calendar year in conjunction with GLOS Annual General Meetings. Additional meetings, workshops, or conference calls may be held to facilitate the activities of the Working Group and ensure the fulfillment of its mission.

Reporting of Activities

It is expected that the Working Group will provide the Member Agencies with an annual update of the progress of its activities.

In addition, the Working Group shall issue, as appropriate, additional reports and outreach materials, to inform resource managers, decision makers, and key stakeholder groups of relevant issues related to ecosystem modeling and forecasting in Lake Michigan.

Decisions

Decision-making by the Working Group requires consensus from all members, which requires that every member be able and willing to support decisions of the group. Decisions are considered final when each member has been allowed to vote or abstain. If consensus is not reached, a small subgroup of members may be assigned to develop a recommendation for reconsideration of the entire group.

Products and Publications

Products may include but are not limited to, documents, PowerPoint presentations, videos and associated information.

All Working Group products and publications are under the stewardship of Working Group members and GLOS. The development, review, and maintenance of each product should be considered prior to undertaking a project and considered in annual work objectives.

Products developed by the Working Group must not be available from another agency or private entity. The Working Group will not compete with private business or replace the need for agency-specific information. All Working Group products are in the public domain and will be identified as products of the Lake Michigan Ecosystem Modeling and Forecasting Working Group.