

SOUTHERN GULF OF ST LAWRENCE COALITION ON SUSTAINABILITY

E-NEWS - APRIL 2000

Dear coalition members and friends:

The SGSLCS Steering Committee met on 17-18 April and will meet again in Moncton on 23-24 June. The process of setting in place the funding, office and procedures we need seems to be taking a long time, but we are making progress.

Oil and Gas Forum

The oil and gas forum committee had its initial meeting, attracting roughly 20 people. It was agreed that a public forum, which will look at available information and discuss whether oil and gas development in the southern gulf region is appropriate (considering social, economic and environmental perspectives), will be useful and should go ahead. The form of the forum - whether one large or a series of smaller meetings - has not yet been decided. As for timing, it clearly has to wait until at least July, to accommodate the schedules of fishing families. Now that Corridor Resources has postponed any exploratory activity on the Cabot Trail Shore until next year, we have more time to find the necessary funding, information and resource persons. The Fisheries Resource Council of Canada has asked Minister Dhaliwal to conduct a thorough impact assessment before any exploratory or development activities are allowed, so as time passes we will hopefully have more information that can feed into the public debate. Anyone wanting to get in on the ground floor of planning for this forum please contact Larry Hildebrand, who is chairing the committee.

Coalition Coordinator

Advertisements for a staff person to coordinate coalition activities have gone out to French and English newspapers in the Gulf region. These ads are attached in word format, for your use. Please print out the ad in the appropriate language and circulate it in your community or organization.

Annual General Meeting

Our second annual general meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2000. Last year the meeting was hosted by Bedeque Bay Environmental Management Assoc. in PEI. We invite all coalition member groups to consider hosting the next AGM. Would any interested group please send in a brief proposal indicating where you would like to hold the meeting, and who would be on the local organizing committee. The venue needs to have the capacity to hold about 150 people, and allow for translation services to be set up. Also, there needs to be enough accommodations nearby to absorb the participants. We would very much like to bring the meeting into a rural community, to spread what economic benefits we can, and also to showcase the work of a member group.

Coastal Zone Canada

The Coastal Zone Canada conference "Coastal stewardship: Lessons learned and the paths ahead" will take place in St John NB from 17-22 September, 2000. Sub-themes include Aboriginal practices, Community-based actions, Coastal health and Oceans governance. It promises to be a very rewarding week of papers, posters, discussions, round tables, field trips and socializing. There is also a trade show that runs in parallel to the conference. For more information, contact the secretariat at czc2000@gov.nb.ca or check the web site www.gov.nb.ca/dfa/czc-zcc2000/htm. Our coalition will be represented at CZC by our chairman, Jean-Paul Vanderlinden of Universite de Moncton, who will present both a paper and a poster.

There is also a CZC youth forum happening on the 15th-17th, which hopes to attract 175 young people (under 30) from around the globe. Encourage your young people to get involved! For information, contact Maxine Westhead at westheadm@dfo-mpo.gc.ca. Youth are invited to submit a paper, artwork, poetry, songs or other media related to the conference themes.

NB Sustainability Program

The Steering Committee of the SGSLCS has sent a letter to the NB government to support the application for funding from our member groups that are part of the NB sustainability program. The objective of the program is "to facilitate local community, business and government interactions for the long-term mutual betterment of environmental quality, economic health and social well-being". Through the implementation of local "sustainable development" projects, this program gave communities a direct role in cleaning up their environment and also facilitated more transparent development planning. We wish them the best of luck with the application for financial support from the Environmental Trust Fund.

Estuarine Research Society

We have recently had mail from the newly constituted Southern Gulf of St Lawrence Estuarine Research Society. Congratulations on your progress ERS! And we look forward to hearing from you and working with you to understand, protect and conserve viable ecosystems in the southern Gulf region. To learn more about this new society of researchers and activists, contact Eric Tremblay, Kouchibouguac National Park, 186 Road 117, NB E4X 2P1. There is also a web site being set up.....watch for it!