**Purpose and Goals of North Atlantic Technical Committee Subgroups – January 2012**

Under the annual process for assessing science needs and selecting North Atlantic LCC projects approved by the Steering Committee, the LCC Technical Committee is charged with developing a set of recommended science needs for consideration by the LCC Steering Committee during its annual April meeting. During the winter of 2011, the LCC conducted an extensive request for regional science needs. The results were reviewed, synthesized into common science needs and prioritized by the Technical Committee and three subgroups. Rather than repeating the full request process in 2012, LCC staff propose that the Technical Committee refine last year’s priorities in light of projects approved last year and new developments or science needs that have emerged since then. LCC staff further propose that the Technical Committee develop aquatic, coastal, and terrestrial subgroups to focus on science needs within these systems. During the March 2012 Technical Committee meeting, the Technical Committee would synthesize information from these teams and make recommendations on 2012 priority science needs to the Steering Committee that best complement completed and ongoing projects.

LCC staff propose the following goals and process:

* Each Technical Committee member will select one of the three system subgroups on which s/he will participate. If they have equivalent expertise and interest in more than one group, LCC staff will help identify the best group to achieve a balanced membership among groups.
* LCC will provide staff support for each of the subgroups to reduce the time and effort required of participants and ensure completion of tasks between calls.
* Technical Committee members and LCC staff will identify additional experts outside of the technical committee who would be valuable participants on subgroups.
* Subgroup members will review last year’s common science needs, Northeast Conservation Framework workshop results and the matrix of projects and priority needs that appears in the LCC Conservation Science Strategic Plan. Subgroup members will also consider the current state of science and data gaps in their systems that relate to landscape-level conservation planning.
* Priority needs identified should not be limited by likely funding via LCC appropriations. The new Northeast Climate Science Center may provide additional capacity to address LCC science needs, and other capacity may exist as well.
* Each subgroup (with LCC staff) will prepare a short, consolidated assessment of high priority science needs in their system for discussion by the full Technical Committee in March.
* At the March meeting, the Technical Committee will jointly review, discuss and synthesize the assessment of the subgroups and develop a single set of 2012 science needs or science portfolio for the North Atlantic LCC.
* If necessary, final refinement of the science needs will occur between the March Technical Committee and April Steering Committee meeting.
* Following approval of science needs by the Steering Committee, the Technical Committee and relevant subgroup will identify the appropriate mechanism (e.g., RFP or direct contract) for seeking proposals.