**Summary of feedback on science needs and science delivery needs from the**

**April 2015 North Atlantic LCC Steering Committee meeting**

At its April 2015 meeting, the Steering Committee considered and discussed recommended conservation science needs and science delivery needs developed by the Technical Committee and Science Delivery Committee. These needs were developed through a process that culminated in the joint meeting of the Technical and Science Delivery Committees on March 10-11 in Hadley. This process resulted in a prioritized list of 12 conservation science needs and six science delivery needs that were presented to the Steering Committee (at the April meeting, the process and needs were described in Handouts 19-25).

During the discussions, the Steering Committee made recommendations for clarifying and enhancing the scope of the needs and individual members expressed support for a number of the science and science delivery needs. The committee also asked questions to make sure that proposed work was coordinated with, and not duplicative of, the work of other organizations. For example, members supported the science need addressing inland river flooding while asking to make sure the work complemented or was integrated with work in this area by FEMA and NOAA. Given the pool of high priority needs exceeded the available LCC funding, the committee also discussed whether the list of needs should be reduced first or whether an RFP process should be used to reduce the list of supported needs.

Based on the discussions, LCC staff agreed to return to the Steering Committee in June with an updated set of science need and science delivery need recommendations. The updated recommendations were to include: 1) more explicit information on desired outcomes and applications where requested by the Steering Committee, and 2) which science needs would be addressed through and RFP process and which could be addressed through sole source agreements or modifications of existing agreements.

Updated recommendations: Based on additional discussions with members of the Technical and Science Delivery Committees and other partners, LCC staff have developed a revised set of recommendations, which consists of the following (consolidated in Handout 6):

* Five priority science needs (reduced from the original set of 12; Handout 7)
  + The aquatic classification for eastern Canada need is proposed to be addressed through a sole source agreement with Nature Conservancy of Canada (Handout 9a)
  + The assessment of tidally influenced road-stream crossings is proposed to be addressed through modification of an existing agreement with UMass Amherst (Handout 9b)
  + Two science needs – consistent floodplain assessment and rare plant prioritization – are proposed to be addressed through an RFP (draft is Handout 10; to be refined with assistance of Technical Committee and subject matter experts)
  + The planning for marsh migration is proposed to be addressed through separate Hurricane Sandy resiliency funds, if they become available as requested
* Six science delivery needs with adjusted funding amounts and descriptions addressed through a mix of existing staff capacity, additional contract staff, sole source contracts and RFPs (see Handout 6).
  + Improved User Interface for Data Basin: reduced estimated cost from $75,000 to $30,000 based on staff discussions on what staff and contract time were needed
  + Initial Knowledge Transfer: maintained full budget ($150,000) as this category emerged as highest immediate priority; estimated specific contract staff and RFP costs to fully implement; steering Committee input needed to implement.
  + Facilitation of Multi-scale Planning: reduced tasks to a survey and analysis of complementary regional, sub-regional (watershed, ecoregion), state and local applications of tools. First iteration can be done with existing staff capacity; budget zeroed out.
  + Focused Science Applications for Terrestrial/Aquatic/Coastal Systems: support for GIS applications for terrestrial example potentially focused on early successional management; convening and training land managers with existing staff capacity and issuing RFP for new applications that could include tidally influenced culverts discussed at Steering Committee meeting; cost reduced from $100,000 to $70,000.
  + Technical Assistance Provider Grants: reduced to $25,000 to be utilized for a demonstration small grant to provide “on demand” partner technical assistance capacity.
  + Coordination of Conservation Networks: reduced to $25,000 to be utilized for a demonstration small grant to build capacity in partner networks to help deliver LCC information and tools.

These science needs and science delivery needs total $635,000 and can be supported through FY 15 projects funds (approximately $600,000) and FY 16 project funds if needed (up to $35,000) for aspects of science delivery that happen next year.