

# **ENVIRONMENT TEAM**

Roundtable Sessions

Quebec, 13 September 2005 – Cleveland, 20 September 2005

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Russ Smith,  
Transport Canada

Jim Galloway,  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## **GREAT LAKES ST.LAWRENCE SEAWAY STUDY**

Joint Canada/United States Study

# Environment Team Composition

Five of the seven project partners are represented, including:

Alec Simpson*, Russ Smith, Kelly Goody	<b>Transport Canada</b>
Jim Galloway*, Adam Fox	<b>U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</b>
Craig Czarnecki*, Bob Kavetsky, Stephen Patch, David Stilwell	<b>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</b>
Jean-François Bibeault, Ralph Moulton, Susan Nameth, André Talbot	<b>Environment Canada</b>
Pierre Pesant	<b>St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation</b>

(\*) denotes co-lead of team

# Environment Team Goal

## Primary Purpose

Provide decision makers with information regarding the expected environmental effects of the alternatives being considered.

## Range of Alternatives

This study assumes that repair, rehabilitation, and possible reconstruction may occur to keep the GLSLS system operational at its current dimensions.

## Specific Goal

Provide a preliminary assessment of the environmental effects of the maintenance options being considered to keep the GLSLS operating.

# Environment Team Approach

As the maintenance scenarios are being developed for the study, the environment team is:

- Assessing the important role that water level regimes play towards the ecosystems of the St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes – *USACE*
- Benchmarking the ecological characteristics of the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes and the Connecting Channels – *Environment Canada and USFWS*
- Looking at fish and wildlife resources potentially impacted by navigation and how they are likely to change over the next 50 years – *Environment Canada and USFWS*

## Environment Team Approach (continued)

- Identifying and evaluating several system wide issues of concern that have direct links to navigation and the St. Lawrence Seaway operations – *Environment Canada and USFWS*
- Examining how navigation related activities generally affect aquatic ecosystems - *USACE , SLSMC and Transport Canada*
- Reviewing how cumulative effects are being addressed by the two countries and outlining a methodology to be considered over the longer term to quantify those environmental factors that are most sensitive to navigation activities – *Transport Canada*
- Consulting and drawing upon recent ongoing studies in Canada and the U.S. that may assist and influence this study – *Transport Canada and USACE*

# Environment Team Work

When the maintenance scenarios have been developed, the environment team will work as a group to:

- Examine each scenario to make a preliminary determination of what environmental impacts would be likely to result from its implementation.
- Determine if the likely impacts would be significantly different between the various scenarios considered.
- Identify additional work that would need to be done to assess environmental effects before a commitment is made to a particular scenario.

# Environment Team – What we heard

The main stakeholder concerns were:

1. Expand the Environment Team
2. Conduct Comprehensive Environmental Studies
3. Complete Accounting of Navigation Impacts/Costs
4. Calculate Impacts/Costs of Aquatic Invasive Species
5. Explore New Systems for Ballast Water Control
6. Evaluate Restoration Needs and Costs
7. Study Dredging and Disposal Impacts/Costs
8. Study Effects of Climate Change and Water Diversions
9. Study Erosion

# Environment Team - Summary

1. This study is limited to maintaining the GLSLS navigation system in its current configuration.
2. The environmental task at hand, in relation to navigation, is to benchmark the current environmental state of the St. Lawrence River and the Great Lakes and identify and assess the potential environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the various maintenance alternatives being considered.
3. Stakeholders through various means, including the summer 2004 Consultation Sessions, have identified several larger scale questions that merit investigation but are beyond the scope of this study.
4. Many of these issues are being addressed by other studies or in other forums.