

2013

CARING FOR OUR COAST

Supplement - Summary of Actions for SCEP Focus to 2020



St Croix Estuary Project Inc
350 Todds Point Road
Dufferin, NB
E3L 3R8

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Summary of Actions for SCEP Focus from the Community Environmental Management Plan for the St. Croix Estuary Area to 2020

Prepared by:

St. Croix Estuary Project Inc.
350 Todd's Point Road
Dufferin, Charlotte County, NB E3L 3R8

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SCEP is dedicated to the continual improvement of environmental quality of the St Croix estuary ecosystem, in full collaboration with and in support of, healthy and prosperous coastal communities. SCEP's goal is to engage local and regional decision-makers and citizens in working together to better understand, sustain and improve the environment at local and regional scales through research & monitoring, application of scientific data, education and action.

SCEP's public centre and associated grounds at the Ganong Nature Park, consists of 350 acres located on the tip of the peninsula lying between Oak Bay and the St. Croix River near Passamaquoddy Bay on the Bay of Fundy, and acts as a base for outreach activities. SCEP utilizes outdoor education, interpretive, celebratory and stewardship activities, state of the local environment reporting, as well as the provision of outdoor space for activity, to develop understanding, respect and appreciation of nature, aiming to inspire environmental stewardship and the development of community capacity. Ecological and environmental research, monitoring and education are critically important activities in support of sustainability. Research and monitoring produce information which leads to increased knowledge and understanding. Education is the process by which knowledge and understanding is transmitted by and to others. Together, these three activities overcome lack of knowledge, misunderstanding and misperception, all of which can be barriers to effective consideration of and decision making on sustainability issues.

Through the sharing and promotion of this revised environmental management plan, SCEP's objectives include;

- Facilitating cooperation and partnering with government, industry, municipalities and other stakeholders wherever possible, to improve understanding of factors impacting our ecosystem and promote sharing of information and technological exchange resulting in empowered decision-makers and citizenry prepared with the knowledge, tools, and research to make ecologically sound decisions
- Supporting the advancement of appropriate levels of land use, marine, estuarial and fresh water-based environmental planning, regulation and enforcement
- Supporting integrated environmental monitoring to assess the ecosystems ecological health and its environmental stressors, resulting in identification and establishment of ecosystem priorities and projects to enhance the ecological integrity of the St Croix estuary drainage basin
- Engaging local community members in the celebration and promotion of the St Croix Estuary's environmental qualities and values - as necessary to sustain a healthy sense of pride and stewardship actions that are meaningful, relevant, and fun and which restore and protect the St Croix River watershed

This document provides a detailed look at four, priority, ecosystem-relevant issues; clean water, climate change, compatible and sustainable economies as well as informed stewardship. As in the 1997 Comprehensive Environmental Management Plan, it has been identified that SCEP is one player of many. Throughout this environmental plan revision, various partners and independent organizations as well as government agencies have been identified as key players in order for various actions to be accomplished. During the consultations for this revised plan, it has been reaffirmed that the following list of actions is currently relevant for the focus of program and initiative development for SCEP in the next decade;

Clean water:

#1: Monitor fresh & estuarine water quality; use the findings for long-term planning

Implement a water quality and quantity monitoring plan for primary tributaries to the St. Croix estuary area to obtain data for water use, water standards and climate change. (Other partners must include Environment Canada, NB Department of Environment and Local Government, US Department of Environmental Protection and St Croix International Watershed Commission).

#2. Monitor and reduce land-based point source pollution

Continue to monitor and reduce the effects of point source discharges to the estuary area. Particularly, seek to support the completion of the remaining storm/sanitary sewer separations, update or replace outdated smaller wastewater treatment systems, and continue to upgrade the effluent standards and performance of major municipal and industrial systems (Other partners must include NB Department of Environment and Local Government, US Department of Environmental Protection, local municipalities, academia, WPL).

#3. Monitor and reduce major land-based nonpoint pollution sources

Encourage shoreowners to adopt best management practices that minimize their impacts on adjacent waters (Other partners should include NB Department of Environment and Local Government, local municipalities, Regional Service Commission 10, and St Croix International Watershed Commission)

Climate Change:

#1: Take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Encourage regional, national and international programs to adopt, and actively pursue, vigorous greenhouse gas reduction targets (All).

Engage in programs that encourage individual and institutional involvement in greenhouse gas reduction (Other partners should include Environment Canada, NB Department of Environment

and Local Government, local municipalities, Regional Service Commission 10, ENGOs and community groups, academia).

#2: Implement policies and programs to conserve water use, especially in the summer months.

Pursue municipal and individual water use reduction and conservation programs to ensure an adequate year-round water supply under an anticipated increasingly frequent drought conditions (Local Municipalities, Champlain Industrial Park, major water users, ENGOs).

#3: Initiate longterm adaptation plans to address sea level and stormwater increases

Using current detailed contour mapping and other data, conduct vulnerability assessments for 50-90 year sea level rise and stormwater/flood scenarios. Develop municipal and regional adaptation plans that initiate policies and actions to start addressing emerging conditions in a timely and cost-effective manner (Local municipalities, Regional Service Commission 10, NB Department of Transportation, academia).

#4: Monitor climate change impacts on land and freshwater-based species that have significant implications to the local ecology or economy; initiate proactive awareness, conservation and management plans for adaptation

Increase monitoring, analysis and integrated reporting of changes in soil and freshwater temperatures, critical habitats and of species that are key indicators of climate change or have primary roles in the local ecology or economy (NB Department of Natural Resources, NB Department of Aquaculture, Agriculture and Fisheries, forestry interests, fish/wildlife interests, ENGOs, academia).

Support the development and maintenance of an inventory of important terrestrial and freshwater habitat sites - develop and implement site-specific terrestrial and freshwater habitat protection strategies (NB Department of Natural Resources, NB Department of Aquaculture, Agriculture and Fisheries, forestry interests, fish/wildlife interests, ENGOs, academia).

Compatible, Sustainable Economy:

#1. Support maintained, and restored, traditional marine fisheries

Encourage immediate *international* planning for future St. Croix alewife and eel stock management and harvest (SCIWC, SCEP, conservation interests, user interests, SCFSC)

Informed Stewardship:

#1. Improve public access to information on St. Croix coastal resources, issues, management and public involvement opportunities

Encourage local organizations, tourism businesses and media to regularly feature St. Croix water-based heritage and stewardship in their activities and coverage (*SACT, CCHS, PC, HMSC, SCEP, SCIWC, eco-tourism operators, St. Stephen, St. Andrews, CHCO-TV, St. Croix Courier*).

Support the establishment of new public access points, in accord with resource conservation and land development plans, and maintain existing points. Erect directional/locational signage for, and interpretive signage at, public access points. Establish and maintain public water-side recreational trails (Local municipalities, community groups, ENGO's, Regional Service Commission 10)

#2. Expand the involvement of residents, visitors, students and local governments in environmental stewardship.

Increase the exposure of local residents, of all ages, to experiences that broaden their knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the ecological setting and functions of the estuary area, and the linkages between this setting and socio-economic forces behind environmental change. (Academia, ENGOs)

Support the establishment of provincial programs for families/individuals and municipalities that provide the tools and incentives to be better environmental stewards (NB Department of Environment and Local Government, academia, ENGOs, Local Municipalities)

Encourage local municipalities to develop active, long-term community sustainability plans that include coastal stewardship objectives (NB Department of Environment and Local Government, academia, ENGOs)

Continue development and delivery of current school-based stewardship programs.

#3: Continue to establish a public centre for community-based environmental sustainability and St. Croix coastal resources at the Ganong Nature Park.

Continue to deliver public presentations, workshops and demonstration projects on environmental sustainability practices for local communities, residents and students at the Ganong Nature Park. (Anglophone South School District, NB Department of Natural Resources, NB Department of Environment and Local Government, NB Department of Aquaculture, Agriculture and Fisheries, organizations with nature, horticulture and agriculture focus, ENGOs)

Sponsor school and community-based interpretive activities and field sessions on the local coastal and intertidal environment at the Ganong Nature Park (Huntsman Marine Science Centre, Anglophone South School District, individual schools, community sponsors, ENGOs)

Host regional conferences, sessions and workshops on environmental sustainability and coastal planning at the Ganong Nature Park that offer the opportunity to learn from others (NB Department of Environment and Local Government, St Croix Waterway Commission, International Joint Commission, Southwest NB Marine Advisory Committee, Atlantic Coastal Adaptation Solutions Association, Regional Service Commission 10)

Explore funding models and opportunities to continue to improve a regional sustainability resource centre at the Ganong Nature Park