



Research Needs Workshop 3.01

Aquatic Habitat Assessment - Predicting the Effects of Changing Water Levels in the Huron-Erie/Lake St. Clair Corridor

Thursday February 2 - 3, 2004
Alumni Hall - University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario, Canada

Overview: There is increasing recognition that aquatic habitats are maintained by dynamic interactions among environmental, hydrological, geological, and biological factors. This one-day organizational workshop brings together fishery biologists, aquatic ecologists, physical scientists (geologists, hydrologists, and engineers), and resource managers to assess the adequacy of existing physical and biological aquatic habitat data sets within the Huron-Erie Corridor (HEC) system. This is the first of a series of three workshops. In follow-up workshops, interested participants will have an opportunity to form research groups to examine the utility of using dynamic models to characterize and map aquatic habitats and develop strategies to identify potential aquatic habitat restoration opportunities.

Goals: Short introductory presentations will summarize the attributes of known high-quality HEC fishery habitats, geospatial data sets, ongoing habitat characterization and data collection efforts, and water-level change scenarios. In subsequent round table discussions, workshop participants will: 1) assess key factors (i.e., data and coverages) needed to understand the processes that maintain the quality and control the distribution of these aquatic habitats; 2) provide a preliminary identification of existing habitat assessment and classification tools; 3) compile a list of existing geospatial datasets for the HEC/Lake St. Clair system; and 4) identify critical research gaps and data needs.

Outcomes: Workshop outcomes will include identification and compilation of key agencies, organizations, and individuals who are willing and able to contribute data, knowledge, or expertise and/or who wish to collaborate as part of a binational Aquatic Habitat Research Consortium focused initially on the HEC/Lake St. Clair system. Specific products of this first workshop will include a binational compilation of existing geospatial datasets, existing habitat assessment and classification tools, ongoing research and restoration projects, and associated metadata for the HEC/Lake St. Clair system.

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