

Great Lakes Regional Data Exchange (RDX) Conference



Decision Support for the Great-Lakes St. Lawrence System in the New Millennium

October 26-28, 2004, Marriott Renaissance Center - Detroit, Michigan

Executive Summary



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

In October 2004, more than 150 people met in Detroit, Mich. to discuss the future of information technologies and data management in the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River region. Over the course of the three-day event, this collection of regional experts shared recent accomplishments, outlined current challenges and brainstormed collective solutions. Numerous developments within the region that have forged a need for a new generation of information technology tools to assist informed and effective management of the region’s unique resource – the Great Lakes basin. These developments include new water quantity management protocols under the Great Lakes Charter Annex 2001; initiation of the Global Earth Observing System of Systems and its regional component, the Great Lakes Observing System; increased high-level coordination among U.S. federal agencies under the new Great Lakes Task Force; review and possible revision of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement; proposed U.S. federal legislation to support a basin-wide restoration plan and regional activities to coordinate such a plan; and more.

With a theme of decision support systems, this conference explored the potential for improved management and synthesis of data and information to facilitate progress in each of these emerging areas. Additional prominent topics of discussion at the conference included remote sensing, geographic information systems, web-mapping applications, e-government, data exchange policies, the Great Lakes Information Network, legal issues, security, and emerging technologies. The conference laid the groundwork for establishing partnerships and a community for advancing these important issues. This proceedings document presents the formal discussions that occurred at the conference and the outcomes, recommendations and future steps.

The following emerged as primary recommendations from the conference:

- RDX** Establish a leadership structure for regional data and information management to promote efficient and consistent actions and practices within and beyond the Great Lakes region.
- RDX** Increase the commitment of regional partners to open and efficient exchange of data and information and collective product development.
- RDX** Improve communication, team-building and coordination among and between the Great Lakes data and information management and user communities.
- RDX** Adopt and implement standards for data collection, management, access, exchange and tool development.
- RDX** Ensure complete and consistent metadata are developed and shared for all regional data holdings to promote efficient discovery, convenient access and appropriate use of data.
- RDX** Develop and implement advanced informational tools to promote science, education and informed decision making.
- RDX** Coordinate consistent data management strategies to support implementation of emerging activities regarding monitoring systems, indicator development and restoration.

These recommendations are described further in the full conference proceedings. The proceedings, presentations and information about past and future events are available at <http://rdx.glc.org>