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### **Wingspread Conference: Funding Strategies for Restoration of Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes Basin. Summary Report. Racine, Wisconsin, July 23-25, 1996**

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***Wingspread Conference:  
Funding Strategies for  
Restoration of Areas of  
Concern in the  
Great Lakes Basin***

***Summary Report***

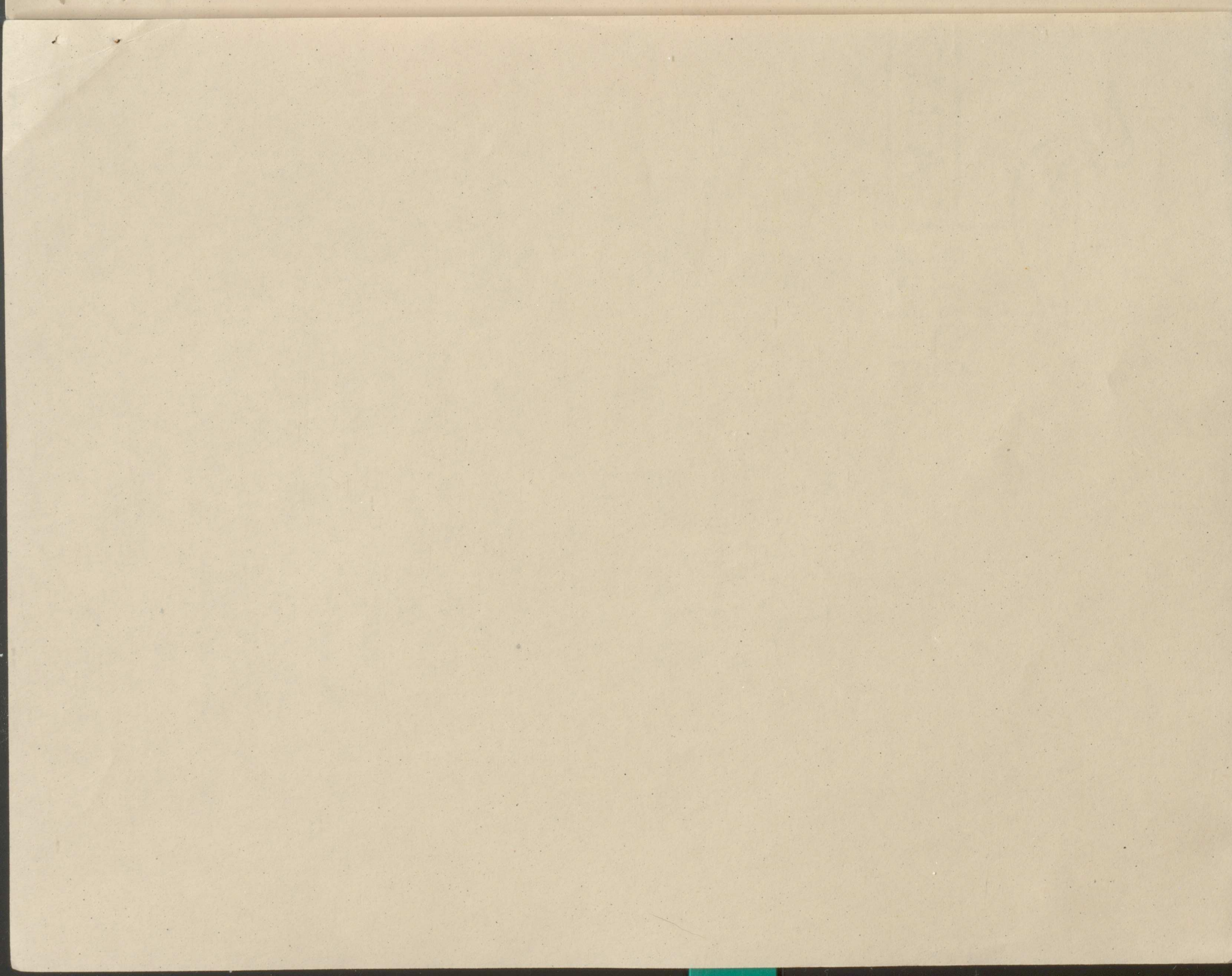
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***INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION  
THE JOHNSON FOUNDATION***

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***August 1996***



## **Funding Strategies for Restoration of Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes Basin**

**Wingspread - The Johnson Foundation  
Racine, Wisconsin  
July 23-25, 1996**

### **Summary Report**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

On July 23-25, 1996, the International Joint Commission and The Johnson Foundation convened a conference on *Funding Strategies for Restoration of Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes Basin*. Held at The Johnson Foundation's Wingspread meeting facility in Racine, Wisconsin, the conference brought together 40 agency and community representatives -- including provincial, state, federal and tribal government officials, non-government organization and Remedial Action Plan public advisory committee members, and IJC commissioners and staff -- who are involved in developing, implementing and monitoring restoration activities in Areas of Concern throughout the Great Lakes Basin. The purpose of the conference was to share and discuss strategies for funding AOC restoration, a critical issue in many parts of the Basin in an era of reduced government funding to support restoration efforts at the local level.

The conference consisted of a series of presentations focusing on AOC restoration financing case studies and strategies, followed by facilitated discussion sessions addressing key aspects of the funding issue:

- success factors for effective AOC restoration financing;
- barriers to successful AOC restoration financing;
- creative strategies to overcome these barriers; and
- minimum funding requirements to sustain AOC restoration.

This report has been prepared by the conference facilitator and provides his perspectives on the key messages provided by the conference speakers, as well as the results of the facilitated discussion sessions.

## 2.0 Key Messages from Conference Presenters

The following provides a brief snapshot of some of the key messages presented by conference speakers regarding funding strategies for AOC restoration financing.

### **Pierre Béland - Commissioner, Canadian Section, International Joint Commission**

- There is money available for AOC restoration financing; we just have to be more creative in finding it. This should include taking advantage of the lessons that we have learned previously. At last year's Wingspread Conference, Jeff Busch, Director of the State of Ohio's Lake Erie Office suggested the use of **vanity license plates** and the use of **affinity credit cards**. These two ideas may be applicable elsewhere in the Great Lakes Basin.
- the IJC is committed to do what it can to help clean up AOCs and to monitor government progress in doing so

#### *Strategies:*

- use techniques such as vanity license plates and affinity cards (a mock-up of a possible Ontario vanity license plate is appended to this summary report)

### **Tony Wagner - Waterfront Regeneration Trust**

- be sure to celebrate your successes, both large and small
- in developing and obtaining funding for projects, **look beyond the traditional, narrow definition of "environment" to ensure that economic and community/social aspects are included**; this was a key feature of the Trust's partnership approach in developing the Waterfront Trail

#### *Strategies:*

- form **partnerships** with like-minded stakeholders
- seek **sponsorships**; capitalize on the trend toward **"cause marketing"** in the business community
- develop a **logo and identity** for marketing purposes
- create an endowment fund
- obtain necessary status to conduct **fundraising** activities (the WRT has Schedule 3 status in Ontario)
- engage and utilize **volunteers**

### Ken Hall - Bay Area Restoration Council

- carefully consider your group's organizational structure; take the time up front to determine how your group will operate, your mandate and goals and objectives
- new thinking, strategies are needed for PACs that want to move beyond their original advisory role; the key is for your group to take ownership of its own destiny

#### Strategies:

- obtain charitable status to enable fundraising
- attract members to your group and charge membership fees
- form partnerships with other community organizations (e.g. schools) to develop and fund projects that meet mutual objectives
- mobilize your volunteers

### David Leech - St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Studies

- "Just do it" ...  
Wisely - pursue scientifically sound, economically and socially responsible solutions to local environmental problems  
But don't do it alone - continually look for new partners with compatible mandates  
Loudly - get the word out about your successes to anyone who will listen
- be creative, build on your organization's strengths, but stay focused and true to your mandate
- start small, focusing on projects your community can afford, and build on these successes; then, don't be shy about lobbying business and government for the bigger \$ needed for larger restoration projects

### Dave Patterson - Quinte Public Advisory Committee

- remember "what you like about your AOC" to give you the strength and desire to carry on in difficult times
- interactive dialogue, creative lateral thinking and strategic planning are the keys to moving your PAC from an advisory/watch dog role to a more sustainable, viable community organization
- small amounts of seed \$ can go a long way and achieve big results if volunteers are used effectively

#### Strategies:

- develop a business plan to move your organization towards sustainability

- incorporate
- get in-kind support from community partners to conserve precious funds
- take an "in your face" approach to marketing your RAP (e.g. make personal presentations to area municipal councils)
- get public input to develop support for your initiatives
- focus your efforts on emerging issues in your area (e.g. cage aquaculture)
- form alliances with local like-minded organizations to share resources
- pursue local and regional fundraising opportunities
- obtain corporate sponsorships

#### **Rick Brewer/Brett Kaull - Ashtabula River Partnership**

- success factors for the Partnership
  - conducting outreach to get widespread support
  - cultivating media support
  - the ability of the Partnership to mobilize fundraising efforts using local funds to leverage federal funding
  - the short-time for the remediation effort helps maintain momentum
  - its composition (many diverse stakeholders) and consensus-based approach

#### *Strategies:*

- form a foundation, under U.S. 501(c)(3), to raise funds
- consider issuing tax exempt bonds to finance clean-up efforts

#### **Beth Admire - Indiana Department of Environmental Management**

- in developing creative funding, partnership proposals, it is critical to get senior staff involved and on-side early; this is particularly true for the regulators

#### *Strategies:*

- consider setting up an enforcement-based trust fund, where companies required to pay fines do so into the fund rather than into general revenue; the fund could be used to finance remediation efforts
- use grant-pooling to fund big ticket projects

#### **David Timm - Wells Kingdom Workers/Indiana University**

- the key to fundraising is to make it as easy as possible for the donor to give; treat donors as you would like to be treated

- success factors
  - you need passion for your cause
  - a willingness to ask for \$
  - training and know-how
  - a marketable product
  - an informed constituency
  - a workable plan
- remember the donor's "Bill of Rights", including the right to...
  - know what will happen to the donation
  - access financial information on request
  - be assured the donation will be used for the purpose it was given
  - receive honest answers
  - have his/her name deleted from the fundraising list
  - say no
- the best method for fundraising is face-to-face contact; a personal letter with telephone follow-up is second best

#### **Jan Miller - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

- in the U.S., there are a wide range of federal funding authorities and programs available for AOC restoration work; generally, these are under-utilized by RAPs
- various authorities and programs may be geared to funding each phase of restoration: planning, development and implementation
- don't rely on any one program for funding; look at all options

#### **Tillie MacDonald - Collingwood**

- operate your community organization as you would a small business; remember the bottom line and make sure you are compensated for your services
- the key is to define what you do and go out and sell it; if you don't ask for \$, you won't get it
- know your target market; conduct outreach to get community buy-in - the politicians will come on board quickly as buy-in spreads
- focus on outcomes and successes in spreading the word
- a good relationship with the media is critical

#### **Strategies:**

- seek incorporation for your group to enable you to manage your own affairs and funds
- develop partnerships with local groups (e.g. service clubs)



**Gail Krantzberg - Ontario Ministry of Environment and Energy**

- new funding partnerships for RAP implementation are needed now, particularly in Ontario where fiscal restraint is happening right at the peak of RAP implementation
- we need to sell our success with RAPs by celebrating our progress

*Strategies:*

- provide "tool kits" to PACs, containing practical information on marketing, fundraising, incorporation, etc.
- conduct collective fundraising (e.g. on a provincial scale) to raise funds for high-cost implementation efforts (e.g. sediment remediation)
- set up a Great Lakes private/public partnership fund to provide a pool of funds for restoration
- market the success of RAPs to senior management of government agencies and the public
- affinity cards
- Basin-wide fundraising events

**Tanya Cabala - Lake Michigan Federation**

- it is critical to cultivate local ownership of the RAP; with ownership comes the desire to persevere and succeed
- it is important for PACs to establish and maintain good relationships with government agencies; media support is also crucial

*Strategies:*

- obtain seed funding for staff support

**Ronald Baba - Oneida Nation, Wisconsin**

- in pursuing restoration efforts, keep in mind several Oneida sayings: "fight in a good way" and "be of a good mind"

*Strategies:*

- develop partnerships with key stakeholders to facilitate project development and implementation; Oneida Nation has entered into partnerships with local municipalities, environmental groups, and local farmers to pursue specific projects
- use local resources to leverage federal grants

### 3.0 Towards Successful AOC Restoration Financing: Results of the Facilitated Discussion Sessions

#### 3.1 Success Factors for Effective AOC Restoration Financing

In sharing and discussing AOC restoration success stories from around the Great Lakes Basin, conference participants identified a number of common ingredients or success factors which can provide the foundation for successful restoration financing. A synthesis of these success factors is presented below:

##### *Innovation and Creativity*

Now more than ever, AOCs have to be innovative and creative to finance and sustain restoration activities. This means that people must:

- "dare to dream"
- "remember that there are no rules - don't stop at the wall"
- "think outside the box".

##### *Organizational Development and Sustainability*

To move towards sustainability, AOC community organizations and PACs need:

- energy and commitment
- to clearly **define** what they want to achieve; their role; their niche
- to continually **demonstrate and prove** that they do good work
- to consider organizational opportunities such as **incorporation**, setting up a **foundation**, etc.
- to become **informed** about where funding opportunities lie
- to take a **business approach** to running their organizations.

##### *Partnerships*

Partnerships are key to successful AOC restoration financing. This can encompass:

- project-specific partnerships involving like-minded organizations with compatible mandates
- unique links between partners representing diverse interests (such as historical/cultural preservation and remediation)
- collaborative effort to secure funds

- mobilizing volunteers.

### *Communications and Involvement*

To spread the word about RAPs and sustain involvement and interest, AOC community organizations and PACs need to:

- communicate and illustrate the economic benefits/spin-offs of restoration
- demonstrate success by illustrating incremental improvements - success attracts public and political support ("the velcro factor")
- where possible, transfer credit for this success to the community as a whole
- educate children about the importance of restoration and encourage children to educate their parents
- focus on the positive aspects of restoration by avoiding confrontation, negativity and litigation.

### **3.2 Barriers to Successful AOC Restoration Financing**

Conference participants also identified barriers to successful AOC restoration financing. These barriers generally fell into the following three categories:

1. Financing - Dealing with Government Cutbacks;
2. Communications and Sustaining Public and Stakeholder Involvement; and
3. The Regulatory Framework.

Figure 1, "The Barrier Mosaic" illustrates participants' perspectives on the range of barriers and challenges facing those involved in funding AOC restoration.

**Figure 1: Barriers to Successful AOC Restoration Financing  
"The Barrier Mosaic"**

<b>Financing: Dealing With Government Cutbacks</b>	<b>Communications and Sustaining Public/Stakeholder Involvement</b>	<b>The Regulatory Framework</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• obtaining local funds (donations, industry contributions)</li> <li>• competition for funding (available funds are too few and declining)</li> <li>• coordinating major fundraising</li> <li>• magnitude of the problem: cost and area extent)</li> <li>• forming <u>effective</u> partnerships</li> <li>• lack of education on creative financing; lack of understanding of financing mechanisms</li> <li>• lack of information on funding processes, opportunities</li> <li>• not enough experience, expertise in fundraising</li> <li>• uncertain gov't commitment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of communications to <u>all</u> stakeholders</li> <li>• lack of sense of urgency</li> <li>• maintaining public interest as PACs move from advisors to implementors</li> <li>• public involvement with local leadership</li> <li>• lack of local leadership</li> <li>• recruiting to allow revitalization of PACs</li> <li>• the will to succeed (community advocates, decision makers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regulatory support</li> <li>• regulation as a double-edged sword (brings industry to the table but also scares them away)</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Strategies to Overcome the Barriers

Conference participants then proposed a set of strategies to help overcome these barriers:

#### **Financing: Dealing With Government Cutbacks**

##### *Strategies:*

1. Involve local businesses.
  - target local business to provide in-kind services
  - attract interest by demonstrating the benefits of restoration to business
2. Develop a trust fund to provide restoration funding at the local level.
3. Implement the RAP in an incremental fashion as funding permits.
  - develop detailed implementation plans for specific restoration actions/projects; seek funds opportunistically; celebrate completion of individual projects
  - use benchmarks (related to the overall RAP goals) to demonstrate incremental achievements
4. Communicate funding needs to government.
5. Provide education for AOC communities via training seminars on creative financing and new ways of doing business (e.g. consensus decision making).
6. Pursue coordinated, cooperative effort for "serious" fundraising.
7. Recruit and train "RAP Practitioners", who could go to any AOC and evaluate/audit the current state of the RAP and offer advice for moving forward.

#### **Communications and Sustaining Public/Stakeholder Involvement**

##### *Strategies:*

1. Develop an award system which encourages involvement.
2. Celebrate successes at every opportunity. Recognize that it is essential to market success to garner support for future funding.
3. Involve stakeholders in active roles - "give the key people a job to do".

4. Communicate RAP successes to the broader community.
5. Undertake a concerted effort to get local government(s) buy-in for RAP implementation.
6. Regularly communicate with the public and stakeholders regarding the RAP process, directions and needed modifications. Give the community opportunities to contribute to approach and directions.
7. Encourage meaningful (physical) grass roots activities that support RAP goals (e.g. Water Watchers, river cleanups)
8. Assess upcoming tasks and recruit new participants to meet task goals while maintaining communication with those who have "completed" their immediate tasks ("get the right people for the right tasks").
9. Draw attention to a relevant local issue with broad appeal.
10. Develop partnerships.

### **The Regulatory Framework**

#### *Strategies:*

1. Encourage and promote a combination of "carrot and stick" approaches.
2. Stimulate a new philosophy for regulatory agencies in view of the contemporary funding situation.

### **3.4 Minimum Funding Requirements to Sustain AOC Restoration**

Conference participants also addressed the question of what might constitute minimum funding requirements that AOCs need from government to sustain restoration efforts. Ideally, it was noted that original funding levels should be maintained. If this is not possible, it was suggested that AOCs need enough support to ensure that interest in AOC restoration is maintained at the local level. Without this local interest, sustaining RAP implementation will not be possible.

It was also suggested that support need not necessarily come in the form of monetary allocations. AOC communities also need:

- technical and administrative support;
- updates on changes, developments in legislation;
- accurate and timely information.

### **4.0 Summary**

The Wingspread conference provided an excellent opportunity for participants to share and discuss issues and opportunities relating to AOC restoration financing. In particular, the conference enabled the exchange of information and experiences among PAC members, RAP coordinators and agency staff concerning options and strategies for continuing their important work in an era of reduced financial resources.

