New England Federal Partners
Statement of
Common Purpose
September 7, 2010

Introduction

This statement of common purpose establishes a framework for communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among the federal agencies working in New England. These agencies will work together to effectively address complex large-scale issues that cut across multiple agency missions confronting the New England region. Recognizing this need, the New England Federal Partners (NEFP), a multi-agency group, formed to support the needs of the states, Tribes, and communities of the New England Region and to facilitate and enable informed decision-making throughout the region. The NEFP builds off of a strong history of federal cooperation in this region including the Northeast Federal Partners for Natural Resources (1999) and the federal partners for the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC). The federal partnership serves to avoid duplication and increase synergy. It seeks opportunities to direct funding, when available and in accordance with applicable law and policy, to fill information, education, and outreach gaps based on end-user needs. The partners expect regular meetings of the NEFP will result in more effective and responsive action by federal agencies and will help stakeholders make more informed decisions.

Organizing Principles

- New England Federal Partners (NEFP) will provide a forum for addressing complex broad-scale issues confronting human well-being and ecosystem health in the New England region.
- Thematic areas of focus include Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.
- The NEFP will operate within the context of existing structures, authorities, and directives of the federal agencies.
- Information needs, partnerships and roles will vary in accordance with the particular thematic areas.
- The NEFP will provide a broad perspective, beyond that of any one agency, to address complex regional issues in a comprehensive manner.
- The NEFP will serve as a forum to represent and discuss federal interests in relation to state, local and NGO interests.
- The NEFP will be led by a steering committee consisting of senior management, or their designee, from each of the agencies. This Steering Committee will meet twice per year.
- The Steering Committee will strive to reach decisions through consensus and will identify appropriate staff and expertise to serve on cross-agency workgroups that will focus on the priority thematic areas.

Primary Goals

1. Improve cross-agency communication,
2. Identify and support opportunities to develop and demonstrate cross-agency cooperation,
3. Identify and support opportunities to coordinate federal activities,
4. Identify and support opportunities for collaboration across federal agencies, and
5. Ensure stakeholders and decision-makers in the region have the most effective federal support.

Priority Theme Areas

Priority Theme Areas will be determined by the Steering Committee based on criteria that include, but are not limited to: the magnitude and complexity of the issue requires cross-federal agency attention to be effectively addressed; and the issue is a significant and high-priority concern for the New England region. The partners expect usable information outputs from this effort will be provided and communicated to agency management as well as to end-users, with the objective of increasing their understanding of the issues and their capacity to plan and act on these issues. Successfully addressing these themes will require information sharing, communication, outreach, and education. To ensure that the NEFP is responsive to critical needs, priority themes will be vetted with regional partners and stakeholder communities. The following themes shall be considered priorities for federal attention under the NEFP. These themes are based on the NEFP's current understanding of needs and roles, and may change over time.

1. **Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning.** Coordinate federal activities and support the development of coastal and marine spatial plans for this region.

2. **Climate Change Mitigation**. This theme cuts across multiple agency missions and includes issues associated with renewable energy projects, conservation of traditional energy sources, efficiency measures, clean technologies, air quality, water quality, transportation, and land use.

3. **Climate Change Adaptation**. Coordination across federal agencies will be essential to ensure effective federal support and provision of useful services to stakeholders as national, regional, and state adaptation and resiliency plans are being developed and implemented. Adaptation includes issues associated with climate science and impacts such as sea-level rise, temperature change, altered precipitation patterns, species habitat, abundance and distribution, new pest species, and human health.

Mutually agreed and understood by and between cooperators

- The parties to this Statement of Common Purpose are authorized by the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(G), "to make available...advice and information useful in restoring, maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment."
- This Statement of Common Purpose establishes a framework for communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among the federal partners. It is not intended to be a legally binding instrument, or to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity, by persons who are not a party to this agreement, against the federal partners, their officers or employees, or any other person.
- As required by the Antideficiency Act, 31 U.S.C. §§ 1341 and 1342, all commitments made in this Statement of Common Purpose are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Nothing in the Statement of Common Purpose, in and of itself, obligates the partners to expend appropriations or enter into any contract, interagency agreement, or incur other financial obligations that would be inconsistent with their budget priorities. Any transaction involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the partners will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures under separate written agreements.
- This Statement of Common Purpose is to take effect upon the signature of the partners and will remain in effect for 5 years. This Statement of Common Purpose may be extended or modified at any time per the mutual consent of the partners. Additionally, a partner may terminate its participation in this Statement of Common Purpose at any time by providing written notice to the other partners at least 14 days in advance of the desired termination date.

Statement of Mutual Interests and Missions

Army Corps of Engineers

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provides planning and engineering services, as well as construction support for a wide variety of military and civil works projects. The Corps primary civil works mission is to develop, manage, and protect the country's water resources. USACE has civil works programs in navigation, storm damage and flood risk mitigation and ecosystem restoration.

Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Helps people help the land through scientifically based, locally led voluntary conservation. Created in response to the disastrous Dust Bowl of the 1930s, NRCS is the lead Federal agency in conserving and improving natural resources on privately-owned lands. NRCS provides technical and financial assistance that make land more productive and the environment healthier through reduced soil erosion; improved soil, water, and air quality; energy conservation; restored woodlands and wetlands; enhanced fish and wildlife habitat; and reduced upstream flooding. NRCS works in partnership with farmers and ranchers, communities, and State, local, and Tribal governments.

Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts, share that knowledge and information with others, and use it to improve society's conservation and management of marine resources. Through its longstanding mission of science, service, and stewardship, NOAA generates tremendous value for the nation – and the world – by advancing our understanding of and ability to predict changes in the Earth's environment, by improving society's ability to make scientifically-informed decisions, and by conserving and managing ocean and coastal resources.

Department of Homeland Security

Federal Emergency Management Agency

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards

U.S. Coast Guard

The United States Coast Guard is a military, multi-mission, maritime service within the Department of Homeland Security and one of the nation's five armed services. Its core roles are to protect the public, the environment, and U.S. economic and security interests in any maritime region in which those interests may be at risk, including international waters and America's coasts, ports, and inland waterways. The Coast Guard has five fundamental roles: Maritime Safety, Maritime Security, Maritime Mobility, National Defense, and Protection of Natural Resources.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes:

utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business.

Department of Interior

The Mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitments to island communities.

Bureau of Indian Affairs

The Bureau of Indian Affairs is responsible for administering Federal Indian policy; fulfilling its Federal trust responsibilities to American Indians, Tribal Governments, and Alaska Natives; and promoting tribal self-determination and self-governance.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement

The Bureau's mission is to manage the ocean energy and mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf and Federal and American Indian mineral revenues to enhance public and trust benefits, promote responsible use, and realize fair value.

Fish and Wildlife Service

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.

Geological Survey

The USGS serves the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand the Earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhance and protect our quality of life.

National Park Service

The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.

Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Highway Administration - FHWA's mission is to improve mobility on our Nation's highways, with a focus on safety, reliability, effectiveness, livability and sustainability. FHWA delivers the Federal-aid Highway Program through partnerships with States, metropolitan areas, Tribes, and other Federal agencies.

Federal Transit Administration

The mission of the Federal Transit Administration is to improve public transportation for America's communities.

Environmental Protection Agency

EPA Region 1

The mission of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment - air, water, and land - upon which life depends.

Office of Research and Development, National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory

The National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory formulates and implements a comprehensive research program to investigate the effects of environmental pollutants and other anthropogenic stresses on human health and the ecosystems in which we live.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Goddard Institute for Space Studies

Research at the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) emphasizes a broad study of global change, which is an interdisciplinary initiative addressing natural and man-made changes in our environment that occur on various time scales — from one-time forcings such as volcanic explosions, to seasonal and annual effects such as El Niño, and on up to the millennia of ice ages — and that affect the habitability of our planet.

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Colonel Philip T. Feir
District Commander
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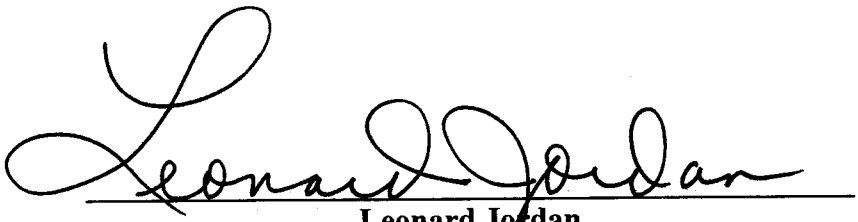

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Marvin Moriarty
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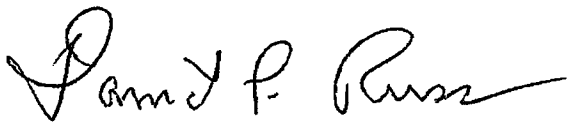

David P. Russ
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Dennis R. Reidenbach

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Joyce A. Curtis 12/13/10

Joyce A. Curtis
Director of Field Services – North
Federal Highway Administration

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Mary Beth Mello *

Mary Beth Mello
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration, Region 1

*We fully support the principles of partnership espoused in this Statement of Common Purpose with one caveat— I, Mary Beth Mello, do not have the authority to direct funding, and therefore cannot commit to the statement "It [New England Federal Partners] seeks opportunities to direct funding, when available and in accordance with applicable law and policy, to fill information, education, and outreach gaps based on end-user needs" in paragraph 1, page 1.

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