

The Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species Organizational Strategy and Guidance for Operations

A. Background

Introduction

The following presents an organizational strategy and guidance for operations for the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species. This summary responds to Section 1203 of the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-646). Presented within is background information on the establishment of the Great Lakes Panel called for in the 1990 legislation; a Great Lakes Panel mission statement; information on the structure and function of the Great Lakes Panel; operational procedures and guidelines for the conduct of Panel activities; and information on current funding for carrying out the requirements of Section 1203.

History

The enactment of the federal Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 (NANPCA, Public Law 101-646) has provided federal legislative support for programs aimed at aquatic nuisance species (ANS) prevention and control. NANPCA's enactment was a response to the growing threat that ANS pose to the environment and economy of the United States and was prompted to a large extent by the introduction of the zebra mussel to the Great Lakes and its subsequent economic and ecological impacts to the region. Although the introduction and spread of the zebra mussel played a central role in prompting passage of the federal legislation, NANPCA was also established to prevent the occurrence of new ANS introductions and to limit the dispersal of ANS already in U.S. waters.

In drafting NANPCA, Congress recognized that mitigation of the adverse impacts of all aquatic nuisance species is dependent on a well-coordinated outreach, research, monitoring and prevention/control program at the national as well as regional levels. Mechanisms for addressing these challenges included:

- **Establishment of a national ANS Task Force:** The national Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force is an intergovernmental organization charged with implementing NANPCA and subsequently NISA, the National Invasive Species Act which was passed in October 1996. The Task Force is comprised of representatives from 7 federal agencies and 11 ex-officio members and is co-chaired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- **Establishment of regional ANS panels:** Under NANPCA, the ANS Task Force requested that the Great Lakes Commission convene the Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species per Section 1203 of the Act. Since 1991, the Great

Lakes Panel has worked to prevent and control the occurrence of aquatic nuisance species in the Great Lakes.

Establishment of the Great Lakes Panel has provided a long-standing body of regional experts that contribute substantially to information and education programming, research and management coordination, and regional coordination of policy initiatives. Effective prevention and control efforts in the Great Lakes region continue to be the first line of defense in slowing or preventing the spread of nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species not only in the Great Lakes but to other regions of the country as well (e.g., the Mississippi River watershed).

With the approximately 20 agencies working on research, use, prevention or control of ANS at the federal level, the need for a coordination and collaboration on a regional level is essential. The Great Lakes Panel's multi-jurisdictional representation makes this entity well suited to meet the complex challenges posed by AIS invasions. A 1994 report to Congress titled *Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations of the Intentional Introductions Policy Review* further confirmed the need for regional inter-jurisdictional panels in making ecologically credible decisions.

Congress also recognized that, by providing sound advice to the ANS Task Force with input from experts in a seriously impacted region, the Great Lakes Panel makes a substantial contribution to the collective effort at both the regional and national levels.

The role and potential contributions of the Great Lakes Panel were further enhanced by the provisions of the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 (NISA). The 1996 Act, which reauthorized NANPCA, further responded to the increasingly national scope of the ANS problem. The zebra mussel for instance, since its discovery in the Great Lakes in the mid-1980s, has since colonized most of the Mississippi River and is gradually extending its range westward. To address this expanding threat, NISA strengthened existing ANS prevention and control efforts and authorized the formation of new regional ANS panels. By doing this, NISA further encouraged the use of regional panels as mechanisms to assist the ANS Task Force in developing coordinated approaches to prevent and control ANS introduction and spread. The states and provinces in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region have increasingly recognized this need to collaborate on a regional basis to develop and implement effective ANS prevention and control programs.

B. Mission of the Great Lakes Panel

The mission of the Great Lakes Panel per Section 1203 of NANPCA is the following:

- Identify ANS priorities for the Great Lakes with respect to ANS;
- Make recommendations and develop regional positions statements on ANS priorities to the national ANS Task Force to carry out Section 1202 of NANPCA (as amended 1996);

- Assist the ANS Task Force in coordinating federal ANS program activities;
- Provide advice to the public and private individuals and entities concerning ANS prevention and control;
- Coordinate ANS program activities in the Great Lakes related to information and education, research and regional coordination activities, and other areas that are not cited directly in the 1990 Act.

Further embellishment of mission statement is encouraged from the Executive Committee and/or other Panel members

C. Principles Governing the Operation of the Great Lakes Panel

Section 1203(c) of NANPCA (as amended by NISA, 1996) requires the ANS Task Force to encourage the development and use of regional panels in the coordination of activities related to the prevention and control of ANS. The regional panels along with the standing committees of the Task Force provide an intergovernmental mechanism for the development of a coordinated federal program to prevent and control ANS as authorized by NANPCA, 16 U.S.C. 4701-4741.

Along with these principles outlined in federal law, the design and coordination of Great Lakes Panel priorities and activities will be guided by the following additional principles:

- Participation by all interests in the binational Great Lakes-St. Lawrence basin will be maximized to ensure that NANPCA Section 1203 goals are fully addressed;
- The Panel will not duplicated or replace ongoing efforts occurring in the federal, state, provincial, local, academic and nongovernmental sectors related to ANS prevention and control initiatives. The Panel will build upon and showcase these efforts and activities.
- The Panel will use a consensus-based approach in priority-setting and all related decisionmaking activities, except where otherwise indicated in this document.
- The Panel will serve as a coordinator, catalyst and convener, relying upon its membership and other cooperators for the conduct of most program activities (e.g., research, public information, regional coordination and outreach).
- The Panel will serve as a principal regional conduit to the national ANS Task Force and federal, state and provincial agencies with regard to Great Lakes ANS-related research, information/education and regional coordination activities.
- The Panel will coordinate, where possible, regional ANS program activities that are not necessarily conducted pursuant to NANPCA (as amended in 1996).

D. Membership

Section 1203 of NANPCA provides limited guidance in establishing membership for the Great Lakes Panel, calling only for the convening of a panel of Great Lakes representatives from Federal, State and local agencies and from private environmental and commercial interests...@

A careful balance must be struck to ensure that the Panel is both broad in representation and yet manageable in size. To achieve this, a four-tiered approach will be employed.

Membership of the Great Lakes Panel shall consist of the following categories:

- **Regular Members:** Regular members Of the Great Lakes Panel will be drawn from key agencies/organization pursuant to the Acategories@ of interest identified in Section 1203 of NANPCA. Members of the national ANS Task Force will have the opportunity to nominate individuals to be members of the Great Lakes Panel as appropriate. *(More detail needed on how Panel members are selected)*
- **Alternate Members:** Regular members may appoint an alternate to represent them at Great Lakes Panel meetings. Alternate members may vote only when the regular member, who they are representing, is absent from the meeting.
- **At-Large Members:** At-large members are nominated by and elected by the Panel membership and serve three year terms. The at-large members represent certain constituents or areas of expertise that were not identified in the original list of Panel members when the Act was first passed.

Interested Parties/Observers: An individual, agency or organization may be designated as an interested party/observer (as opposed to a regular, alternate or at-large member) if: 1) Section 1203 does not provide for direct membership; 2) if their category of interests (e.g., environmental, commercial) is already adequately represented on the Panel; or 3) if their role in exotic species research, control and monitoring is comparatively limited

In the interest of maintaining a functional Panel size, membership policy dictates that, where available, associations or other Umbrella@ groups will be requested to designate a single individual to represent all members within the association.

Regular Members

The regular membership arrangement for the Great Lakes Panel is as follows:

U.S Federal: One member each from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; U.S. Coast Guard; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; the State Department; and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

- State: One member each from the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.
- Regional/Binational: One member each from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, the International Joint Commission and the Great Lakes Commission (ex-officio).
- Canadian: One member each from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (federal); the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; and Ontario Hydro.
- Tribal Authorities: One member each from the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission and the Chippewa-Ottawa Treaty Fishery Management Authority.
- Local: Two members representing coastal communities, preferably one U.S. and one Canadian.
- Citizen/User Groups: One member each from Great Lakes United and the Great Lakes Sport Fishing Council.
- Private Commercial: One member representing the Council of Great Lakes Industries. One member each from the following industries: electric utility; Great Lakes St. Lawrence maritime transportation; and water supply.
- University/Research: Two members from the Great Lakes Sea Grant Network; one providing expertise on research initiatives, the other on advisory services/extension. One member from a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Research Unit.

Alternate Members

Regular members may appoint an alternate to represent them at Great Lakes Panel meetings. Alternate members may vote only when the regular member, who they are representing, is absent from the meeting. While having alternates in place for regular members is appreciated, agencies/organizations appointing regular members to the Panel should appoint individuals who themselves are interested and able to fully participate in Panel meetings.

At-Large Members

There are six at-large members serving on the Great Lakes Panel. The first group of six at-large members elected in 2001 served staggered three year terms. So each year, two at large memberships come up for election. The intent of the at-large membership program is to ensure that there is balanced representation among all stakeholders involved in the Great Lakes ANS issue area, including emerging priorities. At-large members receive the same privileges as regular and alternate members; they are able to vote and serve as committee chairs and as the

Panel Vice-chair if elected. The Panel Chair must be a regular member representing one of the eight Great Lakes states.

Interested Parties/Observers

Interested parties/observers are welcome at all Panel meetings and have the opportunity to participate in and contribute fully in discussions of the Great Lakes Panel. Interested parties shall not vote but can be involved in all other aspects of Panel meetings. Panel members may suggest to the Great Lakes Commission any agencies/organizations that might be designated as interested parties/observers. Similarly, any such agency/organization can request that designation via communication with the Great Lakes Commission. After the initial recommendation or inquiry, interested parties/observers will be appointed by the Great Lakes Commission staff in consultation with the chair of the Panel.

Appointment of Members

Recommendations for Panel membership will be developed by the Executive Committee of the Panel. Recommendations for committee membership will be made by the committee chair in consultation with the Executive Committee. Panel and committee membership will require the approval of the co-chairs of the ANS Task Force. In appointing the Panel membership, the following points are emphasized:

- Panel membership requires the approval of the two co-chairs of the National Task Force (i.e., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and must meet all criteria for a federally chartered advisory body. The Panel has always operated on the premise that Canadian and tribal authority representatives have membership status. If any such federal criteria preclude non U.S. membership, those interests will need to be officially designated as interested parties/observers and, through this vehicle, participate in Panel activities.
- The co-chairs of the ANS Task Force will be responsible for extending Panel membership invitations.

E. Officers

Panel Chair: A Chair of the Panel will be elected by the Panel membership on a biennial basis. The Panel Chair must be selected from the group of state members. The Chair will serve a two-year term, and will be eligible to serve two consecutive two-year terms, after which time a new Chair must be elected. The Chair will hold the following responsibilities:

- conduct all meetings of the Panel
- oversee the activities of the Executive Committee
- serve as the principal Panel liaison to the national ANS Task Force
- play a significant role as spokesperson for the Panel at meetings and conferences.
- *description needed for Chair's role in the Panel's decision making process?*

Panel Vice-chair: A Vice-chair of the Panel will be elected by the Panel membership on a biennial basis. The Panel Vice-chair can be selected from the larger group of regular members. The Vice-chair will serve a two-year term, and will be eligible to serve two consecutive two-year terms, after which time a new Vice-chair must be elected. The Vice-Chair will hold the following responsibilities:

- conduct of meetings of the Panel in the absence of the Chair
- participate as a member of the Executive Committee
- serve as liaison to the national ANS Task Force in the absence of the Chair
- serve occasionally as spokesperson for the Panel at meetings and conferences
- ***description needed for Vice-Chair's role in the Panel's decision making process?***

F. Election Process for Panel Officers *(to be completed)*

- Panel Officers
 - Panel Chair and Vice Chair
 - Committee Chairs
 - At-Large Members
- Eligibility criteria for officer positions and voting procedures:
 - Panel Chair can be held by a state representative on the Great Lakes Panel
 - Panel Vice Chair can be held by any member of the Great Lakes Panel
 - At-Large members represent certain constituents or areas of expertise that were not identified in the original list of Panel members when the Act was first passed
 - Current Panel officers and at-large members can be re-elected
 - ***Nomination process (to be completed)***
 - Votes for Panel officers can only be cast by members of the Great Lakes Panel (refer to Panel list at: www.glc.org/about/taskforce/glpanel.html)
 - In cases, regarding Panel membership, where there is a primary representative and alternate, one vote should be cast for each position on the election ballot
- Terms of service

There may be interest in integrating a mechanism allowing for the election of the Panel Chair a year in advance; thus enabling officers elect to strengthen their institutional memory and account for new duties (in terms of time and funding).
- ANS Task Force approval of elected Panel officers

G. Committees

Executive Committee: An Executive Committee will be established to serve administrative and executive functions of the Panel. The executive committee will be comprised of the Panel Chair, Vice-chair, and the chairs of the three standing committees: Information/Education, Research Coordination and **Regional Coordination (committee has historically operated under the name of Policy and Legislation)** and a staff person from the Great Lakes Commission. The main functions of the Executive Committee will be to work with staff to plan Panel meetings, develop meeting agendas, and identify important items to be discussed by the Panel and other

administrative items as necessary. The Executive Committee will also act in providing final approval for recommended actions of the Great Lakes Panel to be communicated to the ANS Task Force.

More detail needed on structure and function of the Executive Committee

Standing Committees: The standing committees operate under the auspices of the Great Lakes Panel to advance priorities on ANS prevention and control as identified by the Panel and/or by individual committees. Standing committees of the Panel include:

- Information/Education
- Research Coordination
- Regional Coordination (committee has historically operated under the name of Policy and Legislation)

Chairs for the standing committees are elected for a 2 year term. Committees, led by a Committee Chair, meet for 2-3 hours sessions during Great Lakes Panel meetings. The Committee Chairs are responsible for arranging and conducting meetings and/or teleconferences outside of the Panel meeting with support provided by Panel staff.

Under the leadership of the Committee Chairs, each standing committee is responsible for establishing a mission statement, including goals and objectives, an annual work plan, and ideas for funding proposals for projects to be conducted under the auspices of the Great Lakes Panel and/or standing committees. This information on each standing committee will be provided as an appendix to this operational guidance document.

Committees can recruit their own membership. There is no limit to the number of members a committee can recruit. However, individuals recommended for Committee membership must be submitted to the national ANS Task Force Program Manager for approval. Individuals can serve on more than one committee, with the concurrence of the Chairs from each committee involved

New standing committees can be created by a majority vote of the Great Lakes Panel. (Should this approval be based on majority or consensus?)

Ad Hoc Committees: The Panel may, from time to time, establish ad hoc committees to address specific issues or tasks not covered by the standing committees. Ad hoc committees are established for a specific purpose and for a specific period of time. Once the purpose for which the committee was formed has been accomplished, the committee is disbanded. Ad Hoc committee membership will be established from the regular panel membership, including at-large members and may include other individuals with specific expertise who are willing and able to serve. Ad hoc committees can be created by a majority vote of the Panel. Potential members to serve ad hoc committees will be identified by the Panel and approved by the Panel Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee. Invitations to serve will be made in writing by the Great Lakes Commission staff. All other provisions pertaining to standing committees are applicable to ad hoc committees.

H. Staff Support

The Great Lakes Commission will provide staff support to the Great Lakes Panel. The level of this support will be a function of the availability of funds. At the minimum, a portion of staff time of one or more existing Great Lakes Commission staff members will be dedicated to facilitate Panel activities. The Executive Director of the Great Lakes Commission will be responsible for oversight of all personnel assigned to support Great Lakes Panel activities.

To advance the priorities and activities of the Great Lakes Panel, the Great Lakes Commission staff (staff) performs the following functions:

- **Communication Network:** Support a communication network among Panel members and interested parties including the website (www.glc.org/ans/panel.html) housed on the Great Lakes Information Network, ANS Panel list serve and ongoing correspondence on Panel business conducted both by electronic and U.S. mail.
- **Conduct of Panel Meetings:** Panel meetings are held 1-2 times a year as a forum for coordination and collaboration regarding Panel activities and projects as well as initiatives of the Panel membership. Staff organizes meeting logistics and sets the agenda with guidance from the Panel Executive Committee. Meeting facilitation of both plenary and committee break out sessions are also provided by staff. A summary of the meeting is documented with meeting minutes and a list of action items as posted on the Great Lakes ANS website. This information is also distributed electronically to Panel membership and interested parties.
- **ANS Update:** Publication of the quarterly newsletter, *ANS Update*, providing state and federal programmatic updates, recent publications and upcoming events. The *Update* also features an article on emerging ANS issues, authored, in most cases, by ANS stakeholders and reviewed by the Panel's Information/Education Committee. ***More detail will be provided on the role of the I/E Committee regarding the editorial process for the ANS Update feature article.***
- **ANS Task Force Meetings:** Representation of the Great Lakes Panel is provided at the biennial meetings of the national ANS Task Force meetings. In the event that Panel officers are not able to attend, staff acts in this role through the preparation of activity updates and associated presentations regarding Panel initiatives and recommended actions on ANS prevention and control in the Great Lakes region. ***(Is further information needed on Great Lakes Panel representation at Task Force meetings?)***
- **Standing Committees:** Support for the operations and activities as determined by each of the committees.
- **Administrative Duties:** Development and submission of annual proposals supporting Panel operation, grant progress reports and annual reporting on the Panel accomplishments and recommended actions for submission to the ANS Task Force.

I. Meetings

Frequency of Meetings: Meetings of the Great Lakes Panel will be scheduled by the Chair with the advance approval of the designated federal officer of the national ANS Task Force who will also receive and approve the draft meeting agendas. The Great Lakes Panel will meet at least once a year unless determined otherwise by the Task Force Co-Chairs. The normal meeting schedule for the Great Lakes Panel will be twice per year.

Requirements for Meeting Notice and Public Comment: Due to the strict requirements of FACA (the Federal Advisory Committee Act) all meetings will be open to public and will be announced in the Federal Register at least 15 days prior to the meeting. To meet additional requirements involving the publishing of any Federal Register notice, the Great Lakes Panel will submit the meeting information to the Executive Secretary of the ANS Task Force at least 6 weeks in advance of the meeting as is required for all regional panels. Because the regional panel meetings are governed by FACA, all Great Lakes Panel meetings will provide an opportunity for public comment.

Quorum for Decisionmaking: A majority (50 percent) of the Great Lakes panel membership (i.e., regular and at-large members) will constitute a quorum for the conduct of official business at a Panel meeting.

Membership Roll Call and Introduction of Visitors/Guests: At the beginning of each Panel meeting, a formal roll call of members will be taken to inform the record of who was present and to provide the basis for determining a quorum for that particular meeting. Also, the Chair/Vice-Chair will ask visitors and guests to introduce themselves after the roll call is conducted.

Meeting Conduct: *(to be completed)*

- Robert's Rules of Order

Decisionmaking Process: Great Lakes Panel decisionmaking will be done on a consensus basis whenever possible, particularly involving programmatic issues. As a guiding principle, consensus is defined as "reaching a decision wherein most of the group agrees." During a Panel meeting, if anyone expresses concern over a decision, the Chair/Vice-Chair will ask the member(s) expressing concern whether they can "live with the decision." If the answer is no, the chair/co-chair will either extend discussion to try to address the member(s) concerns or call for a formal vote to determine the level of consensus among the members present. Only members of the Panel/Committee or, in their absence, their designated alternatives may vote. Minority or dissenting opinions are considered important in the decisionmaking process and will be developed when there is less than full consensus on a decision or recommendation.

Meeting Summaries/Minutes: Summary minutes of each Panel meeting will be prepared for distribution to the full membership, interested parties and to others upon request. Panel meeting minutes will also be made to the ANS Task Force. In addition, the minutes of each meeting as well as recommendations made, actions taken and all studies and reports received, issued or approved will be available for public inspection and copying by the Executive

Secretary of the ANS Task Force. These materials will be provided by the Great Lakes Commission staff to the Task Force.

Panel Decisionmaking between Meetings

From time to time, the Great Lakes Panel will need to take action on items during periods of the year between the regularly scheduled meetings. The Panel Chair may at his/her discretion convene conference calls of the Panel to discuss proposed actions or may communicate in writing or via email requests for Panel consideration of a particular item or action. All Panel members will be encouraged to provide input and participate in any conference call discussions that may be arranged between meetings. Any proposed actions or communications that occur as a result of conference call discussions or written or email requests will move forward only if consensus exists among those Panel members providing comments. When a proposed action or communication is developed, ample time (at least two weeks) will be given for Panel members to review and comment on the proposed action or communication. When Panel members choose not to respond during a specified review period, it will be assumed by the Chair that there are no objections to the proposed action moving forward. In other words, silence will be construed to mean agreement (i.e., support for proposed action)..

Request for Panel action or deliberation between meetings can be initiated by any Panel member through communication to the Chair or the Great Lakes Commission serving as staff for the Panel. Requests for these actions should be made in writing or via email to either the Panel Chair or staff. The Panel Chair, in consultation with the Executive Committee will decide whether a request is urgent enough to be brought before the Panel between meetings or whether it can be postponed and discussed at the next in-person meeting.

J. Making Recommendations to the National ANS Task Force

The Great Lakes Panel is responsible for providing recommendations to the national ANS Task Force on specific issues tasked to it, including an explanation of the rationale for the recommendation. If the Panel or a Standing Committee of the Panel has identified and evaluated options or alternatives on an issue, the rationale as to why a particular option or alternative was selected should also be presented as part of the recommendation. *More detail needed on the types of recommendations made to the Task Force.*

K. Guidelines for Advocacy

As an entity of the national ANS Task Force, the Great Lakes Panel may make recommendations only to the Task Force. It follows that Panel recommendations in the form of advocacy may not be made directly to any other federal agency or to Congress (*is this worded correctly?*). The Great Lakes Panel, as an organization, may not represent the national ANS Task Force in any matters relating to national, international or regional policy, legislation or regulations. Individual members of the Great Lakes Panel, representing their respective organizations, may provide input on these matters, but the Panel as a whole or its standing committees may not. *(Is it appropriate in this section to discuss how “educational”*

information in the form of brochures, newsletters, briefing papers, etc. can be conveyed to other federal agencies and Congress?)

L. Funding

Consistent with Section 1301 (b) (6) of the Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will provide financial support to the administrative entities to fund the regional panels. In the case of the Great Lakes Panel, the administrative entity is the Great Lakes Commission, a binational public agency dedicated to the use, management and protection of the water, land and other natural resources of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence system. The Commission serves the eight Great Lakes states and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec and is founded in state and U.S. federal law.

Funding provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be allocated to support the general operation of the Great Lakes Panel as discussed under the aforementioned section covering staff support. Additional funding for Great Lakes Panel activities will be dependent on the priorities of the annual work plan and the ability of the Great Lakes Commission to secure special project funding from other sources.

M. Annual Work Plan

The Great Lakes Commission will develop an annual work plan to guide its Panel-related ANS support. This plan includes proposed work items, estimated costs, staff allocations and background information on each work item to be used in prioritizing components of the plan based on availability of funds, other critical resources and timeline for completion. The Executive Committee of the Panel will work with the Commission staff to develop the annual work plan, to periodically review the plan and suggest any changes based upon Panel priorities or other factors. Since the Great Lakes Commission as a particular organization is also involved in its own invasive species related projects, the Panel work plan will be clearly organized to show which activities will be accomplished with funding specifically available to support the work of the Panel as well as Great Lakes Commission-led special projects that are done in partnership with the Panel. Projects that the Great Lakes Commission undertakes that do not directly or indirectly involve the Panel will not be included in the Panel work plan, but will be reported on at regularly scheduled Panel meetings.

N. Annual Report

The Great Lakes Commission, working in conjunction with the Panel executive committee, will develop an annual report to be submitted to the national ANS Task Force by November 1 of each year. The report will include information regarding the activities, decisions, and recommendations of the Panel and its committees that took place during the previous program year. The report should also include a brief action plan of anticipated work for the upcoming year.

O. Amending the Operational Guidance Document

Any amendments of changes to the approved operational guidance document will require a two-thirds majority vote of members present at an officially called Great Lakes Panel meeting. Any suggested amendments must also be submitted to and approved by the national ANS Task Force.