***Perceived Needs of the CMS***

* A mechanism for the collaboration and communication that promotes the transparency and accountability in CMS decision making; and
* Help connecting SHRU teams with Agencies, Tribes, and external partners with stakeholders and other members of the public to engage participants with a broad range of knowledge and expertise in SHRU level planning.

***Proposed Actions to Satisfy the CMS Needs***

* A standing committee as a means for collaboration and implementation of specific Outreach and Education Actions as laid out by the 2019 Recovery Plan;
* Educate the public on the challenges to Atlantic salmon recovery and the importance of stewardship of their ecosystems; and
* Engage the public on the recovery process for endangered Atlantic salmon and the ecosystems on which they depend.

**Draft Appendix X: Outreach and Communications Standing Committee**

*Terms of Reference*

The purpose of this document is to describe the *potential* roles and responsibilities of a standing Outreach and Communications Committee under the 2019 – 2020 Collaborative Management Strategy (CMS) for the Gulf of Maine Atlantic Salmon Recovery Program.

1. **Standing Committee Role**

Pursuant to the 2019 Atlantic Salmon Recovery Plan and in support of the 2019– 2020 Collaborative Management Strategy for the Gulf of Maine Atlantic Salmon Recovery Program, the OCC is a group whose proposed role is to support the internal communication goals of the CMS and the external outreach and education objectives of the Recovery Plan. This group will help: a) facilitate communication within and without the CMS on Atlantic salmon recovery planning and implementation efforts through identified communication channels, b) problem-solve communication challenges, and c) provide a platform for promoting and/or enhancing outreach and education opportunities.

Specifically, the OCC will work to facilitate the flow of information pertinent to Atlantic salmon recovery through the following mechanisms:

* Ensure appropriate consideration and inclusion of the cultural connections to Native Nations and set the stage for delivering on federal trust responsibilities;
* Attend Board and Team meetings to assist in determining, planning, and conducting specific actions to meet their communication and/or outreach needs;
* Provide opportunities for partners to contribute to communicating CMS-related information across a variety of platforms based on targeted audience (e.g., the newsletter currently led by NOAA Fisheries, press releases, social media);
* Maintain the [Atlantic Salmon and Sea-Run Fish Restoration in Maine](https://atlanticsalmonrestoration.org/) website or other cross-agency platforms that includes a calendar of events (including annual CMS meetings);
* Develop and conduct outreach events and/or related activities across the DPS;
* Work with SHRU Coordinators to identify SHRU specific outreach and/or communication needs; and
* Work with the Implementation Team to help support and facilitate distribution of CMS materials/resources/reports.

1. **Responsibilities -** in support of recovery plan goals (see italicized text), we outline the following responsibilities:

* *Inform stakeholders and the public of sea-run fish resources in Maine, the importance of protecting and restoring the ecosystems upon which they depend, and the Native Nations with whom their identity and culture are intimately connected.* Ways to satisfy that responsibility include, but are not limited to:
  + Collaborate or provide guidance on preparation of outreach materials;
  + Maintain a website for information about sea run fish biology, ecology, conservation, and differences in the ability to practice sustenance versus recreational sea run fish consumption;
  + Develop, and augment existing, outreach programs in coordination with partners; and
  + Participate in key outreach events with representatives from the full range of sea-run fish restoration partners.
* *Fulfill the conservation goals of the ESA by engaging with stakeholders and the public to guide the implementation of actions necessary for the recovery of Atlantic salmon.* Ways that this action will be completed include, but are not limited to:
  + Organize CMS meetings as a means for the agencies, stakeholders and the public to engage in dialogue on Atlantic salmon recovery efforts;
  + Facilitate the logistical aspects of Board and Team meetings (e.g., venues, technology requirements including webinars (when warranted), agenda development, and public notification/advertisement);
  + Organize the biannual Atlantic Salmon Ecosystem Forum as a means to learn of new science and management efforts that pertain to the restoration of Atlantic salmon, the ecosystems on which they depend, and the different cultures with which they are connected; and
  + Strengthen communication pathways to involve stakeholders in the development and updating of SHRU-level work plans, including:
    - Coordinating with Native Nations and Outreach organizations to accurately represent cultural connections.
* *Provide opportunities for stakeholders to increase capacity in implementing recovery efforts.* Ways that this action will be completed include:
  + Engage stakeholders on training in approaches to habitat restoration including road crossing and Section 6 funding resources;
  + Facilitate workshops and trainings on ESA requirements and cultural awareness; and
  + Distribute proposals for funding opportunities that support salmon recovery and associated cultural awareness efforts.

1. **Ways of Working**

* The OCC Standing Committee will meet once a month, and as necessary;
* Support the CMS Administrative Coordinator, as needed, to ensure vertical and horizontal communication;
* At the request of the Implementation Team, members of the OCC will be prepared to provide input or to gather information (for dissemination) during meetings, as needed;
* A member or members of the OCC will attend individual SHRU Team meetings to disseminate information, and to facilitate proposed actions where appropriate;
* The OCC will help SHRU teams connect with agencies, stakeholders and other members of the public; and
* The OCC will maintain the “Restoration.Org” website, or other designated platforms, as a means of internal collaboration and for external information sharing.

1. **Membership, Committee Structure, and Transparency**

Membership to the group is open to those who have a stake in promoting and supporting the recovery of Atlantic salmon and sea-run species in Maine including representatives from the National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maine Department of Maine Resources, and Penobscot Indian Nation. The OCC will integrate the outreach and communication efforts and resources of each participating Agency/Tribe. Members may also include representatives from other organizations, such as Sea Grant, that have expertise in communications and outreach, and/or research related to pertinent social sciences.

We recommend that the OCC include members from each of the Resource Agencies/Tribe mentioned above to represent the interests of each Agency/Tribe. Further, we suggest that the OCC Chairperson serve a two-year term and rotate among the members of the OCC such that no agency or tribe will serve consecutive terms. The Chair would be responsible for setting the internal meeting agendas, running the OCC meetings, and representing the OCC at MB & PB Meetings. Monthly OCC meetings will be open to the public.

1. **Support from Resource Agencies**

When necessary, NOAA/USFWS/DMR/PIN staff members beyond the Committee may be requested to support the work of the OCC (for example, to help staff a table at an outreach event). The support team is likely to be drawn from people who have served on the Committee or who have specific expertise in a given area. The OCC Chair may call on additional staff members as needed. However, this does not guarantee staff participation given other commitments or agency priorities.

1. **Deliverables**

* The OCC will provide an annual summary report to the Implementation Team detailing the following information:
  + A detailed narrative of the effects of our external communications, such as voice, print, and digital media, to the community,;
  + A detailed narrative of the effects of our internal communications within the CMS and those leading Atlantic salmon recovery;
  + Ongoing and upcoming Outreach activities by SHRU and a list of staff working on those activities;
  + Outreach metrics for the previous year (e.g., number of events conducted and individual interactions); and
  + Identification of deficiencies, and solutions to rectify shortcomings.