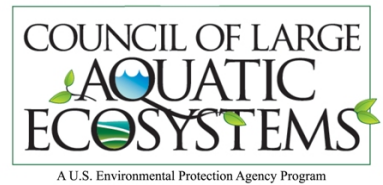


Council of Large Aquatic Ecosystems

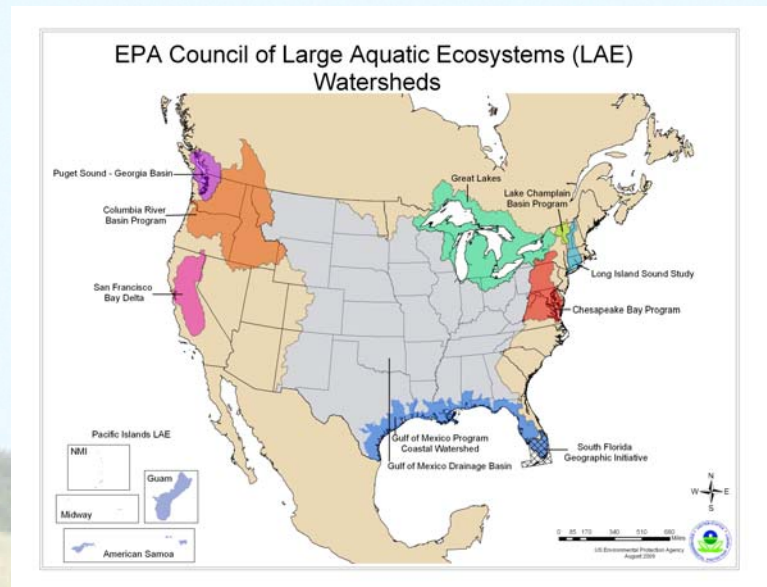
FAQs



Who are the members of the Large Aquatic Ecosystems (LAE) Council?

The council is composed of ten geographically based, large aquatic ecosystem programs across the U.S.

- The Chesapeake Bay Program
- The Great Lakes
- The Gulf of Mexico Program
- The Long Island Sound Study
- The South Florida Geographic Initiative
- The Lake Champlain Basin Program
- The Puget Sound - Georgia Basin
- The Columbia River Basin
- The San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary
- The Pacific Islands Program Office



The council also includes:

- The EPA Deputy Assistant Administrator for Water, who serves as chair
- The directors of the Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds, the Office of Science and Technology, and the Office of Wastewater Management
- A senior representative of the EPA Office of Research and Development
- Two EPA Region Water Division Directors serving two year terms

What are the objectives of the LAE Council?

The charter for the Council of Large Aquatic Ecosystems, established by EPA in May 2008, states five key objectives:

- Strengthen Aquatic Ecosystem Programs
- Strengthen Core Water Program Implementation
- Improve Aquatic Ecosystem Program Links to EPA Strategic Plan and Budget
- Improve Aquatic Ecosystem Program Links to EPA Research Plans
- Develop and Define New Aquatic Ecosystem Programs

The charter includes additional information concerning specific activities under each of these goals. The charter can be found at:

http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/pdf/large_aquatic_ecosystems_charter.pdf

Why was the LAE Council created?

Despite tremendous progress in protecting and restoring the nation's water quality, severe threats and challenges remain. Ecosystem-based programs complement national programs, such as the discharge permit program or infrastructure financing program, by delivering plans and programs tailored to a specific, critical aquatic ecosystem. The Council of Large Aquatic Ecosystems seeks to strengthen these ecosystem programs by facilitating communication among the LAE members and their national water program counterparts.



The LAE Council was created by the US Environmental Protection Agency in 2008. The ten geographically-placed program members focus on protecting and restoring the health of critical aquatic ecosystems. The LAE Council seeks to merge geographically-based efforts with national water programs to advance the health of the Nation's large aquatic ecosystems and strengthen national water programs.

How did the LAEs become part of the council?

The council is made up of large aquatic ecosystems identified in Goal 4 of the EPA Strategic Plan. These are major aquatic ecosystems in which EPA and others are making substantial investments and for which EPA is committed to reporting progress toward restoration goals. In developing the final charter for the council, several large aquatic ecosystem programs not now addressed in Goal 4 were included at the request of EPA regional offices.

What are the roles of the LAE Council members?

The members of the council will work together to formulate strategies to help implement their plans of action. Council members identify common needs, promote best practices, and work with HQ program offices and the Office of Research and Development to improve link between programs. Council members hold periodic conference calls and meet occasionally to implement these actions.

What about LAEs that are not now members of the council?

The primary function of the LAE Council is to integrate the ten geographic-based programs that are part of the council with EPA's national water programs. From time to time EPA may decide to add new LAEs to the council.

How are the operations of the council supported?

The Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds provides administrative and management support for the council and serves as a HQ point of contact for LAEs on budget, assessment, and strategic plan related activities.

Where can I find more information about the LAE Council?

EPA LAE Council Website:

http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/partnerships/large_aquatic.html

LAE Council intranet wiki: (currently an internal EPA wiki)

https://kestrel.rtpnc.epa.gov/laecouncil/index.php/Main_Page

LAE Program Web Sites

Chesapeake Bay Program

www.chesapeakebay.net

Columbia River Basin

www.epa.gov/region10/columbia

Great Lakes

www.epa.gov/glnpo

Gulf of Mexico Program

www.epa.gov/gmpo

Lake Champlain Basin Program

www.lcbp.org

Long Island Sound Study

www.longislandsoundstudy.net

Pacific Islands Office

www.epa.gov/region09/islands

Puget Sound - Georgia Basin

(Under Construction)

San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary

www.epa.gov/region9/water/watershed/sfbay-delta.html

South Florida Geographic Initiative

<http://epa.gov/region4/water/southflorida/index.html>

Office of Wetlands, Oceans,
and Watersheds

[www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/
partnerships/large_aquatic.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/partnerships/large_aquatic.html)

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