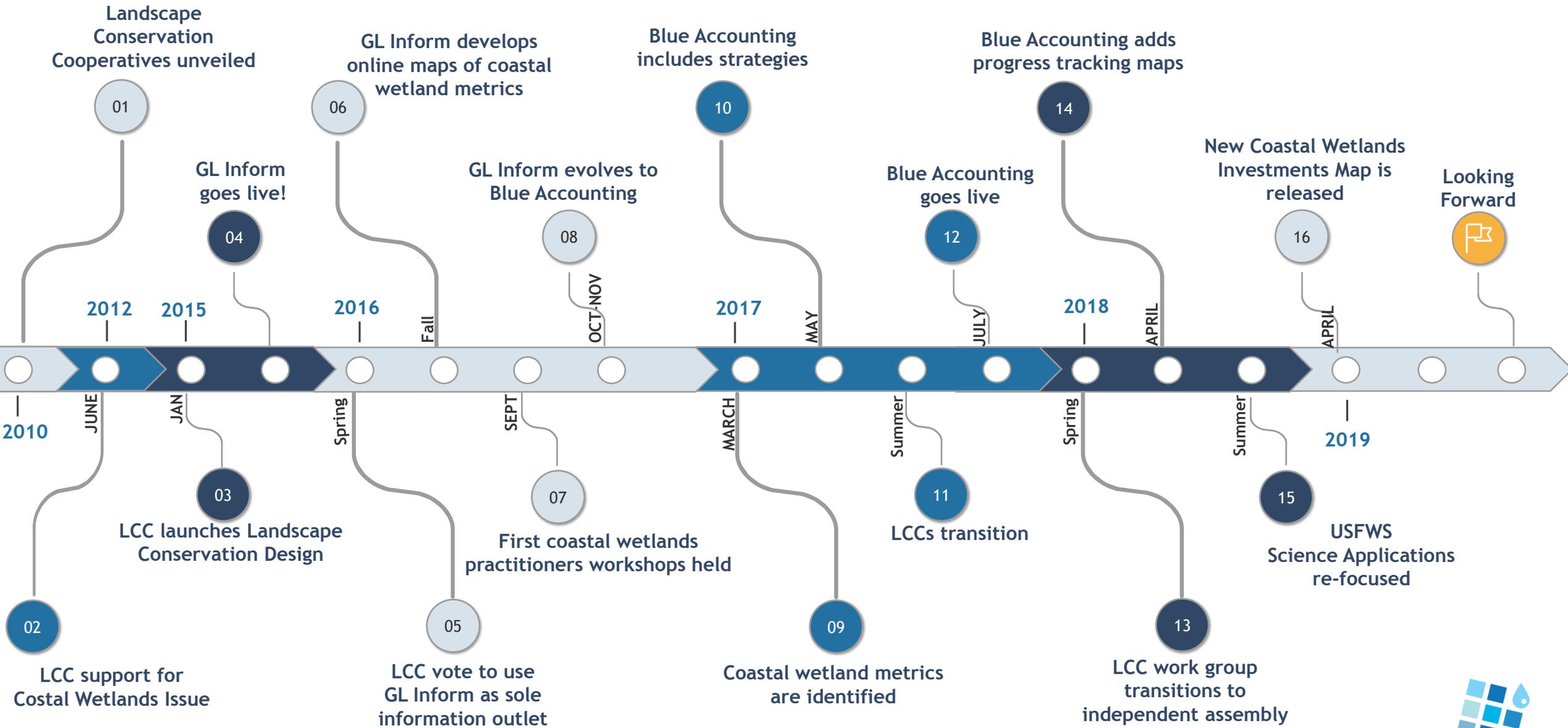


# History of the Great Lakes Coastal Wetlands Blue Accounting Issue Development



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- 01 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives are unveiled**

Led by USFWS Science Applications (SA), 22 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) were designated as self-directed, multi-jurisdictional, collaborations for addressing issues that span large geographies. The Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC (UMGL LCC) establishes five landscape level priorities for including Aquatic Connectivity, Coastal Conservation, Forest Conservation, Urban Conservation, and Gulf Hypoxia, each with associated working groups.
- 02 UMGL LCC provides support for Coastal Wetlands information delivery**

The UMGL LCC provided funding to The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for development of Great Lakes Information Management & Delivery System (GLIMS), an adaptive management website that was designed to be the sole source for information sharing across the collaborative.
- 03 UMGL LCC launches Landscape Conservation Design**

Landscape conservation design (LCD) is a partner-driven, adaptive process that provides information, tools, maps and strategies in order to achieve sustainable, resilient landscapes. The UMGL LCC Coastal Conservation Working Group launched a pilot LCD for coastal wetlands in the Saginaw Bay - Western Lake Erie geography.
- 04 Great Lakes Inform goes live!**

GLIMS evolves into the Great Lakes Inform platform and included an updated design and new features like web maps and investment tracking.
- 05 UMGL LCC elect to use GL Inform as sole information outlet for issues**

With leadership approval, UMGL LCC Coastal Conservation Working Group (CCWG coordinated with TNC to launch the Coastal Wetlands issue. A resource library is compiled to create a single informational outlet on Great Lakes coastal wetlands; other priority issues were expected to follow.
- 06 GL Inform develops online maps of Coastal wetlands and tracking metrics**

Web maps included protection, restoration, and enhancement coastal wetland project information including funding amount and source. With the help of the Coastal Wetland Monitoring Program, vegetation IBI was used as the initial tracking metric for coastal wetlands quality.
- 07 UMGL LCC Coastal Conservation Working Group hosts coastal wetlands practitioners workshops**

Several workshops were held within the pilot region to inform the working group of practitioners needs to support coastal wetland conservation efforts.
- 08 GL Inform evolves to Blue Accounting**

With support for Blue Accounting from the Council of Great Lakes Governors, GL Inform evolves to Blue Accounting, a information platform for water resource monitoring based on collaborative, issue-based working groups with a common agenda and strategies to optimize investments. The coastal wetlands is important to the Council and was naturally transitioned to the new platform.
- 09 Coastal wetland metrics are identified**

Based on feedback from the practitioner workshops, a team of wetland scientists rank the proposed metrics for tracking coastal wetlands quality and value based on relevancy, data availability, and response interval to restoration. A few, easily obtainable values are identified to pursue in this first round.
- 10 Blue Accounting includes strategies**

The UMGL LCC CCWG collaboratively developed strategies for obtaining a healthy coastal wetlands ecosystem in the Great Lakes based on the Theory of Change methodology. These are openly shared on Blue Accounting.
- 11 LCCs transition as a result of zero funding in Presidential budget**

With a drastic change in presidential priorities away from climate change and resource conservation, USFWS must transition the coordination support for LCCs to the collaborative itself and enter into a participant role in collaborative landscape conservation. The Coastal Conservation Working Group begins transition.
- 12 Blue Accounting website goes live!**

Blue Accounting publicly released and promoted as a go-to information hub for key Great Lakes issues.
- 13 The LCC CCWG transitions to Great Lakes Coastal Assembly**

With an independent charter and renewed mission, the UMGL LCC CCWG emerges as an independent work: Great Lakes Coastal Assembly (GLCA) and grows with increased participation, both domestic and internationally.
- 14 Blue Accounting adds progress and investment tracking maps**

With the need to track investments and implementation progress, Blue Accounting adds new tracking maps.
- 15 USFWS Science Applications re-focused**

Although no longer coordinating the LCCs, USFWS SA continues to work on landscape level, cross-jurisdictional issues that focus on the USFWS mission and priorities including species through collaborative partnerships. Some issues include at-risk species like Monarch butterfly and other pollinators, migratory tree bats and landscape habitats like grasslands and stream connectivity for native fish.
- 16 New Coastal Wetlands Investments Map is released**

Blue Accounting and the GLCA release a comprehensive interactive dashboard of Great Lakes coastal wetlands project investments. [Read more](#)
- Looking Forward**

The GLCA is revising basin-wide goals for coastal wetlands and establishing an annual, international workshop for conservation and restoration professionals