

URBANWATERS

A Partnership Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities

July 28, 2017

9:30 AM -12:00 PM Central

504 Broadway, Gary, IN

I. Welcome & introductions

In attendance: Jen Birchfield- Urban Waters; Brenda Scott Henry- Gary Green Urbanism; Joe Exl- NIRPC; Michael Spinar- IDEM; BreShaun Spikes- Student Conservation Association; Tatianna Thomas- Student Conservation Association; David Lampe- US Geological Survey; Jack Eskin- City of Gary; Iza Redlinski- Field Museum; Nathanael Pilla- Save the Dunes; Ethan Brown- Alliance for the Great Lakes; Tim Kingsland- City of Hobart; Jacob Van Horn- BF&S Engineering; Collin Simex- BF&S Engineering; Rich Underkofler- Highland Community Foundation; Kaitlyn McClain- DNR Lake Michigan Coastal Program; Lisa Harris- Self/League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region; Leslie Dorworth- Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant/Purdue Northwest; Daniel Goldfarb- Wildlife Habitat Council; Logan Donovan- Wildlife Habitat Council; Kevan Kolb- Wildlife Habitat Council; Drew Hart- US Forest Service; Sheela Johnson- US Forest Service; Lynda Lancaster- National Park Service, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore; Cherrie Fisher- US Forest Service; Carolyn Saxton- Legacy Foundation; Reggie Korthols- Butler, Fairman & Seufert; Paul Labus- The Nature Conservancy

II. Urban Waters updates – *Jen Birchfield, NWI Urban Waters Coordinator*

Jen updated the group on the NWI Urban Waters work plan, Urban Waters nomination for a Sammie award; the One DOI Initiative; funding opportunities, and upcoming events. The group discussed the One DOI Initiative, including matching funds for USGS monitoring projects.

III. Gary Green Infrastructure Planning and GSTADS Tool - *Jack Eskin, Deputy Director of Redevelopment, City of Gary*

After the presentation, the group discussed the tool's relevance and transferability to municipalities throughout the region.

IV. Monitoring of Green Infrastructure at Gary City Hall-*Dave Lampe, Hydrologist , U.S. Geological Survey- Indiana Water Science Center*

Dave noted that USGS is looking to add sites to the monitoring program, specifically for tree plantings. There was not sufficient time for discussion, but several partners spoke with Dave during partner updates and after the meeting regarding potential monitoring sites.

V. Pertinent partner updates and announcements – *Group*

- Carolyn Saxon- Legacy and Unity Foundations are working with other community foundations on a Great Lakes Protection Fund proposal for developing strategies for green infrastructure in Lower Lake Michigan (Evanston through Michigan City).

- Dave Lampe- Paul Buszka has proposed the HUC boundary changes to the working group.
- Lynda Lancaster- There will be a concert at West Beach August 4th. The Little Calumet River East Branch Environmental Assessment has been signed with a finding of no significant impact.
- Michael Spinar- A public CARE seminar for the Grand Calumet Area of Concern will be held on October 26th.
- Kaitlyn McClain- Coastal Program is accepting pre-proposals. The Coastal Advisory Committee will meet in August.
- Tim Kingsland- Hobart was awarded a \$340,000 EPA GLRI grant to install green infrastructure at four sites, as well as two 319 grants for Deep River.
- Paul Labus- Great Lakes Audubon has been doing marsh bird monitoring over the last three years and is expanding into sites in NWI. Opportunity to engage citizen scientists. May be good to request a presentation for sites at INDU.
- Sheela Johnson- USFS is working with USGS to identify tree sites.
- Nathanael- Save the Dunes completed septic education campaign, including realtor and installer trainings and a good neighbor sign campaign in Trail Creek and Miller. 19 inspectors were certified and about 100 people came in to the trainings. Outreach templates are available that can be adjusted for communities, Doreen has more information. Lynda asked if there is there a list of inspectors. IOWPA has one. The list should be shared with NISWAG.
- Joe Exl- NIRPC has signed a contract with Flatland Resources for an engineering feasibility study of the Deep River dam. NIRPC is submitting a 319 proposal for a collaborative multi-watershed cost-share program. Communitree applied for USFS GLRI funds to replenish tree canopy. About 150 trees were planted this spring in six municipalities. Fall applications will be accepted again for fall planting season. There will be a workshop this fall.
- Drew Hart- The SCA crew is working with communitree to plant and water trees in East Chicago, Hammond, Whiting. Another 1000 trees will be planted this fall. They are seeking volunteers
- BreShaun- SCA planted 250 trees in Gary, Hammond, and Whiting and is now watering. The team will start fall plantings in September. Dave Lampe asked if the plantings are being tracked.
- Daniel Goldfarb- Wildlife Habitat Council has two interns here. They have a GLRI grant for planting on industrial sites. They have done one at Praxair and one at ArcelorMittal, and more are planned for fall. Daniel has ideas of monitoring sites for USGS and will speak with Dave.
- Rich Underkofler - SCA planted trees at elementary schools in Highland. Rotary is encouraging members to plant trees with a goal of one per member. Outreach is being conducted to rotary clubs in Hammond, Schererville, Dyer, and Gary.
- Reggie Korthols- Have we given up on the West Branch WMP update? Joe replied no, but we need to coordinate it with IDEM's monitoring, the monitoring is burdensome. NISWAG meets on August 17th in Merrillville. Indiana Water Environment Association conference will be August 22-24 in Indianapolis. Indiana Association of Floodplain Managers conference will be in South Bend September 6-8.

- Jack Eskin- Update on Vacant to Vibrant program. There will be a public meeting August 30th and a site design meeting September 14th.
- Leslie Dorworth- 50 teachers from South Bend toured Roxanna Marsh. She participated in water safety and nothing down the drain education with summer camp. Sea Grant's administrative office is moving back to South Bend.
- The Little Calumet West Branch WMP is on the back burner due to a need for resources, monitoring in particular.

VI. Group input on future meeting topics, location, and format (& break before tour)

Limited feedback was obtained. One individual requested that meetings end at noon. One participant indicated that they prefer that meeting locations continue to rotate with tours. One participant indicated that there is so much going on, perhaps meetings should be more frequent or subcommittees could meet.

12:00 -Walking tour of green infrastructure projects in downtown Gary led by *Brenda Scott Henry, Director/MS4 Coordinator, City of Gary - Green Urbanism/ Environmental Affairs* and *Dave Lampe- USGS*

Next Meeting: October 5, 2017, 9:00AM-12:00PM CST

Joint Environmental Management Policy Committee (EMPC) – Urban Waters Partnership Meeting
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (6100 Southport Road Portage, IN)

Thank you to our presenters and to 504 Development for use of meeting space.