

PARTNERING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

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NORTHWEST INDIANA FORUM

Northwest Indiana Forum

- A regional, non-profit economic development organization
- Services Lake, Porter, LaPorte and Starke Counties
- Membership organization – 123 members including industrial and commercial businesses, financial entities, universities and municipalities
- Reflecting \$40 Billion in commerce

Forum Environmental Committee

- Committee members include:
 - ArcelorMittal USA, Indiana Harbor & Burns Harbor
 - United States Steel
 - BP
 - Cargill
 - MicroBac Labs
 - Many others

Committee Mission Statement

- To represent the interests of the Northwest Indiana Forum membership on environmental issues affecting the quality of life and business climate in Northwest Indiana

Committee Goals:

#1. To strengthen the Forum's role as a primary advocate on legislative and regulatory proposals regarding environmental issues

Objectives:

- Participate in public and informal discussions on environmental issues of concern to Forum members
- Prepare and present forum written comments on proposed environmental laws and regulations as requested by the Committee and Forum administration

Objectives Continued

- Inform Forum membership of local, state and federal laws and regulations affecting their interest and the impact these may have on their operations
- Identify, assess and monitor pertinent regulatory, legislative and environmental proposals affecting Northwest Indiana
- Seek consensus of Forum members on environmental issue positions developed by the Committee

Committee Goals

#2 To be a resource supporting the
Northwest Indiana Forum's role for
regional economic development

Objectives

- Foster continual improvement in Brownfields development through participation with regulatory agencies, advocacy groups and local economic development organizations (LEDOs)
- Develop relationships with regional organizations such as Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) and Regional Development Authority (RDA) to coordinate efforts

Objectives Continued

- To become a clearinghouse for disseminating factual information regarding environmental successes, opportunities and challenges in Northwest Indiana
- Prioritize information and assist in development of methods for informing audiences

Subcommittees

- Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Basin Compact Team
- Antidegradation Rulemaking
- Environmental Permitting Information teams

Who we partner with....

- Save The Dunes
- Alliance for the Great Lakes
- National Wildlife Federation, state and national offices
- Individual Communities

Partnering Example

- Great Lakes Compact
 - Tom Anderson, Charlotte Read – Save the Dunes
 - Lee Botts – Environmentalist and Alliance for the Great Lakes representative
 - John Goss, Molly Flannagan, Indiana National Wildlife Federation
 - Cameron Davis, Alliance for the Great Lakes

What we did.....

- Knew that we wanted to support the Compact concepts
- Recognized that there would be components that may be viewed differently by industry/municipalities and environmental stakeholders
- Determined that we wanted to have the dialogue locally to discuss potential differences

What we did.....

- Contacted local environmental stakeholders to invite them to discuss the issues proposed to be addressed by the Compact development
- Began a dialogue – lots of coffee!!

What we learned....

- There weren't as many differences in the stakeholders views
- Where there were differences, we were able to discuss them
- All stakeholders needed to be able to freely express concerns and opinions
- With open dialogue, education and exchange, we found solutions

What we accomplished....

- Created a joint environmental/industrial Statement of Support for the development and implementation of the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence River Basin Compact
- The only joint support statement from the 8 Great Lakes states of this kind
- Asked by Ohio Compact representative if we **could teach their stakeholders 'how to get along'**

What we accomplished....

- Worked closely with Senator Beverly Gard, Senator Karen Tallian, Senator Ed Charbonneau, Kari Evans and David Phippen of Governor Daniels office and Ron McAhron of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources on Senate Bill 45 that positioned Indiana as the first state to pass language to adopt and implement the Compact

What we accomplished....

- Compact team members provided educational outreach to many local meetings
- Compact team members testified before numerous Senate and House Environmental Committee hearings
- WOWed the legislators with our joint environmental/industrial support

Senate Bill 45

- First bill of the 2008 Legislative Session signed by Governor Daniels in February, 2008
- In recognition of our partnership effort, the **“Compact Team”** was invited by the Governor to attend the signing ceremony

Taking it to the Federal level....

- Invited to testify before the Senate Judicial Committee, Washington DC on Senate Joint Resolution 45, July 2008
- Senator Feingold and committee members were impressed...

It works so keep on doing it...

- Antidegradation – statewide rulemaking process
- Trying to lead by example to others throughout the state to have this type of open dialogue on issues

More issues are bound to arise...

- Northwest Indiana is recognized as the leader in the state when it comes to this relationship
- The stakeholders involved have had **relationships for many years....in some cases – decades!**
- New stakeholders are showing up – we look forward to future dialogues with them

Final thought....

- There may be difficult times...I can't promise there won't be problems
- But the end result can be very rewarding
- Good luck!