

## Environmental Management Policy Committee

Lake Michigan Room

May 4, 2023

### Minutes

Bill Emerson called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance were Bill Emerson (Lake County), Reggie Korthals (MS4), Ryan Lisek (DCI), Robert Forester Kouts), Kay Nelson (Forum), Brenda Scott-Henry, Daina Dumbrys, Kevin Brietzke, George Topoll (Union Township), and Daina Dumbrys.

NIRPC staff present were Kathy Luther, Jennifer Birchfield, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

The meeting minutes of February 2, 2023 were approved on motion by Reggie Korthals and second by Robert Forester.

### Public Comments

No public comments were submitted.

Kathy spoke on the overview draft *NWI 2050+* and Climate Action NWI (CAN), which will be out for public comment until May 5. NIRPC is required by Federal law to update the long-range plan every four years and must have at least a 20-yr horizon. CAN is a multi-stakeholder effort that encourages long-term action, engagement and implementation of local climate action places including the following:

- NWI Regional Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory
- NWI Regional Climate Action Framework
- NWI Regional Climate Resilience Plan (CAP)

A 2017 baseline for CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions was established for Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties, totaling 54.5M tons. 54.9% CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions come from industrial energy, 24.7% is from industrial processes and fugitive, 8.7% is from transportation and mobile, commercial energy contributes 5.2%, and residential energy is at 5.9%. It is estimated that between 2016-209, trees and forests removed a net 442,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. The Framework coordinates local efforts to achieve a regional goal of 63.4% reduction in 2017 GHG emissions levels by 2030 and a carbon neutral region by 2050. NIRPC completed a Business-as-Usual emissions forecast. Planning assumptions for growth in population on vehicle miles traveled were aligned with land use, housing, and travel demand portions of *NWI 2050+*. By 2050, future GHG emissions would increase to 58M tons.

Examples of corporate goals to reduce industrial energy include Cleveland Cliffs. Their corporate goal is a 25% GHG reduction from 2017 by 2030 and designing 50-70% CO<sub>2</sub> capture from blast furnace gas at Burns Harbor (2M tons/year). US Steel's corporate goal is to have a 20% GHG reduction by 2030. NIPSCO has made efforts in decarbonization of energy generation and committed to continued investment in renewable energy.

Regional contributions and local government are the primary metrics that will be used to prioritize emission source categories for CA planning. NIRPC will provide climate action plan templates and technical support to cities and towns interested in pursuing a local CAP.

Transportation accounts for 40% of NWI total GHG emissions. Diesel vehicles and freight rail can lessen the impact by reducing idling and congestion. Promoting transitioning to electric where appropriate, was discussed. An increase in electric vehicle (EV) adoption are part of transportation decarbonization. A map of EV charging stations within the Region were presented. Regional transit expansion will consist of collaboration with public transit to enhance regional transit and expand capacity by establishing a regional fixed route mass transit system.

Plans to increase Resilience are as follows:

- Climate friendly parks - Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore Action Plan: The plan aims to reduce vehicular and waste related emissions in the park and provide robust educational programming to staff and visitors on sustainable park practices.
- IDNR Wetland Action Plan: instituted an in-lieu fee program for mitigation of impacts to aquatic resources.
- Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs): The plan is to protect, restore, and enhance Indiana's landscapes by coordinating efforts to identify, prevent, and control invasive species.
- Watershed Management Plans: The plan is intended to be a practical tool with specific recommendations on practices to improve and sustain water quality.
- Conservation Action Plans

The full plan can be viewed online at [www.nirpc.org/nwi-2050/](http://www.nirpc.org/nwi-2050/). You can also want the NWI 2050+ recap on NIRPC's YouTube page. Comments can be emailed to [nirpc@nirpc.org](mailto:nirpc@nirpc.org), or call 219-763-6060.

#### **Reports from Planning Partners**

Ryan Lisek (DCI) reported on events and programs with Drive Clean Indiana. For more information, please visit <https://drivecleanindiana.org/>.

Announcements were made.

The next EMPC meeting is slated for August 3, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. in the NIRPC offices.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.