

Urban Waters Federal Partnership Meeting
November 9th, 2012
10:00AM-12:00PM Central

Michigan City City Hall
Emergency Operations Center Meeting Room
100 East Michigan Boulevard
Michigan City, IN 46360

Introductions (3 minutes)

Please see the separate Excel sheet

Overview on Urban Waters to Date (20 minutes)

- Mission Reminder
 - Natalie Johnson delivered a brief overview on the Urban Water's mission & purpose of gathering
- Project Successes
 - Lynda Lancaster provided update on National Park Service (NPS) partnering successes: Summer 2012 partnership among NPS, Northwest Indiana Paddling Association (NWIPA), Indiana University Northwest, Great Lakes Innovative Stewardship through Education Network (GLISTEN), Save the Dunes, and Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM)
 - Tom Dilley provided update on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) partnering on emerald ash borer studies being conducted in the Town of Munster, the City of Valparaiso, and Town of Merrillville. The projects consist of GPS mapping infested trees and ash trees likely to be infested and planning for their replacement with other native trees. Calculations were made using the Tree Benefit calculator to assess how much additional stormwater is entering nearby waterways due to tree loss.
 - Natalie provided update on Wilderness Inquiry's visit to Trail Creek. Wilderness Inquiry (WI) first contacted the UWFP during 2011 after having worked with the Anacostia pilot. Contact information was passed through the organization and Nicole Messacar of LaPorte County Soil and Water Conservation District (LC SWCD) was able to lead and coordinate the event along with Dan Plath of NWIPA in partnership with Lake Michigan Department of Natural Resource (DNR), Trail Creek Watershed Committee, Michigan City Sanitary District (MCSD), NPS, & Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The program brought 24' Voyageur canoes to Michigan City and provided education and paddling to over 450 students and parents.
- Urban Waters Project Parameters

- Natalie updated on what kinds of topics the chosen Urban Waters projects fall under. These parameters act as a guide for what future projects might be claimed as Urban Waters projects.

Project Area Updates & Wish-list

- Deep River (new addition)
 - Gina Darnell speaking on behalf of Dan Plath (NWIPA) brought attention to opportunities to pursue projects in the Deep River watershed. There is much momentum surrounding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), NWIPA, and Gary Schools to remove a dam in Lake Station that is hazardous. Deep River has also been identified for increasing public access through designating as a water trail, adding signage noting so, creating a public paddling event, and collecting partners to help remove debris along the shoreline. Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) is preparing to submit a 319 planning grant to develop a watershed management plan. The UWFP is supportive of this application and looks forward to incorporating Deep River in more projects.
- Trail Creek (10 minutes)
 - Nicole Messcar (LC SWCD) & Michael Kuss (MCSD) updated the group on Trail Creek Watershed Committee: Need to garner forces to clean up old landfill around a school and HUD housing unit to provide a safe environment. Interest in EPA Environmental Justice Grant—and non-profit is needed to apply. Cary Troy from Purdue has also been monitoring Trail Creek. Momentum surrounding Cheney Run (which was visited during field trip)—a storm drain that may be a suitable project for green infrastructure implementation. Nicole stressed the importance of finding community leader. Proposal submitted to bring Wilderness Inquiry back to Michigan City in 2013.
- East Branch of the Little Calumet/Salt Creek (10 minutes)
 - Jen Birchfield, Save the Dunes, updated: Planning on holding education day at Brummitt Elementary for 2013. Asks for federal agencies to take back the message of difficulties providing non-federal match to match grants. Also mentioned that IDEM's 319 does not allow for sampling to be a component. Note that asking for technical assistance for partners to offer sampling resources would be welcomed in any watershed group. EB Little Calumet is holding technical and outreach meetings at this time. Conducting windshield surveys. Sampling complete—waiting on IDEM data. Lynda Lancaster updated: NPS Parkids program successful reached out to underserved communities to put kids on the water.
- Grand Calumet (10 minutes)
 - Ashley Snyder, IDEM, updated: Remediation Action Plan (RAP) is used as basis for Grand Calumet Area of Concern (AOC) beneficial use impairment delisting (BUIs). Next section of dredging and carbon capping to take place east of the Indiana Harbor Shipping Canal. Update from others: USACE is heavily involved but because of contaminants in the east lagoon, but may be able to move forward using the Economy Act as a justification. Will

look to the City of Gary for a letter of intent. EPA will remove the old Sheriton Hotel in Gary and make it a storm water swale. The USACE can do the planning, design and implementation but they need a local match 35/65. Natalie brought up need for community outreach in these areas (especially on the AOC). A meeting will take place later to bring interested organizations together on how to proceed. Dorreen Carey with Lake Station emphasized importance of holding AOC public meetings in the AOC.

○ Mapping (10 minutes)

- Paul Buszka, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), updated: USGS working on creating a pilot map similar to the Anacostia map
NWI Map: <http://lcat.usgs.gov/nwindiana/>
Anacostia: <http://lcat.usgs.gov/anacostia/>
Progress is being made working with NIRPC & Save the Dunes to gather data layers.
More information to come. Check out the sites in the meantime.

~~Small Group Breakout Sessions on Wish-lists (20 minutes)~~————

Grant Opportunities (5 minutes)

Lynda Lancaster: America's Best Ideas Grant available for NPS to apply

Closing Comments/Date Reminders (5 minutes)

Gene Fleming updated the group on the many projects the USACE is working on in the area. Emphasized that the partnership has helped the USACE move forward on a project with Shirley Heinze. ** I, Natalie, have asked Gene for a list/map of these projects so as to not leave out any.

Dates:

November 29th AOC Public Meeting through CARE Committee (contact Ashley Snyder for details)

December 19th Meeting for the East Branch of Little Calumet Watershed (contact Jen Birchfield for details)

May 5-11th National Drinking Water Week

June Coastal Month

June 1st Kreuger Middle School Water Festival (contact Natalie Johnson for details)

June 22nd Hobart Water Festival (contact Sherryl Doerr or Natalie Johnson for details)

September 30th-October 4th Tentative Wilderness Inquiry Visit to Trail Creek (contact Nicole Messacar for details)

Mingle & Lunch Break

- ❖ Next UWFP meeting in February 2013
- ❖ Special thank you to the Michigan City Sanitary District and the Trail Creek Watershed Committee for the field trip to see Cheney Run
- ❖ Another special thank you to the City of Michigan City for hosting our meeting