

Education and Outreach Subcommittee Meeting I
May 7, 2007 4:30-6:15 pm

Attendees: Alicia Maloy, Don Emmert, Crystal Joshua, Deb Lane, Lindsey Payne, Linda Prokopy, Art Remnet, Falon French, Sara Peel

Messages:

- Ecosystem in general and how it pertains to the Wabash River
- Need for buffers to improve water quality
- Fish species/community
- Interconnectiveness – cities to Wabash, Wabash up and downstream
- Reduce fears/stigma of the river
- Stewardship responsibilities/opportunities
- Safety and use of the river
- Recreational activities/opportunities
- Basic facts – length, width, access locations
- History – use as a trade route, navigation, etc.
- Watershed concept – 80% of people don't know that they live in a watershed
- Benefits of the river, of clean water, of being involved

Ideas to deliver message:

- Use field trip or bring the river to them
- Create a camp opportunity –multi-day session
- Canoe float
- Activities on the river
- Hands on

Next Efforts:

- Develop work plan
- Survey or listing of what other groups in the county/city/watershed are already do education-wise and how we can supplement those efforts

Audiences:

- Community/General Public → Wabash River is not toxic
 - Different messages for rent/own, urban/rural, Lafayette/West Lafayette/Battle Ground/etc
 - Host a river genealogy event – what was the river or community like when my family arrived? Or a day in the life type event. Partner with Canal Interpretive Center with a history focus
 - Information on what can you do with your land, what you should do with your land, who should you call if - listing on website
 - Track water drop from the river to your tap or vice versa – highlight connection of what you do is important
 - Encourage green ideas – rain gardens, rain barrels, tree planting

- Look for opportunities to get word out – River Fest, Dog Park Day, etc and tailor message to attendees
- Include information in water bills – identify who fills and mails those and determine if they are looking for messages, cost to include, etc.
- Farmers/Rural landowners → How can I help?
 - Highlight opportunities at SWCDs/extension
 - Canoe trip with urban and rural partnership
 - Familiarize landowners to available programs
 - Detail “what’s in it for me”
 - Encourage implementation through new connections – churches, etc.
- Recreational users → Don’t have to leave the area to recreate/Save gas and reduce your carbon footprint
 - Highlight summer events through Parks and Recreation
 - “Wednesdays in the Wilds”
 - Other summer events – opportunity to partner?
 - Fishing derby – locate where we can do this
 - Guided wildlife hikes
 - Provide information as to where/how to access – provide additional access points
 - Try a boat on the river event
- Teachers (P-12) → How to teach the message/ways to incorporate it into their lesson plans
 - Cole Elementary School – “teach the pond” where teachers learn about methods to use the pond for education
 - Project Wet, Project Wild, Hoosier Riverwatch opportunities
 - How many of these events occur already?
 - National days which pertain to ecosystems – generate a list and provide ideas as to how to include the Wabash River for those “days”
- Purdue students → Think Globally, Act Locally, While you are here, take care of your resources
 - Partner with Boiler Green Initiative, AFS, Ducks Unlimited
 - Green Week 2009 is focused on water – incorporate our message into their events
 - Highlight recreational opportunities
 - Welcome week/Freshman orientation/International student week events to highlight the Wabash River
 - Post information in dorms and common areas
 - Identify Wabash River independent study/research projects on which we need help
 - Post all volunteer opportunities to Purdue Volunteer Initiative

- Businesses –Downtown/Levee → make it worth their while
 - How do we make it important to them? Increase visitors/travelers to business location
 - Work with corporations/businesses adjacent to the river – TCPWQ adopt-a-river adjacent to Cargill, those businesses are on board with efforts
 - Leverage “green” opportunities through sponsorships or associations that make business patriotism more attractive
 - Invitations to festivals or events – allow businesses to have booths
 - Create an “approval” process through PU Green Initiative – only those businesses the PUGI recognizes are rated as green, which could increase patriotism
 - Post information in businesses downtown or send them to one or two specific businesses to obtain information
 - Host green or river events in downtown businesses

- Developers → highlight their efforts, make it worth their while
 - Highlight green practices and options, LID opportunities
 - Create economic incentives
 - Local certification process – focus on one group before progressing to another (ie those that are water-wise or use native plants in development)
 - Note: very manpower intensive
 - Use EPICS students for creative projects
 - Create a contact list – I want to know this/do this, who do I contact

- Web users → Wabashriver.net is the go to place
 - Create the go to place for information about the Wabash River, the community, events, etc
 - Develop and post pod casts focused on water quality, wastewater treatment plant(s) and their accomplishments, specific watershed areas – Heritage Trail, etc
 - Create google earth tour of the watershed – highlight both good and poor quality areas
 - Webinars – subjects TBD
 - Ask an expert chat with local or regional expert on topic – watershed coordinator, fisherman, WWTP operator, stormwater specialist, etc
 - Create a mailing list – email and newsletter based, bump up social networking options through facebook and AGreener Indiana

- Visitors/Tourists → what can I do, what are you doing?
 - Provide general watershed and Wabash River information
 - Post signage – now entering X watershed (note: use smaller tributary watersheds, not Wabash River watershed) and include logo for WREC and any partners who assisted in posting that sign

- Post name of stream signs – encourage adopt-a-river program similar to Wildcat Guardians
- Focus on hotels and restaurants, post information at sporting events – places that visitors congregate
- Historic trolley tours/art walks/historic home tours – incorporate information into their brochures or information shared during those tours which highlight the Wabash River and our efforts