



6100 Southport Road
Portage, Indiana 46368
(219) 763-6060
www.nirpc.org

Climate Action NWI Work Group Meeting Notes

August 11, 2022, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Central

Zoom meeting recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNedM2JG4pc>

Participants:

- Kathy Luther, Director of Environmental Programs, NIRPC
- Jen Birchfield, Natural Resources Planner, NIRPC, jbirchfield@nirpc.org
- Kevin Polette, Technical Assistant, NIRPC
- Flor Baum, Administrative Assistant, NIRPC
- Thomas Dow, Director of Transportation, NIRPC
- David Clifford, IU Climate Fellow
- Kathy Sipple, Senior Resiliency Coordinator, Earth Charter Indiana, Kathy@nwiregionresilience.org
- Renee Prejean Motankey, Earth Charter Indiana
- Julie Whitaker- Energy and Sustainability Coordinator at Valparaiso University
- Cathy Perrin from Highland Neighbors for Sustainability
- David Wright, Planning and Marketing Manager for Gary Transit
- Harshini Ratnayaka - Save the Dunes
- Laura Henderson, Michigan City Sustainability Commission
- Ryan Lisek - Drive Clean Indiana
- Connie Wachala, Highland Neighbors for Sustainability
- Kevin Breitzke, Porter County Surveyor, NIRPC Commissioner
- Nancy Moldenhauer, Chair, Michigan City Sustainability Commission
- Chrissy Foreman, Cleveland-Cliffs
- Rachel Krcmarich, Purdue Northwest
- Bill Emerson, Jr., Lake County Surveyor
- Eric Bird, Stewardship Director for Shirley Heinze Land Trust. Porter resident
- Byran Zicherl - Decarbonization & Climate Change Manager at NIPSCO/NiSource
- Victoria Wittig, NWI Urban Waters

Meeting Objectives

1. Clarify and gather input on the NWI regional climate action framework progress, proposed product, timeline, and preparedness assessment.
2. Self-assessment of community and stakeholder preparedness for next steps climate action planning process at the local level

Meeting Notes:

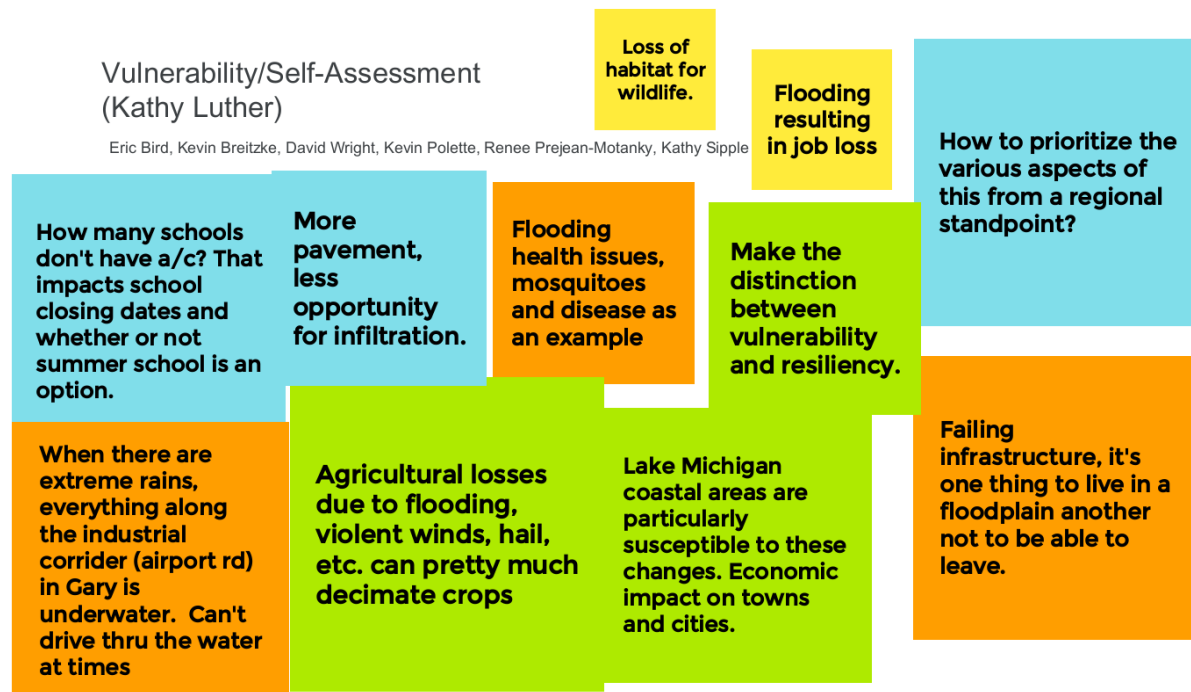
1. Regional Climate Action Plan Framework timeline and progress
2. Regional climate action framework template adapted from ICLEI template

-Presentations from Kathy Luther and David Clifford.

Questions and comments:

- David Wright, GPTC: The urban core communities are not monolithic and some of their neighborhoods are stable and/or growing in population and retail. Thus, some measures for those communities would need to be expansive to reflect that.
- NIPSCO/NiSource climate and ESG documents:
<https://www.nisource.com/company/sustainability/reports-and-policies>
-

3. Topical break Out Sessions:



Recording of Vulnerability Break Out Session: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTAqUS4_gtk

Hoosier Resilience Institute: <https://hri.eri.iu.edu/>

Control/Reduction Strategies

(Jen Birchfield, David Clifford, Ryan Lisek, Nancy Moldenhauer, Connie Wachala, Cathy Perrin, Julie Whitaker, Rachel Krcmarich, Laura Henderson, Bryan Zicher, Victoria Wittig, Harshini Ratnavaka)

I keep hearing that insulating buildings is a great reducer of energy. How can we encourage this?

How will farming practices be addressed? Hope to include land use and update forecast. Sequestration is in clearpath for different land uses

Tips on how to approach Town Council on carbon reduction? especially if not attuned to climate action? Message to something they are interested. ie energy and cost savings

Examples of cost savings from neighboring communities, identified in regional framework? Hobart, Highland Fleets. Triple bottom line

Look at building codes to update outdated standards. Energy consumption reduction important in existing building stock, how do we address not adding the same energy deficiencies in newer buildings and homes?

Don't point finger at Steel Mills. Doing what they can. Yes heavy carbon, but NWI but US GDP depends. Work with industrial fleets to offer improved fuel options. monetary motivators for locally funded fleets

Conserving land is cost driven. Land between Chesterton and Valpo for example expensive. Ag land around waterways within reach. Partners looking to harness new funding opps.

NIPSCO has free programs for residential efficiency and savings

Universities hold research but don't put in understandable language. Language rarely changes once institutionalized. Will keep advocating resilience over climate since politicized and will not be embraced

<https://www.nipsco.com/energy-efficiency/for-your-home/income-qualified-weatherization>

<https://www.nipsco.com/energy-efficiency/for-your-home/home-energy-assessment>

Green Team Academy: https://www.greenteamacademy.org/climate-action?utm_campaign=1e955420-17cd-4c61-8142-a4431b8cfa71&utm_source=so&utm_medium=mail&cid=925ac948-6b1d-4bd7-b559-31392068d5df

Region Neighbors for Sustainability event, August 27: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/region-neighbors-for-sustainability-tickets-384180864307>

Next Meeting:

September 15, 2022

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83634095166?pwd=QjdvdREJNY3lvL2pxUjh0NDM0Z3NrUT09>

Meeting ID: 836 3409 5166

Passcode: 080425