

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**CARE
Grantee Final Report**

Grantee: Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership
 Project location: Marquette, Michigan
 Project title: Earthkeepers CARE Project
 Grant period: 10-1-06 to 9-30-08
 Project Manager: Carl Lindquist
 EPA Project Officer: John Perrecone

I. Your Partnership

Please describe your CARE partnership and explain how it operated. Please make sure that your description includes the following:

Marquette is the largest city in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and is faced with a variety environmental challenges that threaten water quality and quality of life including but not limited to; improper disposal of pharmaceuticals, household hazardous waste and electronic waste (e-waste), high levels of mercury in wastewater treatment plant effluent to Lake Superior and a high incidence of burn barrel use for trash disposal. The City of Marquette has critically elevated levels of mercury documented in the effluent of the Marquette Area Water Treatment Facility (MAWTF), which enters Lake Superior via the Carp River AOC. The primary source of mercury to the MAWTF has been attributed to over 30 dentist offices in the community. Although these problems pose serious environmental and health risks they also present great opportunities to involve the public in addressing them. In 2004 the Central Lake Superior Watershed Partnership (CSLWP) helped establish the Earth Keepers. Participating faiths included Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Episcopal, Jewish, Presbyterian, Buddhist, Unitarian, and Bahai. Other partners include, but are not limited to, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC), The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Northern Michigan University (NMU).

Organization	Type of Organization (non-profit, business, small business, industry, business organization, academic institution, local government, state government, federal government, consultant, individual, other)	Contact Name(s)
1. Northern Initiatives	Economic Development Org.	Dennis West
2. Great Lakes Youth Development	Youth Development	Judy Wattson Olson
3. Michigan Tech University	University	Nancy Auer
4. Northern Michigan University	University	Dr. Ron Sundell
5. Lake Superior State University	University	Greg Zimmerman
6. Keweenaw Bay Indian Community	Tribe	Todd Warner
7. City of Marquette	Local Government	Judy Akkala
8. Churches	Faith	Jon Magnuson

9. 30 Dentist Offices (LSDS)	Business	Gary Asano
10. Wastewater Treatment Plant	Local Government	Curt Goodman

- a. Did this project bring any new partners into your work? How did the new partners aid the partnership and project? Yes, (see above). New partners helped us to achieve our pollution reduction goals.
- b. What role did your organization play in this partnership? The SWP staff designed, coordinated and implemented the project. What skills were most important from your organization to implement the project? Planning and logistics.
- c. Which partners were most active? Tribal and Dentist partners were most active. How? Both worked consistently with SWP staff throughout the life of the project.
- d. What resources and strengths did each organization bring to the project? Each organization brought a different set of resources to the project but all organizations brought a high level of commitment to helping to protect our regional environment and quality of life.
- e. What efforts did you make to ensure that the most vulnerable community members were included in the partnership? Public outreach, including outreach through the churches, included the most vulnerable community members.
- f. What role did your EPA Project Officer play in the partnership? John Perrecone provided technical assistance and resource and made site visits during the project.
- g. What barriers did your partnership experience and how did you overcome them (distrust, unequal power, control over money, differing priorities, process for reaching consensus, etc.)? We encountered very few barriers. The main barriers were logistical.
- h. How has this partnership improved relationships among those involved? Please describe the working relationship that has improved the most and those that may still need work. The SWP and project partners have strengthened their relationships and are better positioned to take on other projects as they arise.
- i. Has your organization engaged in a similar process to CARE in which you had a similar role? Please describe briefly. Yes, the SWP has engaged in numerous community based pollution prevention programs with local units of government and local tribes.
- j. Is there anything else about your partnership that you would like to share? No.

II. Your Project

Please describe your CARE project and provide copies of important materials that you developed. Please make sure that your description includes the following:

- a. What toxic risks did your project address? Primarily we addressed mercury in wastewater effluent, pharmaceuticals in local waterways and burn barrels.
- b. What toxic reduction strategies did you pursue? We used a variety of toxic reduction strategies including education, technical assistance and collections. Specifically, we provide dentists with technical assistance regarding mercury amalgam separators, we coordinate a pharmaceutical collection for the general public, tribes and Earth Keeper churches and provided all local units of

- government (townships, cities, counties) with a model ordinance and additional information regarding burn barrels.
- c. How did you reach agreement on implementation decisions? We had weekly SWP staff meetings regarding implementation and usually had quarterly meetings with project partners.
 - d. Did you reshape your partnership in any way to address strategy implementation? Please explain. Not really.
 - e. What outside resources (e.g., people, programs, approaches, etc.) were most important to your project? The Keewenaw Bay Indian Community was one of the most important partners to this project.
 - f. Was there any environmental issue that EPA seemed to lack the tools or means (e.g., Partnership Programs, data tools, other expertise) to address? If so, please describe the situation or need you had. No.
 - g. How did you build momentum over the course of your project? Did you secure any “early wins” to help build momentum? Did you look for additional funding early on? What was acquired? The most important early win was the successful pharmaceutical collection which netted over one ton of medications. We secured some additional funding from local units of government and tribes.
 - h. What were the significant *outputs* of your project (meetings held, materials developed, people trained, etc.)? Significant project outputs included planning meetings, power point presentation, burn barrel information, public outreach materials and volunteers trained.
 - i. What were your project’s most significant *outcomes* (changes in policy, behavior, and practice, e.g., auto shops’ shift to less toxic materials, ban adopted on school bus idling, change in local agencies’ policy or procedures, school district commitment to IPM for pest control, etc.)? The projects most significant outcomes included the Superior Dental Society (over 30 dental offices) passing a unanimous resolution to voluntarily install mercury amalgam separators immediately after a presentation by the SWP on the high levels of mercury in the wastewater effluent entering Lake Superior. Many communities have to resort to regulatory approaches. Also, significant was the record breaking collection of over one ton of pharmaceuticals in 3 hours. The EPA featured this event in its Significant Activities report for April, 2007. Lastly, several local units of government have contacted the SWP regarding possibly adopting a burn barrel ordinance to address the issue of airborne pollutants in the their communities.
 - j. What specific reductions in environmental risks did your project achieve? 1) Over 40% reduction in mercury level in effluent entering the Carp River and Lake Superior from the Marquette Wastewater Treatment Plant, 2) over 2,000 pounds of pharmaceuticals collected with the controlled substances having a street value of estimated at over \$500,000 and 3) provide model burn barrel ordinances (hard copy and CD) to all townships (149), all counties (15) and most larger cities (13) in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan (see enclosed).
 - k. Were there differences between your original plan and what actually occurred in your project? Did you achieve your objectives? Please explain. What objectives were not met and why? No major differences. We achieved or exceeded all of our objectives.
 - l. What other resources (not already covered in your discussion of your partnership or outside resources above) did your project mobilize, both financial and in kind?

Tribal resources were mobilized in addition to several community organization listed above.

From your progress reports:

Organization	Support you received	
	Financial (amount)	Other
Keweenaw Bay Indian Community	\$17,000 (total)	
City of Marquette	\$20,000	

III. Reflection

- a. How likely is it that the progress achieved could have been made without your CARE partnership? Our success would have been impossible in my opinion.
- b. What do you consider your project's greatest achievement? Raising awareness and community involvement about several critical environmental problems.
- c. What was your greatest challenge and how did you deal with it? Coordinating project partners and the general public was the greatest challenge. We dealt with it by weekly staff meetings to prioritize challenges and opportunities.
- d. What would you do differently next time in terms of organizing and structuring your partnership to achieve your project objectives? Reduce unnecessary meetings.
- e. How might you have been more strategic in designing or implementing your project? Structure several smaller collections instead of one big collection.
- f. If you chose to create one, did you find using a logic model or other goal-driven model helpful? Please explain. Did the model change over time? If so, how? No, we did not use a logic model.
- g. To what extent did your CARE community communicate or engage with other CARE communities and how was that interaction helpful? Staff participated in three separate CARE conferences and shared stories with other CARE recipients.
- h. Did media coverage play a role in your project? If so, please explain. Yes, the project received widespread media coverage throughout the region, several Great Lakes states and Canada.
- i. In what ways did you rely on EPA for assistance (assessing risks in your community, conflict resolution, partnership support, voluntary programs, such as Tools for Schools or Pollution Prevention)? EPA provided additional educational resources and technical support.
- j. What role did your Project Officer and other EPA staff play in your work? What would you have liked more of or less of? Our project officer paid site visits and answered questions throughout the project at the same time he did not get overly involved and allowed the project to succeed on its own locally-driven terms.
- k. To what extent do you think that this project increased the capacity of your organization? Your partnership? Your community? Please provide examples. This project increased the capacity of the SWP through widespread recognition due to media attention and awards and the CARE network. It increased the capacity of our partnership and our communities to address complex problems. It increased the SWP ability to assist partners in accomplishing huge success

stories with limited funding, hopefully more funding will lead to more success stories.

- l. Did your project produce any new “community leaders?” Please describe. Several tribal members and local youth clearly have the potential to be future leaders based on their participation in this project.
- m. What advice would you offer to other communities undertaking similar work? Make it clear that all are welcome but also clear that there is a lead organization to coordinate a successful project.

IV. What Next?

- a. Will members of your partnership continue to work on these issues? Yes, as funding allows.
- b. How will this work be sustained? Additional grants and limited local support.
- c. If neither your organization nor the members of the partnership plan to continue the work, please describe why. Not applicable.
- d. Please describe a continuing or next source of funding you have for your work or other groups in your community that have continued the work and have found funding. The SWP has received some additional funding through local tribes and units of government for several similar small scale pollution prevention projects.

V. Feedback and Follow up

- a. Please share any thoughts you have about what EPA could do to improve the CARE program. Create more community based funding opportunities.
- b. We want to keep in touch and learn about the work that you do after your grant with CARE. Would it be okay for someone from the headquarters CARE team to contact you in the future to talk about how your work is progressing? Are there others we should contact instead of or in addition to you? If so, please provide their contact information. Yes, please feel free to contact anyone on the SWP staff at anytime (906-228-6095).
- c. Would you be willing to be interviewed for a more in depth case study? Yes.