

Supplement: Leelanau County Materials Management County Engagement

March 1, 2023

PREPARED BY:



COMMISSIONED BY:



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Working together with Networks Northwest and member communities, RRS completed a comprehensive set of tasks that fulfills the objectives of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Materials Management Community Engagement (MMCE) grant and lays the groundwork for regional collaboration in materials management planning among member communities.

The MMCE grant process is intended to help counties in the transition to materials management and begin to identify partnership within regions and counties, understand current materials management deficiencies and opportunities, highlight future changes to the planning process, and outline steps that can occur now at the county and regional levels to assist with the development of future materials management programs and infrastructure.

Key improvements and recommendations for counties within Networks Northwest are found in the respective sections in the report. RRS identified forty (40) recommendations that are categorized into seven areas which form the basis for a robust materials management system:

- Community Access
- Facilities and Infrastructure
- Robust Markets, including Materials of Focus
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Supportive Policy
- Education and Outreach
- Regional Planning

Specific to Leelanau County and as required by the EGLE grant, RRS identified the top five needs and the top three materials management projects that Leelanau County should consider.

TOP FIVE NEEDS:

1. Curbside recycling
2. Consistent education and outreach
3. At least one Center for Hard to Recycle Materials (CHaRM)
4. Hub-and-spoke collections for key materials, particularly yard and food waste
5. More frequent household hazardous waste collection opportunities

TOP THREE MATERIALS MANAGEMENT PROJECTS:

Based on the top five needs above, RRS recommends Leelanau County focus on three projects that could have significant impact on accessibility, awareness, and sustainable funding for programs and services.

1. Engage County and municipal leaders in conversations about materials management solutions in light of changes in state law.
2. Evaluate the funding and infrastructure needed to collect additional materials, including more frequent household hazardous waste events, mattresses, food waste, and other difficult to recycling items regularly or periodically.
3. Develop consistent recycling outreach materials in partnership with the hauler, the processor, the mills, and, as appropriate, the region.

STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholder list was developed in fall 2022 collaboration with each county recycling contact to determine priority county, municipal, and other invested stakeholders. Perspectives were sought from either direct interview (in person or via phone) or through a set of questions distributed via email. Emails were sent at least twice seeking feedback.

**Note: these were stakeholders identified for outreach in late 2022. Subsequently, some are no longer key stakeholders based on their changed role in the community.*

First	Last	Organization	Contact Type
Trudy	Galla	Leelanau County	primary
Todd	Harland	Republic Services	email
Jill	Reynolds	Republic Services	email
Andy	Gale	Bay Area Recycling for Charities	email
Mark	Bevelhymmer	GFL/American Waste	in-person
Sarna	Salzman	SEEDS	in-person
Ann	Rogers	Northern Michigan Environmental Action Council	email
*Rick	Robbins	Leelanau County	email
*Debra	Rushton	Leelanau County	email
*Lois	Bahle	Leelanau County	email
Ty	Wessell	Leelanau County	email
*Patricia	Soutas-Little	Leelanau County	email
Gwenne	Allgaier	Leelanau County	email
Melinda	Lautner	Leelanau County	email

LEELANAU COUNTY - GAPS



Population:	22,301
Square Miles of Land Area:	347.2
Households:	9,201
Employer Establishments:	747
Countywide Curbside Trash:	NO
Countywide Curbside Recycling:	NO
Countywide Curbside Organics:	NO
Countywide Drop-off Trash:	NO
Countywide Drop-off Recycling:	YES
Countywide Drop-off Organics:	NO
Countywide Drop-off HHW:	YES

Community Access: Every household and business in a community needs convenient access to effective programs. This access can be through curbside collection, drop-off site locations, or a combination of the two. Material diversion and recovery needs to be as convenient as waste disposal as a first step sustainable materials management.

- Curbside recycling is not available to Leelanau County residents.
- There are nine (9) recycling drop-off locations across the county.
- HHW days are offered three to four times per year.
- There is no countywide organic waste collection program for either yard waste or food waste.

Processing Facilities: The material collected at the home and business needs to be processed before reaching the end market. It is crucial for the County to own or have access to processing facilities conveniently located, technologically advanced, and with enough capacity to handle the population's current and future material streams. These facilities act as the "middleman" between the local government and the end market.

- Leelanau County does not own or operate any processing facilities but does contract with processing facilities for solid waste and recycling.
- There are two privately-owned organics processing facilities in the county.
- One secondary processor is located in the county, for electronics disassembly.

Robust Markets: The success of end markets that receive the recyclables that are collected leads to success in growing a sustainable circular economy that ultimately allows material to be diverted from landfills over the long term. By increasing demand, Networks Northwest creates a 'pull' for additional materials that in turn, drives supply.

- Within Leelanau County there are no identified markets for recovered materials.

Public/Private Partnerships: The business community and Networks Northwest will need to work closely together to find success. These partnerships can be found through funding opportunities with private companies, shared owner/operator agreements for MRFs and composting facilities, marketing and educational campaigns, and everything in between. Many retailers and packaging companies are realizing that local governments are responsible for the end of life for their products, thus leading to the sustainability of their product. Therefore, the benefits of public/private partnerships are becoming more apparent and accessible.

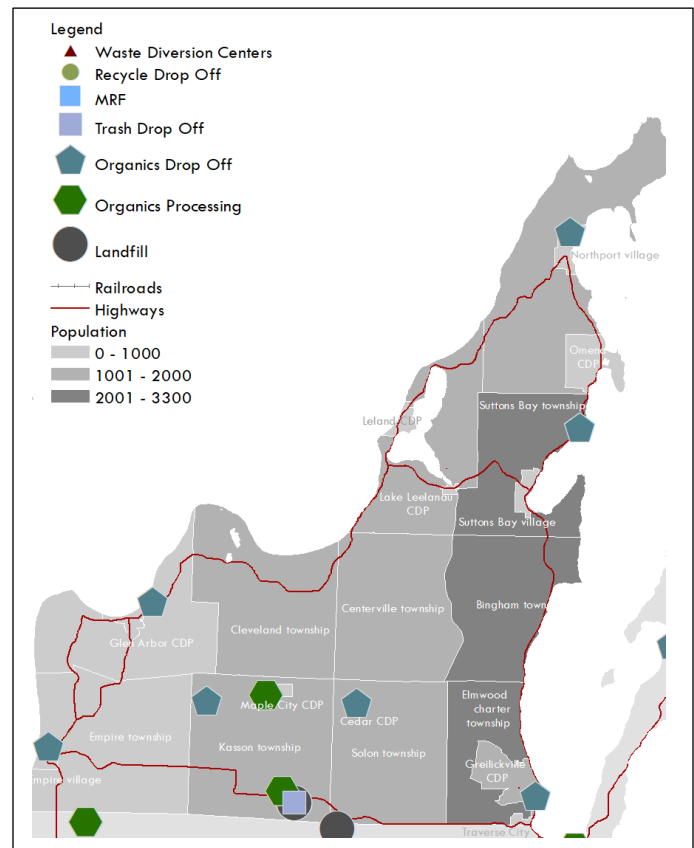
- Leelanau County partners with local businesses to host recycling drop-off centers.

Supportive Policy: To reach high landfill diversion goals, policy will need to be crafted to ensure responsible recovery of material is the standard practice throughout the community, not just the best practice. A variety of policy approaches can be explored for Networks Northwest that have found success in other parts of the country and the globe.

- Leelanau County utilizes PA 69 to fund current programs.

Education and Outreach: Once a strong infrastructure is in place, all citizens and businesses will need to know how to handle material in their home and at work. Recycling systems continue to evolve as material composition changes and technologies change. Thus, information needs to be put in front of the citizens of your community on a regular basis in many different ways to feed MRFs and end markets with good quality material, while continuing to decrease the material buried in landfills.

- There does not appear to be a consistent message about recycling locations and materials across the county.



SURVEY

Over 1,650 individuals across the Networks Northwest region took the survey that included questions about current participation in recycling-related activities as well as future needs and demographic information to inform trends. 110 people from Leelanau County participated in the survey.

This survey was not intended to meet statistical minimums. Rather, it was intended to be a snapshot to inform the current usage and future needs of the region. The set of questions that were asked was purposefully restricted to reduce the chance of survey fatigue, wherein participants close the survey prior to completing it.

The survey was intended to take no more than 10 minutes to complete, with participants being told in the introduction that it should take no more than 5-8 minutes. The survey was distributed by community recycling coordinators and Networks Northwest via social media and press release. Survey logic was built into the flow of questions to ensure that the appropriate type of question was asked based on previous responses. As such, participation rates in each question varied. The majority of survey respondents are current recyclers and is the result of the way the survey was distributed. Further studies to understand reasons for non-participation may be needed.

The full survey results for Leelanau County are on the following pages.