

E&E Project Evaluation Form

****Please be advised that completed evaluations are made available publicly and are posted on Stewardship Ontario's E&E Fund web site****

Project Name/Number/: Northern Ontario Waste Diversion Study/ #130

Priority area: Other Projects

Lead Sponsor/competed by/date: Totten Sims Hubicki Associates (TSH) / April 7th, 2006

Project Duration: May 2005 to April 2006

Total project value: \$65,000

E&E funding amount: \$65,000

Section 1 –To be completed by Project Applicant

1) What were the Project Goals and Objectives (as per the E&E Application and/or Contract)?

- An assessment of recycling best practices and opportunities for improvements in Northern Ontario
- Recommendations regarding the way in which EE funds can best be invested in the North to help meet the Fund's objectives (e.g. increasing blue box marketed tonnes and reducing recycling costs per tonne); and
- Opportunities to engage other interested stakeholders (e.g. federal and provincial funding agencies) in helping address the unique waste diversion challenges in Northern Ontario.

2) Were the goals and objectives met? (and if not why not?)

The project resulted in a greater understanding of the challenges faced by Northern Municipalities when it comes to blue box diversion. Given the vast geographic area covered by northern Ontario and the high level of diversity in this region, it was established that programs should be assessed on a regional basis. Specific indicators were used to clearly identify well performing and under-performing programs within each region, enabling individual program operators to compare their program with others in the region and to improve their performance. A number of recommendations on how E&E funding could be invested in the North have also been made in the report.

Federal, provincial, municipal and private sector stakeholders met in Sault Ste. Marie to discuss the challenges of waste diversion in Northern Ontario. A number of action items have been identified and are outlined in the report.

3) Summary of Project Accomplishments (i.e. what did the project do/achieve?):

A comprehensive summary of blue box waste diversion practices in the North is provided. The study breaks the vast area of the North into five Regional Areas or "blue box waste sheds" and recommends these areas be used when future waste diversion initiatives are planned. A summary of waste diversion programs by category (i.e. large urban, small urban, rural collection and depot) is provided. These programs are compared to similar programs in Southern Ontario.

The report also distinguishes between programs that are performing well versus those that are experiencing difficulties. A number of recommendations are made and some next steps are suggested.

4) Summary of Project Limitations (e.g. is there anything that should have been done differently?)

The amount of data that had to be assessed was significant. Although every program is unique, the study had to adopt a 'regional analysis' approach. A detailed program by program evaluation to identify best practices was not achievable.

5) What do you consider to have been the key "lessons learned" from this project? Does your project/activity represent a "best practice"?

The North is a vast area that traditionally has not been well understood from a blue box waste diversion perspective. This study provides a sound baseline for future evaluations of individual Northern diversion programs.

6) What specifically are municipal staff doing with the experiences and data from this project? Do you have plans to apply these lessons in your program? Please explain how.

Not applicable.

7) Has your municipal council been informed about the project and its results?

The report should be shared with Northern municipal councils through municipal staff.

8) Do you think there are opportunities to share/replicate the successful elements of this project with other Ontario programs? If yes, how and where?

The report should be shared with all Northern Ontario municipalities. Once municipalities know how they fare relative to other municipalities in their Region they may be motivated to improve their performance and share best practices.

9) Did this project result in either reduced costs per tonne of Blue Box waste recycled and/or increased Blue Box tonnes diverted? (Please explain)

It is hoped that eventually the cost per tonne will decline and the capture rate will increase in programs that are performing poorly provided a strategy is established to share information on best practices.

Section 2 –To be completed by Stewardship Ontario (and reviewed by applicant)

10) Did this project do what it set out to do? If not, what were the reasons/ barriers?

The objectives of the study, as per TSH's original proposal, were as follows:

- Assess recycling best practices and opportunities for improvements in Northern Ontario (e.g. opportunities for MRF rationalization, local market development, etc.);
- make recommendations regarding the way in which E&E funds can best be invested in the North to help meet the fund's objectives (e.g. increasing blue box tonnes marketed and reducing recycling costs per tonne); and
- identify opportunities to engage other interested stakeholders (e.g. federal and provincial funding agencies) in helping to address the unique waste diversion challenges in Northern Ontario.

As stated by the project consultant above, due to the substantial amount of data that required analysis, it was not possible to carry out a program by program evaluation to identify 'best practices' or specific opportunities for improvements. The two other objectives were met.

11) What are the key learnings from this project? Are there any next steps? What is being done to share the results?

The geographical divisions established in the report constitute a useful framework in identifying "blue box waste sheds" for planning future waste diversion initiatives. Furthermore, the report provides the following recommendations:

- EE funds be made available to northern communities to complete the elements of their Waste Diversion Management Plan that relate to blue box waste.
- EE funding be made available to assist northern municipalities with the preparation of tenders.
- A Northern Ontario forum to discuss diversion be established by Stewardship Ontario. Information sharing between northern municipalities should be encouraged. This would best be undertaken through the Stewardship Ontario Knowledge Network.
- The EE fund should consider undertaking pilot programs to collect glass using alternative approaches.
- The cost implications of the transport of marketable materials out of Northern Ontario should be investigated further to determine if a transportation credit should be applied to the North.
- In response to the shortcoming in meeting the first objective above, the report recommends that a comparison of the better performing and programs and those that are under-performing be undertaken to identify the factors that contribute to their respective performance.

A number of E&E Fund initiatives that address some of the points above are currently under way. A Rural Recycling Depot learning module is currently being developed by VuBiz, the IT company that has been providing support in developing Stewardship Ontario's Knowledge

Network. This learning module relies on the findings from E&E project 45 – Rural Recycling Depots, and includes a two-part tool which will provide information on strategies to improve a program, and strategies to get the best price when depot program operators go to Tender. The module will also include a clickable map of best performing rural depot programs, as well as some generic promotion and education materials available for download.

The E&E fund has also committed \$128,866 in funding support for project 200 – Municipal Consultation Sessions on Blue Box Best Practices. The goal of the project is to solicit municipal and other stakeholder input through a consultative effort to establish the principles and guidelines to define, determine and identify Blue Box Best Practices. Four consultative sessions will be held throughout Ontario, one of which is scheduled in Sudbury June 29th. This session will address the particular challenges faced by Northern programs in working towards ‘Best Practices’.

12) Was the project good value for the money (*e.g. were there measurable program or system cost reduction benefits, cost effective tonnage increases, etc?*)

This project was meant to provide an overview of the current state of Blue Box recycling in the North. It is hoped that the findings will enable the development of an E&E Fund strategy to increase capture and decrease system cost in this region.

13) Does this project represent “best practices”? If yes, explain.

Although, as was mentioned above, the project was not able to identify recycling best practices and opportunities for improvements in Northern Ontario, it laid down the preliminary work required to move forward on this objective.

14) Tonnage and Financial Summary

Total project cost - \$65,000
E&E contribution – \$65,000