

**Networks and Fragmentation Among Community Environmental Groups
of Southeast Chicago**

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This report represents the research, analysis, and views of the researchers and not
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Executive Summary

This research report discusses community level organizations in Southeast Chicago. We focus on differences in framing and prioritizing of environmental issues among two different ethnic groups' communities, and information flow and access to institutional resources among those communities.

The goals of the field research, carried out from August 1999 to January 2000, were to identify community organizations with environmental interests and to delineate information flow among community groups and between community residents and government agencies or other official sources. Our methodologies included observation of organizations' meetings; 'snowball sampling' of social networks; open-ended interviews with individuals; and review of relevant documents.

Although residents of Southeast Chicago widely acknowledged the presence of industrial waste and pollution, relatively few were environmentally active. Local perceptions of priorities for community mobilization did not always coincide with those of organizations more directly focused on environmental issues and wetlands preservation, such as the EPA and nature-conservancy oriented groups. Community participation in formulating environmental policy was constrained by information flow relating to environmental issues among various community sectors and organizations, and was affected by technical knowledge, political agendas, and the existence of brokers who mediated and translated information flow among multiple organizations and constituencies.

Southeast Chicago is a distinct community within Chicago. There are different neighborhoods within Southeast Chicago and there has been a history of ethnic conflict among its residents. It is important to this study to recognize the nature of the local, neighborhood communities that can be the basis for social and environmental action.

There was a distinct disjunction between the networks of White and African-American organizations. There were differences in the emphasis and expression of environmental concerns among community groups reflecting different constituencies: groups based in predominantly African-American neighborhoods emphasized health and environmental justice; groups drawing from predominantly White neighborhoods spoke more of heritage and quality of life; environmental activists from national and regional organizations spoke more of natural resource conservation. In keeping with these different priorities, White and African-American based community groups tended to have connections with different governmental and non-governmental agencies. The fact that there was little integration of these communities' groups was probably due to these differing priorities as well as existing ethnic separation. Nevertheless, there were significant points of intersection among community group interests, such as making industry responsible to local people and building sustainable communities.

Information flow among groups helped to define lines of communication, important sources of information, and delineate significant community and extra-community organizations. One of the salient means by which information was transmitted among groups was through people we call 'brokers.' These are people who are strongly committed to the environmental cause and therefore disseminate information. They also have multiple links among many or all of the types of groups discussed earlier. Brokers, because of their position, often served as translators of information between levels. Because of this structural position, they were potentially very important links to the community for government agencies.

To facilitate ease of reading, Sections III, IV and V – the longer, more substantive chapters – begin with bullet points listing the main points of the chapters.

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Section I. Introduction

Genesis and Purpose of Study

The work of the United States Environmental Protection Agency is primarily regulatory. The activities most relevant to the concerns of the present study are those in environmental planning and problem solving, including environmental justice analyses and planning processes; Superfund site identification and remediation; and Community-Based Environmental Protection. Each requires an awareness of how different community groups value and interact with the environment and with each other, as well as structural mechanisms that allow meaningful representative participation in planning and problem solving processes. Despite this significant work, the U.S. EPA's work in addressing environmental problems via programs such as Community-Based Environmental Protection runs into problems when there are no regulatory solutions. It depends, ultimately, on the active participation of the community, albeit with support (data-sharing, contacts, seed money, etc.) from federal and state regulatory agencies.

As anthropologists, we aim to apply our discipline's understanding of the social and cultural dimensions of the community to the challenges of environmental policy makers in identifying significant social groups, understanding their environmental values and helping environmental professionals to work more effectively with those groups. We focused on Southeast Chicago because it is an area of Chicago of interest due to both existing environmental problems and significant resources. Furthermore, it is also an area of complex community structures, including multiple interest groups and internally recognized neighborhoods as well as significant class and ethnic diversity. We sought to demonstrate the value and use of other applied social science methods, particularly ethnography, to contribute information and perspectives useful in identifying ways in which environmental professions can practically define "the community" in terms of groups, organizations, and individuals who are potential partners in broad-based environmental planning and action, including groups who may not have identified themselves as environmental actors.

The EPA Region 5 Greater Chicago Team, following the EPA policy of Community-Based Environmental Protection, has been coordinating their regulatory and remediation work in the Calumet area across media – air, water, soil, etc. – and also conduct community outreach activities, linking with locally-based groups. Our project was to take our own look as anthropologists at community organization and existing resident-based environmental concerns in the area: specifically, to assess the diversity of local social/political organization in Southeast Chicago and its current links to participation in environmental planning as well as opportunities for expanding those links. We had the advantage of being able to build on the work of anthropologist Elizabeth Babcock and other consultants who had already identified groups and interviewed key actors involved in local environmental activism. We proposed to base our analysis on data collected through attending meetings of local community organizations and groups, in order to 1) get a picture of the range of groups that are involved or potentially involved in shaping local stakes in the Calumet environment and their relation to local residents' social networks; 2) understand how issues or concerns relevant to environmental action are framed in these local discussions, which may be different than the way EPA professionals or outside activists frame the issues; and 3) examine the flow of information related to environmental awareness and action, where people get information from and where it goes

(which is connected both to how issues are framed and people's social networks). We attended, between the two of us, 24 meetings and conducted supplementary open-ended interviews and conversations with participants, both to identify relevant meetings and to understand what went on at them. We also examined newsletters, flyers, local newspapers, and educational brochures put out by the EPA and other government agencies. We had no single community partner in this project. Our methodology and the groups whose meetings we attended are discussed in Section II.

Target Area: Calumet Area and Surrounding Neighborhoods in Southeast Chicago

These social science technical assistance goals were particularly salient to the situation in the Calumet Region. Southeast Chicago is a critical environmental area for the U.S. EPA due to its combination of severe industrial pollution and unique wetlands environment. The Lake Calumet area supports the most biodiversity in the State of Illinois.

Sources of Pollution

For over 100 years, the Calumet Region was a major industrial center; its steel mill industry was the most important in the world. The wetlands and its location on the shores of Lake Michigan made it well-suited to receive shipments of iron ore and coal, to ship out its product, and to use streams and wetlands for cooling and waste disposal. Astounding amounts of solid and liquid wastes resulted from industry. Acids and heavy metals leached out of these wastes. The concentration industry also resulted in severe air pollution; stories of the dust and grit everywhere are near-legendary. After the close of the mills in the 1970s and 1980s, waste disposal became explicitly important in the local economy. This was not, however, a new use of the wetlands – in the era preceding industrial development, farmers in the Calumet Region transported produce to the city of Chicago and carted back urban waste to dump in the wetlands. Today, the residents of Southeast Chicago have to deal with the residual effects of over one hundred years of industry as well as more recent dumping, both legal and illegal. More recently, industry has returned to Southeast Chicago, but present day residents and the government at all levels are more concerned with environmental protection, as evidenced in such processes as the Good Neighbor Dialogues to negotiate remediation. The goal is safe and sustainable economic development.

The Wetlands

Despite the severe pollution, the Calumet Region remains a unique ecosystem. It is an important site for migratory birds. Copses of oaks in marshes (both natural and artificial) support black-crowned night herons, snowy egrets and common egrets. Other wildlife can be observed as well. There are rare prairies, oak savannas, and marshes, rivers, and lakes. Other endangered or threatened species (Illinois listed) found here include: pied-billed grebes, common moorhen, and yellow-headed blackbird (NC News December 1999/January 2000). The wetlands, as part of a larger hydrological system and habitat for migratory water birds, are important to the ecological health of an even larger region in the north central United States. These features have attracted the interest of regional and national environmentalists as well as

local community members, all hoping to preserve and enhance these areas for future generations. Area activists hope that natural resource preservation will attract economic investment that they think of as more sustainable – environmentally safe, providing steady reliable jobs for the community. They envision residential, commercial and industrial complexes with native landscaping, aesthetically centered around the Calumet waterways and prairies.

U.S. EPA's CBEP Place-Based Strategy and Southeast Chicago as a "Place"

The Calumet Region can be defined as a place ecologically and geographically. In addition, it is a socially significant region to its residents. Southeast Chicago is a sub-unit of that place, defined by political, social, and economic factors. Southeast Chicago is part of Chicago, and as such is incorporated into the political processes of the City of Chicago as well as the State of Illinois. Furthermore, Southeast Chicago is marked by a shared economic history of steel mills and unionism. The concepts of Calumet and Southeast Chicago as 'places' will be further discussed in Section III.

The U.S. EPA and other organizations have recognized the importance of communities in addressing pollution through the integration of the Community-Based Environmental Protection (CBEP) into its activities. For the purposes of this study, CBEP is significant for the following core principles: it focuses on a definable geographical area; works collaboratively with a full range of stakeholders through effective partnerships; assesses the quality of the environmental resources in a place as a whole; and integrates environmental, economic, and social objectives and foster local stewardship of all community resources (EPA 1999b: 6). The idea is to support communities' efforts to use, protect, and restore natural resources (EPA 1999a: 2). A key element in the process is to ask whether the EPA's involvement can produce tangible results, which requires that they be able to assess community capacity and readiness, as well as the availability of EPA resources (*ibid.*: 3).

Clearly, the concept of community is intrinsic to the carrying out of this framework. But 'community' can be difficult to define; it is, perhaps, best defined in practice. For instance, the main CBEP document states the following:

The definition of community endorsed by EPA for CBEP efforts includes places and people that are associated with an environmental issue(s). The community may be organized around a neighborhood, a town, a city, or a region (such as a watershed, valley, or coastal area). It may be defined by either natural geographic or political boundaries. The key factor is that the people involved have a common interest in protecting an identifiable, shared environment and quality of life. Any 'community' will include a variety of differing values, perceptions, priorities, and complex interrelationships around environmental protection, as well as other issues. CBEP practitioners are encouraged to define and understand the appropriate scope of 'community' for each particular place (EPA 1999b: 5).

The definition given in the glossary is similar to what might be found in a social science textbook, but perhaps less useful for people in the field:

... components and attributes of social interaction, common ties, mutual satisfaction of needs, and shared territory or place. More specifically, individuals may define and understand what is meant by community in any particular situation. As such, any 'community' includes a variety of differing values, perceptions, priorities, and complex interrelationships around environmental protection as well as other community-based issues (EPA 1999b: 38).

This study seeks to develop the analytical tools needed to better define "community" and better understand the social and cultural environment of Southeast Chicago in order to facilitate the inclusion of local stakeholders in environmental policy making and implementation. The development of sustainable environmental policy and practice requires the input and involvement of a diverse population of stakeholders. Yet in culturally and organizationally diverse urban populations such as Chicago, there is too little knowledge of sociocultural characteristics and of the structures by which meaningful participation in planning and problem-solving can take place. Identifying 'community' at a local level in such a diverse social context can be difficult, but that does not mean that community has disappeared. Community is enacted in informal social networks of friends and family, as well as various local organizations or groups. Furthermore, the local sense of community can be made more complicated by the fact that significant community relations in Chicago, as in other American cities, are not always geographically based. For instance, many inner-city church congregations or ethnic associations are supported by members in the suburbs. This may make them stakeholders in geographically specific environmental concerns.

We will first discuss our methodology, then the Calumet Region and Southeast Chicago as communities and the groups involved in environmental activism in Southeast Chicago. In the following section, we will discuss the different framings of environmental priorities among the different communities in Southeast Chicago. The next section discusses information flow and how that delineates communities. That also affects ways in which agencies such as the U.S. EPA can make connections with the communities we delineated. Finally, we make specific recommendations for improving communication and involvement in environmental activism.

Section II. Methodology of Study

Goals of Field Research:

- Identify community organizations with environmental interests
- Delineate information flow among community groups and between community residents and government agencies or other official sources

Methodologies Used:

- Observation of organizations' meetings
- 'Snowball sampling' of social networks
- Open-ended interviews with individuals
- Document review of available materials

Our first goal was to identify community organizations that had environmental interests. We focused on those organizations that were (a) community-based in the sense of having strong connections with residents or business owners, and (b) had goals of community empowerment and support of quality of life in the community. Many different types of groups might be involved; we selected groups of various types in order to reflect the range of interest and expression found in these communities (see discussion below, and Table 1 for details). Assessing the potential of organizations for community-based environmental partnerships included identifying possible common interests and goals between these organizations and existing government programs, and the analysis of their framing and representation of community concerns that had implicit as well as explicit connection to environmental issues.

Once we had identified specific community groups, we observed their meetings and conducted open-ended interviews with key members to get fuller background information on the genesis of the group, its organization, and its community connections. Through these referrals from one interviewee or organization to others, we were able to construct a picture or map of community groups, their social networks, and the relations with each other and external groups (national environmental organizations, government agencies). This method is known as "snowball sampling." It is a flexible methodology, designed to address the high degree of organizational and cultural diversity that exists in urban communities.

Why were meetings a crucial element in our field research? Because, at the local level in Chicago and other urban American communities, going back to the time of De Tocqueville, meetings are a primary venue for enacting community, for forming and implementing collective agendas. Chicago has a formal political organization that extends down to the level of the aldermanic ward, but aldermen are mainly involved in coordinating existing city services within the ward and providing a base for local party politics. They are significant players in zoning and hence land use decisions. Aldermen can be important in resources for gaining access to resources for community development. Nevertheless, neighborhood organizations, meetings concerning local parks, and other community-level groups exist beyond and sometimes in opposition to the formal political network. Their activism may prove the impetus for the formal political network to become involved in resolving a local problem. In short, there is no a priori mandated organization for face-to-face coordination of collective action. The most immediate form of community organization is the meeting. People create community and assume local leadership through mobilization around perceived problems.

Effective local community action also has to involve broader levels of community and associated institutions — city, state, and federal agencies, outside interest groups — because first, that is where the resources are and second, the agendas of these agencies and groups affect local development, e.g. through land use regulation and development plans. Meetings represent the context in which meaningful participation in planning and problem-solving can take place, and local residents can create links to resources and decision makers in city, state, and regional institutions. The advantage of this research's focus on meetings is to provide an ethnographic data base rooted in how community relations are carried out in practice. Meetings provide a public forum in which it is possible to observe group processes that help to describe and create community and relationships between local and wider levels of community.

The technique of snowball sampling was also especially well-suited to examining information flow in order to map environmental awareness and identify local perceptions of environmental and other priorities. The impetus for focusing on information flow was our perception that local people might well have environment-related concerns not communicated as environmental concerns *per se*, e.g., health concerns.

Information flow tells us things such as how people form their ideas about the environment, and thus their environmental values and levels of activism. Where do people in the community get their environmental information from? This requires consideration not only of information gained from official or scientific sources, but information gained from newspapers and popular sources, shared among neighbors, and derived from personal experience. All of this has profound consequences for peoples' level of environmental activism. For instance, personal experience of coal dust or shared perceptions of illness caused by environmental pollution may motivate community action more than abstract scientific reports, because it is more immediate. Media and information campaigns may be influential in disseminating information and forming opinions. But such information does not go into communities as on to a blank slate. Information is accepted or ignored based on existing ideas (e.g., about pollution, its intensity and consequences, the perceived reliability of the source of information) and motivates action based both on that and social relations. We sought to examine this in this study.

Analysis of information flow concerns community organization and residents as sources of information as well as recipients of information. the social and organizational networks through which such information flows among groups, and relevant concepts and representations such as the desired or disapproved characteristics of the environment, and how they differ among community groups, and between community residents and government agencies. Tracing information flow is not separate from the issue of defining community boundaries, but rather is integrally connected to it — where information flows or is obstructed indicates and shapes the existence of community networks and their boundaries. Delineation of information flow entailed use of snowball sampling, open-ended interviews, and document review of materials such as neighborhood newspapers, newsletters, city-wide media, and EPA outreach materials.

Our initial idea of the types of environmental organizations involved in the study site was developed in part through discussion with U.S. EPA Region 5 staff, particularly a social scientist in the Office of Strategic Environmental Analysis and the members of the Greater Chicago Team. The EPA has been involved in this region for some time because of the high levels of waste dumping and industrial pollution in a geographical region of great ecological uniqueness and significance. As a result, they had working relationships with many researchers and

activists in the region. One of the most important initial contacts was with faculty at Chicago State University who led the Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership, an umbrella organization of environmental organizations involved in strategic planning for the Calumet region. Attending those meetings introduced us to a wide variety of players from national and local organizations, as well as government agencies from the city to state to federal government. By following these links, we eventually attended the meetings of local civic or neighborhood associations. However, as will become clear in the following pages, the network thus revealed left out significant communities of the Calumet region. It therefore became necessary to start from a different center-point, the Greater Roseland Health Coalition, and sample out from there. This revealed not geographically separate neighborhoods, but communities with a very different framing of environmental issues and, as a result, different connections with government agencies. Due to time limitations, we were unable to make significant contact with members of the Hispanic community. Given the long residence of people of Hispanic ancestry in the Calumet region, we hope that more work will be done to contact this group in the future.

Participant observation and open-ended interviews, rather than surveys or structured interviews allowed us the flexibility to follow these threads of contact. We were especially fortunate to observe several particular processes in action as local communities and government agencies sought to solve specific problems. Observing several processes also meant that we did not have one primary community partner, but several. These allowed us to observe how local people made contact with relevant government agencies; which agencies and community groups they chose to partner with; how problems were defined; and how funding found. Our specific findings are discussed in the following sections.

Table 1. Categories of Groups Working in Southeast Chicago

A.	<p>Government Agencies Examples: EPA and other agencies (HUD, Cook County Dept. of Public Health, etc.) whose mandate includes environmentally-related concerns Roles: Regulation, provision or facilitation of mandated services Position in community: Collaborations with local residents and stakeholders to accomplish goals and implement programs; negotiation with industry to remediate environmental damage</p>	Tier 1
B.	<p>Externally-based Environmental Interest Groups* Examples: Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Citizens for a Better Environment. This category can also include groups that include environmental concerns within a wider mandate, e.g. sustainability (Center for Neighborhood Technology). Roles: Advocacy, including influencing policy makers and public education Position in community: Information and outreach to local residents, sometimes through local resident members, affecting environmental actions of local residents and stakeholders.</p>	Tier 1
C.	<p>Community Advisory Councils or Planning Groups (Agency-supported) Examples: Greater Roseland Community Health Council, Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership Roles: Planning and/or coordination of existing services and activities Position in community: Instigated or supported (e.g., through planning grant) by government agency to facilitate community outreach and connections. Councils supported by agencies other than the EPA (HUD, Dept. of Public Health) include environmental concerns (brownfields, environmental health hazards) as only part of their mandate. Usually include variety of stakeholders — representatives of various agencies, service providers, interest groups, universities, and/or other local institutions. Includes representatives of local residents (may be requirement) but strength of linkage to local residents varies. When linkage to resident-based groups is strong, position in community is similar to that of locally-based umbrella organizations.</p>	Tier 2
D.	<p>Local Umbrella Ecological Organizations (cross-neighborhood)* Examples: Southeast Environmental Task Force, Calumet Ecological Park Association. Roles: Advocacy, coordination of environmental action in area beyond specific neighborhoods, public education, members are neighborhood improvement associations and community organizations (see (F) below). Position in community: Have members representing other groups active in neighborhoods, e.g., civic groups, disseminate information and coordinate action through these members. Like the local EIG's, often led and organized by a committed activist and broker.</p>	Tier 2
E.	<p>Resident-based Local Environmental Interest Groups (neighborhood-based)* Examples: People for Community Recovery, Environmental Committee of Victory Heights/Maple Park/West Pullman Advisory Council (a civic organization) Roles: Advocacy on behalf of local residents' concerns and inclusion in policy-making, educating local residents, influencing local stakeholders Position in community: Groups often form around one passionate, activist/broker resident. Leader and members work to increase awareness of other residents and mobilize action. Leaders also work to establish relationships with government agencies and funders. Groups can be instituted as sub-group or committee of wider-interest civic group or agency-instigated local advisory council. Special-purpose groups can start as part of particular action, e.g. Good Neighbor Dialogue groups.</p>	Tier 3
F.	<p>Neighborhood-Based Civic Organizations Examples: Fair Elms Civic League, East Side Pride, Pullman Civic Organization, Victory Heights/Maple Park/West Pullman Advisory Council Role: Cover a wide range of neighborhood residents' concerns: housing and commercial development, zoning, city services, crime and safety, recreation, quality of life Position in community: Provide a forum for community residents to get together and voice common concerns and decide on joint action; the strength and history of these organizations varies with the neighborhood. Often include more homeowners than renters. Block clubs perform similar role on a smaller scale.</p>	(Tier 2)
G.	<p>Bi-State Working Groups* Examples: Calumet Heritage Partnership, Friends of Wolf Lake Role: Coordination of environmental planning and/or advocacy in region that crosses state boundaries. Position in Community: Similar to (C) or (D) above, but work across state boundaries.</p>	(Tier 2)

*These categories include only primarily environmentally-focused groups or organizations; tiers are more fully explained in Section IV and Figure 4.

Section III. Calumet and Southeast Chicago as Communities

- Calumet is a distinct region in the upper Midwest, definable geographically, ecologically, and socially
- Within that region, Southeast Chicago is a distinct community marked by its history, social relations, and by a shared position vis-a-vis the City of Chicago.
- Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think of Southeast Chicago as a community in and of itself. It is heterogeneous; there are different neighborhoods within Southeast Chicago and there has been a history of ethnic conflict among its residents. It is important to this study to recognize the nature of the local, neighborhood communities that can be the basis for social and environmental action.
- There was a distinct disjunction between the networks of White and African-American organizations; the geographical separations between neighborhoods magnifies this segregation, but can not say that this is the cause.

Definitions of Calumet and Southeast Chicago

The Calumet Region

The Calumet Region is a region at the southern tip of Lake Michigan. For many, it is defined first and foremost as an important industrial region. It extends beyond the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois into northwest Indiana. Despite these political boundaries, there is a sense of community among residents of the Calumet Region, as evidenced by local support of the Calumet Heritage Corridor, the Calumet Heritage Partnership, and the "Calumet 101" conference. It is worth considering this larger 'community' here because it underlies some of the self-definition of community by the residents of Southeast Chicago. What, then, is the self-definition of Calumet residents?

One is a sense of being on the frontier (Mendelsohn 1996; Calumet 101 conference). This carries over into the sense of being 'peripheral' to the main centers of political power in their states, although many recognize its importance as a transport hub (e.g., iron ore over Lake Michigan, coal up the river from downstate Illinois; commodities transported in and out via rail). The sense of periphery derives in part from the fact that this area experienced urban development later than other parts of Chicago; the wetlands made it unappealing for residential expansion, but in turn made it suitable for industrial expansion. In the Calumet region, the city found the ideal spot for industrial expansion: within their municipality but away from existing residential centers where citizens might complain of public health nuisances. The Calumet Region, thus, is seen as the fringes of the metropolitan area, the repository of heavy industry, waste and dumping. Outsiders view the area as noxious and dirty, and residents are well aware of this.

Southeast Chicago has been relatively isolated from the gentrification process so common in the north and northwest sides of Chicago and areas closer to the Loop (the central business district). While this may be due in part to outsiders' perceptions of the area, it may also be due to the relative transportation isolation of parts of the Southeast. The 'border' quality of Southeast Chicago is manifested in various ways. The CTA Red Line Elevated (Howard/North to Dan Ryan/South) ends at 95th Street; Southeast Chicago is serviced by the South Shore

Metra Trains out of Indiana and by slower CTA bus service. Southeast Chicago suffers from The sewer system is inadequate, resulting in flooding; and in fact parts of Southeast Chicago were not part of the city's sewer system until the 1970s, when local groups agitated for its installation. For whatever reasons this isolation has occurred, it contributes to the strong neighborhood identity we noted in many parts of Southeast Chicago. Yet other factors first put this strong identity into force, such as labor history. The current perception is that plans in the 1980s for an airport that would have cemented over significant parts of the Lake Calumet region and its neighborhoods in Chicago was a major catalyst for community activism. (But see Jones 1998: 26 for a discussion of community in Southeast Chicago; she suggests that current 'community stories' gloss over the serious divisions at the time.)

Their identity as an industrial region is very salient to Calumet residents, and it is a matter of pride. There is pride in the immigrant history and the solid economic base that gave so many a chance to live relatively well. People identify as hard-working and as able to survive hard times – the working conditions at the mills, hard-fought strikes, and finally the close of the mills and collapse of the economic base. Another set of values concerns community and family: they speak of themselves as people with cohesive communities, family-oriented, with strong neighborhoods and parishes. They contrast their housing conditions – single family homes, owner-occupied, on lots large enough for yards – with those of tenement-style housing found closer to the city centers. It is an area of open spaces, not dense and crowded. People often commented that they considered their area physically unique and special, saying "It's not like you're even in Chicago!" In short, this is a region that has been good for working-class people, a community with urban amenities. Finally, there is pride in the progressive tradition of unionism.

Southeast Chicago

Figure 1 shows a map of Southeast Chicago. Figure 2 shows the communities we included in our investigations of Southeast Chicago, labeled on the map as areas 49-55. They are: Roseland, Pullman, West Pullman, South Deering, East Side, Riverdale and Hegewisch. Our northern cut-off point was 95th Street. This corresponds in general to the community's sense of social boundaries, if not ecological boundaries; in addition, a large and complex planning process by the City of Chicago for South Chicago (Southworks, a former mill, abandoned like so many others in the 1970s and 1980s) is already underway, which changes some of the dynamics of environmental activism in the area. Therefore, we did not carry out research there.

These neighborhoods correspond to community areas used by Chicago city planners and local nonprofit organizations, designating neighborhoods that have some sense of a local identity and history, and associated class and ethnic characteristics of the resident population. These community areas were originally devised by University of Chicago sociologists (the "Chicago school" of ethnographic sociology) in the 1920s and only roughly reflect contemporary reality because of economic and population changes since then. Existing boundaries reflect the physical boundaries of newer expressways as well as the long-standing railroad tracks, canals, and river beds. The extent to which those community areas reflect contemporary reality is partly a result of self-fulfilling prophecy in that these areas have been used for planning and implementing city services and allocating resources such as parks and other public facilities, as well as for organizing the efforts of nonprofit organizations and resident activities. An

alternative depiction of community areas is shown at the Chicago Historical Society's web page on Global Communities: Chicago's Immigrants and Refugees (<http://www.chicagohistory.org/global/imap.html>).

Nevertheless, such communities do have greater salience in the Southeast of Chicago than in other parts of Chicago because of the settlement history; it is an area marked by ethnically separated contiguous neighborhoods. As documented in the accompanying table of 1990 Census data, there are marked differences in the ethnic and economic status of these neighborhoods. Hegewisch and East Side are practically all White; Roseland, Riverdale, and West Pullman are practically all Black; South Deering and Pullman are more mixed (see Table 2). These patterns arose in part from mill hiring practices (Kornblum 1974) with changes arising in the post-WWII period with the building of public housing, civil rights and open housing laws, and the economic devastation of the mill closings. At first, African-American laborers were hired, if at all, for low-paying and custodial jobs. When they gained more secure union jobs and eventually able to buy homes, restrictive housing policies prevented them from buying in the eastern neighborhoods, so their areas of settlement tended to be further west. There was also a tendency, common throughout the city, for younger people to move out of the neighborhood as they found jobs in other areas.

Table 2. Selected 1990 Census Data for Southeast Chicago Community Areas

Community Area	% White	% Black	% Hispanic Origin	% Below Poverty
49. Roseland	.9%	98.9%	0.4%	18.8%
50. Pullman	15.2%	78.8%	0.8%	18.7%
51. South Deering	23.3%	59.0%	28.2%	18.4%
52. East Side	77.7%	0.0%	39.5%	13.0%
53. West Pullman	1.8%	93.7%	4.3%	19.3%
54. Riverdale	0.8%	97.2%	1.7%	62.9%
55. Hegewisch	87.1%	0.7%	11.0%	7.7%

Although there has been a Hispanic population living in Southeast Chicago for several generations, there has also been a more recent influx of Spanish-speaking people, not all of them immigrants. This can be documented by looking at the languages used at local churches; all have English services, and many have services in an eastern European language such as Polish as well as Spanish. Hegewisch, East Side, and South Deering now have significant Spanish-speaking populations attracted, like other working class people before them, by the low cost of relatively good quality housing. Many work outside of the area.

Many neighborhoods have more specific communities locally recognized and named within them, and these may be more recognizable and significant than the official designations. Furthermore, significant ties may exist between communities that make each more salient in local categories than in other communities. For instance, Hegewisch includes three neighborhoods, Avalon Trails, Harbour Point Estates, and Arizona. It is, however, a relatively unitary community as evidenced by organizations such as the Hegewisch Chamber of Commerce. Hegewisch also has very close ties across the state border with Hammond; these are as significant, if not more so, than connections with other neighborhoods. East Side can be divided into the Upper and Lower East Side; it also contains a sub-community or neighborhood called Fair Elms, which has an active civic group. Riverdale contains Altgeld Gardens, with a very active community group concerned with public housing and pollution. Locally, North Pullman is recognized as a separate neighborhood from Pullman proper, which has a higher percentage of White residents. South Deering contains Jeffrey Manor, Veteran's Memorial Park, Irondale, and Slag Valley; these derive in part from the fact that new immigrants settled close to the mill in which they worked (Kornblum 1974). The primarily African-American neighborhoods surrounding Roseland (Roseland, Altgeld Gardens, West Pullman, Morgan Park to its west, and Calumet Park to the south) are referred to by local churches and community activists as "Greater Roseland" and served by such groups as the Greater Roseland Development Corporation and the Greater Roseland Health Council. Some of the community area names are more regionally salient than others. For instance, Pullman, originating in the planned community built by railway tycoon George Pullman, is more recognized than Riverdale; Riverdale is more recognized as the site of the Altgeld Gardens Housing Complex. Finally, neighborhoods are locally delineated on the basis of association with parishes as well. And although peoples' closest ties are to those they interact with most frequently – family, work, church, block clubs – they do identify with the area of Southeast Chicago and its environmental amenities as a whole, as well as with the Calumet Region (see Figure 3).

Therefore, community and community-based activities occur on many different levels, from the very localized neighborhood of a few blocks, up through designated neighborhoods in the city system (which may correspond to wards in some cases), and encompassing, in some contexts, the entire 'Southeast Chicago' or 'Calumet' community. How and when each sense of community is activated depends on the social context. We will examine these different levels of community, how they interconnect in our discussion of the different kinds of groups we encountered, and how this affects environmental involvement or activism in Southeast Chicago.

Southeast Chicago in the Context of the City of Chicago

Indeed, there is a sense in the city of Chicago that the South side in general is peripheral to the city. To Southeast Chicagoans, this reads as neglect. In terms of spatial layout, Southeast Chicago has both a more dispersed settlement pattern and is almost the farthest distance from the City center of any city neighborhoods. The Southeast is not served by the city's elevated train system; taxis do not serve the streets as regularly as the dense North. This area was not fully connected to the municipal water system until the late 1980s, and then only because of agitation by the People for Community Recovery (Mendelsohn 1996).

In some cases, being peripheral is read as a benefit. For instance, white ethnic residents of the East Side and Hegewisch view their communities as distinct and separate from the City of

Chicago. They particularly note the history and heritage of their communities and are concerned about its dilution due to ethnic and economic change. Environmental activism occurs in the context of building sustainable economies in order to preserve those communities. Many express concern about young people moving out. Members of East Side Pride have been lobbying for more patrol cars because they live on an "island," and if the bridges over the river are up when a call goes out for police protection, patrol cars may not be able to get to them. People in Hegewisch believe that "substandard maintenance has contributed to declining interest in local sports leagues" (Babcock 1998: 10).

Nevertheless, it is a hallmark of the current city administration that more city resources are being put into economic development and environmental rehabilitation. And Southeast Chicago is fully integrated into the political structure of Chicago. The ward structure affects both local level politics and activism. It is a system of patronage that was essential to immigrants in decades past. It is a way of life in most of the city. It has important implications for activism, not only in terms of getting things done, but also for how people interact in pursuit of civic goals and how they prioritize different goals. In the ward structure, it is quite straight forward. If you need something like better garbage pickup, more patrol cars, or streets paved, you take it to the alderman (often via a contact such as a precinct captain). It should get done; if it does not, if the request is denied, it may mean that you or your contact have insufficient clout – or that there's a specific political reason why it will not be done. It is a system that provides a sense of control in terms of a high degree of understandability in marked contrast to environmental issues, which can take a much longer period of time to resolve, because of the profound nature of pollution, the lower visibility of pollution, and the difficulties of enforcing federal rules and regulations.

Environmental regulation entails long periods of collecting data and then negotiating equitable and workable resolutions. This contrast has important implications for local commitment to environmental activism. When local environmental problems are not immediately resolved, local people may be inclined to look for political reasons for this. For example, a group of East Side residents had recorded data on dust emissions from a local industry under the guidance of a local environmental activist. When the problem did not appear to have been remedied or even addressed, residents had a number of theories as to why it had been neglected, prominent among them regarding the activist's supposed political and kinship connections and why the activist had decided not to press their concerns. All of these had to do with relative clout, and little to do with what probably was the reality of documenting problems and negotiating resolutions in the context of the appropriate government agency. It simply appears harder to get things done environmentally. This 'conspiracy theory' thinking appears common in communities historically cut out of the pathways of power and efficacy.

Boundaries

Neighborhood dynamics are also demonstrated in terms of who gets to use what resources when and where. These are based not just on locality, but ethnicity and class. These factors are inseparable from issues of immigration and changing communities. While we were unable to observe much use of public space because this study took place in the winter, people mentioned ethnic segregation of use of these resources, whether of parks or fishing locations.

Southeast Chicago benefits greatly from having a great deal of land that is thought of as 'public space,' where residents can hunt, fish, and boat. These are 'working class parks,' accessible by public transportation (Hurley 1995; see also Mendelsohn 1996). Wolf Lake was once the classic example of a working class park. Wolf Lake later became categorized by residents as a park used by outsiders (often Hispanic) who were perceived as making the atmosphere rowdy and crowded. In the 1990s, the community has done a great deal to bring about the banning of alcohol and late night partying and locals once again think of it as 'their' lake. At other locations, there has been concern about gang activity; Fishing Buddies, whose fishing activities occur in Beaubien Woods, was one way to combat gang activity in the park.

It appears that similar dynamics are in place in other parts of Southeast Chicago, particularly in defining use of neighborhood parks. Recent immigrants using local parks, especially African-Americans and Hispanics, were often mentioned by people in neighborhood associations as a cause of 'gang' violence in parts of Hegewisch and South Deering. Some people gave sketchy accounts of pitched warfare between themselves and newcomers (African-American in this case) but were reluctant to go into details over what they considered past history. Conversely, people decide not to go to parks where they do not feel comfortable, resulting in spatial segregation: few African-Americans cited a preference for Wolf Lake and many apparently prefer areas that are not official parks, to avoid crowds and conflict.

Another example that better illustrates the role of class in defining use of local resources comes from Morgan Park, a neighborhood outside of our study area. The City of Chicago acquired the right-of-way to the abandoned rail corridor needed to connect what will become the Conrail Bike Way. Not long after taking ownership, the City cleaned out the neglected corridor, cutting down weeds and brush and unwittingly mowing down one of Chicago's long standing barriers between two economically disparate communities: Sheldon Heights, a middle-class, predominantly African-American community and the Racine Court Cooperative, a tenant-managed residential complex and former public housing project. For years, the right-of-way had helped enforce the separation between Sheldon Heights and the Cooperative, acting as a buffer zone between different standards of living and the crime Sheldon Heights residents felt dominates the other side of the tracks. Residents of Sheldon Heights worried about crime increasing as a result of the destruction of the barrier. Conversely, residents of the Racine Court Cooperative had requested the clean-up as the weeds and brush were considered an eyesore and a danger to local children (Chicagoland Bicycle Federation 1998).

These concerns probably reflect local concerns about community change. It is true in the White ethnic neighborhoods that there is an aging population, as young families have moved out in search of jobs; and in African-American communities, where the middle-class has often moved out, leaving a disproportionate share of the poor behind. The most recent in-migrating population is young and/or Hispanic. There seems to be both generational and ethnic contestation of use of these public spaces. In fact, African-Americans who complained of ethnic conflict in the parks cited incidents with Hispanic youth.

Finally, there is temporal segregation. One African-American woman told Gillogly that "Black people don't like to go out in the mid-day sun and bake; you won't see them in the middle of the day, they like to go in the late afternoon and evening." Hurley mentions this temporal difference in park use in Gary (1995). Nevertheless, the history of racial exclusion here and elsewhere may still inform how and when minority people use public parks; it may also factor into their

rejection of more explicitly environmental causes – early middle-class environmental activism also served to protect the ‘purity’ of the neighborhoods, both in terms of class and ethnic composition (Hurley 1995).

Community as Enacted Through Community Groups

As stated above (Section II), meetings held by community groups are a primary venue for enacting community in urban America. By enacting community we mean groups of people coming together to form and implement collective action. Acting together, whether through organizing block parties and neighborhood festivals, or formulating proposals or requests for submission to political leaders or government agencies, creates or reinforces social ties among neighbors or people with shared interests, including people with interests in particular places who may or may not live nearby. People who take the initiative in this sort of collective action — community activists — see themselves as affecting and in fact do affect the lives of people beyond the activists themselves. That’s why they speak of themselves as creating or belonging to “community” groups or organizations. How wide or inclusive the community is that they attempt to affect varies. Community in urban America can be enacted or built at multiple levels of inclusion in geographic terms, from the very local (block associations), to neighborhood (as variously defined, e.g., parish, aldermanic ward, or Chicago community planning area), to region within the city (Southeast Chicago, South Side Chicago), on up to the city, county, state, and nation.

For community groups and organizations, the relationship between the level of community they see themselves as representing and higher levels of politically-constituted community (city, state, nation) is often a key part of their agenda, as they try to affect the policy decisions at those higher levels which control the distribution of resources to their more local community. (“Organization” is usually taken to refer to a more formally constituted body with bylaws, legal status, etc., as opposed to the more inclusive term “group”, which includes less formal bodies.) In this effort, local community groups and organizations interact with formal organizations whose mandate is defined at higher levels of community (e.g., city, state, or national government agencies).

The accompanying diagram and typology (Table 1 and Figure 4) describes the range of organizations relevant to environmental action that we encountered in Southeast Chicago, and their position in regard to various geographic and governmental levels of community: neighborhood, Southeast Chicago as a city region, the city, the region, and the state. The diagram can be used as a tool to envisage the intersections (or lack thereof) that various community organizations or groups have with the informal social networks of friends and family that are the backbone of community in the sense of strong and enduring social ties on the one hand, and the formal bureaucracies of government and national organizations on the other. The types of organizations and advisory councils labeled “Tier 2” in the table and figure play an important role in linking state and national agencies to neighborhood and other more local and informal groups.

In Southeast Chicago, we found that some specifically environmentally-action oriented organizations connect with resident social networks through neighborhood-based civic organizations (see Table 1, Figure 4). Some of these environmental action groups function as

umbrella organizations whose scope of operations goes beyond specific neighborhoods, using representatives of civic organizations to connect with neighborhood residents and the broad range of neighborhood issues and concerns that the civic organizations represent. The seven types of groups and organizations outlined in Table 1 can connect to each other and to informal social networks in multiple ways, summarized in terms of organizational "tiers" in the diagram.

The diagram indicates the possibilities for the differences in interconnections, but does not reflect the differences in the interconnections and their density that we found in the Greater Roseland neighborhoods versus the eastern neighborhoods. We found that there was very little overlap between the networks of environmentalists and civic organizations on the eastern side of Southeast Chicago and the environmental/health and nonprofit organizations found in the Greater Roseland neighborhoods. To get information on these networks required going through two different 'entry points' in order to make contact and begin sampling. Furthermore, the "Tier 2" and "Tier 3" organizations in the Greater Roseland area had a different set of connections to "Tier 1" agencies: the East side groups had stronger connections to specifically environmental agencies and groups (Region 5 EPA, Illinois EPA, Illinois Dept of Natural Resources, Audubon Society, etc.) while the Roseland area groups with environmental interests were pursuing ties to health and social service agencies (Cook County Dept. Of Public Health, Illinois Dept. Of Human Services).

Regional and national environmental groups are also very important in looking at environmental activism in Southeast Chicago. Many activists are associated with regional branches of national groups such as the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club. As such, they often play an important role as catalyst in getting information to people, developing plans, and organizing action. Some live outside the region; some come from the region but now live in other parts of the city; and still others are local. Nevertheless, we found little evidence of resentment of 'outsiders' being involved in environmental issues in SE Chicago, perhaps because some have been effective in improving conditions for residents; there appears to be a congruency between environmentalists' interests and those of local residents, at least in the 1990s (see below for further discussion of the role of activists or advocates).

For all of these groups, "community outreach" is not a task limited to government agencies. Neighborhood-based groups are also involved in mobilizing their neighbors and increasing active membership. Roseland activists, for instance, emphasized the importance of community education, and Fair Elms Civic League members were concerned about the need to involve new residents, as was East Side Pride.

Figure 2. Chicago Community Areas

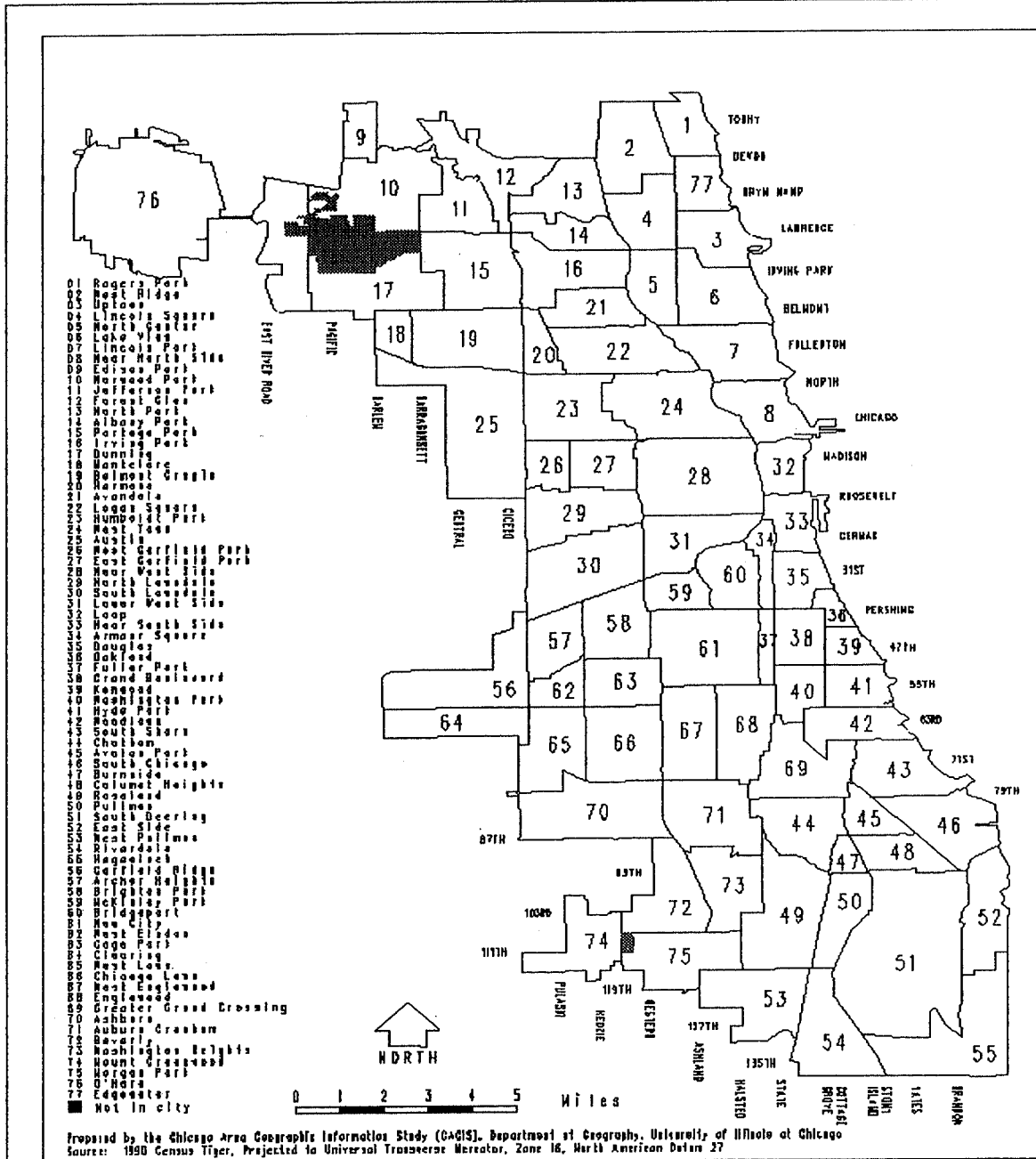


Figure 3. Connections and Subgroupings, Southeast Chicago

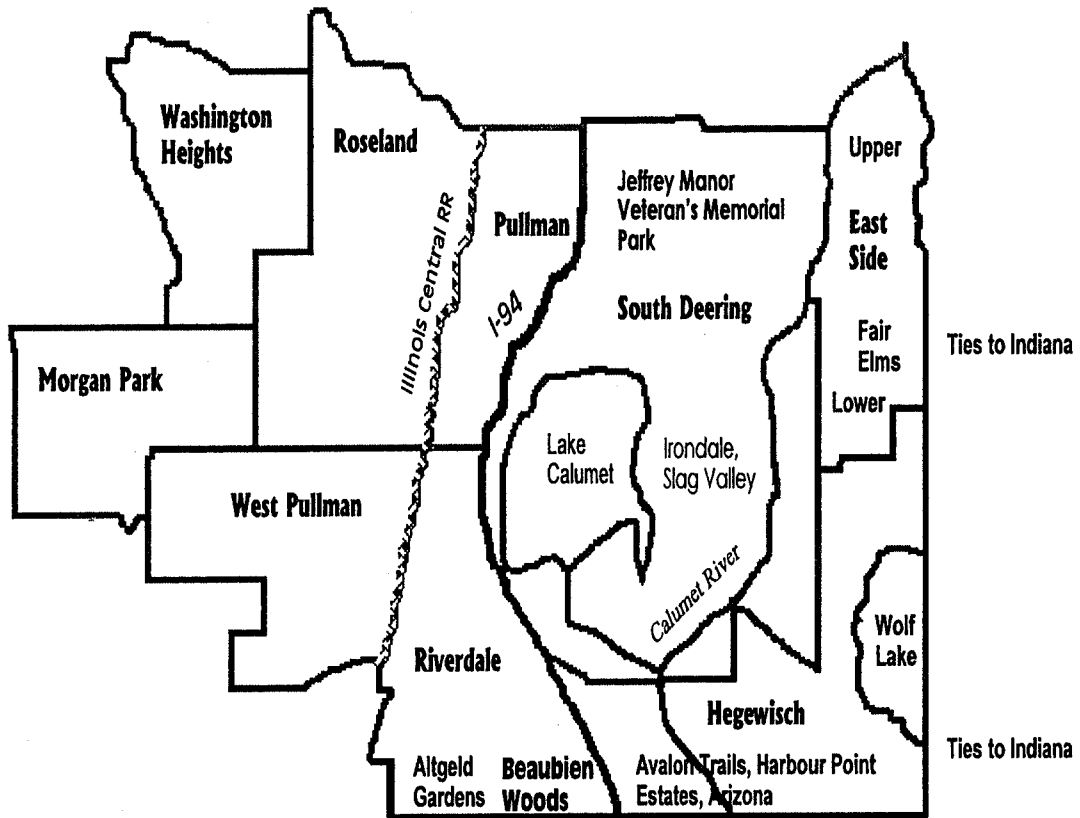
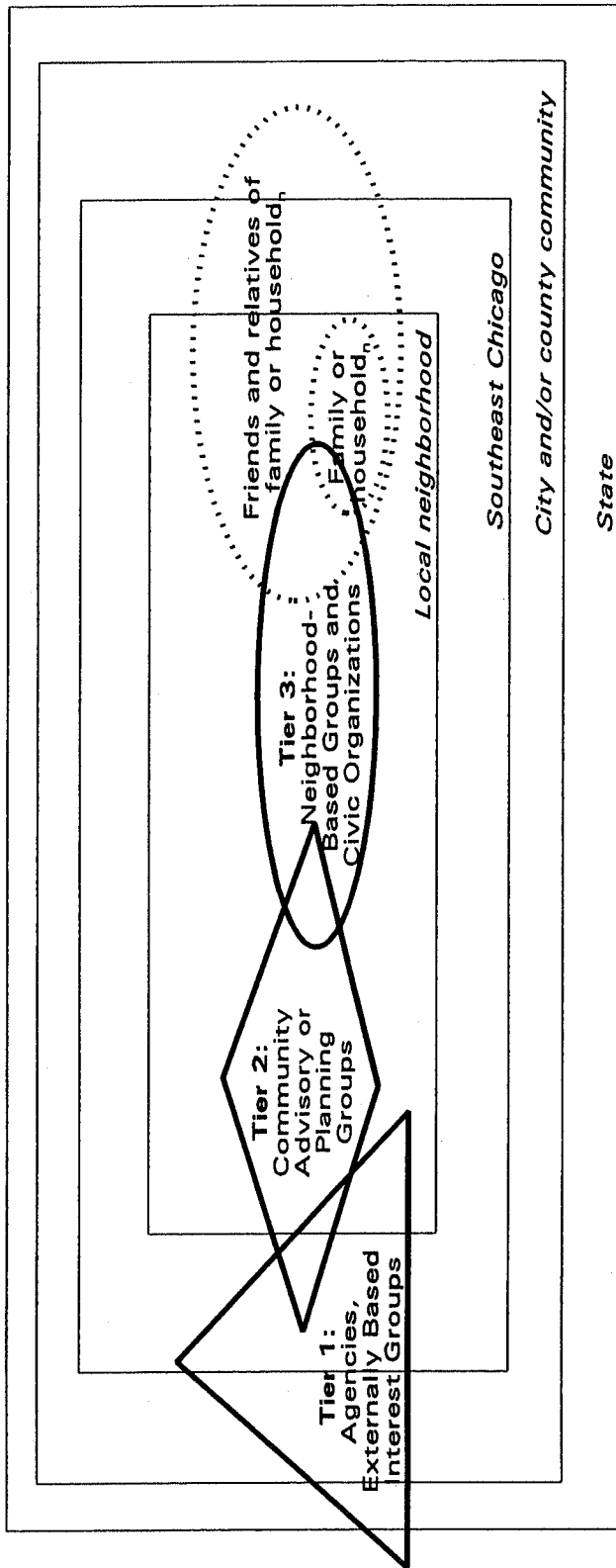


Figure 4. Environmentally Active Groups in Relation to Levels of Community



There are a number of organizations, households, local community groups, etc., all intersecting in multiple ways; the precise configuration and overlap of membership is specific to each locality and group. Brokers create intersections among multiple groups and organizations.

Section IV. Not Good at Partnering? Framing of Information and Priorities

- There are differences in the current emphasis and expression of environmental concerns among community groups reflecting different constituencies: groups based in predominantly African-American neighborhoods emphasize health and environmental justice; groups drawing from predominantly White neighborhoods speak more of heritage and quality of life; environmental activists from national and regional organizations speak more of natural resource conservation.
- In keeping with these different priorities, White and African-American based community groups tend to have connections with different governmental and non-governmental agencies.
- The fact that there is little integration of these communities' groups is probably due to these differing priorities as well as existing ethnic separation.
- Nevertheless, there are significant points of intersection among community group interests: making industry responsible to local people and building sustainable communities.

The profound segregation that is widely recognized between the White, African-American, and Hispanic immigrant ethnic communities exists in how environmental concerns were expressed and acted upon. People worked in very different community groups and networks of those groups. This reflects and reinforces differences in framing, that is, in the priorities that constrain or facilitate participation in partnerships or coalitions. Here, we examine the differences in priorities and action taken by the White and African-American community groups we encountered. There are strong environmental activists in both the African-American and the White communities. However, the linkages between them are weak, reflecting the social divisions, differing perceptions, and segregated residence patterns in the area. Basically, we found that the White environmental activists have closer connections to the U.S. EPA, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the City of Chicago Department of the Environment, the National Park Service and outside environmental interest groups, while the Greater Roseland activists have or are developing closer connections to health agencies such as the Greater Roseland Health Council and the Chicago Department of Public Health, and have not been as involved in area-wide environmental planning and land use efforts.

This is partly due to the differences in the way environmental concerns have been framed and expressed in the different networks, as well as to perceptions of where to find resources for solutions to problems; perceptions of available resources influence how concerns are framed. Differences in framing result in differences in what's perceived as relevant information and how it is acted upon (or not). To briefly summarize overall general patterns (of course there are individual differences): The Greater Roseland activists emphasize the physical health effects of environmental toxins on area residents, environmental justice and its relation to civil rights, equitable economic development, and cleaning up the environment to make it safe and healthy for people. Cleaning up the environment to make it safe does not preclude developing commercial activity and jobs: Looking out from high in the Pullman Bank Building, from where you can see landfill, a chemical factory, railroad tracks, and Lake Calumet, the director of the South Side Health Consortium, one of the local African-American activist leaders, said, "Look! We've got everything — waterfront, industry, transportation — this could be a center for economic development, we could develop this area like other places have developed their waterfront areas."

This activism is based on a civil rights model of activism. As one activist put it: "There's three models of activism. One is the Saul Alinsky model, but that depends on an outsider and we want to do it ourselves¹. Another is the union model, but we don't have jobs! The third is what we need – the civil rights models. If we can't organize ourselves and get ourselves straight, we can't be partners in other folks' projects; we can't be partners if we're not equal." Thus, environmental pollution concerns are put in a frame of fairness and equality. This is a frame that many Whites interpret as confrontational and rooted in the past. It is also put in a frame of cleaning up their own community, and as such touches on issues such as disease and a healthy body, both individually and as a community. Unhealthy people can not make a healthy community. For instance, lead poisoning is a big concern, especially as the physical effects of lead poisoning are seen by some residents as resulting in the behavioral problems of young men (poor impulse control, lower intelligence, violence) that then leads to gangs and gang violence.

For these reasons, the African-American community tends to draw on support and funding from health-oriented and social service agencies rather than explicitly environmental agencies. Furthermore, Pinsker's experience is that the dollar amounts offered for funding from state and federal agencies dealing with health issues have tended to be larger than what the federal and state EPA or the Illinois Department of Natural Resources can offer for community-based projects. Some funding has been from these sources available to address broad issues of creating healthy communities, not just the targeting of specific diseases or conditions. For example, the Developing Communities Project, based in a coalition of Roseland churches, received funding from the Illinois Department of Alcohol and Substance Abuse for a multi-year community leadership development program, on the basis that strengthening local leadership capacity would help residents address the roots of addiction and substance abuse. Given the limits in the staffing and resources currently available to many of the African-American organizations based in Chicago's South and West sides, it makes sense to put more effort into establishing connections with health, housing, and human services agencies on the federal, state, county, and city levels to get the funding and assistance they require. This is one of the reasons that African-American activists participate less frequently in environmental activism.

It is true that these activists express more pressing concerns, issues that are of a higher priority, such as unemployment, inadequate health care, gang violence, and drugs. Nevertheless, we did not find that the people we interviewed were uninterested in environmental issues or do not see relationships between environmental issues and these other concerns. Neighborhood-based organizations such as Fishing Buddies and Reduce Recidivism by Industrial Development (RRID) show a mode of environmental activism that emphasizes the relationships between environmental and other urban issues. (Fishing Buddies was

¹ It is commonly believed that Alinsky-style organizing depends on outside instigators. While not everyone agrees that this is the case, it is often how it has worked in practice: professional community organizers coming to a neighborhood not their own and mobilizing residents to action. Regardless of whether they are outsiders or residents, however, Alinsky trained organizers emphasize confrontation and "winnable issues" in planning actions, leading to the critique that this style of organizing sometimes emphasizes short-term publicity value over long-term substantive goals. This with the "eyes on the prize" model embodied in the history of the U.S. civil rights movement.

established to give young African-American boys the opportunity to fish and use the natural resources available on the Southeast Side as an alternative to less desirable activities. The founder of RRID is trying to call for attention and further research on the possible connection between environmental toxins, mental health, and criminal behavior). These organizations frame environmental issues differently than the White environmental activists, emphasizing their connections to priority issues such as health and youth violence, which leads them to partner with very different agencies. Activists' time and resources are taken up with these efforts to such a degree that they rarely have time or incentives to attend meetings focusing on issues such as longer-term regional environmental planning and land use, meetings that are seen as mostly discussion with little immediate return in terms of funding or action.

One example of a venue in which environmental activism explicitly takes place is the Greater Roseland Health Coalition. This community also includes Altgeld Gardens, the home of Hazel Johnson, founder of People for Community Recovery (PCR) and known in the media as the "Black Mother of the Environment." Johnson and PCR have campaigned publically and in the courts to have the toxic wastes surrounding Altgeld Gardens – what they call the "toxic donut" – recognized and redressed as an environmental justice and civil rights issue. Although Altgeld Gardens, like the East Side, Hegewisch, and South Deering, is close to Lake Calumet and surrounding old industrial development, PCR has closer ties to community health activists in the Greater Roseland area than it does to the environmental activist groups in East Side and Hegewisch. Pullman, however, and the Good Neighbor Dialogue groups that have begun meeting with local industrial companies in that area, is one venue where there has been some overlap and networking between African-American based groups such as PCR and the Committee for Economic Recovery (West Pullman) and White activists.

Other environmental issues for African-American residents are noxious odors and pollution of soil and water. Natural surroundings are also of concern. Members of PCR and other African-Americans in Greater Roseland have very strong ties to nature, related more to their Southern heritage. This is kept alive by visiting back and forth to Southern states. People plant vegetable gardens in the summer to get the greens and vegetables they prefer.² In this context, pollution of soil, water, as well as noxious smells, are all factors that mobilize the residents of Greater Roseland. White environmental activists have not yet learned how to tap into these strong impulses. They, in contrast, show a very strong impetus towards protection of natural or restored areas. The spread of such attitudes among the general population is probably in contrast to attitudes a decade or more ago when people had a tendency to see an abandoned site rather than a reviving prairie or marsh. Again, the interests of activists in each group toward land and place are not opposed, just taken from different angles.

A major concern to the African-American activists is maintaining the stability and viability of their communities. Here, the pattern is that as families get stable jobs and become successful, they move to the suburbs, leaving the impoverished behind. The extent of this move out is evident at church services, where people who grew up in a local Greater Roseland church may return each Sunday; some churches are considering opening up 'branches' in suburbs where large numbers of their congregation live. For community activists, the issue is to attract the families

² As most of our research took place in winter, we did not observe this. We are grateful to Mardi Klevs for making these points (personal communication, 7/31/00).

that left back into Greater Roseland in order to further revitalize it and to keep others from moving away.

Similarly, the White activists hope to attract suitable development that will keep young families in the neighborhood, thereby preserving the community and its heritage. Their concern is what's perceived as an aging and dwindling population. Issues of heritage and quality of life/sustainable economic development are especially salient in this context. Their discourse, the things they talk about, are planned aesthetics, the heritage of immigration from Europe, and the history of steel mill labor and union activism. Economic revitalization is often spoken of in explicitly environmental terms, such as attracting nature tourists.

There are, again, important common interests – quality of life and the kind of economic development that will sustain communities without polluting them. Neighborhood control and the protection of the surrounding environment are commonly invoked themes. Whether through environmental or community health activism, all hope to attract suitable development that will keep families in the neighborhood, thereby preserving the community and its heritage.

In this, the White and African-American community activists have similar frames of reference: by improving the quality of life, they hope to improve economic conditions by attracting business. Probably the biggest difference is African-American activists' simultaneous goal of improving social conditions through attracting development. White groups' focus on *place* and an outer physical environment for recreation and aesthetics; and the emphasis on maintenance of community and heritage. In this, there is sometimes a hint of ethnic conflict in concerns about 'outsiders' taking over 'our' parks. Nevertheless, the specific incidents mentioned to us concerned conflict with the Hispanic immigrant population. Nothing was specifically racial; everything concerned local control of space.

In keeping with their priority on more explicitly environmental issues, White groups had far-ranging and substantial connections with a number of environmental agencies on the national, state, and city level. Gillogly observed three separate processes in which communities or community representatives, non-profit environmental groups, and government agencies cooperated in planning and/or remediation (Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership, Wolf Lake Bi-State planning, and Cluster Site clean-up). In each of these cases, the number of people local groups could draw together, including government agency staff and regional environmental representatives, was impressive (see Table 3, Figure 5).

Finally, we note that non-neighborhood-based environmental activists, on the other hand, generally did not emphasize local control but did speak of the importance of conservancy and the preservation of natural resources — as a resource for all, whether in or out of the community.

There are concerns and themes common to all these groups: making industry responsible to local communities, health and safety (e.g., no bad odors in the air) as a concern of both Black and White neighborhood residents, and the creation of sustainable communities. Class and racial barriers come up in discussions specifically involving who these communities are for and who has access to the resources within them (see Section III).

The primary concerns expressed by environmental activists involved in the Southeast Side, then, can be broadly summarized as follows:

Groups based in predominantly White neighborhoods

- aesthetics
- heritage
- quality of life
- local control over places

Groups based in predominantly African-American neighborhoods

- environmental justice (fairness, equality)
- health, removal of toxins
- jobs and economic development

Outside environmental activists

- conservancy and the preservation of natural resources as a resource for all

Common interests

- Making industry and government responsible to local communities; health and safety of residents; sustainable economic development

In summary, the predominantly White environmental groups of the east side of Southeast Chicago take a more explicitly environmental view, and as such have a wide range of connections to many and various governmental and national or regional environmental groups. They are able to work through these to carry out activities in their neighborhoods. As can be seen in Figure 5, leaders in these neighborhoods have extensive contacts with people in the government and regional level who give them access to resources they need to get things done.

The situation in African-American communities of the west side of Southeast Chicago is rather different. There, the pool of leaders is much sparser and their contacts not quite as extensive. Those that are interested in environmental issues tend to be with organizations and agencies that are less explicitly environmental, in part because they find these a better source of funding as well as one more appropriate to their concerns. The fact of fewer (often over-burdened) leaders and organizations, as well a different framing of concerns, likely accounts for outsiders' assessment of these organizations as uninterested in environmental issues and 'not good at partnering.' This has been acknowledged by at least one African-American leader, with his diagnosis that organizations in his community can not be good at partnering until their organizational structure and economic conditions are better.

Table 3. Organizations Involved in Three Environmental Activities, White Communities

Processes	
Site-based	Wolf Lake – natural resource management by/for community Cluster Site – site cleanup, remediation and rehabilitation
Planning-based	Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership – regional planning (SE Chicago)
Agencies and Organizations Involved in all Three (see Figure 5 for details)	
Calumet Ecological Park Association	local, umbrella/partnership
Center for Neighborhood Technology	local (city-wide), project
Southeast Chicago Development Commission	local, project
Washington High School	local, education
Calumet Environmental Resource Center	local, education and information
Northern Indiana Birding Network*	local, environmental
Openlands Project*	regional (NE IL), environmental
Sierra Club*	national, environmental
Citizens for a Better Environment	regional, environmental
Audubon Society*	national, environmental
U.S. EPA	national, government (various departments)
IL EPA	state, environmental
City of Chicago	local government, various departments (Environment, Planning)
Agencies and Organizations Involved in Two Processes	
Southeast Environmental Task Force*	local, umbrella
Hegewisch Chamber of Commerce	local, business
South Lakefront Coalition	local, environmental
Calumet Heritage Partnership	local/bi-state, environmental/heritage
US Army Corps of Engineers	national, government

* Denotes prominence in part due to the activism of an individual who attends most of the meetings in the area and is deeply involved in planning

Table 4. Organizations involved in Health and Environmental Activities, African-American Communities*

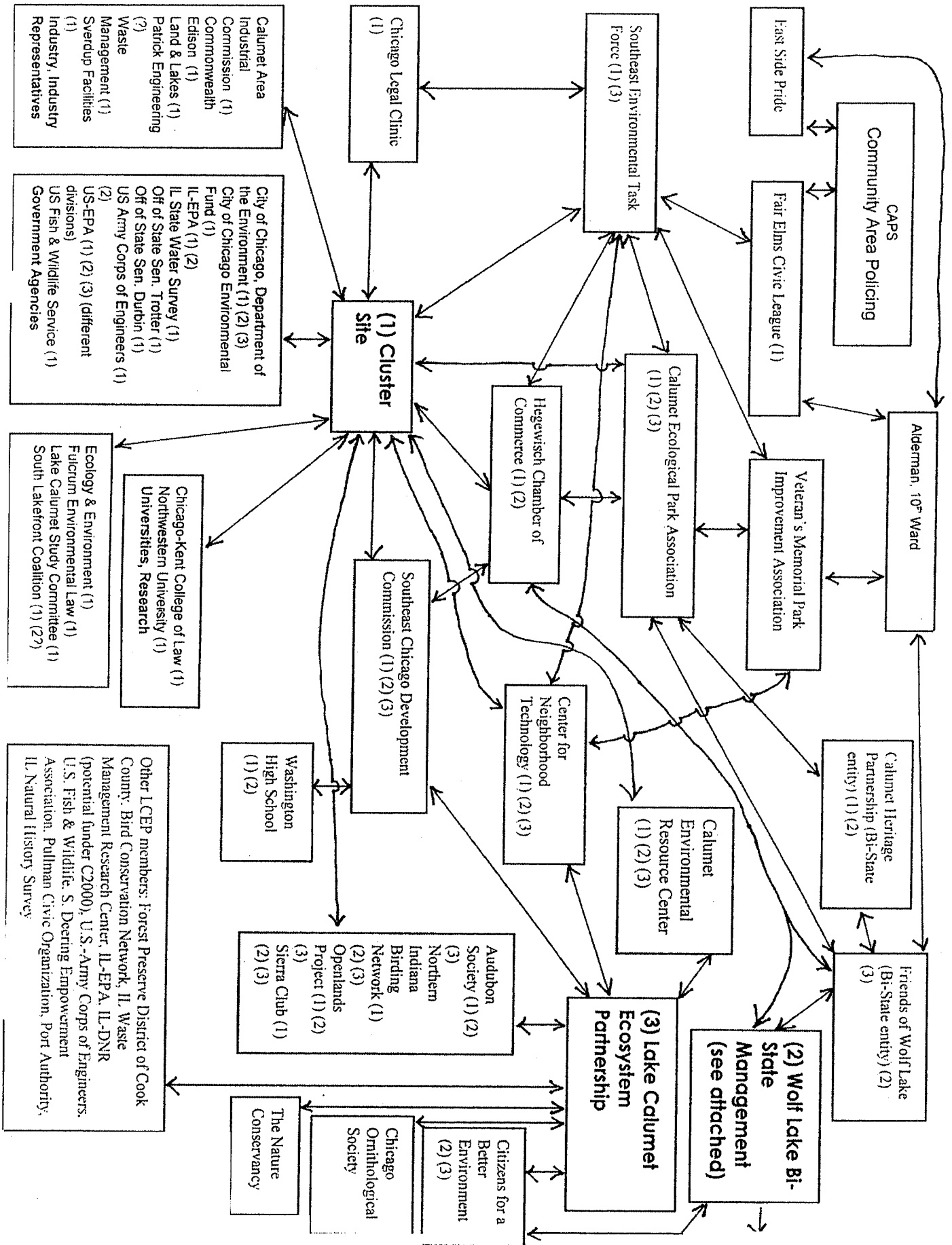
Processes	
A. Chicago Specialties Good Neighbor Dialogue, Pullman* *	
B. Health Forums sponsored by Greater Roseland Health Council	
Organizations Involved in All Three	
Committee for Economic Recovery (A, B)	local, environmental and economic
People for Community Recovery (A, B)	local (Altgeld Gardens based but with broader agenda), environmental justice
Victory Heights/Maple Park/ West Pullman Advisory Council, Environmental Committee/ RRID (Reduce Recidivism by Industrial Development) [Committee and organization have same leadership] (B)***	local, environment and health
Greater Roseland Health Council (A, B)***	umbrella, health, community health, environment
Southside Health Consortium (B)***	umbrella, health
Other Organizations Potentially Relevant to Environmental Coalitions:	
Fishing Buddies	local, youth and environment
Developing Communities Project	local coalition, economic development, land use
Greater Roseland Development Corporation***	economic development

* These refer to organizations involved, not sources of funding such as Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, or state and county health agencies. We did not see representatives of these government agencies attending community meetings.

** Although organizations cited here did not send representatives to all meetings, the Good Neighbor Dialogue is cited as a process since it did demonstrate some information flow among organizations, and also represented an overlap between these groups and some of the organizations cited in Table 3: Southeast Environmental Task Force and Citizens for a Better Environment as well as the Pullman Civic Organization.

*** These organizations have overlaps or strong links among their leadership.

Figure 5. Diagram of Parties Involved in Environmental Processes



Addendum to Figure 5. Entities Involved in the Initial Wolf Lake Bi-State Management Process

NB: This chart is intended only to show the density and cross-cutting nature of the relationships among local groups and agencies in Southeast Chicago. The connections are of many different types, such as shared membership, disseminating information, participating in Good Neighbor Dialogues, or very dense interactions based on joint activism on a specific issue, including planning and carrying out remediation (Cluster Site process) or regional planning (Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership). The strength of these relationships can also wax and wane over time. Some groups that are active in each process (e.g., Audubon Society) show intense involvement by different chapters at the local and national levels. For some of these groups, it is impossible to indicate all of the connections by lines; a better model would be three-dimensional.

City of Hammond
Hammond Parks Department
U.S. EPA
IN DEM
IN DNR, Fish and Water
IL EPA
Forest Preserve District, Cook County
U.S. National Park Service
City of Chicago, Department of Environment and Planning
Northwestern University, Chemical Engineering
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Alderman Pope's Office (10th Ward, Chicago, IL)
Rep. Peter Visclosky's Office, Grants and Projects
Congressman Jerry Weller's Office
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, IL

Hegewisch Commerce Committee (IL)
East Side Chamber of Commerce (IL)
South Lakeshore Coalition (IL)
Calumet Heritage Partnership (Bi-State)
Chicago State University, Calumet Environmental Resource Center (IL)
Sierra Club
Save the Dunes (IN) (Conservation Fund)
NIPSCO (IN)
University of Purdue at Calumet (IN)
Audubon Society (local and national)
Center for Neighborhood Technology (IL)
Openlands Project
Illinois Conservation Foundation (IL)
Calumet Ecological Park Association (Bi-state)
Southeast Environmental Task Force (IL)
Lake Michigan Federation
Citizens for a Better Environment (IL)
Washington High School (IL)
Calumet Council of Boy Scouts (IN)
Calumet District of Chicago Boy Scouts (IL)

Hegewisch Chamber of Commerce (IL)
Southeast Sportsmen's Club (IL)

City of Hammond
Hammond Parks Department
U.S. EPA, Greater Chicago Team and NW Indiana Team
IN-DEM
IN-DNR, Fish and Water
IL-EPA
Forest Preserve District, Cook County
National Park Service
City of Chicago, Department of the Environment and Planning Department
Northwestern University, Chemical Engineering
US Army Corps of Engineers
Alderman Pope's Office (10th Ward, Chicago, IL)
Peter Visclosky's Office, Grants and Projects
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SEDCOM (IL)
Audubon Society
Center for Neighborhood Technology (IL)
Openlands Project
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Washington High School (IL)
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Calumet District of Chicago Boy Scouts (IL)
Hegewisch Chamber of Commerce (IL)0

Section V. Relation of Information Flow and Brokers to Groups and Group Meetings

- One of the salient means by which information is transmitted among groups is through people we call 'brokers.' These are people who are strongly committed to the environmental cause and therefore disseminate information. They also have multiple links among many or all of the types of groups discussed earlier.
- Brokers, because of their position, often serve as translators of information between levels.
- Information flow among groups can help us to define lines of communication, important sources of information, and delineate significant community and extra-community organizations

Information Flow Among Groups

Clearly, none of the groups or communities we have discussed so far work in isolation. What are the specific mechanisms by which information is passed among organizations? It seems obvious: newsletters, meetings, educational handbooks, informal discussion. But the specific carrier is human agency, that is, people's actions. Here, we will look at specific types of people who are highly significant in the flow of information among groups.

In the course of this research, we met many politically and organizationally involved people. In fact, given the vast number of organizations of various types in Southeast Chicago, it is not surprising that there can be considerable overlap among membership of groups. Given the constraints on community involvement (see discussion below), those who have the free time and the strong motivation to become involved play a disproportionately important role in the transmission of information. The scope of their involvement can be widespread. In one case, two men, who had known each other since high school but now live in different neighborhoods, each attended about 250 meetings a year. In this case, the two men had similar concerns in environmental issues, business development, and ward politics and coordinated with each other on projects, but only formally saw each other at an informal weekly meeting. Between the two of them, they attended approximately 475 community meetings a year. These were people with other full-time jobs. For those who work full-time in activism, the level of community involvement can be even higher. This level of activism is reflected in environmental groups as well.

There are a number of grassroots environmental activists from Southeast Chicago and the Calumet Region. Many of these people have started their own organizations or are active and prominent members of regional and national environmental organizations (for instance, the local chapter of the Audubon Society or the Sierra Club). They attend the larger meetings concerning environmental issues and many of the smaller ones as well. They may attend many of the neighborhood-based civic organization meetings to get information on community concerns about environmental issues and to convey information about policy and ongoing projects. One activist puts out a newsletter that is an important source of information on environmental issues. The activists are often the catalyst for addressing an environmental issue: they observe a problem, call meetings, help to develop possible solutions, mobilize community support and then advocate this to the relevant government agencies or funding sources. These activists are the advocates, people who are deeply committed to and knowledgeable about environmental issues and who are widely recognized in the community for these qualities. Despite the fact that some (both community residents and the staff of governmental bodies) expressed mixed feelings about advocates as being too single-issue or

extreme in their views, thereby pushing negotiations too far against, for instance, development, most were well-known and respected for their knowledge, their commitment, and their willingness to work on projects at considerable personal cost. In this, environmental advocates filled an important role as brokers.

The Broker Role — Translators and Networkers

As brokers, the local environmental activists were in position to mediate and translate among multiple organizations and constituencies. Brokers, because of their commitment, tended to attend large numbers of meetings, both those directly concerning environmental issues but also meetings at which environmental issues might or could be raised peripheral to other community issues. They attended the larger, extra-local meetings such as those sponsored by government agencies, externally-based environmental interest groups, or regional planning groups and conveyed information from these meetings to local community groups. A number of features of the brokers' structural position facilitated this role. First of all, because they were deeply committed to environmentalism, when they got information, they **conveyed** it. Not everyone conveys information. In fact, a surprising number of people who worked on environmental issues along with other community issues said they did not talk to their family, friends, or neighbors about those issues. This has significance for government agencies trying to educate the public about environmental pollution and attempting to enlist communities in environmental protection. Agencies may be getting information out effectively, but that information hits a wall and does not go any further than the people who directly heard a presentation or read a brochure. The environmental advocates can be counted upon to go around the neighborhood and make sure people are aware of issues, attend local meetings and make reports there, and so on. They can be very important in mobilizing support for issues and projects. Thus, their support or opposition can be important to local projects.

Furthermore, because of their commitment, advocates or brokers study the issues and are generally more conversant in the technical scientific language of government agencies and national environmental groups. As such, they have a good base of knowledge and are rarely intimidated by the plethora of data presented at some of the more formal meetings held by governmental, environmental, or research institutions. They are also in a good position to ask questions in ways that will elicit appropriate answers from speakers. Most important, it makes them more capable of transmitting information further through the structure. **They can serve as translators.** Gillogly sat in on three Cluster Site meetings; the Cluster Site process is taking an innovative approach to remediating pollution and rehabilitating wetlands; the meetings were informative and detailed. Nevertheless, the level of detail made it very difficult to convey that information to other people. Advocates are more capable of this necessary process of translation. Some do this informally at meetings and talking to the people they know; some put out newsletters; and one organization we observed specializes in 'translating' or explaining technical reports to community groups when they facilitate Good Neighbor Dialogues, which Pinsker observed.³ There are several mechanisms for this kind of information transmission: conversations with other community residents; specific columns in community newspapers or newsletters; newsletters devoted to environmental issues; flyers giving out substantive information and information about upcoming events (the latter also being communicated

³ Good Neighbor Dialogues are processes where community members and local industry meet to negotiate resolution of environmental concerns. This has become a key element in negotiating compliance of industry with environmental regulations.

through phone trees); documents available at local branches of the public library; and reports on environmental news given in the meetings of civic organizations.

Finally, the brokers can serve as **mediators** as local people attempt to negotiate the maze of bureaucracy necessary to getting projects done. Bureaucracies in Chicago (at city, county, state, and federal levels) are complex; to a neighborhood resident, they may appear faceless. Brokers, on the other hand, have often worked with these bureaucracies over a number of years and have important contacts within the bureaucracy, and detailed knowledge about departments and their responsibilities. They can, therefore, be far more effective than a resident calling a central switchboard for the first time to find out who to contact. They have already gone through that process and can share their knowledge with others. Finally, personal contacts can be very important in the context of Chicago ward politics.

Similarly, brokers can be important to government agencies and extra-regional organizations attempting to make contacts in the local community. Brokers are salient in the flow of information from neighborhoods up to the government agencies that have the technical skills and funding to solve the severe environmental problems residents and workers of the Southeast Side might face. Because they spend a great deal of time attending meetings and talking to their neighbors, and because they carefully observe conditions in their neighborhoods, they are often catalysts for the recognition of a problem. In this respect, they carry information from the down up. Their contacts in a wide range of groups including those with expertise and funding allows them to organize action for and against given environmental issues. A good example of this was the Cluster Site process, which was frequently cited by government agencies and business as an example of community activism that was having appreciable results. In this case, a local umbrella organization with a very significant broker, along with other community interests, approached a downtown organization to help negotiate remediation of several problematic sites in Southeast Chicago. Due, perhaps, to common goals and to the ongoing social relations of many of the parties involved, the process of cleanup has been remarkably cooperative and fast; it also attests to the excellent connections not only of the local-level brokers but of people in the government agencies involved; these connections made people effective – as did the good fortune of government policy that was congruent with local needs and interests.

Therefore, advocates are extremely important in information flow because of their role as brokers in the flow of information from government agencies to local environmental and neighborhood groups and informal social networks. They vertically integrate information flow from the top down, and horizontally integrate information flow among the different civic organizations of functionally equivalent neighborhoods.⁴

What Do Brokers Do?

What do brokers do aside from attending meetings and advocating their own interests? They undertake a lot of activities that may be invisible to professionals – like the work to maintain a household, it's work that is private, time-eating, small tasks, and essential to getting more public activities done. In the same way, their work can be essential to neighborhood mobilization.

⁴ It has been argued that such horizontal networks are something the state cannot control, and lends communities independence or autonomy in action (Pettersson 2000). The social position of such organizations vis-a-vis community requires more research.

These activities include: (1) information collection: face work, talking to fellow residents about what's going on, particularly perceived problems; gathering information from written sources such as newspapers, newsletters, flyers, brochures, and technical reports; and visiting sites and other more clearly environmental activities such as bird-watching or canoeing; (2) information dissemination: writing columns or a newsletter; soliciting articles; typing; copy-editing; proof-reading; printing; getting copies made; collation; calling people; door-to-door visits; e-mailing; sending out mailings, which includes labeling and affixing postage; taking documents to public places such as churches and libraries; and (3) miscellaneous work such as traveling to and from meetings, which can take considerable time when using public transport. As mentioned previously, there's a plethora of meetings – 'meeting mania' – in Southeast Chicago and NW Indiana. Traveling to and attending meetings alone can take up considerable time in addition to the support work.

Constraints on Volunteerism

From the above, it is easy to see that the main constraint on volunteering for environmental activities is time. Activism can take up most if not all of a broker's time. This, plus the timing of many meetings, constrains many people from participating due to the obligations of child care, elder care, and work (both because of time spent at work and scheduling of work).

There's also cost constraints in the cost of travel (gas, parking, public transportation) and then, for those actively involved in working on projects, there's the cost of the other support services: paper, mail, phones, photocopying. Some volunteers also cited lost income due to spending time on these activities.

Finally, there's constraints due to alternative activities and priorities for community action. Awareness does not always lead to activism. Those aware of environmental issues may not be inspired to activism because of these constraints. As concerned environmentalists, we ardently believe that environmental health and safety are fundamental to sustainable communities. And, we believe we can make a difference. Others have different priorities, both for achieving sustainable communities and for their own place in that project. Their time is devoted to other activities: mentoring young people, Local School Councils, business development, Little League, Meals-On-Wheels, church groups, etc. These are not just equal alternatives to environmental activism. They may be more highly valued for a host of social reasons. First, people choose to volunteer in activities that help their children and/or allow them to spend time with their families. Second, there's a community hierarchy of activities. People do not start out as volunteers at the top. They pay their dues, get experience, and gain respect in the community by starting on smaller, local activities and then progression to less family-oriented more community-wide activities. It is, therefore, noticeable that many volunteers are people with no children or whose children are grown. They may not be employed full-time, retired, run their own business (and so have a more flexible schedule), or, of course, cut back on formal employment in order to devote time to environmental activism. This raises the question of why the environmental organizations do not successfully recruit youth activists, as they have more free time and probably no children. This merits further study.

Brokers as Gatekeepers

Many of the brokers are volunteers. Their community activism entails considerable costs in terms of time and materials. This can put them in a paradoxical position vis-a-vis professionals in government agencies or national organizations. They are key to information flow yet they do not have the formal training or specialization that professionals do. While brokers can be extremely important in facilitating the flow of information, they can be a source of perceived obstruction of information flow as well. Professionals can become frustrated with brokers because they are in position to control or gatekeep information and to shape it suit their own agenda. To professionals and others, there are questions about their objectivity and representativeness of community opinion. A related issue is their extremism or perceived extremism and their ability to shape or push dialogue.

Also, despite being conversant in the language of science, technology, and bureaucracy, brokers might not present information in ways that professionals in government agencies, national organizations, or industry consider appropriate. Nevertheless, due to their key position, it probably behooves the first tier agencies to pay close attention to what the advocate/brokers have to say about community concerns. They may not always be saying things that make sense in scientific and technical concerns, but the scientific validity of what they're saying isn't necessarily what's important. What's important is that advocates' statements reflect what people are really worried about; however, agency personnel may need to tease out the resolvable environmental issues. For instance, local people might not accept federal or state standards for clean-up and claim a plethora of illnesses because of their perception of continuing pollution. Visible emissions may be perceived as far more dangerous than what researchers consider a significant pollution problem, such as groundwater pollution. At community meetings, we heard neighborhood discussions of deaths of infants and the incidence of cancer in adults, or other causes of premature death, linked to perceived signs of toxicity in the environment, such as smells and visible industrial waste. Residents showed varying degrees of sophistication about the statistical significance of reported morbidity or mortality, but their own empirical observations of their neighborhood should not be summarily dismissed because of that.

There are indeed fair questions about the legitimacy of how brokers represent the community voice. In local meetings, we sometimes saw efforts made by other local residents to question the more extreme claims of some broker/activists. However, outside organizations tend to rely heavily on the brokers due to what we call the 'take me to your leader' phenomenon.' It is logistically necessary to depend on these people because to gain access to the entire community is probably impossible given professional staff's time constraints and the constraints of agency policy. Agency dependence on brokers can increase the costs of volunteerism. Even sympathetic government staff may be unaware of the considerable time spent simply on travel to meetings, going door-to-door to mobilize support, and the material costs of putting out a newsletter or flyers.

One solution has been to fund environmental organizations with highly effective brokers. This is necessary, yet it can disproportionately favor certain voices over others. Groups that already have staff (at the minimum someone to answer the phone so appointments can be made and calls returned quickly; voice mail has limits for people who are working another "day job") and the ability to fiscally administer grants, and existing connections to agencies that provide them with ready access to information about funding opportunities, have an advantage in getting further funding. Emerging groups and organizations perceive disparities in existing support and access to further funding, and it makes them wary, both of donating their time when others are

getting paid, and of information-sharing that may not be to their advantage. There is a strong sense that information-sharing is too much of a one-way road, expressed more generally in the statement that there can not be a partnership if the parties are not equal. Yet, as can be seen in the Wolf Lake Bi-State Management process, such formal organization is necessary to getting things done where there are a number of qualified activists who have good connections to agencies and sources of information. In this, we see the difference between volunteers in the predominantly White eastern side environmental activists and 'professional' activists of the western side African-American community organizers, who may spend much more time on activities such as getting 501C3 status. The 'equality' inherent in partnering is of greater concern to African-American activists, who generally have fewer community resources and government contracts on which to draw. This highlights the 'density' of brokers' connections, as illustrated in Figure 5, among White environmental activists we observed.

Despite the perceived inequities, this sort of "them that have, gets" cycle can be very difficult to break. Furthermore, it is not the role of the EPA to directly address the disparities among organizations and neighborhoods, including inequities in organizational material resources and paid personnel as well as differences in the skills and time of available volunteers. These disparities contribute to the differences noted earlier in the participation of African-American groups (based in the lower-income neighborhoods) in broad environmental coalitions. The leaders of some of the African-American organizations have extremely demanding schedules; we've seen them put in very brief appearances at meetings because they were due in several places at once, and do not have sufficient staff or trained volunteers who can represent them. By itself, Region 5 EPA can perhaps make concerted efforts to include a diverse group of brokers in ongoing events and programs through considering incentives for their participation (honoraria, publicity, material support for their organizations to participate in programs such as reporting odors or distributing information locally). Honoraria, however, are not allowed by agencies such as the U.S. EPA; and the other elements are already being used by many government and private agencies. However, longer-term solutions to addressing inequities in organizational resources can probably only be achieved through partnership with other agencies, foundations, and/or educational institutions in identifying and fostering potential local environmental leadership (e.g., young people interested in environmental activism) and supporting the development of the capacity of existing organizations.

Information Flow and Community

Neighborhoods in Southeast Chicago are geographically dispersed. The communities there are separated by wide swathes of wasteland, wetland, or industry. In the past, certain communities were closely tied to a particular mill (as Kornblum 1974 discusses in Blue Collar Community). As a result, the communities are or were tightly-knit by ethnic culture, kinship, religion (association with a territorial parish, for instance), and by working together in a given mill and membership in a given union. Despite the profound economic changes that have taken place, this combination of history and geography serves to maintain the separateness of different communities or neighborhoods. This separatism has been reinforced, rather than mitigated, by the demographic changes that took place in the last generation in the western part of Southeast Chicago: the replacement of the former "white ethnic" (Irish, Italian, Eastern European) residents of Roseland, West Pullman, and adjoining neighborhoods with African-American residents, and the influx of Hispanic residents throughout the area.

From snowball sampling, we noted certain overall limits to the extent of involvement and transmission, indicating definite constraints to information flow corresponding to pronounced

community boundaries, boundaries which are social as well as geographic. For instance, we gained access to white ethnic community groups more quickly because the brokers we initially contacted through government agencies and planning groups introduced us to them. African-American community organizations did not have representatives or brokers at these meetings. In order to contact that segment of Southeast Chicago, we had to find a different start point. As discussed previously, different concerns, ways of framing interests, and contacts outside of the community meant that environmental issues in the communities were different from each other. There was very little information flow among these groups.

This, of course, should not be a surprise. There is a long history of ethnic segregation in Southeast Chicago, with roots in the steel mill hiring practices. Kornblum documented the geographical results of racial segregation in Blue Collar Community. The cultural traits and assessments of each other developed over decades of segregation and conflict remain even when overt racism does not. For instance, people from more settled white ethnic neighborhoods saw the nature of their community involvement as quite different from those of the African-American community. They saw this difference as being rooted in the white ethnics having been settled and committed to their neighborhoods, living as homeowners in the neighborhood for generations; but those people do not have the commitment we do because they are transient or at last have not lived here as long. To some extent, this is 'Othering,' attributing characteristics to other people based on their own expectations and cultural values, rather than through actual experience. But on another level, this can be seen to be true because African-Americans were not allowed to settle in these areas until recently. Thus, African-American working class families that have done well enough to buy homes often move out of Southeast Chicago into the south suburbs because there have been strong social processes keeping them from settling closer to work; professionals often move north, to Hyde Park, South Shore, or the north of Chicago. Those left behind have a whole array of problems to deal with besides environmental issues: unemployment and profound poverty, gangs and crime and drug abuse, and so on. Yet these communities, as discussed above, were not uninterested in solving environmental problems. Rather, environmental issues were often addressed through the major health problems associated with pollution. As such, the information flow on environmental issues connected with health-related agencies rather than with more directly environmental groups.

Differences in position in the flow of information, access to information, and thus activism may be related to economic and demographic conditions of families as well. Not everyone in the community is equally involved in public fora such as meetings. People who were comfortable negotiating government bureaucracies or who were involved in externally-based environmental interest groups tended to be middle-class, small business owners, or blue-collar workers with secure jobs. Other people are constrained by the obligations of job, lack of money, and child care. Going to meetings at night after work and dinner can be exhausting, especially for people who may have jobs that require them to be at work very early or at night. It is often easier for those in white collar jobs or who own their own business to adjust their schedules to fit in meetings, especially when meetings are held during the day in the work week. Younger families with children need to find child care if they are to attend meetings; often, they have too little free time to get involved. Others are on very limited budgets and can not afford to drive or take public transport to meetings that are too far distant. All of these factors severely constrain the types of people who become involved in meetings and community activism.

Despite the fact that these constraints to environmental activism may be partly class- and generation-based, it is often conflated with race. This may be because many of the poor in the area are immigrants (largely Hispanic) and African-Americans with young families. Because so

many of ethnic minority people move out of the region when they achieve economic security, few middle-class or secure blue-collar ethnic minority families might remain, leaving middle-class or secure blue-collar white ethnic participants disproportionately represented in community-level environmental activism. Further study on migration and mobility is needed to verify or refute this definitively.

Section VI. Implications for Access to the Community

These findings have implications for agencies attempting to get access to "community voices." There is no simple way to determine the validity of claims to represent "community." Pinsker refers to this as the "Take me to your Leader" fallacy. The diversity and heterogeneity of even apparently homogeneous communities means that there may be many different 'leaders,' depending on the context and issue at stake. In these situations, we are dealing with informal forms of community organization; there have been no elections to determine leadership. Any individual's claim to represent their community must be analyzed: Which segment of the community? For what issue? For how long? This is not to undercut the fact that local advocates, brokers, and leaders are in fact valid representatives of certain positions. But their representativeness must be determined contextually, particularly through attention to their integration into the web of meetings and community groups that already exist in Southeast Chicago.

It must also be recognized that groups potentially are competing for funding, volunteers, and to be the representative of their community. Residents decide when and how to get involved depending on their own priorities; groups that can not attract members will not be able to continue. In other cases, there may be turf battles based on differing ideas and plans, as well as competition for resources. These turf battles are most likely carried out behind the scenes. In one case, competing claims for leadership were dealt with by avoiding them. When the leaders of one group realized that a critical meeting was likely to be sidetracked by one person's rivalry with another group over an issue that was not central to the group's plan, the meeting was canceled. This was a rivalry that had a long history of antagonistic interactions and was unlikely to be resolved in the context of this group's plans. This maneuver allowed the main purpose of the project to be carried out; they did not shut out competing voices completely, nor did they intend to do so. Yet, in other cases, such a maneuver might indicate a lack of openness. It is necessary to be aware of the personalities, history of rivalry, and the parties' points of view when attempting to work with community groups. Only by being aware of such currents can agencies hoping to work through these groups and advocates avoid being drawn into such turf battles. Knowledge of the community as a whole, particularly of the sub-groups that exist, is the best way to analyze and understand representativeness.

Some communities can be remarkably contentious, and non-profits or community groups carry out pitched rivalries for access to agency staff, knowledge, and resources. Other groups can be remarkably cooperative. It was one of the hallmarks of the Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership, in which groups and individuals were developing plans for the region and submitting proposals that would, in the end, be in competition with each other, that there was relatively little competition among the participants. It appears that many of the participants had known each other and worked together before; but more importantly, the Partnership put a lot of time and effort into the process of developing relationships before the time came for submission of proposals.

There is no way to do an 'end run' around this process. Even when we, as scientists or researchers with years of experience in our fields, feel that we already know the appropriate answer, the right project, the process of negotiation and building of trust among partners in a project can not be short-circuited. Without that process, partners will be unable to cooperate; without attention to the social relationships, a technically good project can collapse because of social conflict. The practical corollary of this is that time and resources for building relationships needs to be allowed for in the project timelines and budgets. The use of planning grants is an example of how this can be facilitated by allowing a period of research, planning, and

organization before actually putting a time-delimited project into place. Furthermore, for agencies such as the EPA, directors could consider how to foster internal sharing among staff of experiences and lessons learned in building relationships, and staff development (including, for instance, sending staff to or hosting appropriate workshops) in the skills needed to facilitate collaboration.

Social service agencies, including government agencies such as the EPA, can connect with informal social networks by working through more formally constituted community-based organizations or groups. Evaluating the legitimacy of particular leaders or organizations' claims to represent community residents is an important step in planning programs that will effectively impact the quality of life in communities and engage citizen participation. To that end, it is important to collect information profiling how particular organizations or groups connect with the social networks of community residents and stakeholders.

Section VII. Recommendations

Here, we summarize our recommendations for the EPA in implementing Community-Based Environmental Protection and for increasing community outreach. In this, we are mindful of the fact that many EPA staff are already stretched to their limit in activities. Most local meetings take place outside of regular work hours; becoming involved in more community groups means even more evenings and weekends spent doing outreach than they do now. So far, the Region V team has done a good job of (1) using local brokers and organizations (e.g., CBE) as disseminators and translators, and (2) attending local meetings. From the perspective of state or federal agencies looking to involve local community residents in planning and implementation of programs, the fluidity of local socio-political organization means that a straightforward "take me to your leader" approach to community outreach does not work, particularly given the existence within a given set of neighborhoods of multiple social networks with limited interconnections reflecting divisions of ethnicity and class.

Suggestions for improvement:

- I. Ongoing attendance at local meetings is desirable, not just showing up at public forums. In keeping with developing relationships, an end-run can not be done around this; developments take time and repeated exposure to develop. The Lake Calumet Ecosystem Partnership is a good example of the effort needed to develop strong working relationships before carrying out significant projects. The Friends of Wolf Lake is also a group that had long-standing social relationships before undertaking their project. Continuing series of meetings are used to develop relationships; relationships affect how information is received.
- II. Given the very real constraints of time, personnel, and legislative mandates on achievable goals for EPA community outreach, the existing staff allocation of time for attending community meetings and public fora should be examined, with an eye to figuring out what is the most effective long-term investment for available staff time. Suggested guidelines in choosing meetings to attend and organizational relationships to foster include:
 1. Ongoing partnerships or coalitions the Region 5 office is participating in should continue to have consistent EPA representation.
 2. Consider explicit agreements and procedures among Illinois EPA, Region 5 EPA, and/or Chicago Dept of Environment staff for sharing information on community meetings attended, to maximize staff investment when not all parties are able to attend. We were told information is shared, but on an ad-hoc basis.
 3. If current partners in explicitly environmental coalitions do not reflect the range of ethnicity and/or income shown by target area demographics (e.g., in Southeast Chicago African-Americans are underrepresented), consider as possible partners organizations involving these underrepresented constituencies that link environmental issues to other expressed priority concerns, such as health or economic development. Look for opportunities to attend events or meetings sponsored by these organizations. When attending broad-based community events with multiple committees or interest groups (e.g, Congressional District town meetings), don't send all available environmental professionals to "environment" committee: look to link to environmental concerns

in other interest groups such as health, youth, or recreation/tourism. In many neighborhoods, churches are key in community communication and present a good opportunity for reaching a broader population with environmental information that may lead to active participation.

4. Prioritize contact with those groups, organizations, and organizational leaders or brokers who show evidence of inclusivity rather than exclusivity in collaborating with others, that is, themselves are trying to build networks and create opportunities for information-sharing and joint action, including across ethnic and class boundaries. When maximizing available resources for relationship-building, it makes sense to concentrate on those groups and brokers who are themselves central to existing networks, with multiple ties to others.
 5. Use of locally-based civic organizations to disseminate to or gain information from neighborhood residents and businesspeople not necessarily focused on 'environment' as an issue. Source of support and entree: brokers who are already linked to those organizations.
 6. Prioritize contact with meetings and organizations (e.g., community advisory councils; civic organizations, as above) that include neighborhood residents and not only externally-based interest group members. (Externally-based environmental interest groups already have strong channels of communication to the EPA).
 7. Consistent records should be kept of meetings attended and organizations contacted (see E below). The EPA Region 5 Greater Chicago Team and/or others involved should regularly review the range of organizations and groups contacted and the attendance of staff at community meetings in target areas to determine if it currently meets EPA goals in community outreach and these guidelines.
- III. Look for ways to collaborate with other agencies and service providers, including health service providers and community church organizations, to get at areas of mutual concern and widen participation in environmental planning.
- IV. Foster development, training, and support of new brokers and staff of existing organizations (in cooperation with foundation and educational partners?) who can outreach to previously unreached or under-represented groups within target neighborhoods.
- V. When asking for information from local residents (e.g., reports of bad odors in air) make clear to whom information is reported, what happens to it, and report back on actions taken. People are reluctant to contribute information if they do not know what the result will be or if anything will result; many communities need to see a clear benefit to themselves, because they have been on the powerless or over-studied end for so long.
- VI. Keep publically accessible records, *organized and retrievable by neighborhood or community area*, of EPA community outreach efforts, to facilitate evaluation

(and documentation of achievements to celebrate, as in G below). Such records should include:

1. Community meetings and other public fora attended, with summary minutes.
2. Notes or reports of follow-up actions taken in response to suggestions at public meetings or other requests from community residents (e.g., reallocation of site remediation funds to reflect community concerns; there have been such follow-up actions, but no consistent or accessible documentation of them).
3. Reports on any specific community outreach programs, including information dissemination or gathering (e.g., odor reporting program), including goals, project plan, who was involved, actions taken, and results.
4. Records and reports on any other actions taken to form collaborations or implement joint action with local groups and organizations.

G. In order to bring more and younger people into environmental activities, environmental activities should be family-focused. This has been found to be important by other social scientists working on similar issues on environmental activism (Monica Hunter, SfAA/EPA fellow, pc, March 2000). Young parents may want to be involved, but their time with their families will generally take priority. Scheduling activities that are fun and on holidays/weekends should help to widen the base of participation in environmental issues.

H. Finally, celebrate successes publicly! Currently, we find that even many aware and fairly active residents are not aware of what successes have been brought about. Yet, when we consider environmental conditions in Southeast Chicago a mere 20 years ago, the improvements have been considerable. A more recent example of an uncelebrated success is the stabilizing and capping of Paxton II as part of the Cluster Site process. It's important for people to have a sense of empowerment, to know that their concerns are indeed addressed, and that their activism has results.

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