



NRC Roundtable on How ROs and Communities Can Move to SMM  
Resource Recycling Conference | Indianapolis, IN  
3 – 5pm Wednesday, September 30, 2015

**Summary Report Contents**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Roundtable Overview</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>Roundtable Discussion and Themes</b>	<b>3</b>
	Need for Resources	3
	Existing Resources	3
	Education	4
	Funding	4
	Economic Impacts	4
	Engagement of EPA and Other Stakeholders	4
<b>III.</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Appendices:</b>	
<b>A.</b>	<b>Agenda</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>Attendees</b>	<b>7</b>

## I. Roundtable Overview

The National Recycling Coalition (NRC) drew more than 130 individuals representing a broad and diverse set of stakeholders at the first-ever Sustainable Materials Management (SMM) Summit held at the University of Maryland, College Park, on May 12 and 13, 2015. There, many of the greatest minds in recycling, reuse, discard prevention, product stewardship and others discussed the most critical issues facing the industry today. The goal of the Summit was to elevate the issues around discards management back to the forefront of national policy dialogue. Key presentations were made by Mathy Stanislaus, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, and Judith Enck, Region 2 Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Following the Summit, the SMM Program Sub-Committee<sup>1</sup> developed the *Recyclers+ Sustainable Materials Management Strategy* based off of submitted one-page white papers from stakeholders, Summit notes, and on-going feedback. The NRC Board approved this Strategy plan on September 29, 2015.

At the NRC Roundtable on How ROs and Communities Can Move to SMM, which served as a follow-up meeting to the inaugural NRC SMM Summit, NRC SMM Committee Co-Chairs Gary Liss and Julie L. Rhodes highlighted NRC's Recyclers+ Sustainable Materials Management Strategy Plan and the USEPA's SMM Strategic Plan. Presentations on making the transition to SMM were made by David Allaway (Oregon and SMM), Liz Resek (Infrastructure for SMM), Betsy Dorn (Policies to Drive SMM), and Elizabeth Roe (Communication for SMM). Discussion then focused on how NRC can support Recycling Organizations and communities to adopt and implement SMM policies and programs.

NRC gives special thanks to the Carton Council, SMART Recycling of NC, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Resource Recycling for their support of the session.

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<sup>1</sup> John Davis, MaryEllen Etienne, Marie Kruzan, Gary Liss, Julie L. Rhodes, Leanne Spaulding

## II. Roundtable Discussion and Themes

The roundtable discussion focused on infrastructure, communication, and policies. Questions that were considered during the discussion included: What do you need to transition to SMM? How can NRC help? How do these relate to EPA's focus areas?

Themes that appeared throughout discussion were:

- Need for resources,
- Existing resources,
- Education,
- Funding,
- Economic impacts, and
- Engagement of EPA and other stakeholders.

These six themes are expanded on below with discussion points from the roundtable attendees.

### *Need for Resources*

- It is important that we are not duplicating existing resources
- There is a need for resources such as a clearinghouse of information, lifecycle data, webinars, and case studies
  - Pay as you throw and results
  - What data is available? What trend lines are there? Look at case studies out there
  - Look at problems, solutions, best practices, lessons learned
  - Metrics, data on source reduction
  - Programs/performance, reuse programs
  - Waste prevention legislation and policies
  - Calculator (similar to WARM)
- Carton Council is developing a Pay as You Throw briefing document and is working to implement a campaign to promote adoption of PAYT policies where appropriate and would like EPA, NRC and others to endorse PAYT and participate in the campaign.
- Need infrastructure in place that make is easy for public to not have to think about it
- Need to find ways of measuring SMM if we are going to encourage activities beyond recycling
- Certification and Training
  - There is the need to train on SMM issues and provide certification

### *Existing Resources*

- Steel Recycling Institute clearinghouse for lifecycle data on the steel industry
- NRC SMM webinars

- EPA PAYT Factsheet
- National Certification Board glossary
- Workshops in Illinois on SMM and Best Management Practices and SMM and Solar—start to think outside of the box

### *Education*

- SMM is a difficult term for the general public (try SM2 instead?). We need to find the most efficient ways to communicate actions beyond recycling.
- Reframe the recycling message (understanding that the recycling symbol has high recognition)
- Need for basic educational materials
  - Common definitions/glossary/lexicon
  - Tailored fact sheets for various audiences (including local elected officials). Creation of templates
- Use of grant money to create an education template that can be tailored by state
- Be careful when communicating about existing practices such as Pay As You Throw—don't send the message that recycling is free
- Educate state regulatory agencies. They set up mandates. That's what local governments respond to
- Move conversation from recycling rate to recovery rate
- Difficult to create behavior change, we are working with limited resources

### *Funding*

- Who is going to pay?
- Should there be an independent organization managing money?
- Potential to partner with the corporate sector
- Connect with climate change—a significant portion of the money is in climate change

### *Economic Impacts*

- Need to continue to provide information on and share information about the economic benefits of Recyclers+
- Jobs through SMM
- Need to focus on economic and societal impacts and share this message. Focusing on the environmental message is not enough

### *Engagement of EPA and Other Stakeholders*

- NRC has rejuvenated conversation with EPA
- Collaboration with Carton Council on this roundtable
- Engage industry—industry is not the same nationally
  - LEED version 4 is moving industry- need something similar for SMM

### III. Next Steps

Following the NRC Roundtable on How ROs and Communities Can Move to SMM, NRC will follow the *Recyclers+ Sustainable Materials Management Strategy* as an internal work plan while facilitating the development of an Action Plan. At the roundtable, NRC Board members, Summit and Roundtable attendees, and NRC members signed up for various efforts and activities from the strategy plan, which will be pursued in the next 24 months. These efforts and activities are:

- Conduct a Roundtable for ROs and Local Communities to engage stakeholders in moving from downstream management to a shift to SMM,
- Host NRC SMM webinars,
- Pursue North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes for Recyclers+,
- NRC SMM Google Group or Listerv,
- Organize SMM Mini-Summits,
- Organize SMM Founders Council,
- Organize SMM Recyclers+ Design Roundtables,
- Promote Certified Sustainable Resource Management Training Programs of ROs, US Zero Waste Business Council Zero Waste Facility and professional Certifications and Zero Waste USA's Zero Waste Trainings,
- Prepare a User's Guide to LCA for NRC members including data collection and gathering, defining boundaries, product design and product end of life management,
- Partner with universities,
- Engage NRC existing assets in SMM—identify roles,
- Promotion strategies,
- Organize SMM Summit 2,
- Promote SMM certification and training programs,
- Work with others to create an open Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) resource clearinghouse focused on materials and products,
- Establish a resource clearinghouse of model SMM programs and policies,
- Organize local, regional, state and national SMM workshops and/or seminars with affiliate support,
- Prepare a User's Guide to SMM LCAs for NRC's members,
- Help seek funding for one or more SMM Research and Development Centers with the EPA Pollution Prevention Network, and
- Coordinate with and engage Federal Agencies (e.g., EPA, Sustainability Office (old OFEE), Commerce, Defense, Agriculture, Labor, Education, Energy).

## Appendix A: Agenda



### **NRC Roundtable on How ROs and Communities Can Move to SMM**

Resource Recycling Conference  
Wednesday, September 30, 2015  
3:00 to 5:00 PM ET

- 3:00pm Welcomes, Opening Remarks, Agenda Review and Introductions  
*Julie Rhodes, SMM Committee Co-Chair*
- 3:15 NRC SMM Strategy  
*Gary Liss, SMM Committee Co-Chair*
- 3:20 Oregon and SMM  
*David Allaway, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality*
- How will Oregon implement SMM at the local level?
  - What will be the roles of local Recyclers+ in Oregon?
  - What are key takeaways from the prior RR Conference Plenary about how Recyclers+ can benefit from pursuing SMM and how Recyclers+ can help SMM?
- 3:35 Making the Transition to SMM
- *Infrastructure for SMM, Liz Resek, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*
  - *Policies to Drive SMM, Betsy Dorn, Reclay StewardEdge on behalf of the Carton Council*
  - *Communication for SMM, Elizabeth Roe, EcoPartners*
- 4:00 Breakout Groups
- What do local governments and ROs need to transition to SMM?
  - How can NRC help local governments and ROs bring about the transition to SMM?
  - How are these related to EPA Strategic Plan 4 priority areas (Built environment, food, packaging, and optimization of collection systems)
- 4:30 Group Reports and Discussion
- 4:50 Wrap Up
- 5:00 Adjourn

## **Appendix B: Attendees**

Abby Goldsmith, GA Recycling Coalition  
Amy Randell, CAFR  
Andrew Kays, NMWDA  
Antonio Rios, CRRPR  
Barbara Baker, LCSWMA  
Bob Bylone, PARMC  
Bob Gedert, City of Austin  
Charlie Reighart, Baltimore County/MD  
Danni McPherron, Indiana Recycling Coalition  
Dave Keeling, Steel Recycling Institute  
David Haedt, ASPEXT  
David Snapp, CO. Department of Public Health  
Delores Smith, EPA Region 4  
Edgardo Romero, Puerto Rico Recycling Coalition  
Elisa Seltzer, Emmet County, MI  
Honore Depew, City of Fort Collins, Co.  
Jack DeBell, NRC Board of Directors and University of Colorado  
Joanne Shafer, Center Co. Recycling and Reuse  
John Harder, Zero Waste Kauai  
John Schott, NMWDA  
Johnny Yucalos, DEP-PA  
Jon D. Johnston, EPA Region 4  
Julanne Saussen, Eco Partners, Inc.  
Juri Freeman, City of Denver  
Kat McCarthy, Tompkins County Solid Waste and NYSAR3  
Kate Melby, Emmet County, MI  
Laura Flagg, NRC  
Lisa Ruggero, Syracuse University Center for Sustainable Community Solutions  
Maggie Clarke, NRC  
Marie Kruzan, ANJR  
Marjie Griek, CAFR  
MaryAnn Remolador, NERC  
MaryEllen Etienne, Reuse Institute/NRC/AOR  
McKenna Morigan, Cascadia Consulting Group  
Michele Nestor, ROC and Nestor Resources  
Michelle Lee Guiney, Waste Management  
Michelle Minstrell, NRC  
Mick Barry, Mid America Recycles  
Mike Van Brunt, Covanta  
Nichole Chatterson, KUPU  
Norm Ruttan, iWasteNotSolutions

Pete Previte, PARMC  
Peter Houstle, MD Recycling Network  
Renee Bellen, EPA Region 6  
Ron Vance, EPA  
Sara Nichols, STAR  
Susan Collins, Container Recycling Institute  
Susan Heffron, Mn Pollution Control Agency  
Suzette Thomason, Steel Recycling Institute  
Wayne Gjerde, MPCA  
Wes Sullens, StopWaste  
Will Sagar, SERDC  
Wynne Coplea, IL Recycling Association