

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

The Importance of Sustainable Development in Troubled Economic Times©



May 12, 2011

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| Table of Contents | Page |
|---|------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| The Price of Pollution | 4 |
| Green Jobs | 6 |
| Green Industry? | 8 |
| Energy Conservation as Economic Development | 10 |
| Regulation's Role in Economic Development | 12 |
| Community Vision | 14 |
| Community Action: The Alternative to "No" | 18 |
| Conclusion | 23 |
| Case Study: PC Pride | 24 |
| References | 29 |
| Attachments | 33 |

Introduction

“Sustainable Economic Development” is a term many recognize and few understand. The simplest and most commonly accepted definition comes from the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. In the Bruntland Commission report, sustainable economic development is defined as “[development that]...meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹ In broader terms, sustainable economic development should improve the quality of life of employees and the community, while protecting public health and the environment.

Many things influence a community’s identity and quality of life. Geography, climate, history and sense of place, business, excellent schools, diversity, natural beauty, a healthy environment and the Arts are just some ingredients which combined in the proper amount impart color and flavor to the whole. In these troubled economic times, government and citizens alike may view their future as bleak and be tempted to accept less than desirable businesses and polluting industries which would not ordinarily be welcomed. It would be wrongheaded to assume that community visioning cannot occur in a bad economy. In fact, what better time to evaluate what has not worked, and to envision a future that improves the quality of life for all citizens? Making poor choices now regarding economic development would be felt for years to come.

¹ United Nations. 1987. "[Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development.](#)" General Assembly Resolution 42/187, 11 December 1987. Retrieved: 2011 05 03

The Price of Pollution



Adverse health and environmental impacts increase costs to taxpayers and can significantly affect the tax base. The effect that degradation of the environment has on the economy must not be underestimated. Pollution contributes to illness, poor quality of life, lowered productivity, work absences and poor academic performance. In a study released in May 2011, researchers from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine reported that it cost *\$76.6 billion* to cover the treatment and associated costs of children who were ill from the effects of pollution in just one year.² Fresh water pollution costs the United States over \$4 billion per year.³

² “Reducing the Staggering Costs Of Environmental Disease In Children: Estimated At \$76.6 Billion In 2008”: <http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/early/2011/05/02/hlthaff.2010.1239.abstract>

³ “Freshwater Pollution Costs US At Least \$4.3 Billion a Year”: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/11/081112124418.htm>

Researchers from Cal State Fullerton found that pollution costs the California economy \$28 billion annually, mostly due to poor air quality.⁴ In North Carolina, large-scale hog operations adversely affect health and quality of life.⁵ Pollution also affects psychological health. Studies have shown a correlation between an increase in suicides and bad air quality days.⁶ Particularly disturbing, children exposed to ubiquitous and persistent pollutants, including lead, mercury and noise suffer from a wide array of developmental problems. In her book *“Silent Scourge: Children, Pollution and Why Scientists Disagree”* developmental psychologist Colleen Moore finds that “These types of pollution are usually silent and insidious.”⁷ The true costs of a degraded environment are unfathomable.



⁴ “Pollution Saps State Economy, Study Says”:<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/nov/13/local/me-pollute13>

⁵ “The Association of Health Effects with Exposure to Odors from Hog Farm Operations”:
<http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/mera/iloodoreffects.html>

⁶ “Large Studies Link Asthma and Air Pollution to Suicide”:<http://www.physorg.com/news198781963.html>

⁷ “Erik Ness Reviews Silent Scourge: Children, Pollution and Why Scientists Disagree”:<http://www.grist.org/article/minds>

Green Jobs



There is a great deal of interest in “green jobs.” The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provided \$500 million dollars for “research, labor exchange and job training projects to prepare workers for careers in energy efficiency and renewable energy industries.”⁸ A study by the Pew Charitable Trusts found that green jobs grew almost 10% between 1997 and 2008—over 2 and ½ times the rate of all other job categories.⁹ Most of this growth has been in the clean energy sector. For example, according to the American Wind Energy Association, jobs in the wind power industry almost doubled between 2008 and 2009.¹⁰

⁸ “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009”: http://www.recovery.gov/About/Pages/The_Act.aspx

⁹ “Pew Finds Clean Energy Economy Generates Significant Job Growth”: http://www.pewtrusts.org/news_room_detail.aspx?id=53254

¹⁰ “Record growth for Wind Power”: <http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/27/record-growth-for-wind-power/>

These jobs are at all skill levels—from laborers to scientists, with incomes ranging from \$21,000 to \$111,000 per year.

What exactly *is* a green job? Typically, this definition is left up to industry, usually vague and self-serving. The Apollo Alliance, a “coalition of labor, business, environmental, and community leaders”¹¹ defines green jobs this way: “well paid, career track jobs that contribute directly to preserving or enhancing environmental quality.” Further, a job that does not pay a family supporting wage or offer advancement opportunity from low-income positions is not considered green collar.¹² The US Department of Labor states that green jobs are:

- “Jobs in businesses that produce goods or provide services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources.
- “Jobs in which workers’ duties involve making their establishment’s production processes more environmentally friendly or use fewer natural resources.”¹³

With little guidance from government, “green job” can be a highly subjective and endlessly debated term. Also worrisome, governmental entities, chambers of commerce, and industry offer the green job carrot to desperate counties, towns and cities—often hiding a big stick.

¹¹ “Apollo Alliance: Clean Energy and Good Jobs”: <http://apolloalliance.org/about/>

¹² “Green Collar Jobs in America’s Cities”: <http://apolloalliance.org/green-collar-jobs/reports-green-collar-jobs/green-collar-jobs-reports/>

¹³ “US Department of Labor Green Jobs”: <http://www.bls.gov/green/>



Green Industry?

Definitions of green industry are inconsistent and, like the definition of green jobs, highly subjective. Sustainability suggests that a green industry is one that will not damage or deplete resources; however, there are no national standards on what green industry *is*. Programs for green certification exist, but participation is largely voluntary. The US Small Business Administration website states: “To differentiate your product or service as environmentally sound, you may want to obtain certification from an independent, third-party so that you can include their logo or "ecolabel” on your product's label and other marketing materials. Ecolabeling is important way to market your product to green consumers.”¹⁴

Perhaps the best way of defining an industry as green would be to identify what it *is not*. One large wrinkle in the sustainable development quilt is the greenwashing of polluting industries. The sector of green growth that holds the most promise for economic development

¹⁴ “ Small Business Administration Green certification and Ecolabeling”: <http://www.sba.gov/content/green-certification-and-ecolabeling>

and presents the most peril is so-called green energy. The Obama Administration's push for a secure and sustainable energy future has created a 21st century "green rush."¹⁵

Of concern are companies that wrap themselves in green cloth—only to end up a Trojan horse; once welcomed into the city the attack begins in earnest. Often, the community is left to identify problems with new or existing corporate neighbors. Elected officials and others in government can help ensure appropriate protection of public health and environment with a clear vision, a dose of healthy skepticism and the use of local zoning ordinances.

One example of an environmental wolf in sheep's clothing is the biomass or "biomess" industry. Proponents claim that burning almost anything—solid waste, whole trees, sewage sludge, invasive grasses, tires, or chicken manure—is clean—as long as it generates power. With proposed deferrals in regulation¹⁶ and local, state and federal tax cuts, every Tom, Dick and Harriet is jumping on the biomass bandwagon. *Smoke and Mirrors- a Report on Biomass, Energy, and Global Warming* explains that: "Biomass combustion, whether it is in rural communities or urban centers, carries with it an unacceptable ecological cost."¹⁷

¹⁵ "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act": <http://www.energy.gov/recovery/>

¹⁶ "EPA to Defer GHG Permitting Requirements for Industries that use Biomass": http://www.epa.gov/aging/press/epanews/2011/2011_0112_1.htm

¹⁷ "Smoke and Mirrors": http://www.bredl.org/pdf3/BIOMASS_REPORT-SMOKE_and_MIRRORS.pdf



Energy Conservation as Economic Development

Energy conservation is also contributing significantly to the economy, with the value-added benefit of reduction of greenhouse gases and lowered power bills. The US Environmental Protection Agency defines green building as “... the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction. This practice expands and complements the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort. Green building is also known as a sustainable or high performance building.”¹⁸

In North Carolina, Governor Beverly Perdue awarded 104 grants totaling \$11.9 million to local governments, public schools and community colleges across the state. These funds are for energy conservation projects including lighting retrofits, heating and cooling upgrades, and

¹⁸ United States Environmental Protection Agency Definition of “Green Building”:
<http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/pubs/about.htm>

replacing single paned windows.¹⁹ Also in North Carolina, local governments are allowed to offer reductions in building permit fees as an incentive for sustainable building.²⁰

¹⁹ “Recovery Act Funds Aid Energy Efficiency and Promotes Green Job Growth”:
http://www.energync.net/resources/docs/press/05-18-2010_EECBG_Cities_release.pdf

²⁰ “Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency”:
<http://www.dsireusa.org/incentives/index.cfm?re=1&ee=1&spv=0&st=0&srp=1&state=NC>

REGULATION'S ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



With the poor economy as an excuse, there is a current slash-and-burn mindset towards environmental regulation. This is especially troubling. The budgets of state and federal regulatory agencies are already lean. With more budget cuts looming²¹ and increased emphasis on fast-track permitting, North Carolina counties, towns, and cities are being targeted by dirty industries. With little political muscle, meager funds, and less personnel, state and federal watchdog agencies struggle to protect public health and the environment. This leaves a community targeted by or living with a polluting industry at risk for negative impacts on health, environment, and quality of life. Business often insists that stringent environmental regulations are bad for the economy. On the contrary, strong regulation stimulates growth. Research suggests that environmental protection jobs are recession proof. In 2003 alone, the environmental

²¹ "DENR weighs effect of cuts":<http://www.newsobserver.com/2011/04/19/1139292/denr-weighs-effect-of-cuts.html>

protection industry was responsible for 5 million jobs valued at \$ 3 billion a year. This industry also generated "...\$45 billion in Federal, state and local government tax revenues."²²

In April 2011, the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League presented comments at hearings concerning proposed changes to North Carolina's health-based Air Toxics regulations. The report, "Job Creation and Economic Stimulation Through Environmental Regulation"²³ outlined the economic benefits created by strong environmental regulation. Protecting North Carolina's public health and environment creates jobs.

The report found that:

- Economists valued North Carolina's environmental industry in 2003 at \$9.1 billion, or 3.1% of State GDP.
- Economists found that in 2003 there were 112,000 environmental jobs in North Carolina, representing 2.9% of State jobs.
- Environmental jobs create opportunities across social classes while ensuring positions for skilled professionals.

²² Jobs Creation in the Environmental Protection Industry": "<http://www.misi-net.com/publications/mi-environmental.pdf>

²³ Attached



Community Vision

The concept of community visioning has become increasingly popular. Municipalities across the country are turning to this method in the hopes of reducing “dysfunctional politics.”²⁴ However, if the process is not truly inclusive— involving participants from many layers of society— it is doomed to failure. In the 1980’s the emphasis was on public-private collaboration. This resulted in a citizen backlash and increased grassroots activism (Vision 3). Government scrambled in response to this activism by developing public participation policies. On the face of it, input from the public can be a meaningful and empowering process, especially when taken seriously, and is a step towards positive change. However, when officials and regulatory agencies use public participation as PR, or to satisfy some legal requirement, it reduces an important policy to a paperwork exercise.

Forward thinking entities have attempted to develop an inclusive process. Local Governments for Sustainability have identified five milestones for sustainability planning success:

- Conduct a sustainability assessment

²⁴“The Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook”
<http://www.cpn.org/tools/manuals/community/pdfs/VSPHandbook.pdf>

- Establish sustainability goals
- Develop a sustainability plan
- Implement policies and measures
- Evaluate progress and report results²⁵

Within these milestones are objectives called Keys:

- Hire a sustainability coordinator to run the show
- Obtain buy-in from a big-wig
- Form teams that build bridges across city departments—and beyond city hall
- Develop a greenhouse gas emissions inventory
- Define clear, relevant, and measurable goals
- Get regular people to tell you what sustainability goals are important to them
- Develop implementation plans within your plan
- Take a deep breath and release a draft plan for public comment
- Obsessively track the implementation status of your measures
- Remain accountable to the public

Alamance County North Carolina has taken big steps in community visioning. The 2020 Land Use Preference Survey was created to ascertain the community's values on land development in Alamance County. The plan addresses how to handle the challenges confronting the county. The plan also serves as a valuable source of information on the community's values,

²⁵ "10 Keys for Sustainability Planning Success": http://www.icleiusa.org/action-center/planning/ICLEI_10_Keys_to_Sustainability_Planning_Success.pdf

likes, dislikes and dreams. It is intended to guide government decisions on future land use regulations, patterns and needs. The 2020 Destination Plan identifies some key components including the following:

- An expanding, diversified economic base, with increased career opportunities and higher paying jobs, for both existing residents and for newcomers alike.
Investment shall be encouraged in downtowns and existing developed areas, as well as in newly developing areas.
- A local economic base made up of clean industries providing good paying jobs, particularly to local area workers. While manufacturing continues to be an important segment of the economy, large numbers of persons are also employed in services, general retail, and other diversified industries. We see the offspring of Alamance County residents finding excellent career opportunities in the area, with the prospect of continued advancement as they develop their working skills and earning power.
- Regarding the issue of "clean" vs. "dirty" industry, emerging new industries are often difficult to characterize in today's rapidly changing national and global economy. Rather than attempting to stereotype a particular industry as clean or dirty, it is more constructive to think in terms of the actual impacts that any given industry may generate in terms of, for example, air particulate matter, water contaminants, water consumption, solid waste produced, heavy truck traffic generated, etc.

- Facilities for the disposal of hazardous waste, whether chemical, biological, radioactive or other, shall not be located in Alamance County.²⁶

Clearly, citizens insisting on a voice in decisions that affect their lives have been largely responsible for the movement toward community visioning. To prevent so-called dysfunctional politics, government must not only listen and hold meetings—they must *hear* what is being said. However, communities should not wait for government to initiate the process of visioning. Being pro-active instead of reactive creates empowerment and autonomy. People know what they want for a good quality of life.

²⁶ “Destination 2020: Charting a Course to Alamance County’s Future”:
http://www.alamancechamber.com/misc/dest2020_small.pdf

Community Action: The Alternative To “No”



Major social change comes from the grassroots. In 1978, young mother Lois Gibbs discovered that a toxic waste dump was located underneath her son’s elementary school. She started talking to her neighbors, they started asking questions, and ultimately 833 families were relocated. The activism that started at Love Canal, New York has continued to this day. Gibbs is the executive director of the Center for Health, Environment and Justice (CHEJ).²⁷ CHEJ has empowered communities around the globe to demand healthy schools, safe food, and a clean environment.

The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) started in much the same way. In 1984, people came together in opposition to the possible location of a high-level nuclear waste dump in the North Carolina mountains. Over 25 years later, BREDL and their member

²⁷ “Lois Gibbs”: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lois_Gibbs “Center for Health, Environment, and Justice”: <http://chej.org/>

organizations continue to work for social justice, community empowerment and environmental protection.²⁸

When communities organize around a common issue whether it be a landfill, better schools, or access to clean water, something truly amazing happens. Men and women, Black and White, Republicans and Democrats, working, middle, and upper class, are envisioning a future—a future different from the one they face. Because of a common concern, communities are able to move past traditional barriers to progress. In identifying their commonalities and recognizing their shared humanity, they work together towards a collective goal. After the unifying issue cools down, community organizations begin to consider what got them targeted for a polluting industry to begin with, and how to prevent it from happening again. Unsound economic development is often the train that brings the unwanted visitors. How can a community ensure that this train will not jump the tracks? By planning the route.

Person County People Rising In Defense of Ecology (PC PRIDE), a grassroots environmental organization, did just that. Their goal was to stop a landfill expansion. They successfully accomplished this first in 2005 and again in 2007 when Republic came back with the same proposal. In the process, PC PRIDE gained a reputation as strong advocates for recycling, Zero Waste, and protecting the environment. PC PRIDE had already identified recycling as an opportunity for growth in Person County. PC PRIDE was ready to change

²⁸ Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League: <http://www.bredl.org>

directions from opposing a mega-dump to promoting a recycling facility and Person Industries needed new jobs for their employees. The Materials Recovery Facility project was born.²⁹

While having responsive local government with transparent and inclusive economic development policies is important, a community need not wait for others to define their vision. Developing clear goals and having the proper tools to meet them facilitates the process. With an hour or two and something to write on, people can identify what is wanted and what is not, what the community's assets are, who can help and who is a hindrance. A vision for the future *can* be created. The process can be as complex or as simple as is desired.

In “Sustainable Economic Development, the Alternative to “No”” the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League identified tools and strategies for citizens to realize their dream of community:

Develop a plan and implement a strategy

- Bring people together to engage in discussion on economic development. The process begins with thinking about the reasons the community is targeted for undesirable industry—nuclear plants, asphalt plants, incinerators, etc.—in the first place.

²⁹ From *PC PRIDE Brings Green Jobs to Person County* by David Mickey “The League Line” Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League Summer 2009. Also, see attached case study.

Needs

- Jobs and money for schools are typical goals of economic development boards. So, make a list of what else is needed, something beneficial for the community. These would be environmentally friendly needs.

Assets

- Take stock of what the community already has. For example: lakes, scenery, highway access, crossroads, climate, history, etc. Next, think about what business could use these assets and fill the needs identified.

Decision Makers

- Ask who makes economic decisions for your county or state. Most people never visit the local chamber of commerce or economic development board. See how they market your community. Often, you can see their plans and maps before it is too late to change them. Visit the chamber or board office and talk about who makes the decisions. Talk about what your community group has found. Economic development meetings are often public. If you attend, you will usually meet industry representatives there who have something to sell. This is the beginning of a dialogue. What do you have to promote? This is where we can present what *we* want our economic development agency to do.
- Take the time to educate your leaders on issues that are important to your community. Knowing the truth about a company or process may help them make better decisions.

Town Hall Meetings

- Finally, hold your own meetings. Bring along small business leaders, faith-based groups and health professionals. Next, return to the economic development group with your plans, needs, and ideas for new economic growth. This is a time consuming process, but it is a means to engage your community to take a second step to find a better way.³⁰

³⁰ Based on an online workshop led by Lois Gibbs, Executive Director, and Anne Rabe, BE SAFE campaign coordinator of the Center for Health, Environment and Justice on February 15, 2011, and on *Sustainable Economic Development: The Alternative to “No”* by Louis Zeller “The League Line” Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League Spring 2011

Conclusion

Decisions made every day impact people's lives without their input or consent. When faced with a threat to their health and quality of life, citizens do what those in power should have done-- ask questions and investigate. Communities have the right to decide how much pollution is too much. Government has the responsibility to protect public health and the environment. These are not mutually exclusive, and when working together with a clear vision of the future they can result in good decisions for a truly green economy—both environmentally and economically.

Case Study: PC PRIDE Works to Bring Green Jobs to Person County*

County Expands Recycling And Creates Jobs

Recycling jobs have come to Person County. Wasting jobs did not.

Four years ago, Republic Services proposed a major expansion of their Upper Piedmont Regional Landfill in Person County. Local residents, already upset by operations at the landfill near Rougemont, organized Person County People Rising in Defense of Ecology, PC PRIDE, as a new chapter of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. Their goal was to stop the landfill expansion. They successfully accomplished this first in 2005 and again in 2007 when Republic came back with the same proposal. In the process, PC PRIDE gained a reputation as strong advocates for recycling, Zero Waste and protecting the environment.

At about the same time, Wanda Rogers, Director of Person Industries, was looking for projects to replace contract work lost to outsourcing. Person Industries is the county's rehabilitation program that employs the disabled. PC PRIDE had already identified recycling as an opportunity for growth in Person County. The county had very limited recycling services and ranked near the bottom in the state. PC PRIDE was ready to change directions from opposing a mega-dump to promoting a recycling facility and Person Industries needed new jobs for their employees. The MRF project was born.

As PC PRIDE's Frances Blalock described the change, "The birth of the MRF is the beginning of a new era for Person County. While it marks a huge success for us, the job is just beginning. Getting people to recycle is our next big task, but we accept this challenge and will continue the work that we have started. We are grateful for every victory."

Horry County, South Carolina provided a model for Person County. PC PRIDE had used Horry County as an example of how a local government could pursue recycling and waste reduction. The group organized tours of the facilities and met with the director, Ricky Hardee. When Mr. Hardee joined DavCo Steel, a Georgia company that designs, fabricates and installs recycling equipment, all that was needed was approval by the Person County Commissioners for the project to move forward.

Wanda Rogers presented the MRF concept to the commissioners in May of 2008 and the commissioners approved the business plan in June. Bid requests went out in October, financing was secured in January 2009 and in May DavCo Steel was installing the equipment. Following extensive training of Person Industries staff and employees, the new facility was officially open on June 29, 2009. (See the DavCo Steel website for a photo album of the Person Industries MRF.)

"I am excited about the awesome opportunity that we now have here in Person County," said Ken Hill, PC PRIDE member and a key player in the effort to build the MRF. But our work is just begun. Now that this facility is truly in existence, we need to look at countywide recycling pick-up. As Solid Waste Advisory Chairman, I will also encourage an economic development platform that seeks out industry that will partner with our MRF," he continued.

As the Institute for Local Self Reliance has documented, recycling creates far more jobs than landfills and incinerators. Their report, “Recycling Means Business”, compares different solid waste management options in terms of job creation. North Carolina already employs more than 14,000 people in recycling. With the MRF in place, Person County is now well positioned to recruit companies that will use their recovered commodities to manufacture new products. These companies will add not only new investments to the county’s tax base, they will add even more employment opportunities for Person County citizens.

Job Creation:

Reuse and Recycling Vs. Disposal

| Type of Operation | Jobs per 10,000 TPY |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Product Reuse | |
| Computer Reuse | 296 |
| Textile Reclamation | 85 |
| Misc. Durables Reuse | 62 |
| Wooden Pallet Repair | 28 |
| Recycling-based Manufacturers | 25 |
| Paper Mills | 18 |
| Glass Product Manufacturers | 26 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Plastic Product Manufacturers | 93 |
| Conventional Materials Recovery Facilities | 10 |
| Composting | 4 |
| Landfill and Incineration | 1 |

TPY = tons per year

Note: Figures are based on interviews with select facilities around the country.

Source: Institute for Local Self-Reliance, Washington, DC, 1997.

<http://www.ilsr.org/recycling/recyclingmeansbusiness.html>

PC PRIDE’s vision is “to effect change so that Person County becomes a clean, safe, healthy environment for future generations.” The Person Industries MRF reflects this vision. Instead of being a target for a mega-dump, Person County is now an opportunity for growth in the new “green” economy. Republic is still there, but now they have competition. It’s a change that PC PRIDE can be proud of.

Resources on the web:

Person Industries: www.personindustries.com

DavCo Steel: <http://www.davcosteel.net/>

Pollution Prevention: www.p2pays.org

Institute for Local Self Reliance: www.ilsr.org

Horry County Solid Waste Authority: <http://www.solidwasteauthority.org/>

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Attachments

Job Creation and Economic Stimulation Through Environmental Regulation

Sponsored by the Blue Ridge
Environmental Defense League



Senate Joint Resolution 17

- The Joint Regulatory Reform Committee was established “to create a strong environment for private sector job creation by lifting the undue burden imposed by outdated, unnecessary, and vague rules”
- Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League is taking this opportunity to provide public input regarding the economic benefits created by strong environmental regulation in North Carolina

Environmental Regulation and Private Sector Job Creation

- Environmental regulations exist to protect North Carolinians’ health and our State’s ecology.
- Economists have found that environmental protection is compatible with private sector job creation.
- States with better environmental quality generally attract more new business and investment



Environmental Protection Net Positive Effect on Employment

- **FACT** – Environmental regulations generate sales and create jobs.
 - EX: The environmental protection industry was valued at \$300 billion/year and responsible for 5 million jobs in 2003.
 - EX: Most environmental jobs are in the private sector.
 - EX: Economic studies show that states with strong environmental regulation tend to have higher economic growth.

Environmental Protection Creating Jobs in North Carolina



Environmental Protection Shifting Jobs

- FACT – Environmental regulation shifts jobs within the private sector
 - EX: Requiring the responsible disposal of chemicals and chemical waste may shift jobs from chemical manufacturing to waste disposal
 - EX: buying home water filters likely shifts jobs from bottlers to filter manufacturers
 - EX: The Army Corps of Engineers created jobs for Americans when it drained the Nation's wetlands...and it creates jobs for Americans today through stream and wetlands restoration projects.

Environmental Protection and Sustainable Growth

- Economists have found that environmental regulations provide “some recession-proof stimulus to aggregate demand”
- The percentage of private sector manufacturing, professional, scientific and technical environmental jobs is significantly higher than the statewide percentage of jobs in these areas

Environmental Protection and Sustainable Growth Cont.

- Environmental jobs create opportunities across social classes while ensuring positions for skilled professionals
- There are fewer environmental jobs in finance, retail sales, transportation and other sectors susceptible to recession

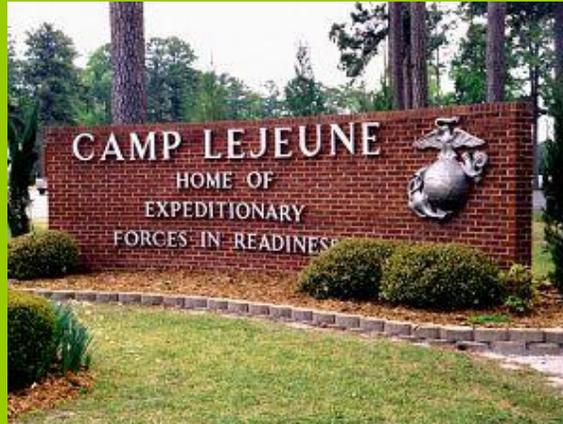
What Should an Economy Produce?

- Government SHOULD NOT seek to protect single industries at the expense of its people and their resources
- Government SHOULD seek to:
 - Protect its citizens from harm
 - Encourage sustainable economic growth and job creation

Environmental Regulation in North Carolina

- This is a unique opportunity for the General Assembly
- We respectfully recommend that the legislature focuses on public welfare and NET private sector job creation when evaluating environmental regulations
- Many environmental regulations should be strengthened to further these goals

Environmental Regulation in North Carolina Cont.



Example of an Inadequate Environmental Regulation

- 15A NCAC 21.0106 requires Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) to ensure that groundwater quality standards are met
- Currently there is no specific time frame required for CAP submission or Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) approval

Example of an Inadequate Environmental Regulation Cont.

- CAPs impose costs on parties responsible for remediation
- Groundwater quality standards were created to protect public health
- Safe water is necessary to attract investment and ensure growth in North Carolina

References

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