



Institute for Environmental Negotiation

Who Are We?

The University of Virginia's Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN) was formed in 1980 by faculty from the School of Architecture's Department of Urban and Environmental Planning to provide mediation and consensus building services concerning the natural and built environments. The Institute has six senior staff and several graduate research associates. Staff have degrees and experience in mediation and consensus building, public involvement, urban and environmental planning, public policy, government, and natural resources management.

Our Philosophy

IEN is committed to building a sustainable future for communities through:

- Practice: Bringing people together to develop sustainable solutions.
- Capacity Building: Providing people with learning opportunities to be creative and collaborative learners.
- Knowledge building: Building understanding of best collaborative processes.

Our Issues

The Institute works on a variety of issues, such as contaminated site re-use, transportation, forest planning, fisheries, watershed management, historic preservation, cultural protection, toxics, waste disposal, sustainable development, and other community issues.

Our Services

- **Mediation:** Helping conflicting parties address their differences in both forthright and productive ways.
- **Public Involvement:** Developing workshops, meeting and conference agendas, coordinating planning and implementation, facilitation, and creating proceedings.
- **Community Dialogues:** Bringing communities together to discuss issues of importance and determining key concerns or ideas for future directions.
- **Collaborative Planning:** Facilitating multi-stakeholder groups to develop consensus for issues, such as watershed plans or brownfield redevelopment, as well as strategic planning for non-profit groups and agencies.



IEN facilitates a community watershed planning process

Clients

Clients include civic groups, local, state and national governments, non-profit environmental and land planning groups, developers, foundations, and universities.

A list of clients can be found on the Institute's web site at www.virginia.edu/ien.

Key IEN Programs

Capacity Building

The **Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute** (VNRLI) is a partnership between IEN, Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) and the Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF). VNRLI is creating a network of leaders in the Commonwealth, across multiple sectors, who have the knowledge and skills to help move communities beyond conflict to collaborative problem solving about complex environmental issues. The curriculum includes leadership development skills, strategies for collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution, and in-depth examination of Virginia's key natural resources challenges. The growing network of VNRLI alumni is helping lead Virginia to effective, sustainable solutions.



VNRLI field trip



IEN facilitates watershed planning

Research

The Institute co-founded the **Community-Based Collaboratives Research Consortium** (CBCRC) in 1999. A community-based collaborative (CBC) is a diverse group of stakeholders focusing on public resource management issues, such as national forests.

The CBCRC is a forum for researchers, agencies, community and environmental groups, tribes, and facilitators, to share and learn from research concerning collaborative approaches to environmental management.

The consortium hosts national conferences and provides an online venue <www.cbrc.org> for sharing research, resources and ideas via searchable databases of literature and projects, discussion rooms, guidance for ethical research, and an online journal. The CBCRC is researching and field testing theories about the environmental, economic, and social outcomes of collaborative processes and has produced many reports and articles.

Community Planning

The Institute has joined other University of Virginia faculty and private partners to develop and facilitate authentic public involvement and cooperation among diverse interests and institutions, including EPA, state, tribal and local governments, citizens groups, non-governmental advocates, and the private economic sector.

Facilitation and Strategic Planning

IEN staff provide frequent assistance to local governments and environmental and civic non-profit groups. Examples include rural heritage plans, community visioning and dialogues, strategic plans, watershed plans, brownfield redevelopment strategies, and other plans.

The Institute also coordinates community development of local land planning, such as watershed or forest management plans, by assessing management and resource needs, defining problems, conducting public education and involvement, and helping the community develop workable solutions.

Contact Us

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