

How FPMA Can Continue to Lead the Industry



James D. Hirsch

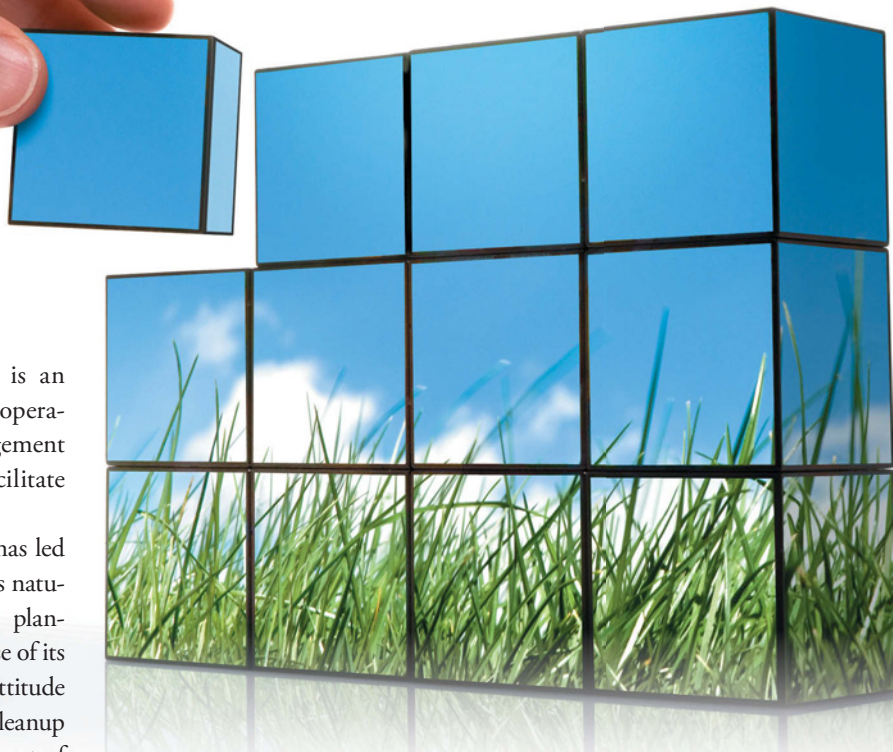
Environmental stewardship is an ethic that embodies cooperative planning and management of environmental resources to facilitate their long-term sustainability.

Since its inception, the FPMA has led the industry in protecting the state's natural resources through cooperative planning, management and judicious use of its financial assets. This stewardship attitude was essential in the development of the Florida Petroleum Cleanup Program (Program) administered by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The Program is funded by the Inland Protection Trust Fund (IPTF), which collects a tax on each barrel of petroleum oil sold in our state.

The Program is one of the leading instruments for protecting and rehabilitating Florida's drinking water resource, groundwater. As important, the Program is the number one tool for cleaning up petroleum-impacted properties so that they can be redeveloped and continue to add to our state's economy through the creation of jobs and commercial growth. Without these things, environmental stewardship becomes increasingly difficult.

Governor Rick Scott has challenged FDEP and the petroleum industry to streamline the Program so that petroleum-impacted sites can be cleaned up faster, better and less expensively, with the ultimate goal of protecting our natural resources and strengthening our economy. In essence, the governor has asked us to be better stewards.

The FDEP has recently reached out to the FPMA Environmental Committee and asked for help in streamlining the Program. As this article is being composed, the FPMA is working with FDEP to improve the Program. In addition, FPMA has agreed to take the lead in conducting this work in a cooperative manner by working closely with other industry organizations such as the Florida Association of Professional Geologist (FAPG), Florida Groundwater Association (FGWA) and the Florida Petroleum Council (FPC).



How to Lead in Environmental Stewardship

For FPMA to continue to lead the industry in **environmental stewardship**, our organization must continue develop and improve in the following areas:

Membership

We need to increase our membership. Strength in numbers is critical to the success of our organization. By expanding our membership this increases our influence throughout our entire state. Expanding membership will also continue to provide us the financial base that is needed to market our organization, provide educational programs and fund legislative efforts important to the organization.

Political Activism

Now more than ever, being politically active is a necessity for getting what you want. This means educating our legislators on the issues that matter most to our members. This can be done through legislative meetings and/or grassroots efforts. This also means financially supporting key political allies, and organizing and attending political gatherings.

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Participating in FPMA

Our organization's success is a direct reflection of its members and their efforts. To date, our members have made FPMA exceptionally successful. However, the competition and necessity for resources and influence is greater than ever. The only sure way for FPMA to maintain its industry edge is for our membership to actively participate in the organization by attending meetings, serving on committees, being politically active and recruiting new members.

Doing Business with other FPMA Members

In addition to membership dues, FPMA members give back to the organization on many different levels. These efforts are often responsible for making our industry a more viable place to conduct business. This extra effort and commitment by our members should be recognized and rewarded by working with other like minded FPMA members.

With a renewed commitment to the fundamentals of our organization, FPMA will continue to lead our industry in environmental stewardship and long-term sustainability of our natural resources. ○

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FPMA Environmental Committee Mission Statement

The mission of the Florida Petroleum Marketers Association (FPMA) Environmental Committee is to gather and facilitate coordination of environmental expertise and advocacy on behalf of the FPMA and to provide the FPMA with accurate information in regard to environmental regulation and environmental legislation in the state of Florida.

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