



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Agenda Item

Item 7. B. – Education and Outreach

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

- Appointments to Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)
The LMRWD received two applications to join the CAC. Staff has held preliminary conversations with both individuals and some background on each of them can be found in Technical Memorandum – New Applicants for the LMRWD Citizen Advisory Committee, dated July 8, 2024. Resolution 24-09 – 2024 Citizen Advisory Committee Appointments is attached for adoption by the Board.
- Signage Proposal for Ike’s Creek Resource Signs
The LMRWD has been working with US Fish & Wildlife Service to develop educational signage to be placed at Ike’s Creek. The proposal is to install a series of signs to inform people of the unique nature of Ike’s Creek and hopefully encourage people to assist in the protection of the resource. Technical Memorandum – Signage Proposal for Ike’s Creek Resource Signs dated July 9, 2024, is attached which presents the proposed sign design and locations for installation. The Technical Memorandum includes estimated cost for fabrication and installation. The Board should make a motion to authorize the expenditure.
- Discussion of Education & Outreach program
On January 11, 2024, the LMRWD held a workshop to discuss education and outreach priorities for 2024. The Board postponed subsequent discussion of the workshop pending the outcome of the biennial solicitation for professional services. The Board selected Young Environmental Consulting Group (YECG) as its Education and Outreach provider but has not had any discussion of the E & O priorities since then. YECG would like feedback from the Board of Managers that Education and Outreach services are being provided in accordance with the goals of the current Board of Managers. The Board should provide direction to YECG. The summary of the January 11 workshop is attached for the Board’s information.

Attachments

Technical Memorandum – New Applicants for the LMRWD Citizen Advisory Committee, dated July 8, 2024

Resolution 24-09 2024 Citizen Advisory Committee Appointments

Technical Memorandum – Signage Proposal for Ike’s Creek Resource Signs dated July 9, 2024

Technical Memorandum – Education and Outreach (E & O) Program – 2024 Action Plan, dated May 7, 2024

Recommended Action

Motion to adopt Resolution 24-09 2024 Citizen Advisory Committee Appointments

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Executive Summary

Item 7. B. – Education and Outreach

July 17, 2024

Motion to authorize expenditure for fabrication and installation of up to 15 signs

Provide direction to staff regarding the 2024 Education and Outreach Program

Technical Memorandum



To: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD)

From: Jess Norby, Education and Outreach Coordinator
Suzy Lindberg, Communications Manager

Date: July 8, 2024

Re: New Applicants for the LMRWD Citizen Advisory Committee

Young Environmental received applications from two community members, Holley Wlodarczyk and Dan Ehrke, who are interested in joining the LMRWD Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). We introduce the applicants below for your consideration:

Holley Wlodarczyk was encouraged to join the CAC after a great interaction at the Burnsville Native Plant Market on May 18th where volunteers discovered she is a resident of the LMRWD (near Mound Springs Park in Bloomington). She is an independent writer, artist, and surface pattern designer that is currently serving as a Board Member for the Twin Cities Chapter of Wild Ones, where she served in various leadership positions for more than 10 years. Her current term ends in December 2024 and Holley mentioned she will have more time to become an active and involved member of the LMRWD CAC after this commitment has ended. She is “interested in learning more about how to protect our watershed and local ecosystem, participating in community education around those issues, and providing resources to help decision-making that affects water quality, plant communities, and wildlife in our area.” Holley has a PhD from the University of Minnesota in Comparative Studies in Discourse and Society, and her dissertation was on the rhetoric of sustainability in suburbia. Check out her full dissertation titled “Somewhere That’s Green? Visions of Sustainable Suburbia” here: <https://conservancy.umn.edu/items/0d2d94bb-98bf-49ff-abac-4242333b6c01>

Dan Ehrke submitted an application from the website to join the CAC and lives near Grace Lake in Chaska. Although he is located outside of the LMRWD boundary, Dan has recently moved to the area and is interested in becoming involved in local organizations because he is passionate about the environment and water resources. He has an educational background in planning and economic

development and worked in city government for more than 20 years. Currently, he is a manager at a regional electrical cooperative and is also a member of Pheasants Forever and McLeod Fish and Wildlife Alliance.

Young Environmental has reviewed both Holley and Dan's application responses and recommend that the Board of Managers approve the candidates for a one-year appointment (on their chosen start date) to serve on the CAC. The applications are available upon request. Both candidates can use their experience to bolster the existing CAC, contributing new perspectives to complete meaningful work that fulfills the Board of Managers' vision. Additional recruitment efforts are continuing in parallel to drive membership and promote retention among current members.

RESOLUTION 24-09

RESOLUTION OF THE LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT BOARD OF MANAGERS

2024 Citizen Advisory Committee Appointments

Manager _____ offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Manager _____:

WHEREAS, pursuant to Minnesota Statute 103D.331, the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD) Board of Managers must annually appoint a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), organized to assist the LMRWD Board of Managers on matters affecting the interests of the watershed district; and

WHEREAS, the CAC is organized to assist the LMRWD Board of Managers on matters affecting the interests of the watershed district; and

WHEREAS, statute requires the committee consist of at least five (5) members; and

WHEREAS, in 2024 the LMRWD received two applications for the CAC; and

WHEREAS, LMRWD staff has reviewed the applicant's background, experience, community service and geographic representation within the watershed and recommends the appointment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers hereby appoint the following individuals to the 2024 Citizen Advisory Committee:

Holley Wlodarczyk

Dan Ehrke

The question was on the adoption of the Resolution and there were ___ yeas and ___ nays as follows:

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
BARISONZI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KUPLIC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LAMMERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SALVATO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VISWANATHAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(signatures on following page)

Adopted by the Board of Managers of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District this 17th day of July 2024.

Joseph Barisonzi, President

ATTEST:

Lauren Salvato, Secretary



Technical Memorandum

To: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD)

From: Jess Norby, Education and Outreach Coordinator
Suzy Lindberg, Communications Manager

Date: July 9, 2024

Re: Signage Proposal for Ike's Creek Resource Signs

Young Environmental has been working collaboratively with the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) on behalf of the LMRWD to develop resource identification signs for Ike's Creek (headwaters and Bass Ponds). The project began after concern about dumping in the area above Ike's Creek, which is a developed area near the Mall of America in Bloomington, MN. The resource signs will help identify Ike's Creek for area businesses, residents, and visitors, and protect the precious resource using positive messaging about its value. The concept has been presented to the Board of Managers in the past, and the sign design is now approved by USFWS and ready to be fabricated and installed.

The following memo provides recommendations for sign placement given a field walk completed with USFWS in June 2024. We have presented a range of options for the number of signs and associated costs that we believe will have the best impact to protect this ecologically important creek (see page 9). The second phase of the project involves developing an interpretive sign with additional information, which will begin once the resource signs have been completed.

About Ike's Creek

Ike's Creek, located in the Lower Minnesota River Basin Watershed, starts near the Mall of America, and flows to Long Meadow Lake in the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Ike's Creek was named after the Izaak Walton League conservation group, which raised fish in nearby ponds in the early 1900s. The Bass Ponds are now part of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and are managed by the USFWS. The headwaters are surrounded by two hotel properties and a recreational attraction so the area can receive a high volume of visitors that are currently unaware of the unique resource below because the creek is hidden from originating out of the bluffs in the ravine below.

The creek is fed almost entirely from groundwater springs that provide cold, clear, and well oxygenated groundwater that can support trout. There is a reproducing population of brook trout that can be found in Ike's Creek. While the creek supports trout, it is not a designated trout stream; however, it is protected by other rules and permits that preserve the creek.

Resource Identification Sign Draft (9x12”)

The following draft was developed in collaboration with USFWS staff as a co-branded sign. It has been approved by our partners at their organization as well as the City of Bloomington. The intent was to identify the resource and share quick strategies for protection as well as a link to more detailed information and recognition of the entities responsible for management.



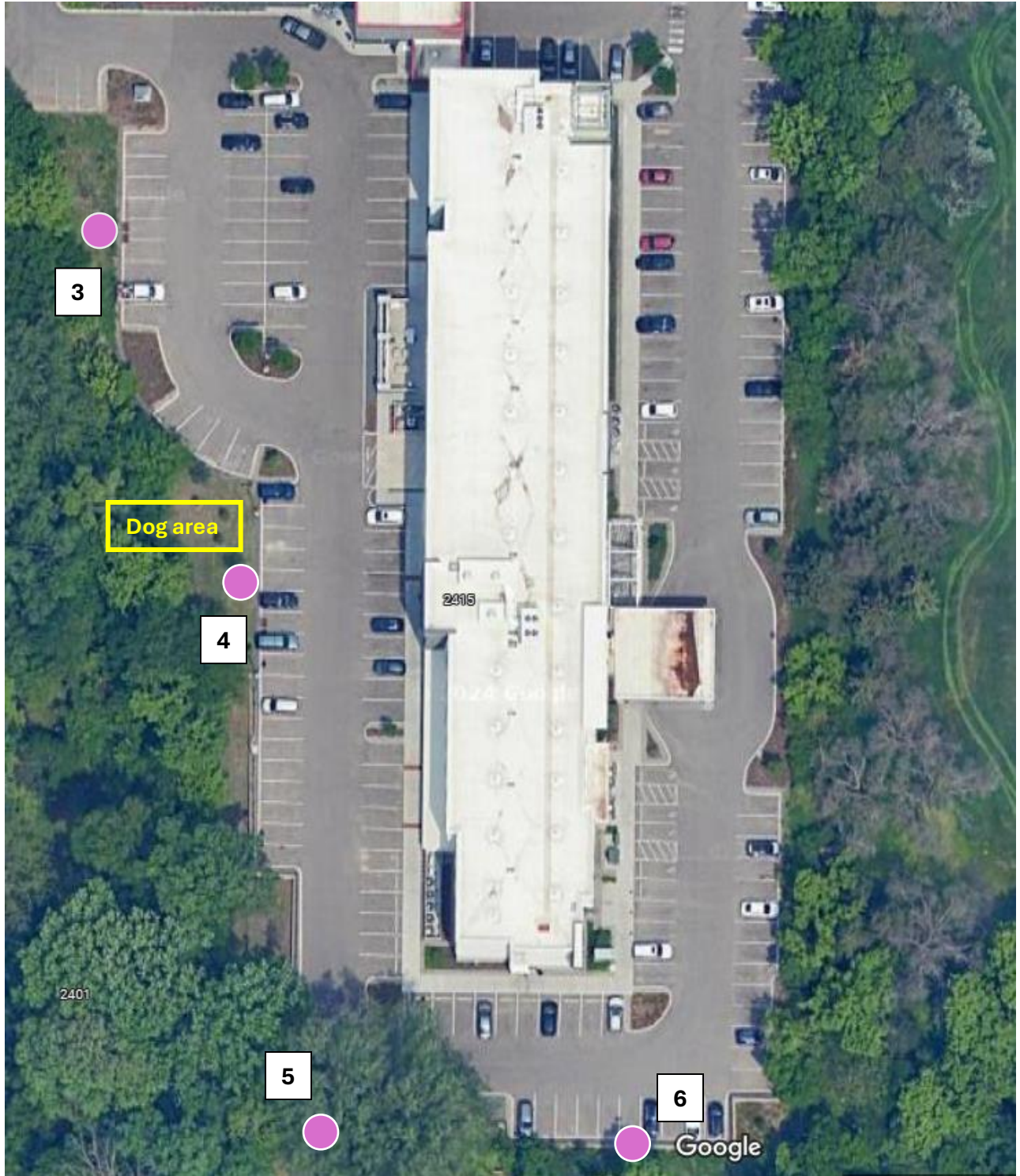
Recommended Sign Placement: Ike's Creek Headwaters to Bass Ponds



Figure 1. Map showing the suggested locations of resource identification signs for Ike's Creek after a scoping walk with USFWS staff. Ike's creek originates from groundwater supplying flow into the ravine below the surrounding properties. The area is prone to dumping of trash and other unwanted items, being thrown over the retaining wall, where they eventually fall into the creek below. An additional 5 signs are recommended for the Bass Ponds trail located nearby on USFWS property.



1. One priority sign is near the parking lot corner where snow piles have been observed. The creek starts just beyond the retaining wall. Other signs are recommended in multiple areas around the perimeter of the parking lot to notify the users of the creek below.



Additional sign locations are shown in detail on the following page.



4. One sign at dog area, could affix on southern pole (nearest in photo) if waste bin is adjusted



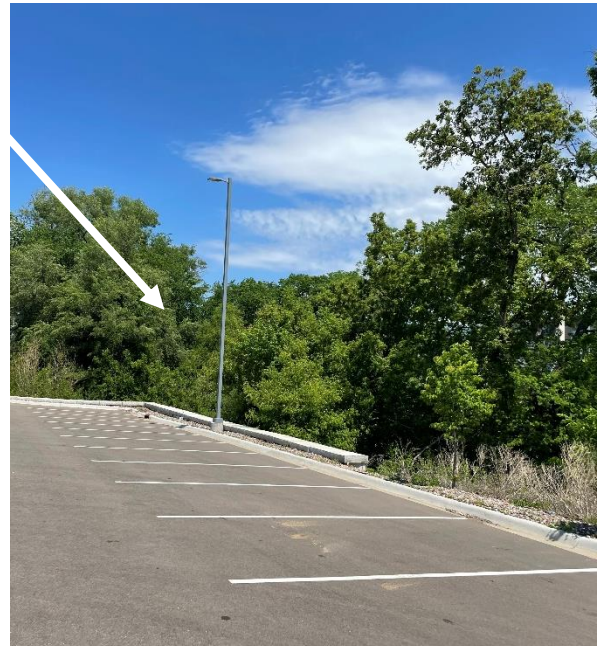
5. In the southwest corner of the parking lot, a sign could be placed and potentially affixed to the existing light pole (pending approval from property owners).



6. South parking lot, could affix to far light pole if allowed



7. One sign from walking path, where excess trash was observed.



8. One sign at northeast corner of lot, where dumping over the retaining wall is common.

10. Non-sanctioned trail forming from people in the area venturing downhill.

Recommendation

Young Environmental and USFWS staff recommend that as many as 15 signs be installed surrounding the headwaters of Ike's Creek (10) and replacing aged signs or adding to the Bass Ponds Trail walking paths on USFWS property (5). The areas around the headwaters have been observed by USFWS and City staff as dumping areas for trash and unwanted items tossed over the retaining wall. The trash and debris can eventually reach Ike's Creek below. The problem is exacerbated because the properties surrounding the headwaters are hotels and an indoor recreation area, so the area is frequented by short-term occupants, and requires sufficient signage to notify the community of the high-value resource below. USFWS staff have initiated coordination with the surrounding property owners for approval of the sign locations.

Pricing Estimate

Item	Quantity	Estimated Price
Resource sign fabrication	15	\$285.02 (quote)
8-foot signpost	3	\$112*
6-foot signpost	5	\$116*
Hardware for install (screws, bolts, pole affixing items)	TBD	\$25-\$50
Total		\$538-\$563

*Prices provided are estimates based on online shopping searches and may vary slightly depending on item pricing the day they are purchased. Any significant variation in costs will be reported.

Technical Memorandum

To: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD)

From: Della Schall Young, PMP, CPESC, CTF, Principal Scientist
Jess Norby, Project Manager, Senior Water Resources Scientist

Date: May 7, 2024

Re: Education and Outreach (E&O) Program —2024 Action Plan

After being re-selected as the Education and Outreach (E&O) Consultant, Young Environmental will continue to execute the 2024 work plan that was approved by the Board of Managers while offering recommendations for future restructuring to incorporate continuous feedback on LMRWD's education and outreach goals. The goal of this technical memo is to clearly define the scope of our current 2024 work plan, outline additional needs as summarized from Board and Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) feedback, and offer suggestions for future work plan considerations. We presented an update on 2024 E&O Program progress in April's Board of Managers Quarterly Progress Report. The Draft Action Plan includes a summary of feedback gained from the January E&O workshop and the accompanying Roles and Responsibilities charts outlining the items in the 2024 work plan followed by *additional needs outside of the scope of the current work plan (italicized)*. Young Environmental is open to restructuring the E&O Program as recommended by the Board of Managers and incorporating feedback into future work plans.

Next Steps

Immediate efforts will be made to increase LMRWD Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) membership to fill two open positions and increase public awareness of the CAC and associated events. Young Environmental will create and distribute promotional postcards to residents and past cost share recipients advertising for CAC members, pursue additional outreach through local government websites or other local environmental groups, revamping the CAC website landing page, and utilizing the existing LMRWD network for recruitment (i.e. current CAC members, Board members,

and educators). Recruitment efforts will also be made while hosting educational outreach tables at local events to promote the CAC and share information on how to pursue membership. In addition to ongoing recruitment and retention efforts, we will work to increase the involvement and visibility of the CAC and ensure they are given meaningful work to advance the LMRWD's mission.

We will move forward with reframing social media outreach, which was summarized in the attached Technical Memorandum from February's Board packet (see Attachment 1). In short, we plan on reducing duplicative content creation like general water quality awareness and increasing content specific to LMRWD, including species in bloom, recreation and volunteer opportunities, important project updates, and picturesque views that highlight LMRWD resources in a unique way. We will increase collaboration and cross-sharing of partner information and applicable resources so that water quality information continues to be shared and the purpose of LMRWD is not lost.

Young Environmental will offer additional support (as part of the General Engineering - On Call Services) toward the immediate planning of the LMRWD summer barge tour, which has been noted as an important activity for E&O outreach. We will also continue to make progress in the other areas of the current work plan as we aim to achieve the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) outlined in the charts below.

Suggestions for Consideration

We understand there are additional needs for increased public relations and communications content in addition to traditional E&O services. Young Environmental has supported these priorities, which are requested as additional services (*billed toward General Engineering - On Call Services*) and can be requested by the Board (website updates, press releases, presentations, annual reporting, etc.). When the 2025 work plan is established, we can clarify whether these deliverables should be defined and included in future work plans.

While some additional outreach goals can partially be addressed with current social media objectives, we may want to explore other outreach methods to successfully target audiences like private contractors, local businesses, policy-makers, homeowner associations (HOAs), and other audiences. We suggest reviewing and creating targeted mailing lists, brainstorming the best outreach strategies, and developing specific action items to include in future work plans to successfully educate the desired audience group if work exists outside of the current community outreach approach.

Managing the cost-share grant program is currently outside of the scope of work for the E&O Program; however, we recognize the important role it plays in E&O goals. The roles and responsibilities for this program could be reevaluated to incorporate CAC review of applications, an approach used in neighboring organizations, and to provide more community awareness of cost-share projects. We recognize the lasting E&O

benefits of water quality improvement projects on private property and suggest a KPI goal of maximizing the amount of cost-share dollars distributed in the community through approved projects.

We look forward to continuing our consulting role for leading LMRWD's E&O Program and welcome any feedback from you have, as the Board of Managers, in reaching your vision of a successful program!

Background for the Draft Action Plan

On January 11, 2024, Young Environmental facilitated a joint workshop for the LMRWD Board of Managers and Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to discuss the 2024 priorities for the ongoing E&O Program, connected to the work plan approved at the October 2023 Board meeting.

The workshop was designed to inform program goals, which include:


- Continuing a successful program that connects the goals and objectives of the Board, CAC, and staff with the intended audience, driving engagement and action.
- Creating and delivering key messaging through education and outreach campaigns, high-priority materials, and memorable events.



The 3-hour workshop was held at the Chaska Community Center to provide educational background information on the program, foster a facilitated conversation, and provide a space for the Board, CAC, and staff to collaborate with each other. The meeting was designed to identify priorities for the E&O Program, establish consensus on shared goals, and create a targeted wish list for ongoing watershed district education and community outreach. Additional goals included establishing benchmarks and metrics to assess the success of the E&O Program and a process to adjust the strategy as needed.



At this point, the group acknowledged that there were 15 individual audiences that could not be grouped together any further and it was that participants voted on their top audiences in the hopes of narrowing in further. The draft action plan was established to focus on these targeted audiences and align not only the Young Environmental work plan, but all LMRWD programs and partnerships, with this outreach.




Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Draft Action Plan


Education and outreach priority audiences and messaging needs.

 Workshop Target Audience: YOUTH			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings (see Roles and Responsibilities charts)	Partner Organizations	Action Items
Hands-on experiences, excursions, and classroom programs.	Work Plan Objective 5: School Engagement	<p>Nine Mile Creek Watershed District: Classroom Presentations</p> <p>City of Burnsville and Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD): Classroom Curriculum</p> <p>Metro Children's Water Festival sponsorship</p> <p>Scott County SWCD's Outdoor Education Days sponsorship</p> <p>River Watch sponsorship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore partnerships to engage youth in the LMRWD through city, SWCD, and county partners in classroom and excursion settings. • Expand ideas for youth activities at CAC tabling events. • Continue to explore sponsorship of existing partner events targeted at youth to create visibility without the added cost of organizing.
Enhancing mini-grant program	Work Plan Objective 5: School Engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to grow network of teachers and educators to share educator mini-grant promotions.
<i>Determine what to incorporate from Texas A&M student project</i>	<i>Special Project: Texas A&M Student Research</i>	<i>Texas A&M students</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reach out to relevant 4H clubs for outreach/collaboration opportunities.</i> • <i>Coordinate and promote clean-ups of the Minnesota River.</i> • <i>Create PR materials as outlined in student campaign.</i>

 Workshop Target Audience: HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS (HOAs)/URBAN RESIDENTS			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
<p><i>Providing technical assistance or contractor recommendations (sustainable practices)</i></p>	<p>Work Plan Objective 3: Social Media</p> <p><i>Cost-Share Grant Program</i></p>	<p><i>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: Smart Salting Training, Turf Grass Maintenance Training, Guidance for Construction Stormwater, Sustainable Building Group Process</i></p> <p><i>Explore partner MS4 cities to determine overlap of education and outreach.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Review existing materials and identify gaps. Consider developing materials as part of the permit customer audience need.</i> • Continue to promote partner resources on LMRWD digital platforms.
<p><i>Increasing outreach surrounding property management training (grass/turf management, low-salt no-salt MN, smart salting practices)</i></p>	<p>Work Plan Objective 3: Social Media</p> <p><i>Public Relations/ Communication Services (Internal, External)</i></p>	<p><i>Nine Mile Creek Watershed District: Turf Grass Management</i></p> <p><i>Hennepin County: Chloride Initiative (Low-Salt, No Salt)</i></p> <p><i>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: Smart Salting Training</i></p> <p><i>Explore partner MS4 cities to determine overlap of education and outreach.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create a direct mailing (physical and/or email) list for better distribution of technical training announcements.</i> • Continue to promote partner resources on LMRWD digital platforms.
 Workshop Target Audience: PRIVATE CONTRACTORS/COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRY/DREDGE CUSTOMERS			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
<p><i>Raised awareness on best management practices (BMPs)/general awareness</i></p>	<p>Work Plan Objective 3: Social Media</p> <p><i>Public Relations/ Communication Services (Internal, External)</i></p>	<p><i>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: Smart Salting Training, Turf Grass Maintenance Training, Guidance for Construction Stormwater, Sustainable Building Group Process</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Review existing materials and identify gaps. Consider developing materials as part of the permit customer audience need.</i> • <i>Focus on the need of industry/dredge customers to further identify gaps and opportunities for education and outreach.</i> • Continue to promote partner resources on LMRWD digital platforms.

 Workshop Target Audience: ONE WATERSHED, ONE PLAN (1W1P) EAST PLANNING GROUP			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
<i>Define what partnership looks like</i>		<i>Partners in 1W1P East Planning Group Process</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Work with this group to engage with upstream partners that can affect agriculture/conservation practices with an impact to the health of the Minnesota River.</i> • <i>Develop an understanding of relationship network and how it can be employed on mutually beneficial projects.</i>
 Workshop Target Audience: RECREATIONISTS			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
<i>Connect the audience with reliable information (ex: what fish can be eaten safely?)</i>	<i>Website Content Updates</i>	<i>Minnesota Department of Natural Resources</i> <i>Minnesota River Congress – Recreation Team</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identify additional information needed and how to disseminate it in addition to the website and social media (i.e. newsletter or flyer at tabling events or proactive connection to local recreation groups).</i>
Increased signage to convey information to this audience	Work Plan Objective 4: LMRWD Signage		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider recreational signs as part of interpretive sign placement and development.

 Workshop Target Audience: PERMIT CUSTOMERS (END CLIENTS)			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
Establish cover letter with permit approval (potentially BMP-specific/giving maintenance advice)	Public Relations/ Communication Services (Internal, External)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider investment in promotional piece to be included to permit customers and end clients (i.e. a cover letter from LMRWD): Additional communications services.
 Workshop Target Audience: LMRWD BOARD, CAC, STAFF			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
Create a standard presentation for staff, Board of Managers, and the CAC to use as a resource to inform meetings	Public Relations/ Communication Services (Internal, External)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider investment in promotional presentation to be used regularly by Board of Managers, LMRWD staff, and CAC if relevant: Additional communications services. Identify list of targeted partnership groups and key influencers to schedule Board of Managers outreach presentations. Populate in "Partner Organizations" for future use. Coordinating a Watershed 101 presentation for educating on watershed district roles in local government organization
More active involvement in E&O program	Communication Services (Internal, External)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue communicative feedback between all members identified in the Roles and Responsibilities matrices to ensure progress.
 Workshop Target Audience: POLICY-MAKERS			
Audience Need	LMRWD Offerings	Partner Organizations	Action Items
Create a standard presentation to give when the opportunity allows (ex: "Who we are", "what we regulate")	Internal, External Communications		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider investment in promotional presentation to be used regularly by Board of Managers, LMRWD staff, and CAC if relevant: Additional communications services. Identify list of targeted partnership groups and key influencers to schedule Board of Managers outreach presentations. Populate in "Partner Organizations" for future use.

<p><i>Establish annual meeting procedure and targeted briefing with different contracts</i></p>	<p><i>Internal, External Communications</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Consider investment in promotional materials and event planning: Additional communications services.</i>
<p> Workshop Target Audience: PUBLIC DURING EMERGENCY</p>			
<p>Audience Need</p>	<p>LMRWD Offerings</p>	<p>Partner Organizations</p>	<p>Action Items</p>
<p><i>Promote the District's work to manage and prevent future emergencies.</i></p>	<p><i>Work Plan Objective 3: Social Media</i></p> <p><i>Public Relations/ Communication Services (Internal, External)</i></p> <p><i>Website Content Updates</i></p>	<p><i>Media Contact Relationships</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop process for PR and external communications: Additional communications services.</i> • <i>Continuously evaluate social media and website's effectiveness at rolling out information to the public in a time-sensitive manner to prepare for urgent events.</i>

Roles and Responsibilities Chart

Internal tool to highlight chain of communication and responsibility



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

	Program Pillars and Tasks	Associated KPIs	BOARD OF MANAGERS	STAFF	CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE	YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL
Task #	Work Plan Objective 1: Project Management and Board of Managers Coordination					
1.1	Project plan development and project management	Work plan and progress	Informed	Accountable	Informed	Responsible
1.2	Board Workshop	Workshop outcomes	Consulted	Informed	Consulted	Responsible
1.3	Quarterly Updates	Quarterly updates	Informed	Authority	Informed	Responsible
	Work Plan Objective 2: Citizen Advisory Committee					
2.1	Maintain a CAC of five members or more and focus on retaining existing members	Number of CAC members and involvement	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Responsible
2.2	Plan and facilitate CAC meetings	Monthly meetings/activities	Informed	Accountable	Informed	Responsible
2.3	Monitor and assist the CAC	Monthly meetings/activities	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Responsible
2.4	Develop educational materials as directed by the CAC (up to 4 items throughout 2024)	Materials created	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Responsible
	Work Plan Objective 3: Social Media					
3.1	Maintain social media sites with approved content calendars	Social media metrics	Consulted	Accountable	Informed	Responsible
3.2	Enhance social media messaging by adjusting content towards highlighting the uniqueness of LMRWD	Social media metrics	Consulted	Accountable	Informed	Responsible
3.3	Grow social media following by increasing visibility of accounts	Social media metrics	Consulted	Accountable	Informed	Responsible
	Work Plan Objective 4: LMRWD Signage					
4.1	Identify sites for interpretive signage while working with local partners on locations and messaging (up to 5 signs completed in 2024)	Number of signs	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible
4.2	Resource identification and protection signs	Number of signs	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible
	Work Plan Objective 5: School Engagement					
5.1	Explore education opportunities in schools and build on partnerships to increase awareness of existing youth programs, hands-on experiences, and other classroom programs relevant to LMRWD (i.e. CCWMO internships, Evening with the Bugs program)	Youth participation numbers, creating classroom material	Informed	Accountable	Consulted	Responsible
5.2	Mini-grant program for educators	Maximizing grant dollars distributed	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible
	Work Plan Objective 6: Community Outreach and Engagement					
6.1	Maintain and build partnerships that promote community outreach	Maintaining partnerships with other entities	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible
6.2	Coordinating involvement of CAC members and staff for local events	Number of events and estimating outreach metrics	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible
6.3	Creating relevant tabling materials for outreach events	Maintaining breadth of hand-outs/talking points	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted	Responsible

Roles and Responsibilities Chart

Internal tool to highlight chain of communication and responsibility



Program Pillars and Tasks	Associated KPI	BOARD OF MANAGERS	STAFF	CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE	YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL
Additional Education and Outreach Needs					
Public Relations/Communication Services (Internal, External)					
7.1 Create branded materials for internal and external use (i.e. press releases, presentations, process documents)	To be determined	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Informed	Responsible / Consulted
7.2 Create a standard presentation for staff, Board of Managers, and the CAC to use as a resource to inform meetings	Standard presentation				
7.3 Increase communications to recreationists (i.e. create Recreation Landing page on website, safe fish consumption guidance or signage)	content	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible
7.4 Increase LMRWD visibility with permit holders (i.e. LMRWD cover letter materials/informational page or BMP specific information page)	Related permit materials	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Responsible
7.5 Increase outreach to HOAs/private contractors by improving awareness of technical events hosted by partners (grass/turf management, low-salt no-salt MN, smart salt training)	Targeted campaigns	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Responsible
7.6 Raised awareness on best management practices/general awareness directed towards private contractors, commercial businesses, and industry/dredge customers	Targeted campaigns	Accountable	Consulted	Informed	Responsible
7.7 Create public emergency response plan	Public emergency response plan	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible
7.8 Planning and outreach surrounding the LMRWD barge tour	Successful barge tour	Accountable	Responsible	Informed	Consulted
Website Content Updates					
8.1 Maintain website with up-to-date content, news, and events	Website content	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Informed	Responsible / Consulted
Update/revise the CAC landing page on the website and maintain with up-to-date announcements, events, and volunteer opportunities	CAC webpage updates	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible/Consulted
Annual Reporting					
9.1 Develop annual report as part of BWSR requirement and communication with LMRWD community	Annual report and related PR	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Informed	Responsible / Consulted
Hennepin County Monitoring Program (in effect, on-going) and general chloride outreach					
10.1 Continue chloride monitoring efforts (sampling and analyses)		Informed	Consulted	Informed	Accountable/Responsible
10.2 Informational report of YE chloride work for the CAC and Board	Report/presentation	Accountable	Informed	Informed	Responsible
Developing targeted chloride awareness/reduction initiatives	Targeted campaigns	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible
10.3 Salt Watch partnership (IWLA) exploration	Number of residents to sign up for the program	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible
Cost-Share Grant Program					
11.1 Manage cost share grant applications	Usage of cost share grant budget	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Informed	Responsible / Consulted
11.2 Create cost share promotional items	Promo items	Accountable	Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible / Consulted
11.3 Outreach initiatives to commercial property owners in LMRWD	Successful projects	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Informed	Responsible / Consulted
11.4 Providing technical assistance or contractor recommendations (sustainable practices)	Ability to offer technical assistance and/or list of approved contractors				
Increase CAC Involvement/Awareness					
12.1 Find gaps in CAC outreach and visibility, determine expectations of members, and revise CAC meetings to increase attendance and involvement	CAC members and involvement	Accountable	Responsible / Consulted	Consulted/Informed	Responsible/Consulted
Presentations to Council Members					
13.1 Board of Managers provide regular presentations to targeted partner audiences	Presentations	Responsible	Consulted	Informed	Consulted
Special Project: Texas A&M Student Research					
14.1 Work with students to develop strategy for education and outreach for basin-wide approach	Incorporated feedback	Responsible	Consulted	Informed	Informed

Technical Memorandum

To: Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers

From: Suzy Lindberg, Communications Manager
Della Schall Young, CPESC, PMP, CTF, Principal Scientist

CC: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

Date: February 14, 2024

Re: Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Social Media Content and Strategy

As part of the 2024 Education and Outreach Program Work Plan, Young Environmental is reconfiguring its strategy and content related to the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District's (LMRWD) social media presence. The following memo highlights the details of this ongoing effort.

SUMMARY

Project Name: LMRWD Education and Outreach—Social Media

Purpose: Reconfigure the LMRWD's social media content and strategy to enhance social media messaging and grow social media following.

BACKGROUND

Young Environmental reviewed previous LMRWD social media content (Facebook, Instagram, and X) from 2023 to adjust its 2024 strategy. Based on this review by our new staff members, we conceptualized the following improvements to establish a clearer identity unique to the LMRWD on social media.

We present the suggested shifts in social media strategy below:

- **Reduce Redundant Content.**
 - Reduce the amount of redundant water quality information already being represented by other watershed districts and watershed management organizations, such as the following:
 - National water quality/world awareness days
 - Salt/chloride awareness
 - Reduce posting frequency to one to three times per week depending on news and events.

- Discontinue posting on the X platform (focus on Facebook and Instagram).
- **Increased Unique Content.**
 - Increase the spotlight of unique features of the LMRWD.
 - More placeholders in the content calendars for highlighting weather-dependent or seasonal facets such as native plants in bloom.
 - General picturesque views unique to the LMRWD captured by our team.
 - Timely LMRWD or partner project updates.
 - Engage citizens.
 - Increased awareness of the cost-share program and highlighting of previous cost-share projects.
 - Photo contest, calendar, or photographer-in-residence campaign.
 - Boost partnership awareness and collaboration.
 - Highlighting of partnership events and local outreach opportunities.
 - Increased awareness through youth outreach activities and internships hosted by partners.
 - Increased awareness of statewide grant initiatives like Lawns to Legumes.
 - Reposting other organization's evergreen content.

The overarching goals of the proposed changes are to enhance social media messaging through more unique and creative content, enhance partnership awareness, and grow LMRWD's social media following (Young Environmental Work Plan Tasks 3.2 and 3.3). Analytics will be collected to verify traction gained or additional improvement items needed. Additionally, Young Environmental has noted an underutilization of the cost-share program. Our staff can use social media as a means of integrating and promoting the cost-share program as an active component of the Education and Outreach Program.

JUSTIFICATION AND COMPARISON ANALYSIS

Upon review, the two local watersheds with the greatest social media success (measured in average number of likes for the five most recent posts, number of followers across platforms, etc.) are Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD).

To increase the engagement on LMRWD posts across social media platforms and expand the audience beyond other government agencies and units, we propose adjusting content and post frequency to mirror the success of the CRWD and RWMWD. Across platforms, the CRWD and RWMWD averaged roughly one post per week.

Topics presented in their recent posts included the following:

- Local projects and features within their district (e.g. the Trout Brook Storm Sewer Interceptor, and ice tracking on Como Lake).
- Reposts from other organizations.
- Seasonal posts: salting, and winter native seeding.
- Lawns to Legumes grant announcement.

Young Environmental noted these watershed districts found success in posting less frequently and focusing the content of their posts around unique projects and features of their district, presenting different seasonal ideas (e.g. winter native seeding), and reposting content from other organizations. These ideas guided Young Environmental's changes to social media content and strategy, beginning with the winter content calendar draft.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To accomplish this overall shift in strategy, Young Environmental recommends the LMRWD Board of Managers solidify goal(s) and desired target social media audience(s) to refocus attention on the LMRWD's unique identity. This solidification will improve Young Environmental's ability to curate social media content around targeted groups and overarching Board goals.

Young Environmental recommends the LMRWD Board of Managers approve the suggested shift in social media content upon reviewing the winter content calendar. We believe it more fully encompasses elements of the shift while maintaining the organization's current identity. Following Board approval and feedback, Young Environmental recommends curating future content calendars to reflect the continued shift envisioned by our staff.

In addition, Young Environmental recommends a more intricate look at the cost-share program to understand how to best apply social media to increase awareness of the program. This primarily includes understanding the roles of all parties involved (e.g. LMRWD Board of Managers, Administrator, Citizen Advisory Committee, Young Environmental) as well as how we can increase involvement in the program to maximize use of the cost-share funds.