United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Getting In Step

A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns

3rd edition

New and improved tips and tools for creating awareness, educating specific audiences, and motivating positive behavior change to improve water quality

Getting In Step

A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns

3rd edition

November 2010
EPA 841-B-10-002

United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Water
Nonpoint Source Control Branch (4503T)
Washington, DC 20460

Getting In Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns was prepared by Tetra Tech, Inc., under a contract with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This is the 3rd edition of the guide. The 2nd edition was published in December 2003. The original guide, *Getting In Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach In Your Watershed*, was published in 1998 by the Council of State Governments, pursuant to a cooperative agreement with EPA.

As a companion to this guide, EPA and the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food jointly developed *Getting In Step: A Video Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns* (EPA 841-C-07-001). The 30-minute video on DVD includes four in-depth case studies that showcase successful outreach programs from around the country and highlight key tips from this guide.

For copies of this guide and the companion video on DVD, contact

National Service Center for Environmental Publications
Phone: 1-800-490-9198
Fax: 513-489-8695
Website: *www.epa.gov/ncepihom*

or visit EPA's Nonpoint Source website at *www.epa.gov/nps*

Foreword

Nonpoint source pollution is our nation's largest remaining water quality problem. It is not caused by pipes discharging waste from big factories or from sewage treatment plants. Rather, it is generated by all of us, a product of rainfall interacting with millions of actions that we collectively take each day, including activities such as applying pesticides, fertilizing our lawns, or even driving our cars. While most of our individual actions have relatively small impacts on water quality, the cumulative impact of how we choose to interact with our land and water is huge. By becoming more aware of the effect of our actions on our rivers, streams, lakes, and oceans, however, we can all develop more water-friendly habits and practices that will enable us to protect and restore the quality of these waters.

This guide offers advice on how watershed groups, local governments, and others can maximize the effectiveness of public outreach campaigns to reduce nonpoint source pollution and protect the lakes, rivers, streams, and coasts that we treasure. It is the 3rd edition of a 1998 publication originally published by the Council of State Governments titled *Getting in Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach in Your Watershed*. This edition includes more information on effective social marketing techniques and new information about using Web 2.0 technologies such as social networks to achieve outreach goals and objectives. Additionally, this edition makes ample reference to EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox, which was released since the previous edition. The Toolbox is an online compendium of resources—including TV, radio, and print ads—to help organizations develop an effective and targeted outreach campaign. This guide is intended as a reference that pulls together principles, techniques, and information for effective watershed outreach into a single, user-friendly source. This guide was developed with input from federal, state and local watershed practitioners and outreach experts.

A companion video on DVD, suitable for viewing by stakeholders, educators, or others interested in generating watershed outreach campaigns, is available to reinforce the steps outlined in this guide. The video includes four varied examples of watershed outreach campaigns that utilize the principles presented in this guide. I hope you find this guide is useful in continuing the important work of raising awareness of nonpoint source issues and changing individual behaviors that will lead to cleaner waters for your community and our nation.

Denise Keehner, Director
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Contents

Introduction . . . 1
- *Purpose of this guide . . . 1*
- *What's inside? . . . 2*

Part 1: Getting Started . . . 3
- *Linking outreach and watershed planning . . . 3*
  - *Using a watershed approach . . . 4*
- *Using outreach to help meet water quality goals. . . . 5*
- *Using outreach to help get the job done . . . 6*
- *Using outreach to help change behavior. . . . 6*
  - *Social marketing 101 . . . 7*
- *Building partnerships to achieve goals . . . 8*

Part 2: Developing a Watershed Outreach Campaign Plan . . . 9
- *Step 1: Define the driving forces, goals, and objectives . . . 9*
  - *Driving forces . . . 9*
  - *Goals . . . 10*
  - *Objectives . . . 11*
  - *Setting up the evaluation process . . . 12*
  - *Process checklist . . . 14*
- *Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience . . . 15*
  - *Segmenting the audience . . . 15*
    - *Geographic location . . . 16*
    - *Demographics . . . 16*
    - *Occupation or links to certain activities . . . 16*
    - *Attitudes and behavior patterns . . . 16*
  - *Deciding which segment to target . . . 16*
    - *Picking the low-hanging fruit . . . 18*
  - *What information do I need about the target audience? . . . 19*
    - *Demographics . . . 19*
    - *Current activities and knowledge of the issue . . . 19*
    - *Attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions . . . 20*
    - *Communication channels. . . . 20*
    - *Social data . . . 20*
  - *How do I get information on the target audience? . . . 21*
    - *Using information already available . . . 22*
      - *Demographic databases, studies, and reports . . . 22*
      - *Public agencies . . . 23*
      - *Trade associations . . . 23*
      - *Universities . . . 23*

Collecting new information . . . 24
Surveys by mail . . . 24
Surveys by phone . . . 24
Intercept surveys . . . 26
Surveys by e-mail/Web . . . 27
Personal surveys . . . 30
Focus groups . . . 30
Community/neighborhood discussions . . . 33
Observation . . . 33
Community cultural assessment and characterization . . . 34
Social maps . . . 35
Asset maps . . . 35
Cognitive maps . . . 36
Concept maps . . . 36
Social network maps . . . 36
Online chatter research . . . 37
Analyzing and understanding the audience . . . 37
Barriers to action: Why do they do what they do? . . . 37
Understanding beliefs . . . 38
Social norms: Everyone's doing it! . . . 39
Critical mass . . . 39
The roles people play . . . 39
Process checklist . . . 41

Step 3: Create the message . . . 42
Deciding on which behaviors to focus . . . 42
Crafting the message . . . 43
The importance of framing . . . 44
Branding your program . . . 45
Getting the audience's attention . . . 46
Getting a response . . . 48
Messages with incentives and rewards . . . 48
Setting up a beneficial exchange . . . 50
Message delivery . . . 50
Process checklist . . . 54

Step 4: Package the message . . . 55
Linking the needs of the audience to the format . . . 55
Format considerations . . . 55
Greening up your outreach methods and materials . . . 56
Repeating the message . . . 57
Don't reinvent the wheel! . . . 58
Format options . . . 58
Mass media formats . . . 59
News coverage . . . 59
Why use the news media? . . . 59
The news is free! . . . 60

What makes the news? . . . 60
How do I "do" the news? . . . 63
Establishing a relationship with the media . . . 64
Levels of doing the news . . . 64
News coverage formats: News releases . . . 65
News coverage formats: Video news releases . . . 68
News coverage formats: Letters to the editor . . . 69
News coverage formats: Query letters . . . 70
News coverage formats: News conferences . . . 70
Advertising . . . 71
Advertising formats: The radio PSA . . . 71
Advertising formats: The TV PSA . . . 75
Advertising formats: Online ads and other media . . . 77
Banner ads . . . 77
Floating ads . . . 77
Pop-up and pop-under ads . . . 77
Rich media ads . . . 77
Text ads . . . 77
Where to place your ad . . . 78
Pay structure for online ads . . . 78
Videos . . . 79
Print materials . . . 79
Design and production . . . 80
White space . . . 80
Fonts . . . 80
Layout of text . . . 80
Making your text come alive . . . 81
Hooks . . . 81
Logos . . . 81
Using artwork and photos . . . 82
Prompts . . . 84
Brochures . . . 85
Flyers . . . 85
Posters . . . 86
Displays . . . 86
Billboards . . . 86
Presentations . . . 87
Events . . . 89
Community fairs and festivals . . . 90
Field trips . . . 92
Open houses . . . 92
Public hearings and meetings . . . 92
Interactive and facilitated meetings . . . 93
Hands-on events . . . 94

Other formats . . . 95
Giveaways . . . 95
What to give away . . . 95
Bumper stickers . . . 96
T-shirts and promotional items . . . 96
Mascots . . . 97
What does it cost? . . . 97
Process checklist . . . 99

Step 5: Distribute the message . . . 100
Who delivers the message? . . . 100
Distribution methods . . . 101
Face-to-face . . . 102
The Internet . . . 102
Creating a website . . . 103
Registering a domain name . . . 104
Designing your website . . . 104
Marketing your website . . . 104
Partnering with other website hosts . . . 105
E-mail distribution . . . 105
E-mail discussion lists . . . 106
Using social media and other Web 2.0 tools . . . 107
Social Networking Sites . . . 107
Facebook . . . 107
Twitter . . . 108
Web syndication . . . 108
RSS feeds . . . 108
Podcasts . . . 109
Blogs and vlogs . . . 109
Media-sharing sites . . . 110
Flickr . . . 110
YouTube . . . 110
Other Methods of Online Information Sharing . . . 111
Wikis . . . 111
Widgets . . . 111
Text messaging . . . 112
The future of the Web and outreach activities . . . 112
Mail . . . 112
News media . . . 113
Timing is everything . . . 114
Staffing the effort . . . 114
Recruit volunteers and interns . . . 114
Piggybacking your message . . . 1165
Go on the road . . . 115
Work with local businesses . . . 116
Process checklist . . . 116

Step 6: Evaluate the outreach campaign . . . 117
Why evaluate? . . . 117
When to evaluate . . . 117
Types of evaluations . . . 118
Process evaluations. . . . 120
Impact evaluations . . . 121
Water quality indicators . . . 121
Social Indicators . . . 121
Context evaluations . . . 123
Process checklist . . . 124
Where do I go from here? . . . 124

Part 3: Implementing the campaign . . . 125
Developing an operating plan . . . 125
Scheduling . . . 127
Determining resources and support. . . . 127
How partnerships can help. . . . 127
Where to find partners. . . . 127
Securing funding. . . . 128
Foundations . . . 129
Nonprofit organizations . . . 129
Federal funding sources. . . . 129
State funding sources. . . . 130
Local and private funding sources. . . . 131
Maintaining the momentum . . . 131
Overcoming barriers to success. . . . 131
Poor coordination and planning . . . 131
Lack of communication . . . 132
Political wrangling and changing regulations . . . 132
Fear of the unknown . . . 133
Letting money drive the process . . . 133
Letting the process bog you down . . . 134
A final thought... . . . 134

Appendix A: Building Blocks Worksheets . . . A-1
Appendix B: Identifying and Removing Barriers to Behavior Change . . . B-1
Appendix C: Behavior Selection Matrix . . . C-1
Appendix D: Outreach Campaign Evaluation Questions . . . D-1
Appendix E: Want to Know More? . . . E-1

Introduction

Purpose of this guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide the tools you need to develop and implement an effective outreach campaign as part of a state or local water quality improvement effort. Whether you're charged with developing a watershed management plan to restore impaired waters or protecting your local water resources for the future, this guide will help you understand the importance of reaching out to people and motivating them to act. It will help you understand the audiences in your watershed, create messages that resonate with them, find appropriate ways to communicate your message, and prompt changes in behavior to reduce water pollution.

This guide is the second update of the 1998 publication *Getting In Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach in Your Watershed*. In 2003 the guide was updated and renamed (*Getting in Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns*) to include more specific information on how to work with the mass media to conduct an outreach campaign and how to incorporate social marketing techniques into a campaign to generate sustainable behavior changes that will protect water quality. With this current update, more background and case studies on social marketing have been added, along with a new section on the connection between outreach and watershed planning. In addition, information on using the latest Web-based tools (e.g., social networking sites, mobile phone technologies, YouTube) has been included to help you keep pace with the latest techniques available to make your outreach campaign easier, more cost-effective, and more successful.

The guide will teach you how to listen to the needs of your audience rather than just blindly handing out fact sheets or reports that sit on shelves and collect dust. It will show you the important roles that audience research and program evaluation play in changing personal behavior. The step-by-step approach to social marketing and outreach planning and implementation in this guide will help you to determine the most effective vehicle to reach your target audience and motivate behavior change.

As a companion to the guide, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food jointly developed a how-to video called *Getting In Step: A Video Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns*. This 35-minute

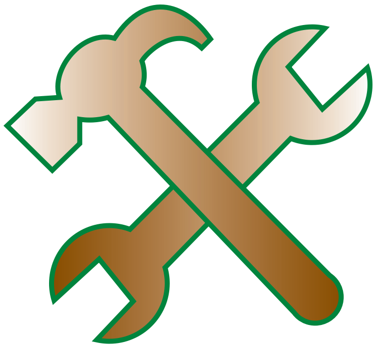
What's in the Introduction?

- Purpose of this guide
- What's inside?

You should read this guide if…

- You're in charge of a stormwater permit program
- You're part of a federal, state, or local water quality program staff
- You're a local watershed coordinator just starting your watershed planning process
- You're a public works director or staff person responsible for implementing stormwater programs
- You don't have any background in outreach, education, or communication, but you've found yourself responsible for these aspects of a water quality program

Outreach and education can help create an awareness of the value of our water resources, educate people about what's threatening the resources, and encourage protective action.



Look for this icon elsewhere in this guide to indicate resources available in EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox.

A word about the word *campaign*…

For the purpose of this guide, *campaign* is defined "a connected series of operations designed to bring about a particular result." A campaign is not a single product or event, but rather a suite of activities, materials, and distribution formats that have been carefully coordinated to achieve specific goals and objectives.

The key to successful outreach is targeting your message to a specific audience and having them respond to your message.

DVD provides background on the six steps for conducting an environmental outreach campaign and includes four in-depth case studies that showcase successful local outreach programs from across the country. The DVD icon in this guide highlights information from the video case studies.

In addition to the outreach guide and video, EPA published a guide in the *Getting in Step* series on stakeholder involvement. *Getting in Step: Engaging Stakeholders in Your Watershed* features information on how to generate interest and participation in watershed assessment, planning, and management. Web-based versions of all of these guides are available in EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox at *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*.

What's inside?

Getting In Step provides the overall framework for developing and implementing your outreach campaign in concert with an overall water quality improvement effort. It is divided into three main parts: Part I, Getting Started; Part II, Developing a Watershed Outreach Campaign Plan; and Part III, Implementing the Campaign. Part II is the main focus of the guide because it presents the outreach process as six discrete steps, with each step building on the previous ones:

Step 1: Define the driving forces, goals, and objectives.

Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience.

Step 3: Create the message.

Step 4: Package the message.

Step 5: Distribute the message.

Step 6: Evaluate the outreach campaign.

Appendixes A–D include worksheets to help you develop your outreach plan. They may be photocopied and used as templates for preparing your plan. Appendix E provides information on additional resources for outreach and education. It includes publications, websites, e-mail discussion lists, and other available outreach materials.

Throughout the guide, sidebars provide specific examples, key concepts, and recommended resources for obtaining more information.

So let's get started on developing an effective watershed outreach campaign!

Part 1: Getting Started

Before you put pen to paper, it's important to stop and think about the reasons you're doing outreach and how they relate to watershed problems. To be effective (making progress toward achieving water quality goals), outreach programs need to be carefully crafted to help address specific water quality issues on a watershed basis. By the same token, outreach can help you get your job done—whether you're a watershed coordinator, public works manager, or employee of a state environmental agency. Done correctly, outreach can be an effective tool to help motivate people to adopt behaviors that will help improve and protect water quality, while at the same time strengthening watershed planning efforts, meeting regulatory requirements, and helping to build partnerships.

What's in Part 1?

- Linking outreach to watershed planning
- Using outreach to help meet water quality goals
- Using outreach to help get the job done
- Using outreach to help change behavior
- Building partnerships to achieve goals

Linking outreach and watershed planning

We've made a lot of progress cleaning up America's lakes, rivers, and streams since the 1972 Clean Water Act was passed. Rivers don't catch fire anymore. Fish kills are down, and the quality of sewage treatment has improved dramatically. Some of the worst problems have been solved. The Clean Water Act has focused a powerful array of regulations and resources on improving wastewater discharges from cities, factories, and other facilities. Billions of dollars have been spent on new treatment plants, permitting systems, and inspections. But even with all of our laws and regulations, about 40 percent of the nation's waters are still too polluted for fishing, swimming, and other uses. Compounding the problem is a lack of public awareness. Many of America's waters are still contaminated by sediment, sewage, disease-causing bacteria, fertilizers, manure, toxic metals, and oil and grease. Some of our stream corridors, riverbanks, and lakeshores lack stabilizing vegetation and continue to erode, further degrading water quality and aquatic habitat. In its report *Environmental Literacy in America* (September 2005), the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation stated that 47 percent of respondents still believe that the most common cause of water pollution is factories.

Today, polluted runoff is the source of most of the contamination in the nation's waters. Heavy rains and melting snow pick up pollutants and transport them downhill toward the nearest body of water

Point versus nonpoint

Point source pollution is linked mostly to direct discharges from wastewater treatments plants, factories, urbanized areas, and concentrated animal feeding operations.

Nonpoint source pollution (also called polluted runoff) comes from many diffuse sources. It occurs when rainfall or snowmelt moves over and through the ground. As it moves, the runoff picks up pollutants such as dirt, oil, and fertilizers and carries them to lakes, rivers, coastal waters, and even our underground sources of drinking water.

or leach through the soil, carrying pollutants toward ground water supplies.

Runoff from an urban or suburban area, for example, is likely to contain the following:

- Fertilizer and pesticides leached from lawns
- Oil and antifreeze washed off driveways
- Bacteria and organic matter from pet waste
- Sediment from construction sites.

Runoff from farms, homes, or factories in rural areas can contain many of the same pollutants. Urban runoff is also characterized by high storm flows and increased water temperatures. Multiplied by hundreds or thousands of acres in a watershed, the cumulative effect of polluted runoff can be devastating to the receiving waters downstream.

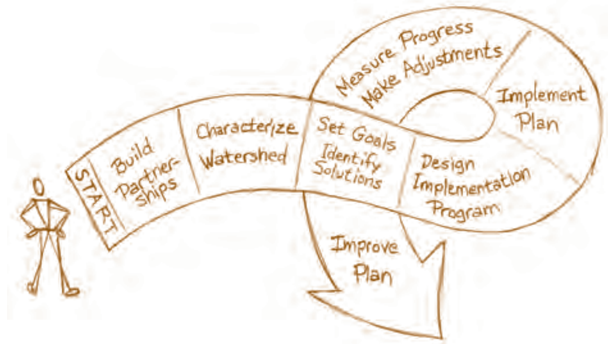
EPA and state and local governments are addressing these challenges by focusing on some of the remaining major sources of water pollution (e.g., urban streets and parking lots, livestock farms, failing septic systems). They're implementing best management practices (BMPs) to reduce polluted runoff and launching new initiatives to educate people and motivate them to change their personal behaviors to help in the effort. But the problems are so widespread that fighting polluted runoff requires the efforts of individuals and communities nationwide. Most people don't realize that many of the things they do every day in and around their homes contribute to polluted runoff. Those individual behaviors need to be changed. Making a change from pollution-generating behaviors to pollution-preventing behaviors requires education, enlightenment, and new attitudes. When people know, understand, and change how they do things, polluted runoff problems can be solved.

Using a watershed approach

Much of the current effort at the federal and state levels to clean up pollution and protect water quality is organized through a watershed approach focused on geographic boundaries defined by drainage basins instead of political or jurisdictional boundaries. This approach provides a flexible coordinating framework that focuses public and private efforts on targeted problems within specific drainage basins. The guiding principles of the approach are stakeholder partnerships, a geographic focus, and sound science. Thousands of projects over dozens of years have shown that involving the people affected by watershed management decisions in making those decisions generates high levels of long-term support and success. Even more important, however, is motivating changes in individual behaviors in the watershed to help achieve water quality improvements after watershed plans have been developed.

Constant feedback is necessary to determine whether the practices used actually help clean up or protect the lake, river, stream, wetland, or ground water source of concern. Throughout the process, there is a continuous need to inform, engage, and motivate water quality managers, "sideline" stakeholders, cooperating agencies, elected officials, so-called "bad actors," and the public. Outreach campaigns can be powerful tools in this process.

In March 2008, EPA published the *Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters* (*www.epa.gov/nps/watershed_handbook*). The Handbook is a comprehensive guide to developing and implementing watershed plans to meet water quality standards and protect water resources—from identifying problems and setting goals to selecting solutions and measuring progress. Chapter 3 of the Handbook complements this guide by providing details on the critical first step of building partnerships to help achieve water quality goals.



Another resource that links outreach and partnership-building to watershed planning and management is the *Stakeholder Guide* noted in the introduction. It describes in detail how to identify stakeholders and partners, host productive meetings, make decisions by consensus, and secure funding. Later on, you'll learn more about how partnerships can help with watershed outreach campaigns and where you can look to find partners.

Using outreach to help meet water quality goals

At the start of your watershed planning process, you probably asked yourself, "What do I want to happen as a result of my watershed plan? What kind of water quality improvements would I like to see?" The same questions should be asked when embarking on a watershed outreach campaign. Ideally the answers will be the similar, if not the same. As mentioned earlier, polluted runoff is the main problem plaguing our waters today. Much of that runoff is not being addressed by permits, laws, and regulations. Instead, it is up to individual citizens, landowners, developers, and businesses to find ways to prevent pollution. Sometimes the only way to address a particular source of pollution is through education. For example, in waterways affected primarily by dog waste, education might be the simplest and most publicly acceptable way of reducing fecal coliform bacteria in the water. Outreach and education are vital in such cases but can also make a dent in addressing many other types of pollutant sources. Ensuring that your outreach goals and objectives are linked to your overall water quality improvement or protection goals will help make your campaign more successful.

Using outreach to help get the job done

Many state and federal agencies require some form of outreach or public education and involvement as part of their water quality laws and regulations. One of the driving forces requiring outreach during watershed planning is section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act, which addresses nonpoint source pollution. If watershed plans are developed in support of a section 319-funded project, they must address the nine key elements that EPA has stated are required for achieving improvements in water quality. Developing an information and education component for the watershed plan is one the nine key elements. And watershed planning and management have many other aspects that require some outreach activities. (More information on the 319 program and its requirements can be found at *www.epa.gov/nps/cwact.html*.)

In addition, Phase II of EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater regulations, which calls for certain municipal separate storm sewer system operators to develop and implement stormwater management programs, requires that localities provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the development of the program and that they distribute educational materials on stormwater runoff. Developing an effective outreach campaign not only will help gain the critical support and compliance that will lead to the ultimate success of the stormwater management program but also will help meet the federal requirements EPA has set. If your program requires the cooperation of the public to meet its legal obligations, making the audience aware of the issues, educating them on what needs to be done, and motivating them to take action will help you meet both your regulatory and water quality objectives.

Using outreach to help change behavior

Changing behavior through education and developing responsible attitudes among watershed citizens and communities is not a simple task, but experience has demonstrated that it can be done. Think of times when you've changed your own attitude or behavior, perhaps when you finally realized that it really isn't so hard to separate the recyclables from the trash or decided to get serious about a diet or exercise program. A few things happened before the behavior change took place. First, you received information on the ramifications of your current behavior—specific data on the problem. Then you linked your actions to something you cared about—your health or your pocketbook, for instance. Finally, you decided to do something about it. Maybe you haven't achieved the success you ultimately want, but you're trying and you're better off now than you were.

That's the approach needed to address polluted runoff. Although it's important to let people know about the water quality problems, sometimes simply informing and educating people on the issues is not enough to initiate behavior change. One of the most effective ways to get people to change their behavior is through social marketing.

Social marketing 101

At its most basic level, *social marketing* means looking at your watershed community as consumers. Social marketing incorporates proven commercial marketing principles into education about social issues. Instead of selling products or services, it sells ideas, attitudes, and behaviors. The goal of social marketing is not to make money, but to improve our society and the environment.

Social marketing might be most familiar to you in terms of preventing drunk driving or forest fires. Everyone knows the popular slogans—“Friends don’t let friends drive drunk” and “Only you can prevent forest fires.” These campaigns persuade the public that a problem exists that only they can solve. These types of campaigns benefit the public at large and the environment.

As defined by Philip Kotler, Nancy Lee, and Michael Rothschild, nationally known social marketing experts, social marketing is “a *process* that applies marketing principles and techniques to create, communicate, and deliver value in order to influence target audience behaviors that benefit society as well as the target audience.” Social marketing is not merely a single slogan, a brochure, or a radio public service announcement (PSA). It is a ***process***. The process includes careful audience analysis, analysis of behaviors, identification of the barriers to behavior change, message planning and techniques to overcome those barriers, execution of appropriate outreach methods, and evaluation of the process and the impact—all of which are necessary for a successful social marketing campaign.

Consider the well-known, award-winning Smokey Bear commercials. One famous ad showed a crackling forest fire as reflected in Smokey Bear’s eyes. It was a very clever PSA, but you could not say that it was social marketing unless it focused on a targeted audience, identified and overcame specific behavior barriers, and was promoted in ways that offered some kind of benefit to the audience. If the ad was the only aspect of the campaign, that would have been all it was—just another catchy PSA. However, the Ad Council, which has cosponsored the 65-year campaign, conducts surveys, manages an online pledge program, hosts social media profiles on Facebook and Twitter, and has numerous outreach materials such as teacher’s guides, activity books, radio and TV PSAs, posters, online burning acreage counters, interactive maps of current wildfires, and many other resources to make it easy, fun, and convenient to learn about and teach others the importance of fire safety (*www.smokeybear.com*). According to a recent Ad Council survey, Smokey Bear and his famous words of wisdom—“Only you can prevent forest fires”—are recalled by three out of four adults without prompting.

Social marketing resources

See Appendix E of this guide for numerous social marketing resources, including publications, e-mail discussion lists, websites, and case study repositories.

Social marketing focuses on societal benefits. There is strong consensus that environmental protection preserves societies, as well as the environment.

The key differentiator between social marketing and traditional outreach and education is that social marketing involves identifying and removing the barriers that have prevented the consumer from "buying" the recommended behavior. For example, if you're trying to get people to test their soil before they apply lawn fertilizer, you can make it easier for them: sponsor a soil test day on which a local garden supply store hands out free soil test kits and demonstrates their use, or work with schools to have students test soil at their homes or local parks. This approach will go a lot further toward getting people to test their soil than merely sending out a flyer in the mail. If the barrier is structural, economic, or political, a multifaceted solution that incorporates group decision-making processes might be warranted. Such a process could help change policies or make funds or equipment available that might not have been available otherwise.

The key to effective social marketing is talking and listening to the people you're trying to reach and trying to determine what it is that will motivate them to make a change or do something new. Part II provides tips on using various social marketing tools that focus on addressing behavior barriers and incorporating commitment, social norms, and prompts to achieve results. (Refer to Steps 2, 3, and 4 in particular).

Building partnerships to achieve goals

Environmental issues are often too complex and too expensive for one group or organization to tackle on its own. That's where partnerships can be useful. A *partnership* is a voluntary collaboration of agencies, organizations, or other groups or individuals that have joined to work toward a common goal. Partnering can play an instrumental role in the success of your campaign. In times of shrinking budgets and increased public demands, many agencies can benefit from the resources and support that cross-agency and public-private partnerships can offer. In addition, engaging a wide variety of partners early in your outreach process helps to create a team that will be very helpful when it is time to identify audiences, messages, and formats for your outreach campaign.

Partnerships have many advantages, including providing access to resources; increasing effectiveness, efficiency, and public influence; allowing for creativity and innovation; and improving communication between typically adversarial parties. Partners can also offer staff, access to and support from their membership, publicity, political influence, and/or financial resources. In addition, partnerships lend credibility to your effort when you're seeking funding and delivering your message. Refer to Part III, Implementing the Campaign, for more details on how to find partners and work with them to strengthen your outreach campaign.

Part 2: Developing a Watershed Outreach Campaign Plan

To develop an effective outreach campaign, you need a plan. Just as you would never drive through unfamiliar territory without a map or GPS unit, you should not conduct an outreach campaign without a plan. The planning process presented in this section follows well-defined steps, and it's important to identify the elements and information needed to complete each step before proceeding to the next. Each step is at least partially dependent on the previous one, so it's vital to go through the steps sequentially and completely before moving on. Too often, someone starts in the middle of the process and important steps such as identifying measurable objectives or defining target audiences, for example, are ignored. Such an unfocused approach is often ineffective and wasteful. Working closely with watershed stakeholders and representatives of your audience will also help make your process more cost-effective and successful.

In addition, keep in mind that your objectives will help you determine the appropriate watershed scale needed to conduct effective outreach. It is often best to break your area into smaller watersheds on which you can focus separately.

What's in Part 2?

- Step 1: Define the driving forces, goals, and objectives
- Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience
- Step 3: Create the message
- Step 4: Package the message
- Step 5: Distribute the message
- Step 6: Evaluate the outreach campaign
- Where do I go from here?

What's in Step 1?

- Driving forces
- Goals
- Objectives
- Setting up the evaluation process

Step 1: Define the driving forces, goals, and objectives

When considering whether to develop an outreach campaign, you first need to ask yourself why you need one. What are the driving forces? These driving forces will then help shape your goals and objectives. Setting goals and objectives will guide the process of engaging and informing those who are contributing to water quality degradation and motivating them to adopt more appropriate behaviors.

Driving forces

Most outreach campaigns are driven by the need to address some underlying problem, such as a water quality standards violations, new regulations, flooding, public concern, or similar issues. Identifying the forces that are compelling the need for an outreach campaign—and exploring their connection to other water quality and quality-of-life issues—will help determine the goals and focus of the campaign. The key question here is "Why are we thinking about doing this?"

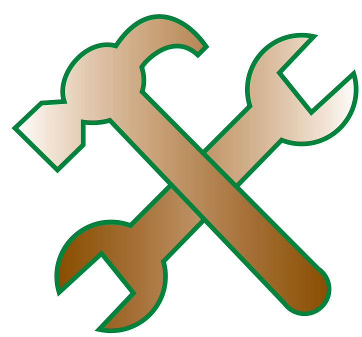
Identifying and characterizing the forces that are motivating your interest in an outreach campaign will help to define your objectives and set the overall framework for your efforts. For example, the City of San Diego faced two powerful driving forces when addressing stormwater pollution—one political and one regulatory. After considerable public pressure to reduce beach bacteria postings and closures, city council action led to the development of the "Think Blue" campaign (*www.sandiego.gov/thinkblue*), a stormwater education and pollution prevention campaign designed to address persistent bacteria runoff problems. In addition, the city's stormwater permit specifically required documentation of behavior change and an increase in stormwater awareness among city residents.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Development pressure was the driving force in west Michigan, where protection of the Bear Creek watershed meant gaining public buy-in for the development of stricter ordinances outlining where homes could be built. The Bear Creek Watershed Project organizers launched a hefty outreach campaign to spread their message.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Development of a Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL (the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards), can also generate the need for an outreach campaign (see box). Once a TMDL is calculated for a waterbody, stakeholders in the watershed should be educated on what they can do to help meet the objectives of the TMDL and assist in its implementation. Such stakeholder involvement is a very important part of the process. To find out how to effectively engage stakeholders in water quality protection, read the companion guide, *Getting In Step: Engaging Stakeholders In Your Watershed*. The Stakeholder Guide is available in EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox at *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*.



Goals

Keeping the driving forces you identified in mind, you can now develop goals and objectives for your campaign. Goals are general statements that express the broad focus of your effort.

Make sure that your goals link back to the driving forces. For example, in response to declining fisheries, the goal of your watershed project might be to protect and restore a local trout fishery. You (or your planning team) have decided that outreach is needed to increase public awareness about the importance of the trout fishery to the

TMDLs as a driving force

Since 1995, 41,500 approved Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) have been developed by the states or established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), addressing more than 38,000 listed impairments. Although this represents a significant number of TMDLs and a large effort by the states and EPA, states have identified nearly 71,000 TMDLs still to be developed in the next 8–13 years.

Is it a mission, a vision, or a goal?

Many people get hung up on the terminology when setting their goals. The important thing to remember is that it is a hierarchy: You move from the broad (goals or mission statements) to the specific (objectives and tasks). Each subsequent level should answer the question "How?" from the previous level. For example, if your goal is to restore the trout fishery, the next level down should answer "How would you restore the fishery?"

community and to increase community involvement in protecting and restoring the fishery. Later on, you'll develop and implement a wide range of specific, measurable objectives to support those goals.

In some cases, there might not be an overarching water quality improvement effort driving your campaign. For example, if your community's trout fishery is not yet in trouble but you would like to preserve and protect its pristine nature and ensure its quality for future generations, the goal of your outreach campaign might be simply to generate awareness of the importance of the fishery and the need to protect it. No problem is necessary before a campaign can begin. Prevention is the best medicine. Remember that awareness is the first step toward behavior change.

Objectives

The objectives developed to achieve a goal should be specific, measurable, action-oriented, relevant, and time-focused (SMART). You'll probably develop several objectives for each goal you're trying to achieve. Keep the desired outcome in mind when forming your objectives. Do you want to create awareness, provide information, or encourage action among the target audience? It's important to make your objectives as specific as possible and to include a time element as well as a result. This approach will make it easier to identify specific tasks and will let you evaluate whether you've achieved the objective. For example, an objective for the goal of increasing community involvement in the protection and restoration of the trout fishery might be to start a citizen volunteer monitoring program by next year.

It's important to remember that as you progress through the phases of developing and implementing an outreach campaign, your outreach objectives and activities will change. As the target audience becomes aware of the issues, you'll focus your efforts toward action. For example, during the early stages of the planning process, it might be necessary to generate basic awareness of watershed issues and define polluted runoff; but as problems are identified, your objectives will focus on educating the target audiences on the causes of the problems and the potential solutions. Finally, your objectives will change to motivating action by the target audience to reduce adverse water quality impacts. Refer to page 21, for a discussion of the stages of behavior change that can affect how your target audience moves along a continuum of changes. Listed below are some driving forces and general watershed project goals, with examples of the types of outreach objectives that should be considered for each goal:

Driving force: Algal blooms are causing taste and odor problems in the local drinking water reservoir.
Goal: Create a grassroots watershed association.
Objective: Within six months, identify five organizations willing to become project partners by signing a Memorandum of Agreement.

Healthy Watersheds Initiative Sets Goal of Preventing Future Water Quality Problems

EPA's Healthy Watersheds Initiative includes both assessment and management approaches that encourage states, local governments, watershed organizations, and others to take a strategic, systems approach to conserve healthy components of watersheds, and, therefore, avoid additional water quality impairments in the future. The approach involves 1) identifying healthy watersheds on a state-wide basis and healthy components of other watersheds; and 2) conserving healthy watersheds and protecting healthy components of other watersheds. It is an approach that will protect the remaining healthy watersheds and prevent impacts to aquatic ecosystems (and, thus, water quality impairments) from land use changes and other perturbations (e.g., invasive species) in other watersheds. For more information about the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, visit *www.epa.gov/healthywatersheds*.

The term *watershed*…

Although some people have heard the term *watershed*, few people understand it well enough to be able to define it and, more importantly, few people see the value in understanding what a watershed is in addressing the problem of nonpoint source pollution. While raising watershed awareness is a positive outcome in general, not all successful campaigns to improve or protect water quality hang on a target audience's understanding of the term watershed—and in fact, such efforts may be an inefficient use of resources. Linking the problem to the causes is often the most important stage of education.

Driving force: Development pressures are threatening local water resources.
Goal: Develop a shared community vision or goal for the water resource.
Objectives: Hold two meetings in July to solicit comments from stakeholders and the public on what they envision for the watershed in the future; communicate elements of the agreed-upon goal or vision at both monthly watershed association meetings and town council meetings.

Driving force: The local river is not meeting water quality standards for cadmium.
Goal: Conduct a baseline assessment of watershed conditions.
Objectives: Through local media outlets, notify organizations and the public the first week of March that baseline studies are under way; encourage those with information on abandoned dump sites or other possible contaminant sources to contact the planning team by the end of May to ensure that the information is included in the assessment.

Driving force: Future grant funding will be dependent on demonstrated progress.
Goal: Evaluate watershed management program success, and adjust approach if necessary.
Objectives: Recruit volunteer monitors to gather long-range information on water quality trends; conduct five volunteer monitoring training courses over the next two years.

Once your objectives are defined, you'll need to prioritize them. You should evaluate which objectives are most important to help meet your overall goal. The priority goals and objectives you focus on might change from year to year because of political, economic, or climatic influences.

Use the Building Blocks worksheets in Appendix A to help you define the driving forces, goals, and objectives for your campaign.

Setting up the evaluation process

Although Step 6 of this guide provides more in-depth coverage of how to evaluate your outreach campaign, building in evaluation from the beginning and during every step will ensure that you stay on the right track and meet your program objectives. Ideally, feedback generated after each completed step will help you carry out the tasks for each subsequent step more effectively. You'll need to identify and use both *social* and *environmental indicators* to guide you along the way. *Social indicators* are measures that describe the capacity, skills, awareness, knowledge, values, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals or groups of people that are expected to lead to water quality improvement. *Environmental indicators* are measures that describe changes to the watershed or water quality environment that can be correlated to specific actions or activities. Before you put pen to paper to write your outreach campaign plan, you should take some time to familiarize yourself with the evaluation methods described in Step 6 of this guide. Doing so will give you the background you need to think about and add evaluation measures as you develop and implement your plan.

In addition, this guide includes specific evaluation questions after each step to help you along the way. Keep in mind, however, that what is successful in one part of the country might not work in another region, state, or locality. By the same token, failure of a particular method of outreach for one issue or in one area does not necessarily mean that it won't work for your campaign. In the next step you'll learn how researching your target audience will help you determine what might work best for your situation.

Building Blocks:

Step 1: Driving Forces, Goals, and Objectives

At the end of each step, you'll see a hypothetical Building Blocks case study box like this one, which highlights the activities that should be undertaken in that step.

Herndon County (a hypothetical locality) is suffering the effects of rapid development. The county's population has increased by 107 percent over the past 20 years. Many watersheds in the county are facing serious water quality problems, including phosphorus and nitrogen overloading caused by urban runoff, sedimentation and erosion, bacterial contamination, and flooding due to impervious surfaces.

To overcome many of these problems, Herndon County has developed a watershed management plan to provide a planning framework for the county to make the most supportable, cost-efficient decisions on management practices that will restore and protect water quality. The county's overall goals for the plan are the following:

- Maintain the environmental goals set for the county's streams and lakes by the state.
- Reduce nutrient runoff from residential and commercial areas.
- Reduce the potential for flooding as development occurs.
- Increase awareness about water quality problems and solutions to protect water quality.
- Strengthen the linkage between land use activities and water quality and flooding.
- Satisfy the requirements of the NPDES Storm Water Phase II regulations.

The overall goal of the county's public outreach program is to "increase the involvement of the community in watershed protection activities through awareness, education, and action." The public outreach program will directly support the watershed management goals. The following are some of the objectives that county staff identified to help achieve the outreach program's goal:

- Research the level of awareness in the county through focus groups and a phone survey in the spring.
- Make residents aware that they live in a watershed and that their day-to-day activities affect water quality.
- Increase awareness of residential nutrient runoff by 25 percent within one year and encourage behaviors that will reduce nutrient pollution in local streams and lakes.
- Through a six-month media campaign, educate residents and businesses about the link between land use activities and water quality/flooding, as well as about the county's role in protecting water resources and managing stormwater.

"We conduct an annual phone survey that reaches about 450 households to determine changes in behavior and increased awareness of watershed issues. We use the information to help shape our media campaign for the next year, deciding where to put our resources and what issues we need to focus on."

—Deborah Castillo, City of San Diego Storm Water Program www.sandiego.gov/thinkblue

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

PROCESS CHECKLIST
Step 1: Define your driving forces, goals, and objectives

- ❑ Are we clear on why we are doing what we are doing?
- ❑ Are the objectives consistent with the planning team's goals?
- ❑ Are the objectives specific, with time limits and measurable components?
- ❑ Will the objectives be accepted and understood by the people who will be affected by them?
- ❑ Will I be able to evaluate whether the objectives were accomplished?
- ❑ Do I have the resources to accomplish the identified objectives?
- ❑ Have I begun to identify ways to evaluate my progress and impact?

Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience

Once you've identified your goals and objectives, you need to identify the audiences you'll target to achieve your objectives. The target audience is the group of people you want to reach with your message. In some cases it might be obvious, but in others you'll be able to identify it only after conducting research. For example, if you're trying to decrease lawn fertilizer applications, do-it-yourself residents and lawn care companies might be target audiences. If you want to increase streamside vegetated buffers, property owners along the stream corridor might be one of the target audiences. If you want to discourage people from purchasing toxic household products, your target audience might be stay-at-home parents who do most of the household shopping. Raising general awareness of the value and function of a water resource, however, will necessitate a very broad target audience. And remember, although raising the general awareness of the audience is an important first step, it should not be the final goal of your effort.

In reality, there is rarely just one audience. The messages you develop need to be tailored to the different segments of the community that you wish to reach. For example, a campaign to reduce shoreline erosion caused by heavy boat wake at a lake should be targeted at two different audiences—homeowners with shoreline property and docks as well as summer and weekend lake visitors. Each audience uses the lake differently and might place a different value on its resources. Both, however, will benefit from the collective reduction in boat wake action along shorelines.

In all cases, break down the target audience into the smallest segments possible that still retain the characteristics of the audience so that when you reach the audience with your message, they'll help you achieve your objective. If the audience is too broad, chances are you won't be able to develop a message that engages and resonates with the entire target audience.

Be sure to read Step 2 fully before you begin to identify and segment the audience. The section "Analyzing and understanding the audience" (page 37) will help prepare you for researching your audience.

Segmenting the audience

Target audiences can be grouped in several different ways depending on your objectives. Four common groupings follow. (Keep in mind that segmentation using these groups is only a starting point. You'll have to define the audience further in Step 2.)

What's in Step 2?

- Segmenting the audience
- Deciding which segment to target
- What information do I need about the target audience?
- How do I get information on the target audience?
- Analyzing and understanding the audience

Geographic location

Audiences are segmented on the basis of specific geographic areas in the watershed, such as school districts, county boundaries, residences along a specific stream corridor, or ZIP Codes.

Demographics

Audiences are segmented on the basis of demographic characteristics, such as ethnicity, gender, age, income, recreational activities, organizational affiliations, or ownership of specific types of property (e.g., forestland, undeveloped waterfront).

Occupation or links to certain activities

Audiences are segmented on the basis of the primary occupations or activities of the target audience in the watershed, such as owners of lawn care companies, developers, county commissioners, automobile service station managers, do-it-yourselfers, managers of large land tracts (e.g., golf courses, office parks), loggers, or livestock producers.

Attitudes and behavior patterns

Audiences are segmented on the basis of current attitudes and behaviors, e.g., residents who don't recycle, homeowners who dispose of leaves and grass clippings on stream banks, dog walkers who dispose of pet waste down the storm drain, or farmers who plow and plant riparian corridors.

The target audience definition can consider more than one of the above groupings. For example, if you want to generate awareness among students about the degradation of Lake Townsend, you might want to target the audience on the basis of demographics and geography (e.g., schoolchildren ages 12 to 17 within the Lake Townsend watershed).

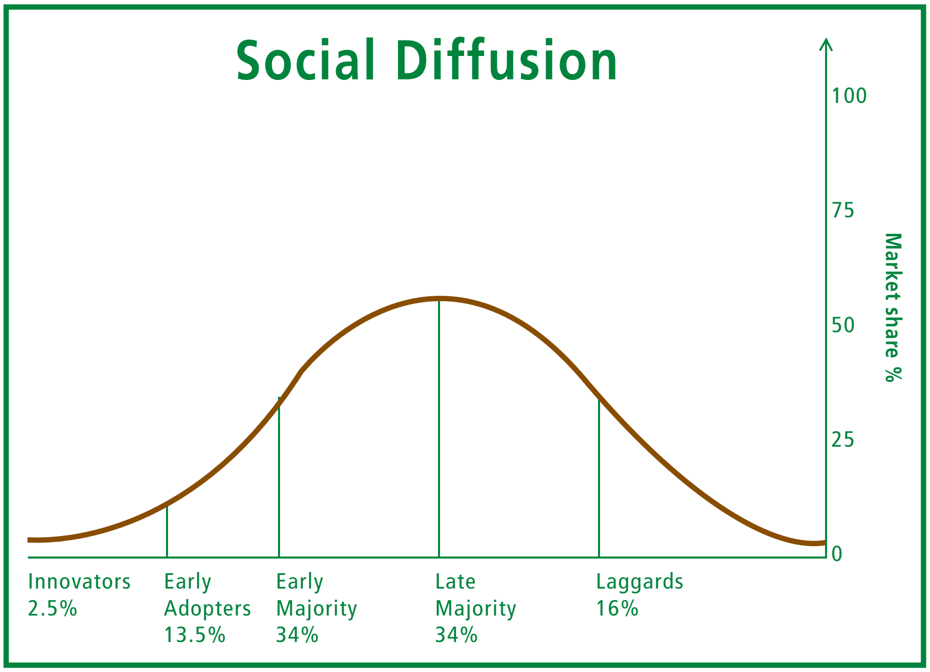
Deciding which segment to target

One of the keys to knowing which segment of the target audience you need to focus on is understanding the concept of *social diffusion*. This means that when a new idea or behavior is adopted by 15 to 20 percent of an audience, it has crossed a tipping point and reached a critical mass to spread on its own. Dr. Everett M. Rogers developed this theory after more than 30 years of research. In *Diffusion of Innovations*, Dr. Rogers discusses five categories of people within an audience that generally adopt new behaviors in sequential stages and at a fairly predictable rate: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority, (4) late majority, and (5) laggards. Identifying which category members of the audience might fall into will help you understand how to motivate them. The people in these categories adopt new behaviors at different rates and require different amounts and types of encouragement.

- ***Innovators*** *(2.5% of market) are often seen as venturesome. They frequently have high education levels, high social status, and up-*

Kids Organized to Protect our Environment (KOPE) in Utah targeted its outreach efforts on the trustees of the Sugarhouse Community Council to persuade local decision-makers to pass an open space ordinance. KOPE wanted to prevent a section of a local stream from being turned into a shopping center parking lot.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.



ward social mobility. They are usually better able than others to cope with uncertainty and high risk.

- ***Early adopters** (13.5%) are second only to innovators in the speed with which they adopt a new behavior. Others often view them as decisive and influential.*
- *The **early majority** (34%) is the segment of the audience that is more deliberate than the innovators or early adopters when making decisions. People in this category tend to be cautious and seek a lot of information on an issue before they make a decision.*
- *The **late majority** (34%) is one of the largest categories. These people are often set in their ways and skeptical about trying new things and adopting new behaviors.*
- ***Laggards** (16%) are the most resistant to change. They are the least likely to adopt a new behavior no matter how hard you try to educate and motivate them.*

Social diffusion and peer pressure among farmers

The Redwood River Clean Water Project in Minnesota was developed to reduce sediment and nutrient loadings, expand game fishery habitat and fishing opportunities, reduce peak flows and improve flow stability, and increase awareness of water quality issues throughout the watershed. In this agricultural watershed, residents were given educational booklets that summarized the adoption of watershed BMPs by farmers from 1994 to 2000. The booklet, *Restoring the Redwood River: Examples of Involvement by Local Citizens*, contained pictures of the farmers participating in the BMP program. It described the changes those farmers made and even provided driving directions to their farms. Interested residents could drive to a particular farm and look at the practices in place. Most farmers were very willing to have their photo, address, and story included in the booklet, which also documented the farmers' soil or phosphorus reduction in tons per year, the amount of area that has BMPs in place, and the acres of land that benefit from these practices.

As a result of farmers seeing what other farmers are doing, and also being held accountable by the community for maintaining their BMPs through the "publicity" they received in the booklet, many more BMPs were installed and maintained than would have been otherwise. In 2000, when the booklet was last updated, 159 landowners in the Redwood River corridor averaged a soil or phosphorus reduction of more than158 tons per year. (Source: Doug McKenzie-Mohr, *www.cbsm.com/cases/restoring+the+redwood+river_168*)

Neighborly outreach

The Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign, a neighbor-to-neighbor program developed by the nonprofit Global Action Plan for the Earth (now called GAP International), encourages families to work together to adopt environmentally friendly lifestyles. Households in one community in Rockland County, New York, formed "Eco-Teams" that met regularly with a trained volunteer coach. The households worked to reduce waste, buy "eco-wise" products and use less water and energy. At the end of the four-month program, the EcoTeams invited other neighbors to participate. Over a two-year period, 70 EcoTeams consisting of a total of 350 households formed in 18 Rockland County communities. On average, participants reduced their garbage by 34 percent, water use by 28 percent, energy use by 10 percent and transportation-related fuel use by 15 percent. The average cost savings per household was $324. The program received an Environmental Quality Award from EPA in 2002. The Sustainably Lifestyle Campaign piques citizens' interest in getting to know their neighbors better and, more importantly, finding out how they can become environmental stewards. The team members support each other to reduce pollution and engage in other practical, earth-friendly behaviors. Behavior changes are documented through baseline and follow-up questionnaires. Visit *www.globalactionplan.com* for more information.

Picking the low-hanging fruit

Many outreach campaigns fail because organizers believe they need to focus heavily on targeting the late majority and laggards segments since they encompass the greatest number of people. However, the late majority and laggards are the hardest people to reach and the hardest to convince that they should change their behavior. It is much easier to reach and convince innovators or early adopters. Once you've reached this more willing audience, they can become partners to start the diffusion process in their own circles. Because they are considered leaders and are well respected, their peers will be more likely to pick up the new behavior. When it comes to changing behavior, success means "preaching to the choir." Focus your efforts on those most likely to adopt the new behavior, and then let them spread the message or behavior in their own spheres of influence.

According to Malcolm Gladwell, author of *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, these types of people are what drive the 80/20 Principle (also called the Pareto Principle), which is the concept that in most situations about 80 percent of the result will be due to the work done by 20 percent of the participants. Gladwell goes on to describe the people who serve as a bridge between those innovators/early adopters and the majority. He classifies these bridge individuals as connectors and mavens. Connectors are the people who are gifted at making friends and acquaintances and generally connecting people together through large social networks.

Connectors have connections with many different types of people across many different disciplines and backgrounds. Think of the old Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon game, where you try to link any actor's name through the movies he or she has been in to Kevin Bacon in six steps or less. Kevin Bacon is a type of movie connector.

Gladwell describes mavens as "information specialists" or "people we rely upon to connect us with new information." They accumulate knowledge with the purpose of sharing it with others. These are the types of people who can help you spread your outreach messages more quickly and more effectively. They help the message make the leap from a small pool of innovators/early adopters to the larger populations of the early and late majority. You can identify the innovators, early adopters, connectors, and mavens in your target audience by talking to community leaders, homeowner association presidents, extension agents, school principals, and other civic leaders.

Once you've identified the target audience, you'll need to gather information on them before proceeding to the next step. Conducting at least a rudimentary analysis of the target audience is a task that's often ignored, but such an oversight can render the rest of the outreach plan useless. To develop an effective message that resonates with the audience, find out what they think about the issues and what messages might engage and motivate them.

What information do I need about the target audience?

First, remember that the target audience is your customer. You want to sell your customer a product (e.g., environmental awareness, membership in an organization, participation in a stream restoration project, or some voluntary behavior change). So you need to find out what will make the customer buy the product. Keep in mind that you can't assume that the customer's reasons or values will be the same as yours. Several types of information are needed to characterize and assess the customer.

Demographics

Collecting demographic information will help define the socioeconomic structure of the target audience, the appropriate education and age levels for proposed messages, and the types of organizations that could be engaged to implement outreach activities. For example, retired persons, with more free time, are able to volunteer more often.

Current activities and knowledge of the issue

Determining current activities or practices that affect water quality and determining baseline knowledge of watershed issues among members of the target audience will establish where you need to begin to define your issue. For example, does the target audience know what a watershed is or understand what causes polluted runoff? If

Reaching Amish farmers

In Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the Natural Resources Conservation Service learned that to convince Amish dairymen to keep the cows out of the stream to reduce pollution, traditional outreach methods using TV, radio, or phone calls were not options. Instead, they turned to one-on-one chats with the farmers themselves.

"The Amish were going to be our focus since they own most of the land and are all dairymen. The problem with working with the Amish is that they don't have phones. If you want to see an Amish man, you've got to jump in your car and drive out and look for him."

—Frank Lucas, Pequea-Mill Creek Project Leader, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Basic information needed about the target audience

- What water-quality-related activities do they engage in and why?
- What are the demographics of the audience?
- What is the knowledge base of the audience regarding water-shed issues?
- How does the audience receive information?
- How do members of the audi-ence communicate among themselves?
- What stage of change is the audience in?
- Does the audience think there is a problem?
- If so, who do they think is responsible?
- How does the audience per-ceive your organization?

not, and if such foreknowledge is necessary, you have to define those terms before you use them in your messages.

Attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions

Exploring what people in the target audience think about an issue or problem and what they value and believe will help you link watershed issues with the audience's concerns. If they don't believe a problem exists or don't understand how it affects environmental resources they value, you'll need to educate them before expecting them to take action.

Remember: Perception is reality. How is your organization perceived by the target audience? Consider who would be accepted as an ideal messenger by your target audience.

Communication channels

Finding out how the target audience gets its information will help you to develop, format, and distribute your message. What newspapers, magazines, or newsletters do they read? To what organizations do they belong? Do they receive information in other forms, such as community radio programs? Do they watch local news or cable TV? Do they even have TVs? Understanding what communication channels the target audience uses and trusts will help lend credibility to your message. It is important to use communication channels that the target audience tunes into.

Social data

Collecting information on the types of relationships and cultural beliefs and norms present in your community can help you identify the barriers to behavior change, better ways of communicating your message, and the formats that might be most appropriate to deliver your message. Social data will also give you insight into who talks to whom, who makes decisions, and who follows others. Understanding community culture and its wide range of distinct and shared values, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs can help you understand what people care about and why, as well as what motivates them to take action. Knowledge about racial, religious, and cultural heritage in your community can help you understand why people behave the way they do, hold certain beliefs, or communicate in certain ways. By collecting social data, you can gain a better understanding of how a community's values and beliefs relate to environmental issues. In addition, social data, such as what social or religious groups have strong memberships among the target audience, might help you identify additional ways to distribute your message. These groups are often well respected within a community, and because they already have the ear of your audience, it will be easier to communicate through them.

Stages of behavior change

Consider how receptive your audience is to behavior change. Many sociologists and marketers call this the *stages of change* model. Prochaska, Norcross, and DiClemente describe the stages in *Changing for Good* (Avon Books 1994):

- **Precontemplation:** People with no intention of changing their behavior. They might have thought about the behavior change at some point in the past, but they never acted on it and do not plan to act on it in the future.
- **Contemplation:** These people are thinking about the new behavior but have not taken steps to adopt it.
- **Preparation:** These people are planning to take action and might even be taking steps toward adopting the new behavior even though they have not yet actually adopted it.
- **Action:** People in this stage are the ones who have actually made a change or recently adopted the new behavior.
- **Maintenance:** These people need constant reminders and reinforcement to make their new behavior become habit and stick.
- **Termination:** This is the stage we strive to reach. In this stage, people are no longer tempted to return to their old habits and have adopted the new behavior for life.

How do you know what stage your audience is in? You'll need to ask them some questions to find out. You'll need to ask whether they have already adopted the new behavior, when they adopted the new behavior (if they already have), or when they plan to adopt the new behavior (if they have not yet done so). These questions can be asked in focus groups or surveys. The messages and materials you use in your outreach campaign will vary based on your audience's stage of change. For example, imagine you are trying to get homeowners along a particular stream bank to stop using pesticides and fertilizers. If your audience is mostly in the contemplation stage, a message that is focused on encouraging a *reduction* in chemical use might be easier for them to consider than a message asking them to quit entirely. This would help them move along the continuum of change and make progress toward the larger commitment of completely eliminating pesticides and fertilizers altogether during the action stage. As long as you keep the audience moving along the continuum, you are making progress toward your behavior change goal.

How do I get information on the target audience?

Now that you know what kinds of information you need from the target audience, how do you get it? You can use several different tools depending on the makeup of the target audience and your available resources (time and money). If the audience is large and unfamiliar, reviewing Census data or data from other literature or reports can help build an understanding of the audience. If the audience is small, direct discussions with audience members using informal interviews or small focus group discussions are extremely valuable. Any information you collect will make your campaign stronger, so don't worry if you can't make your survey results statistically significant. Research past campaigns targeted at the audience and learn how they collected information. Find out whether any of the information they collected might help your cause and save you from reinventing the wheel. A good place to start would be at the U.S. Census Bureau website (*http://factfinder.census.gov*). Keep in mind that using multiple methods of audience research (Census data, surveys, focus groups, and reviewing available studies and reports) is the best way to ensure that you know your audience well. This approach allows the weakness of one type of research method (i.e., lack of in-depth information gathered in a large phone survey) to be compensated for by another type of research (e.g., more in-depth information collected in focus groups).

If you don't have ready access to the information you need on the audience, the following tools will help.

Tools to gather audience profile information

- Databases
- Public agencies
- Trade associations
- Surveys
    - *Mail*
    - *Phone*
    - *E-mail/Web*
    - *Personal*
- Focus groups
- Community discussions
- Observation
- Community cultural assessment and mapping

Using information already available

Demographic databases, studies, and reports

All sorts of databases, studies, and reports that contain information on the demographic makeup of potential target audiences are available. Census data are collected every 10 years and were last collected in 2010. The data are provided at the national, state, and county levels. Counties are further subdivided into consecutively smaller geographic areas called tracts, block groups, and blocks. Census blocks, the smallest geographic unit defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, are typically bounded by streets, roads, or streams and can correspond to a city block. Several blocks make up a block group, and several block groups make up a tract. Using a smaller geographic unit such as a tract, block group, or block allows for analysis at the level at which characteristics of a particular population or area would be distinguishable, whereas at a larger geographic level the differences would be obscured or diluted by the greater population. These data are available through the Factfinder site from the Census Bureau at *http://factfinder.census.gov* or *www.census.gov* and from local libraries.

On the factfinder site you can quickly find information such as number of owner-occupied housing units, racial distribution, how people commute to work, occupational categories, number of school-age children, income levels, age, and education level by city, county or ZIP Code. From the *www.census.gov* site, you can download detailed data tables to analyze or import into your own programs. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics also has national survey data on spending habits that it collects as part of its consumer expenditure survey (*www.bls.gov/cex*). If you don't have access to these files or don't have the resources needed to extract the information, consider asking a college marketing class for assistance. They could be looking for real-world projects, and they might be willing to conduct a detailed analysis of the target group at no charge.

Pros and Cons. Databases can provide consolidated demographic data and can sort the data by different parameters. However, the data might not be current, and you might not have the staff or equipment to manipulate the data. In addition, although the data might provide information on ethnic populations and distribution, those data will not help you understand the cultures in the audience. For more information on collecting cultural information, see the section "Community cultural assessment and characterization" on page 34.

Public agencies

Local public agencies, such as planning departments and property valuation agencies, can be valuable sources of information on the makeup of the target audience. Be sure to contact them early in the data-gathering process. Information collected in this manner should be held in confidence. Circulating perceptions and other information provided in private can seriously harm your credibility and effectiveness.

Pros and Cons. Public agencies might have access to large populations and have information on the target audiences collected over a long period. The agencies might not, however, have this information in a particularly handy format.

Trade associations

Trade associations keep track of marketing research and other information on their members. If the target audience is associated with a trade group, contact the organization to see what's available. For example, if you want to collect information on auto repair shops that recycle used motor oil, an automobile parts trade association might provide you with names, addresses, and association meeting schedules. Your local chamber of commerce can also provide information on local businesses and the demographic makeup of the community.

Pros and Cons. Trade associations might have information specific to the target audience and could possibly serve as a distribution mechanism for your message. The data might not be available for outside use and some information might be biased.

Universities

Many colleges and universities have marketing or sociology departments that feature faculty and student projects that involve conducting high-quality market research and campaign/project planning, execution, and evaluation. The activities supported often include convening and working with focus groups, conducting market analyses and surveys, branding, packaging, and promotion. Some have independent research programs focused in this field. Universities, and even small community colleges, can be an excellent resource to help you collect affordable, accurate information about your audience and conduct your outreach campaign.

Religious groups promote the environment

In Louisiana environmental leaders used religious commonalities to help reach environmental goals. Religious congregations throughout the coastal area joined to sponsor a series of public forums to engage local citizens in efforts to protect and conserve Louisiana's coastal wetlands. The forums were held in local churches and synagogues, which provided a respectful atmosphere that fostered cooperation among the attendees.

In American Samoa there is no separation of society and religion. Because Christianity plays a dominant role in the lives of the American Samoan people, staff in the Coastal Management Program created a Religious Consciousness Project to help spread the word about the islands' environmental problems. They worked with Sunday school teachers, ministers, and other representatives of various denominations to encourage them to put the environmental message into their sermons, local televised religious service, and summer and Christmas programs. They also asked churches to hold special meetings for coastal program managers to present information on issues such as water quality, population growth, wetland preservation, and nonpoint source pollution.

American Samoa's coastal nonpoint program under section 6217 of the 1990 Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments was approved by EPA and NOAA in part because of this project, which uses a localized, culturally based approach to public education that helps address nonpoint issues.

Pros and Cons. Although teaming with a university is probably more cost-effective than hiring a private market research firm, the university workforce might be available only during the school year. Because you are working with students and likely not paying for their work, you don't have the leverage of refusing payment until quality work is delivered, that you would have if you had hired a consulting firm. In addition, each semester might bring different students to the project, which could be a problem for any long-term research that requires historical knowledge from year to year. Your staff will probably need to work very closely with the faculty and students involved, so this may turn into a very "hands on" approach. However, students engaged in graduate research or other projects supporting watershed management work are often found to be committed, competent, and knowledgeable, with strong incentives to successfully complete their work so it can be included on their resumes.

Collecting new information

Surveys by mail

A mail survey is an excellent way to obtain baseline information about target audiences. It can also be used to conduct a post-project evaluation to measure changes in attitudes or behavior in the target audience. Before conducting a mail survey, make sure you'll be able to obtain current addresses for the portion of the target audience you are surveying. Keep in mind what information you want to collect, how you're going to use the information, and how the data will be tabulated. This planning can save a lot of anguish when the results come back. Make the survey relatively short, and explain up-front how long it will take the respondent to fill it out. State the objective of the survey clearly, make the format easy to read, and include a self-addressed stamped envelope to increase the return rate. If you want your results to be statistically meaningful, consult a marketing professional or college instructor for suggestions on survey design, random sampling techniques, follow-up prompting, and other considerations. You might also choose to offer giveaways to survey respondents as incentives to participate.

Pros and Cons. Mail surveys allow participants to think about their answers before they respond, can reach large numbers of people, and can gather data from people who might not be accessible in person or don't have Internet access. The disadvantages of mail surveys include printing and mailing costs, staff time for tabulating results, and the potential for low response rates. Typical survey response rates range from 40 percent to 20 percent or less. In addition, the people who complete the survey are likely to be those interested in your topic, which can introduce bias in your results.

Surveys by phone

Surveys by phone can also provide good baseline (and post-project) information on the target audience. Again, make sure you have access to current phone numbers for the portion of the target audience you are calling and the resources available (phones and volunteers or staff) to

Don't soil our waters

For years the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has worked to educate the public about soil erosion and its detrimental effects on water quality. However, phone surveys continued to show that the public knew very little about the effects of soil erosion on water quality or how to address them.

Before implementing a statewide educational campaign on the issue, DEP worked with two focus groups to obtain input on citizens' ideas, thoughts, and behaviors regarding soil erosion and water pollution. The focus groups helped DEP decide which communication materials—newspaper ads, radio ads, and direct mailings—to use in a pilot advertising campaign.

Follow-up telephone surveys conducted after a test ad campaign revealed that the newspaper and radio ads were most effective. The direct mailings were not as effective because the cost per response received was greater than that of the other formats. Of those who remembered seeing or hearing the newspaper and radio ads, nearly 70 percent could describe at least one action that they could take to reduce soil erosion. For more information, visit *www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/doceducation/dirt.htm*.

carry out the survey. The success of phone surveys tends to vary geographically: Rural audiences are sometimes more willing than urban audiences to take the time to answer questions. Standardize the greeting used by all of your volunteers, and practice proper phone skills. If a person called does not want to participate, thank the person anyway and move on to the next one. Hold practice sessions to be sure that all survey administrators ask the questions the same way. Schedule calls at mixed times—some during weekends, some during the day, but most in the early evening.

The number of people who have traded their landline telephone for a cell phone has increased dramatically in recent years. In fact, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Expenditure Survey, beginning in 2007 cell phone expenditures surpassed spending on residential landline phone services. In the period from 2001 to 2007, cell phone expenditures increased by 190 percent, whereas expenditures for landlines decreased by 30 percent. As the trend continues, many people are concerned that phone surveys leave out a whole demographic of cell-phone-only users because typical phone surveys call only households with landlines. However, a national study conducted by the Pew Research Center, in conjunction with the Associated Press and AOL, assessed the challenge posed by cell phones to random-digit-dial surveys. The 2006 study found that the absence of cell-only Americans (which, in 2006, was an estimated seven to nine percent of the public) from typical landline surveys has only a minimal impact on the results. When researchers included cell-only respondents with those interviewed from a standard landline sample (weighting the combined sample as appropriate), the overall results changed by no more than one percentage point on any of nine key questions included in the research study. Keep in mind that as cell phone usage grows over the next 10 years or so, these numbers are likely to shift commensurately. The study also found that cell-phone-only users tend to be younger, less affluent, less likely to be married or to own their home, and more liberal on political questions.

For any people who refuse to participate in your phone survey, consider using a refusal survey to gain at least part of the survey answers. A refusal survey is a set of two to four key questions that are included in the full survey. Because there are so few questions to answer, those who are not willing to engage in a lengthy survey might be willing to take less than a minute to answer a few questions. When a respondent refuses to participate in the survey, the surveyor says, “Okay. I understand that you don’t want to participate in our survey. May I just ask you three quick questions instead of the entire set?” This way you can still collect useful information from people on the most important issues covered in your survey.

Pros and Cons. Phone surveys allow data gathering from people who might not be accessible in person, elicit immediate responses, and can accommodate many participants. In addition, the anonymity might allow people to be more honest. The disadvantages include the need to access correct phone numbers for participants, the lack of time for participants to think about their responses, the level of resources involved, and exclusion of those who will not respond to unsolicited calls or do not have telephones.

Intercept surveys

One low-cost way of surveying your target audience is through the use of intercept surveys. Intercept surveys are conducted by “intercepting” people as they walk around a shopping mall, walk in the park, commute, or work in their front yard and asking them to take part in a survey. Intercept surveys are most effective when respondents can see visuals related to what you are asking them about, thereby giving you credibility; when the questions are asked in the same order and same way for all respondents; when they are conducted in a high-traffic area frequented by many members of your watershed community; and when the statistical validity of the survey data is not critical to your effort (i.e., when you are only interested in a quick overview of how people feel on the topic).

Make sure that interviewers know to survey each person separately and away from others so as not to introduce bias. In addition, they should not reveal the survey sponsor until after the survey is complete, and they must not discuss the responses with the respondent. They must merely read the survey questions verbatim and record the responses. Interviewers should note some basic demographics for each respondent (e.g., gender, age range, cultural identity). After surveying 150 residents using an intercept survey at three large shopping malls, the Clark County Regional Flood Control District in Las Vegas, Nevada, found that approximately 50 percent of the respondents were not aware that floodwater and urban runoff flowed through the storm drain network untreated to Lake Mead.

Pros and Cons. The pros of intercept surveys are that they can be conducted very quickly (in a day or two) by many different interviewers at different locations and at a low cost. Analyzing the results is fairly easy because of the small number of questions. The biggest downfall with intercept surveys is that results might not be as representative as results gained from traditional large-format surveys due to their relatively small sample size.

Surveys by e-mail/Web

Done correctly, an e-mail or Web survey offers an anonymous way for your target audience to communicate with you and tell you how they really feel about your organization and your programs. E-mail surveys can be sent through your organization's e-mail system so respondents can access the survey and respond using their e-mail programs. If you place surveys on your website, respondents visiting the site can respond to the survey through online forms.

To send an e-mail survey, you'll need a bank of e-mail addresses for members of your target audience. If you have an organizational e-mail list, you could use it, but this might bias the survey results because those participants are most likely already aware of and active in your cause. When you do send your survey, the e-mail can be either a plain text message (text-based survey) or an e-mail attachment (form-based survey created through Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect, for example). After recipients fill out the survey, they can send it back simply by replying to your message.

A Web survey will gather responses from citizens that have access to the Internet. Upload the survey on your organization's website and put plenty of advertising for it on the homepage. People visiting your site will have the opportunity to anonymously fill out the survey at their own pace.

If you can't code your own Web survey, you can use a service such as Survey Monkey (*www.surveymonkey.com*). Survey Monkey is an easy-to-use tool for creating online surveys. It has a simple Web interface, which makes it easy for nontechnical people to create surveys and export survey data. It offers a free limited account that stores 100 responses to up to 10 questions. The "Professional" subscription ($19.95 per month as of December 2009) allows 1,000 responses to an unlimited number of questions. The service allows you to get responses via a Web link or e-mail.

For more information on conducting surveys, see the boxes on pages 28 and 29.

Pros and Cons. E-mail surveys take a short amount of time, are self-paced, and provide the sender with fast results. Computer issues can cause problems, however, if a server goes down or the user has

How to conduct a survey

Select the sample

Your survey participants should be members of the target audience. Ideally you should choose the number of people you need to survey to yield statistically significant results. You might be constrained, however, by time, staffing, or funding. In 1999 the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) conducted a survey of Chesapeake Bay residents' behaviors and attitudes regarding three practices that contribute to nutrient pollution—lawn fertilization, septic system maintenance, and picking up after pets. Telephone interviews were conducted among a random sample of 733 residents in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. For your survey, a small, representative sample could reflect the larger group, but the larger the sample, the more precise your survey results will be. Keep in mind, however, that the rate of improvement in precision decreases as your sample size increases. For example, increasing a sample from 250 to 1,000 only doubles the precision; it does not quadruple it.

Design the questionnaire

Keep your survey short and simple. Long questionnaires get less response than short questionnaires as a general rule, so try to stay well under 5 pages or 20 minutes by telephone. The CWP's survey contained 35 questions and was limited to 5 to 7 minutes to increase the likelihood of participation. (The final report and survey instrument are available online at *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox/surveys/UNEP_all.pdf*.) Also consider how you will handle and analyze the responses. Will you use a computer program while conducting the survey, or will you enter the data later? Making these decisions early on will make tabulating the results quicker and easier.

Subjects are also more likely to respond to a survey based on question content, particularly if they are involved and interested in the issue. Include an introduction or welcome message at the top to give your respondents as much information as possible. Questions can be multiple choice, ratings or agreement scales (such as the Likert Scale, which measures attitudes), or open-ended fill-in-the-blanks. For written surveys, the visual format also makes a difference. Maintain a logical left-to-right flow for minimal distraction. And try to keep your answer spaces in a straight line, horizontally or vertically. Be sure to leave a space at the end for "Other Comments."

Test the survey

You've identified the issues, selected your sample, and designed the questionnaire. Now you need to test the survey. Test the survey on a few (10 to 15) sample members of the target audience. Take note of questions that respondents are confused about, take too long to answer, or answer in a way that does not really reflect what you were trying to ask. Go back and revise the questionnaire based on what you learned. Then test it out again to make sure it functions the way you want it to.

Conduct the survey

Now it's time to conduct the survey. Surveys are traditionally administered by phone, by mail, or in person. In recent years online surveys through e-mail or on the Internet have become popular. These formats are discussed in detail starting on page 24.

Analyze the data

Once all the results are in, the data must be analyzed. For those on a low budget, it may be as simple as tallying the results on paper. For those with a bit more funding, several commercial software packages are available to design and conduct your surveys and provide statistical analysis. Many are available on the Web.

Additional resources

Vovici, survey software design, *www.vovici.com*
StatPac, designing surveys and questionnaires, *www.statpac.com/surveys*
Survey System, survey design, *www.surveysystem.com/sdesign.htm*

Tips for reducing bias

It is virtually impossible to conduct a perfectly unbiased survey. But by taking a few precautions, your survey can be closer to being 100 percent accurate and objective. The main sources of bias in a questionnaire follow.

Nonrepresentative sample

Ensuring a representative sample is the first step toward preventing survey bias. For example, daytime-only phone surveys disproportionately reach stay-at-home parents or non-working people, so results won't represent your target audience as a whole. Web surveys are limited to those with Internet access and are not necessarily representative of the range of residents in your target audience.

Non-return bias

If a large number of people fail to respond to your surveys, bias toward those that did respond is introduced. Be sure to use up-to-date addresses and phone numbers. If your survey is short, concise, and attractive and you promise to make the results of the survey available to each participant, you're more likely to get responses.

Leading questions

Don't ask leading questions that indicate the preferred answer. When you state what you think, the person might feel that you're introducing bias into any subsequent answers. People are reluctant to disagree with the interviewer's "authority." This is an example of a leading question: "You know that using a lot of fertilizer on your lawn is bad, right?" The participant might not have known that the overuse of fertilizer is not recommended, and this information could cause him or her to answer the rest of your questions based on the assumption that he or she knows the consequences of fertilizer overuse.

Question misinterpretation

When talking to respondents, speak in their language. This draws them out and helps you understand how they truly feel. Avoid questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no. You can elicit more information from respondents using open-ended questions, which encourage them to talk and provide salient details. However, phrase questions so that the respondent understands them easily. Long, complicated questions will quickly lose the participants' interest, and they might skip the survey entirely. Keep in mind that answers to open-ended questions take more time to evaluate once the survey is complete, which can increase your costs.

The City of San Diego conducts telephone surveys every year to gauge the community's awareness of stormwater pollution prevention. After asking to speak to the youngest person over the age of 18, the questions turn to the sources of polluted runoff and how the citizen might or might not be contributing to the problem. The questions are concise and easily understood, allowing the respondent plenty of options and opportunity for additional comments. Once the data are collected, an outside market research firm provides a final report with findings and recommendations (available at *http://www.sandiego.gov/stormwater/pdf/2010ressurveyfinalreport.pdf*). The City is able to change the direction of its outreach program, if needed, based on the survey results.

problems downloading attachments. Web surveys assume that members of your target audience visit your website regularly. Keep in mind, however, that most visitors to your site might also be aware of the issues and your efforts. In addition, visitors to your site might not be in your target audience and could skew the survey results.

Farmers' views on TMDL development and implementation

In response to a presentation at a local Farm Bureau to introduce water quality issues and TMDLs, the Yolo County, California, Resource Conservation District convened a focus group composed of area farmers. Their concerns, listed below, provide valuable context for outreach and education projects targeting agricultural activities and practices:

- We don't have time to come to meetings.
- We don't want a bunch of outsiders that know nothing about farming to tell us how to farm.
- We want to be the only decision-makers on these projects.
- There are issues of private property rights.
- How are we going to afford to make the changes in practices?
- We don't want to do something now and then have an agency come to us in a few years and tell us what we did was wrong and then have to change it.
- We don't feel there is enough scientific data in place to tell us what we should be doing.

—Katy Pye, Yolo Resource Conservation District, California

Personal surveys

Surveys conducted in person (interviews) allow the interviewer to ask questions or administer the survey in a variety of ways (e.g., on the street, by appointment, in people's homes). However, they can also be time-consuming and labor-intensive. Potential interviewees must first be contacted to see if they're interested in participating. Then the survey must be conducted around the interviewee's schedule and availability. Interviews should be conducted at locations that are convenient and familiar to the participant, such as a local library or park or in the participant's home. If the participant is in a comfortable, familiar environment, you're more likely to get honest, in-depth answers. Interviews are effective for establishing rapport between the interviewer and the participant, which is especially important if the subject matter is sensitive.

Pros and Cons. Personal interviews allow the interviewer to record the participant's body language and tone during the interview, helping to gain a better understanding of the answers. However, personal interviews remove the anonymity that might have resulted in more honest answers in a phone or mail survey. In addition, having to arrange the interview around the participant's schedule and availability could draw out your collection effort. Finally, the skills of the interviewer can make or break the interview.

Focus groups

Focus groups provide an opportunity to meet with a small representative group from the target audience at once and allow them the chance to expand on comments and ideas. The focus group participants may

be selected through surveys, recommended by a member of the target audience, or selected at random. Focus groups can also be formed based on demographics such as age group, place of residence, or occupation. Try not to accept volunteers because they are likely to already have an interest in the message. If possible, pay the focus group participants a small amount ($10 to $50) as an incentive to participate and to thank them. If you don't have the funds to pay them, at least provide food or other incentives.

Typically, up to 12 members of the target audience are asked to participate for 1 or 2 hours. Be sure to schedule the focus group at a time and place convenient for the participants. For example, most people have jobs during the day and are available to meet only after 5:00 p.m. during weekdays.

If you are planning focus groups to learn about specific behaviors, ideally you should conduct at least two focus groups. One group should consist of those who are currently engaging in the behavior that you wish to get others to adopt. The other group should be made up of those who currently do not engage in the behavior you are promoting. In this way you can better determine the differences between those who have adopted the new behavior and those who have not adopted it. If you do not know who is active or inactive with respect to a particular behavior, try to separate your focus group participants by those who are planning to or are willing to adopt the behavior and those who are not planning to or not willing to adopt the behavior.

The focus group should be facilitated by a trained moderator to avoid introducing bias into the results. A series of questions are asked to the group, and the answers are recorded on video or audio recorder. Be sure to ask open-ended questions that result in detailed answers to collect as much information about the audience as possible. Remember that this is an opportunity to collect information, not to explain the issues to the group. Focus groups also enable you to start building a network of people you might be able to tap into later to help deliver your message.

The value of building rapport in focus groups cannot be overstated. Telling the participants about the reason for the focus group, how the room is set up, and why there are microphones or observers makes the participants feel smart and valuable. Giving them ground rules such as "speak one at a time" and "avoid side conversations" or "respect the opinions of others" means that the moderator saves time by not having to play traffic cop later. Giving participants a reason for the discussion, e.g., "We're going to talk about connections between human activities and environmental problems," gives them an idea of what to expect, helps them access memory, and keeps the answers flowing freely.

Focus group checklist

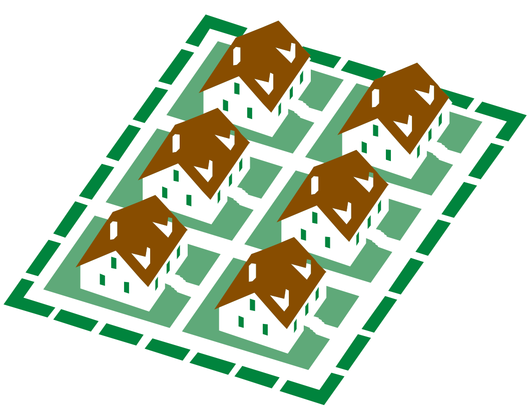
1. Identify target audience. (4 months prior to selected focus group date)
2. Define goal of focus group. (2 months prior)
3. Determine payment amount and method. (2 months prior)
4. Compile mailing list for invitees. (6 weeks prior)
5. Identify moderator. (5 weeks prior)
6. Develop questions. (4 weeks prior)
7. Arrange and reserve session site. (4 weeks prior)
8. Write and send invitations. (4 weeks prior)
9. Follow up invitations with phone calls. (2 weeks prior)
10. Determine room arrangements (seating, audio/visual aids such as flip charts). (2 weeks prior)
11. Place reminder call to participants. (2 days prior)
12. Make arrangements for food or beverages. (2 days prior)
13. Conduct the focus group.
14. Distribute payments. (At the conclusion of the focus group)
15. Send thank-you letter to participants. (2 days after)
16. Review tapes or notes from focus group and summarize. (2 days after)
17. Analyze focus group summary and write report. (1 week after)

Ask participants to introduce themselves using name, age, occupation, and where they live, and ask each participant a question related to the purpose of the focus group to allow them to feel more comfortable speaking in front of strangers and to see where they fit in the group. This process also allows the focus group moderator to create rapport with each participant through eye contact that demonstrates the moderator's willingness to listen and openness to diverse opinions.

To help reduce group bias during the focus group, ask participants to write down their responses to the questions that are asked before they answer out loud. This will reduce the chance of one person's answer influencing another person who answers later.

You will want to record your focus group on audio or video to pick up on tone of voice or body language. Sometimes these auditory and visual clues can help you better interpret how the focus group participants feel about certain issues. Communication experts tell us that body language and tone make up 60 percent of live interpersonal communication. And if you plan to record the session, be sure to let the participants know well in advance. If someone doesn't want to be "on the record," find another participant.

Choose a setting that is appropriate and makes the participants feel comfortable. What message does the setting send? Is it corporate, cozy, informal, or sterile? Does the setting encourage conversation? (For example, are the chairs arranged in a circle or are they facing one direction?) Do what you can to the room layout to foster communication, such as rearranging the chairs to face each other.



Pros and Cons. Focus groups can provide insights about the target audience's composition, perceptions, and beliefs; provide interaction among participants; and build support for further actions or outreach communication. They can give community members a sense of inclusion in the community process by providing them with a forum to express their opinions. The disadvantages are that focus groups can accommodate only up to a dozen participants before becoming unwieldly, the time demand on participants is considerable, and their success depends largely on the skills of the moderators. The small sample size of focus groups might mean that it is hard to get results that can be extrapolated to the whole population. There is a risk of mismanagement or bias being imparted on the focus group participants from the moderator if he or she is not appropriately competent and trained. In addition, focus groups might not be suitable for certain cultures where peer pressure or deference to others might inhibit discussion.

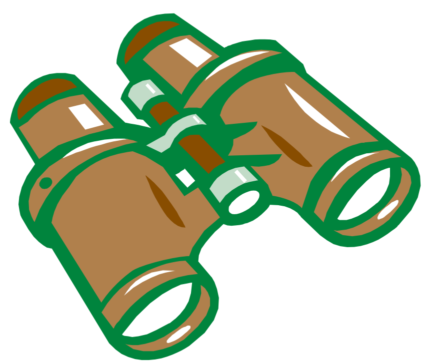
Focus groups can also be conducted online through the use of videoconferencing or live chats. This type of approach can help reduce the potential for bias, and costs are often lower. It can also help in reaching audience members who otherwise would not be able to participate.

Community/neighborhood discussions

Community discussions are somewhat similar to focus groups, but they involve more people, are more open-ended, and can be less focused. Speaking directly with the target audience is a great way to get information straight from the source. A community discussion might involve citizens that have volunteered for the discussion or are in attendance because of a prior commitment. For example, many homeowners' associations and local communities hold public meetings quarterly and are willing to spare some time to discuss important community issues. If your group has the funds and resources, you might choose to rent space in a nearby hotel or community center and advertise a meeting devoted to your organization's agenda.

Schedule discussions on weekday evenings or weekends to attract working and nonworking residents. Develop an agenda, stick to it, and have someone serve as a timekeeper to keep things on track. Allow a short amount of time after the meeting for individual questions and concerns. You may also want to bring surveys and questionnaires with you for residents to fill out and drop off or send back.

Pros and Cons. A community or neighborhood discussion will help your organization gather information directly from affected residents. You won't have to wait for results because you'll get immediate responses from attendees. On the other hand, these types of meetings typically attract people already interested in the subject. You might not reach any citizens who don't know about your issue. Piggybacking on existing meetings will help you avoid this bias because the meeting attendees will have come to talk about other things. Be aware that some meetings are more appropriate for piggybacking than others.



Observation

Observing how the target audience behaves can help you gain insight on people in your target segment and ways that you might encourage behavior change. This method helps you get a picture of what people actually do, as opposed to what they say they do. When asked, most people say that they care about water quality and believe that protecting it is important. When observed, however, those same people might be found dumping motor oil down storm drains or not picking up after their pets. Observations can be made during or after the behavior is completed. During the behavior, the observer makes notes about what triggered the behavior, how much effort the person exerted for the behavior, and what behaviors (e.g., facial expression, body language) accompanied the target behavior.

Pros and Cons. Observing what people do instead of listening to what they say they do is a good way to get a clear picture of how people behave. However, observing how they behave in certain situations can be viewed as an invasion of privacy. Be sure that all observations are carried out in public locations. If the people you're watching notice you, explain what you're doing and why. Often you might have to observe people for hours before you see them engage

For more detailed information on community cultural assessment, obtain a copy of EPA's *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place* (EPA 842-B-01-003) from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications at 1-800-490-9198 or e-mail *nscep@bps-lmit.com*. A PDF version is available at *www.epa.gov/care/library/community_culture.pdf*.

in the target behavior, if at all; thus the time commitment for this method is harder to gauge.

Community cultural assessment and characterization

Understanding the social and cultural aspects of a community can be very important when there's no baseline information on the target audience. For example, if you've just moved from San Francisco to accept a job as a watershed coordinator in a small town in West Virginia, you might not fully understand what makes the citizens in your new hometown tick. The things that San Franciscans care about and what motivates them to act might be quite different from what you'll find in West Virginia.

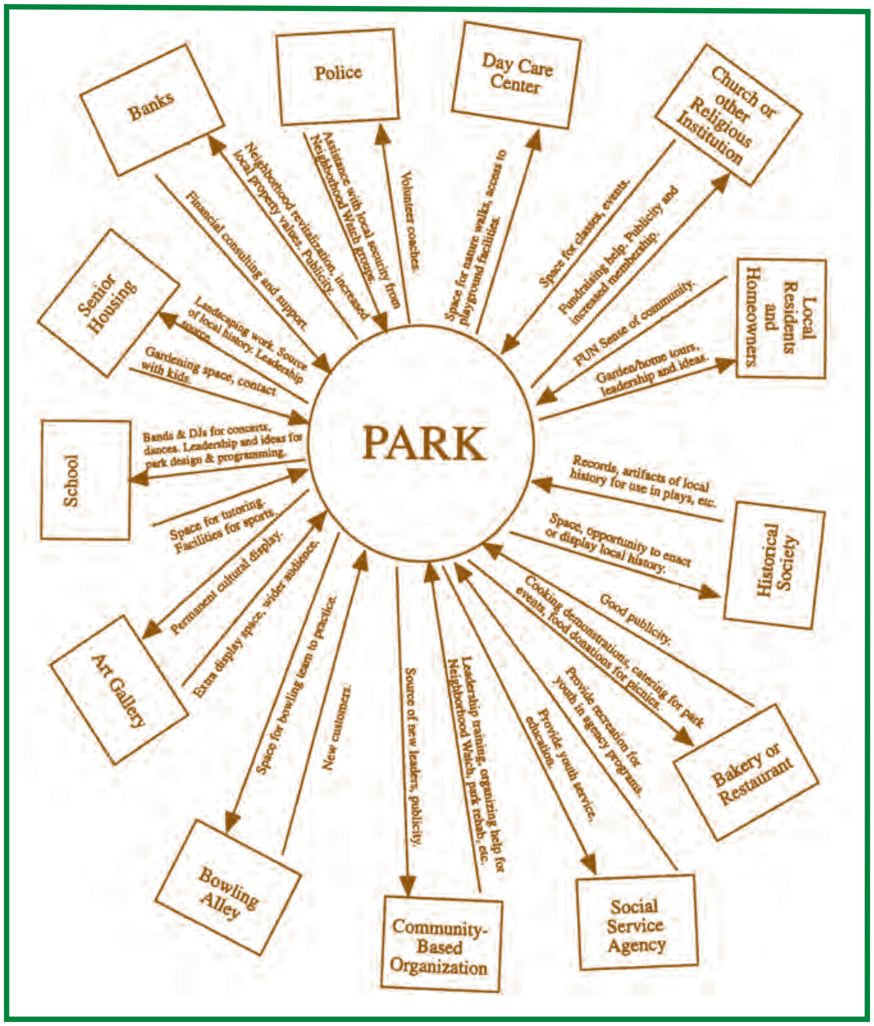
Cultural assessment and community characterization are also useful if previous efforts at reaching and motivating the audience have fallen short. A cultural assessment doesn't just describe the community's makeup. It goes a step further by analyzing the cultural and ethnic preferences, beliefs, and attitudes present in the community. You can carry out cultural assessments by collecting and analyzing cultural information on your community obtained through state and local social service agencies; education agencies; the U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and annual reports prepared by cities, counties, and states. Cultural demographic information can also be researched through all the methods already discussed in this section (e.g., focus groups, community meetings). Characterizing the community will help you answer key questions about its values, attitudes, and beliefs and how they relate to your organization's goals and objectives. Once you know and understand the types of cultures present in your community, you'll be better able to craft messages that resonate with members of each culture, select appropriate formats, and determine the best distribution methods.

Pros and Cons. Although understanding the cultures present in the target audience is important to developing and distributing your message, cultural misunderstandings could result during the collection and analysis of such information. For instance, the audience members might feel they are being selected or "picked on" because of their cultural or ethnic preferences and beliefs. Information collected during a cultural assessment should be kept highly confidential and used with care and within its proper context.

Social maps
Many of the methods listed previously can help you characterize the community and analyze community processes. An additional method of collecting this information is called social mapping. Social maps are drawings used to collect, organize, and analyze social data about a community obtained from actual community members or collected through surveys, focus groups, and community meetings. They illustrate issues or problems, causes and effects, and relationships of organizations and individuals. Social maps can be used to present information on the physical layout of a community or watershed, perceptions, demographics, communication patterns, and more. Maps can be drawn during focus groups, community meetings, or other gatherings of target audience members. There are four types of social maps—asset, cognitive, concept, and social network.

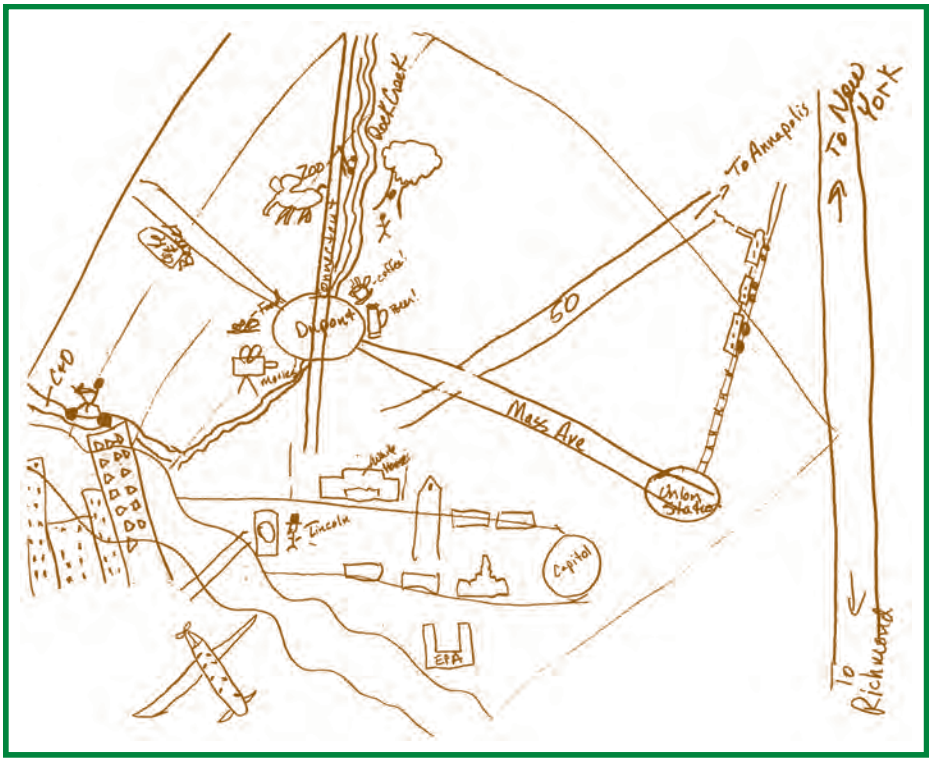
Asset maps
An asset map can be used to describe the assets that individuals, groups and organizations, or institutions can offer to solve water quality problems. It can help you gain access to other resources and services you might not have been aware of to help distribute your message, obtain funding, or collect data.

Asset Map



Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2003.

Cognitive Map



Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2003.

Cognitive maps

Cognitive maps help individuals and groups visualize how they perceive their community and surroundings through self-made drawings. From the maps you can learn what different people see as the community's center, which elements of their community are most important to them (e.g., parks, churches, schools), and their perception of the community's environmental characteristics. You might also learn where members of the target audience spend their time, which will help in distributing your message.

Concept maps

A concept map identifies the relationships between the causes and effects of environmental problems, such as the link between land use decisions and nonpoint source pollution. Your organization might ask community members to draw a concept map depicting their thoughts on how nonpoint source pollution occurs in their community. Once the map is finished, you can see what stereotypes might be present in your community, what perceptions create barriers to change, and where you might need to focus your campaign's attention.

Social network maps

A social network map will help you learn how information is disseminated throughout the target audience. It describes patterns of communication, relationships, and information flow. Participants depict their own personal social networks and then compare them with those of the rest of the group. You can tailor your distribution methods to fit with how members of the target audience currently communicate.

Pros and Cons. The largest obstacle to conducting mapping exercises is the need for group participation. Mapping is not very effective unless several members of the target audience help create the maps. Asset mapping is particularly useful for large groups of people, where visual and easy-to-understand graphics enhance communication and the expression of community values. Cognitive mapping allows you to see the community through the eyes of members of the target audience. A concept map is a great way to show the relationship between both the perceived and real-life causes of problems and the associated effects on the environment. Social network mapping might be useful in large communities where information flow among members of a diverse target audience might be poorly understood by project leaders.

Online chatter research

There are several new technologies available that allow you to get a real-time "read" on what people are currently writing online about your watershed issue or your organization. For example, you can set up a Google Alert to be notified by e-mail whenever new content is added online in blogs, websites, newsfeeds, or social networking sites about the topic you are interested in. You can also search the social networking site Twitter to see if subscribers are tweeting about your issue or organization. You can search by keyword or by using hash tags (words prefixed with #) to find posts grouped by topic.

Pros and Cons. Monitoring online chatter can help keep you informed of developing news stories and keep track of public perception of issues. Because new technologies continue to pop up and others fall by the wayside, keeping up with what tools to use and how to use them can be challenging.

Analyzing and understanding the audience

Now that you've identified the target audience and collected some information about them, you need to analyze and understand them. What drives them to engage in the behaviors you'd like to change? What are the barriers to modifying their management practices or behaviors? Learning the answers to these questions will help you understand how your audience thinks and how you can tailor your message to motivate changes in behavior.

Barriers to action: Why do they do what they do?

There are many reasons why people do not choose sustainable behaviors. They might simply be unaware of the impact their behavior has on water quality. They might believe that doing the right thing is too expensive, takes too much time, is inconvenient, or is socially unacceptable. And unfortunately, when it comes to the environment, most people simply do not believe that a change in the personal routines and habitats of just one person will make a difference. These reasons are called barriers. Barriers prevent people from taking positive steps toward improving the environment. They can be physical (such as the lack of facilities to collect household hazardous waste), economic (high cost), psychological (a perception that lush lawns are prized), or knowledge-based (lack of understanding of how to conduct a soil test). These obstacles must be minimized or removed so that the benefit outweighs the cost or effort of the action.

To address these barriers, you need to think about why people have not adopted the environmentally friendly behavior. For example, many people do not pick up after their pets. One common attitude is that pet waste is a part of nature and that it biodegrades quickly. Some even view it as fertilizer. They don't realize that dog droppings are one of the leading causes of pathogen contamination in streams; each gram of dog poop has more than 20 million *E. coli* bacteria colonies in it (not to mention the nitrogen and phosphorus). Others believe it is just too unpleasant to scoop. Researching your audience

Understanding barriers

Audience research conducted by Toronto's Public Health Office uncovered many barriers to widespread implementation of integrated pest management (IPM) practices by landlords, building managers, and residents, including the following:

- Limited knowledge of IPM
- Lack of trust in IPM's effectiveness
- A misconception that IPM costs more than traditional spray methods
- An expectation of immediate elimination of pests
- The stigma associated with cockroaches, making information-sharing difficult
- Poor understanding of factors that contribute to pest infestations
- Lack of awareness about health risks associated with pesticide sprays.

Armed with this information, health officials developed a comprehensive education campaign that ultimately led to a reduction in the amount of pesticides used by the target audience.

For other case studies like this one, visit *www.toolsofchange.com*, a Canadian community-based social marketing website that includes 88 case studies on community programs across North America.

EPA does not endorse this website or its case studies.

to understand the barriers to getting people to pick up pet waste in their yards, on the beach, or wherever they walk their pets will help you craft your message to change their perceptions. Your message might feature a photo of someone walking their dog on a beach where children are playing in the sand. Overcoming the perceived barriers to scooping the poop will result in more people changing their behavior. Keep in mind that barriers (and benefits) are unique to each audience and each behavior change. Barriers can change over time as people become more aware or as the political, economic, or technological climate changes. Appendix B provides a worksheet that will help you identify the barriers to adopting the behavior you're promoting and tips on how to overcome or reduce those barriers. Periodically revisit the barriers you have identified to make sure they have not changed since you first identified them.

Survey says: Neighbors' opinions matter when it comes to lawn care

In 1999 the Survey Research Center of the University of Georgia conducted a telephone survey of homeowners on behalf of the Pollution Prevention Assistance Division of the Department of Natural Resources. The purpose was to assess the attitudes of Georgians toward a variety of topics related to lawn and landscape maintenance that affect environmental pollution.

The surveyors found that more than half of those polled considered it moderately to very important to have a yard appearing as attractive as their neighbors' yards. In addition, they learned that the principal source of gardening information used by Georgia homeowners is friends and neighbors (64 percent), followed by TV (60 percent).

Understanding beliefs

In psychology, the theory of planned behavior is a theory about the link between attitudes and behavior. Psychologists believe that behavior is guided by three types of beliefs:

- *Behavioral beliefs:* A person's beliefs about the consequences of a behavior.
- *Normative beliefs:* A person's perception about the behavior, which is influenced by the judgment of others (e.g., parents, spouse, friends, teachers).
- *Control beliefs:* A person's beliefs about the presence of factors that might affect whether the person can engage in the behavior. In other words, how much control people believe they have over an issue affects their attitude and behavior related to that issue.

As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude toward a behavior **and** the stronger the social norm for that behavior **and** the more control the person has in how the behavior is carried out, the greater the likelihood that the person will make the behavior change. Campaigns targeted at addressing attitudes, social norms, and the audience's control over the behavior all at the same time tend to achieve greater success than less-multifaceted campaigns.

For example, if a locality wants to develop a campaign to help curb the use of yard chemicals, it might consider developing a water-friendly yard program with yard signs that read "My Environmentally Friendly Yard Saved Me $50 in Lawn Chemical Costs This Year!" The sign could also include a logo that shows that the yard design was approved by the local homeowner association (HOA). Adding a URL that takes homeowners to a website that shows them how easy it is to design their own *custom* water-friendly landscape for their unique needs and how to obtain a yard sign makes it even easier to motivate change. Such signs would address behavior beliefs that doing this would save them money and give their house curb appeal. The signs would also help address normative beliefs because they quickly show that others in the community, especially the local HOA, like and approve of the landscaping. The fact that the local HOA approves the landscaping also addresses the control belief because often homeowners are reluctant to make large-scale home or landscaping changes for fear of disapproval by the HOA. Finally, a "how-to" website with personally tailored designs helps to alleviate homeowners' fears of not knowing how to do water-friendly landscaping and not having control over how it looks.

Social norms: Everyone's doing it!

Social norms are the standards of attitude and behavior perceived as normal, acceptable, and expected among the members of a community. For example, because most people buy red, white, black, or green cars, it is socially unacceptable to buy a hot pink car, even if hot pink is your favorite color. Car manufacturers don't even make cars in hot pink because they know people won't buy them. Social norms affect environmental issues in much the same way. If everyone else on your street maintains a bright green lawn by putting down lots of fertilizer four times a year, you're likely to follow suit whether your lawn needs fertilizer or not, feeling that you'll be judged by your neighbors if your lawn is not as green and lush as theirs.

So how can social norms be overcome? Outreach campaigns should be structured so that they give people new norms. They should inform people of the new acceptable behaviors. The agricultural community does this through farm demonstration projects. Farmers are more likely to adopt a new practice if they've seen that a neighbor is doing it and is benefitting from it. In addition, many manufacturers have become partners in a growing effort to reward sustainable behaviors through eco-labeling. Buying products labeled as ozone-friendly or recyclable makes people feel good about themselves and shows other buyers that they are environmentally savvy. Bumper stickers, T-shirts, and other rewards for environmental behavior are often great ways to establish new environmental social norms in your community. The goal is to make it unacceptable to continue a behavior that has negative effects on water quality.

Critical mass

As mentioned previously, sociologists have found that when a new idea or behavior is adopted by roughly 15 to 20 percent of the audience, it will then have the critical mass it needs to permeate the rest of the audience, by word of mouth and observation. This social diffusion can be achieved by identifying the innovators and early adopters in the community, who are the most likely to try something different. Use them to set the new trend.

The roles people play

People engage in different behaviors based on the role they're playing at the time. Whether they're acting as parents, environmentalists, business owners, or developers makes a difference in which sustainable behaviors they'll adopt. When developing your outreach campaign, you might want to create different messages to address the different roles people have or use different formats and distribution mechanisms to reach them in those roles. If you're having trouble getting business owners to adopt recycling practices, for example, approach them as homeowners first. They might be more likely to overcome their perceived barriers to recycling at home than they are at work.

Building Blocks:

Step 2: Target Audience

One of the objectives of the hypothetical Herndon County's watershed management plan is to reduce nutrient runoff coming from residential areas. The county's watershed planning committee agreed that focusing their efforts on reducing nutrient runoff will greatly improve water quality in the county. The county identified two audiences that need to be reached to reduce residential nutrient runoff: (1) homeowners and (2) homeowner associations and apartment/condominium landscape managers. Two focus groups were held for each group in different parts of the county. In the focus groups, the county learned the following:

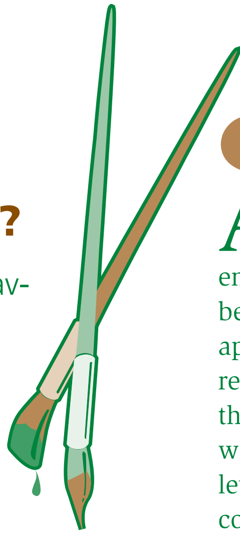
- Local garden and lawn supply stores recommend fertilizing twice a year.
- Most homeowners get advice on lawn care from neighbors, friends, and family.
- Busy schedules prevent many homeowners from taking an active role in environmental efforts.
- Many residents have attended gardening workshops at the local community college.
- Apartment/condominium landscape managers fertilize three times a year.
- Apartment/condominium landscape managers are driven by the need to attract new residents with lush green lawns.
- Both homeowners and apartment/condominium landscape managers are interested in protecting water quality.

In addition, to measure awareness levels and to understand current lawn care practices, county staff conducted a random-digit-dialing survey of county residents. They learned that only 25 percent of county residents were aware that lawn fertilizer is a significant contributor to local water quality degradation.

PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 2: Identify and analyze the target audience

- ❑ Have I defined the audience in a way that separates it from the general public?
- ❑ How many target audiences or segments have I identified?
- ❑ Have I identified the opinion leaders, innovators, early adopters, connectors, mavens, and other important members of the target audience?
- ❑ Do I know what stage of change my audience is in?
- ❑ Do I understand what kinds of beliefs affect the audience's behaviors?
- ❑ Have I segmented the target audience so that I can develop messages for each subgroup?
- ❑ Is the target audience for each objective sufficiently defined?
- ❑ Have I identified the communication channels used by the target audience?
- ❑ Have I collected enough data on the target audience?
- ❑ How long will it take to collect survey data on the target audience?
- ❑ Do I understand the target audience?
- ❑ Do I know what is important to the target audience?
- ❑ Do I know what barriers prevent the target audience from changing its behavior?
- ❑ Are there barriers to accessing the target audience that can hinder the plan?



Step 3: Create the message

What's in Step 3?

- Deciding on which behaviors to focus
- Crafting the message
- The importance of framing
- Branding your program
- Getting the audience's attention
- Getting a response
- Using incentives and rewards
- Focusing on behaviors
- Setting up a beneficial exchange
- Message delivery

After gathering and analyzing information on members of the target audience (Step 2), you're ready to craft a message that will engage the audience's members and help achieve your objectives. To be effective, messages must be understood by the target audience and appeal to people on their own terms. Your message needs to elicit a response. It should be clear, specific, and tied directly to something the target audience values. In addition, the message should articulate what actions the receivers should take. These actions might include letting vegetation grow taller along a stream, pumping septic tanks, or conducting soil tests before fertilizing lawns. Messages that are vague or that don't contain specific calls to action—"We all contribute to nonpoint source pollution"—might help to build general awareness but are ineffective at changing behaviors.

Remember that your message is not simply a restatement of your objective. Your message will help achieve your objective as defined in Step 1, but the two are not the same. Objectives describe final results; messages prompt the knowledge, attitudes, and actions needed to obtain them.

In Pennsylvania Amish country, convincing dairymen to fence their cows out of the stream worked best when the message appealed to the dairymen themselves. Creating a message that focused on herd health or other issues that the dairymen were interested in is what really worked.

Discussing your goals and objectives with members of the target audience through individual contact, focus group meetings, or audience research is highly recommended when developing the message.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Deciding on which behaviors to focus

To create messages and encourage actions that will help you achieve the overall water quality goals and objectives from Step 1, you need to decide which behavior changes will give you the most for your money. Will you gain a greater reduction in overall sediment pollution by asking developers to avoid projects along streams and waterways or by asking construction site managers to plant vegetated buffers along stream banks? Which behavior change will be easier to measure? Which one is the audience more likely to adopt? Which behavior shows the most direct link to the problem? Which will be the easiest to promote, financially and technically? What barriers need to be overcome to motivate people to engage in that behavior? Thinking about these questions will help you choose the behaviors you should target in your campaign.

To make the behavior selection process easier, use a table such as the one presented on page 53 for the Building Blocks box. A blank matrix is provided in Appendix C. By answering the questions in the table, you'll be able to score the potential behaviors you're considering and decide which behavior you should focus on to meet your goals and objectives. For example, when answering the question "Which behavior will be the most affordable to promote to my audience?" be sure to consider both the short-term and long-term costs you might incur while trying to encourage the adoption of each behavior. Think about the costs of outreach materials and formats, how the materials will be distributed, and who will help you distribute them. If the cost to promote a behavior is particularly high, you might want to focus on another behavior that will achieve the same result. The answers to most of the questions in the table will be found during the target audience analysis process you conducted earlier. Having focus group participants complete the table together is also a good way to zero in on behaviors. For each question, rank each behavior, starting with 1 as the behavior least likely to result in the best outcome for that question. Hints on how to answer the questions are provided in Appendix C, which also includes a blank matrix.

Crafting the message

Messages are designed to raise general awareness, educate, or motivate action. Keep in mind that outreach messages depend on what the audiences knows. If people aren't familiar with an issue or problem, awareness and education will have to precede any calls for action. For example, it is unrealistic to expect voters to approve a stormwater management bond referendum that will raise their property taxes unless they know what the money will be used for, why the expense is necessary, and what the benefits will be (e.g., improved water quality, reduced flooding). Awareness and education activities—discussing the inadequacies of the current stormwater system, perhaps, and reviewing possible improvements—are usually required before asking people to take an action that will cost them time, resources, or money. Outreach messages will change over time as the audience moves along the continuum of awareness, education, and action.

A careful analysis of your overall goal (e.g., improve water quality) and supporting objectives (e.g., reduce nutrient loadings, control sedimentation) will help you determine the best way to craft a message for the target audience. A variety of approaches are available. For example, in some cases the message might stress what might be lost if the desired actions are not taken (water quality), rather than individual benefits (increased sense of social responsibility). Other approaches include highlighting potential threats, appealing to a common vision for improved conditions, and portraying the targeted behavior as cool, sophisticated, or otherwise desirable. Always pretest your message on a subset of the target audience and adjust it as necessary. Keep in mind that if your message is focused on getting people to take a specific action, they will be more likely to take part if the message also has a component that helps build awareness at the same time. A message like "Don't dump used motor oil down the storm drains" is much more effective if you add "because our storm drains empty into the bay."

Messages can appeal to the audience's hopes, fears, sense of responsibility, or personal benefits. Exploring the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of the audience regarding the subject of your message (through the research conducted in Step 2) can help you uncover messages that will resonate with the audience members.

Text-message-style messages aimed at youth

An educational nonprofit organization based in Pennsylvania, 12 Caring Habits, developed a program that includes a yearlong series of monthly habit-building teaching and display components that are engaging and extremely easy to teach and learn. Each month becomes a familiar "brand name," and each color becomes a recognized symbol for one of 12 behaviors that motivate caring and mutual respect in classrooms. To better engage youth, organizers developed their 12 messages using a text-message style. In many cases, texting has replaced talking among teens.

Six independent and university studies confirmed that when properly implemented, Caring Habits outcomes support child development and emotional intelligence goals with a minimal investment of only a few minutes a week.

For example, a land manager might be more interested in the amount of time and money he can save by transitioning to a "no-mow" natural landscape or scaling back his existing mowing program than he is in the amount of nutrients and sediments trapped by the resulting vegetation. One developer might be most interested in complying with local erosion and sediment control ordinances and avoiding fines, whereas another might want to preserve habitat in an area of the river she fishes.

Be careful not to create a message that will easily become outdated. If your message involves getting people to support a new zoning ordinance that protects riparian corridors, you might be wasting your time if that ordinance is being spearheaded by a local politician who could be ousted in the next election. Don't ask residents to have their septic systems inspected if sewer lines are expected to be extended to their area within the next year. Make sure your message won't fade with current events or changes in administration. Consider omitting dates from print materials if they will be used for years to come.

The language and style of the message should match those of the target audience. If you're unsure about the reading level of the target audience, pretest the message with representatives of the audience to determine its appropriateness. Consider displaying the message graphically if the target audience is not fully literate. If the target audience's primary language is not English, lead off with their native language first and include an English version underneath, if needed. Always seek to understand and to be understood.

Poorly framed sentence: When you think of the Cobblestone River, you are probably thinking of dirty water, but the Cobblestone has seen great improvements in water quality in the last 10 years.

Well-framed sentence: The Cobblestone River is the cleanest it's been in 10 years because of the tremendous improvement efforts by both state and local agencies and organizations.

The poorly framed sentence reminds people of the frame they believe to be true, and this belief will be hard to overcome no matter what is said next. Consider what happens when someone mentions song lyrics. You tend to end up humming the song all day, even if you don't like it, because you've been reminded of it. It's hard to think of anything else. The same holds true with issue frames or perceptions.

The importance of framing

Framing has to do with how people use meanings, values, context, anecdotes and stereotypes to better understand an issue or event. In outreach, framing is the act of purposely planning the mental connections that people will make when hearing your message so that they will understand and respond the way you want or expect them to. Frames are sets of signals that tell people how they should respond. People understand something better and will respond positively if they are able to quickly fit the concept into a framework for something that they already understand and that they want or like. Following are some examples of framing the same issues in different ways with just a few words:

- *Government-sponsored health care program* versus *public heath care option*
- *Death tax* versus *estate tax*
- *Nursing home* versus *senior living center*
- *Mountain bikers* versus *hikers on wheels*
- *Endangered species* versus *native wildlife*
- *Open space* versus *natural area.*

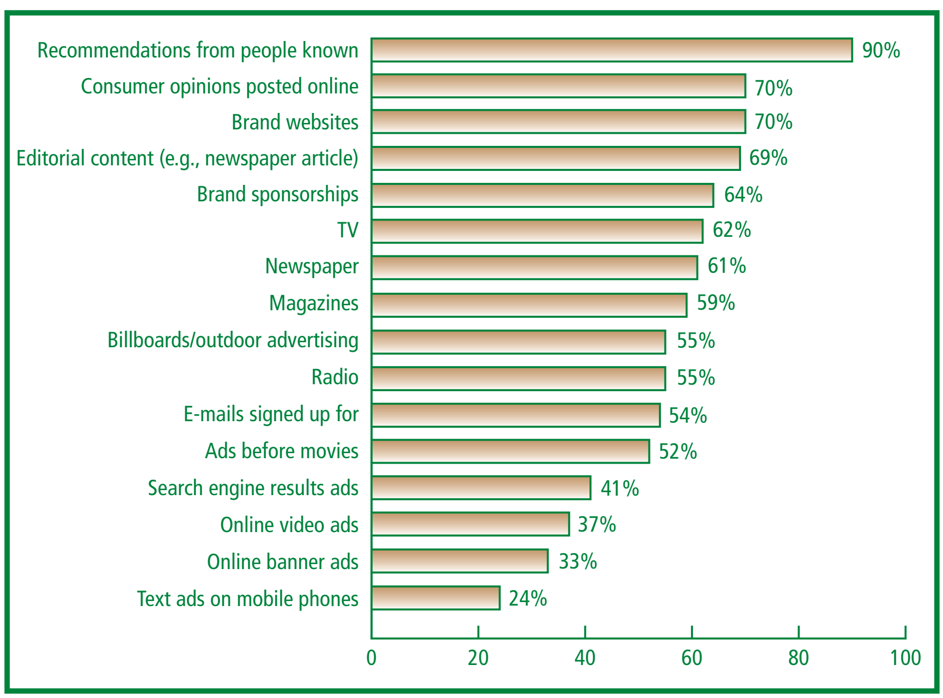
In addition to the words you use in your messages, creating positive, productive frames also involves choosing the right visuals, metaphors, and tone. The publication *Framing Public Issues* by the Frameworks Institute in Washington, DC, is a great resource on how to frame messages. The document provides many examples of both good and bad framing and provides tips and checklists to help you frame your message. It can be downloaded at *www.frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/PDF/FramingPublicIssuesfinal.pdf*.

Branding your program

A brand is a trademark, name, phrase, logo, or design given to a product or an organization. A brand can also be a behavior your group is focused on addressing. Brands are used to create a consistent, memorable identity for your product or project. Brand identity is what you want people to think or feel when they see or hear your brand. When developing a brand, you're hoping to build a positive, action-motivating brand image. For example, EPA's WaterSense label is a brand for a water efficiency program. Products, such as toilets and shower heads, displaying the WaterSense label are more water-efficient than their competitors. When consumers see the WaterSense label, hopefully they see a product that is water-efficient and will save them money on their water bill because it has been approved as such by a trusted environmental agency. How successful your brand is often reflects how well your agency, project, or product is trusted by the audience. Consider, for a moment, the fact that 90 percent of consumers trust information coming from people they know (word-of-mouth information). If your program's brand becomes so popular that it is spread by word of mouth, it will quickly become a trusted, well-known brand.

The West Valley Clean Water Program in the San Francisco Bay area developed a cartoon strip, "Claire Water," as its brand (see page 46). The cartoon characters, Claire (a clapper rail) and Harvey (a saltmarsh harvest mouse), present a consistent brand image even though the messages in the strips change. The cartoon characters can be easily used in logos, newspapers, flyers, newsletters, posters, and virtually anything else. The artist prepares each strip in three formats for various uses—grey scale for newspapers, color, and line art only (for coloring books, etc.).

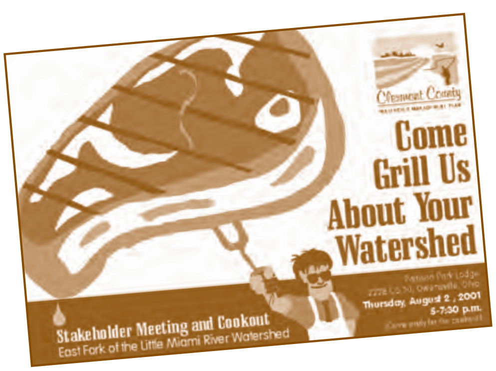
Have some degree of trust* in the following forms of advertising, April 2009



Source: The Nielsen Company

*For example, 90 percent of respondents trusted "completely" or "somewhat" recommendations from people they know

Consider developing an easy-to-remember jingle to get your nonpoint source or stormwater message across in radio or TV PSAs. Jingles can be an effective, vivid communication tool that can help move a behavior from short-term memory to long-term memory. The use of music and rhyming words helps to organize and store the information in the mind, making it easier to remember later. Keep your jingles short—the shorter the better.



Getting the audience's attention

Of course, the message will need to capture the attention of the target audience. Cutting through the clutter of the daily news, school schedules, work commitments, and social outings to grab the audience can be difficult. You need a hook—a way to make the message both lively and personal so that it resonates with the audience and prompts them to respond. The "package" or format of the message can help with this, but the message itself must command attention if it is to be acknowledged.

Effective hooks vary according to the audience. Technical audiences might be drawn to detailed trend charts, modeling results, or data displays on the effectiveness of best management practices (BMPs). Developers might want to know how much bang they're getting for their buck—what's the relative effectiveness of the proposed control measure, and how much will it cost? More general audiences might be engaged by information linked to the local drinking water sources or messages that have powerful emotional connections. The challenge will be finding a way to engage the audience directly without resorting to hyperbole or other inappropriate distortions.

Humorous messages can be used as a hook to attract attention. Keeping your message lighthearted makes people feel more comfortable with the topic and helps them feel less intimidated. For instance, if you're trying to generate stakeholder interest in providing input on a new watershed management plan, you might hold monthly backyard barbecues with the message "Come Grill Us about Your Watershed!"

Analogies or stories that vividly portray the scope of a problem, compelling questions, and appeals that stress rewards or threats can all help grab the attention of the target audience. For example, consider the different approaches in the following table for presenting similar information:

Less vivid	More vivid
There are about 26 million septic systems in the United States.	Septic systems treat and release about 4 billion gallons of wastewater per day.
Every month about 6,000 cubic yards of sediment is transported down the Red River.	The Red River carries the equivalent of 1,000 pickup truck loads of dirt every month.
Hog production in the five-county area generates approximately 750 tons of manure per day.	Hogs in our coastal counties produce more manure each day than a city of a half-million people.
Population is expected to increase about 15 percent annually over the next 10 years.	We'll need to build 10,000 homes, 6 schools, and a hospital by 2020 to keep up with current growth trends.

Using the information you collected on the target audience in Step 2, determine what will grab this group's attention. Talk to people knowledgeable about the audience, convene focus groups of audience members, or research how others targeting that audience develop their outreach or marketing materials. Focus groups are particularly good venues for testing and obtaining feedback on various versions of outreach materials, messages, and other aspects of the effort. In a focus group conducted by EPA, participants mentioned that messages that clearly and dramatically demonstrate the immediate cause-and-effect relationship between personal polluting behaviors and resulting pollution are most effective. Messages aimed at educating teenage audiences must include elements that target that age group: The most effective messages are bold, hard-hitting, unconventional, and provocative.

Most, if not all, public service messages that have ever worked include an emotional appeal—think about the Crying Indian litter campaign from the 1970s and the Smokey Bear appeals. Concerns about getting sick from drinking contaminated water, getting cancer from smoking, and dying in a drunk-driving crash can lead to positive behavior changes. Messages that focus on emotional appeals must be socially responsible, based on indisputable facts, and carefully tested among members of the target audience before widespread use. Nancy Lee, coauthor of *Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good*, recommends considering the stage of change (refer to Step 2, page 21) of the target audience. If audiences currently have no intention of changing their behavior, raising the level of concern might "wake them up." If they are already considering making a change, however, a heightened appeal might immobilize them (e.g., keep a woman from going to get a mammogram). Lee suggests always following up these kinds of messages quickly with a solution, such as a toll-free number to call, a website to visit, or an action to take. You should also make sure that the source of the statistic or information used as the basis for the concern is a credible source. For example, in communicating the dangers of swimming in polluted waterways, using a trustworthy source such as the state or local health department will make your message more credible and less likely to be ignored.

And lastly, make sure the described consequence of not taking action is accurate and not overexaggerated.

Take time to explore how your message will be received and what reaction it is likely to evoke before you finalize and release it. Don't overwhelm your audience by trying to cover too many bases in one message. Keep it simple so the idea is not diluted. Delivering too much information at once doesn't work, even if you're addressing a complex issue.

Getting a response

Ask people to do something in your message, and let them know why it's important. It's not likely that they will do anything unless you specifically ask them. Below are some action steps an outreach campaign might promote:

- *Recycle your motor oil at any auto parts store in town.*
- *Seed and mulch bare ground within 14 days after removing vegetative cover.*
- *Save plastic grocery bags and use them to scoop the poop from your pooch.*
- *Have your septic system inspected every three years and pumped as necessary.*
- *Make your lakeshore a no-mow zone!*
- *Save up to 30 percent on air-conditioning costs by planting trees around your home.*

When asking people to take action, be very clear about what they should do and make it easy to remember. Think about what behaviors are currently the norm and what behaviors you hope to make the norm. If you can reinforce the desired behavior by noting others who are engaging in it, so much the better. For example, farmers are much more likely to upgrade their livestock waste management practices if other nearby farmers are doing it. Asking people to take action is where the rubber meets the road in the world of voluntary BMPs. In many cases, your whole water quality improvement effort might be based on convincing X number of people to take Y number of Z actions. If this is the case, your outreach strategy needs to explore very carefully what type of appeal is most likely to work.

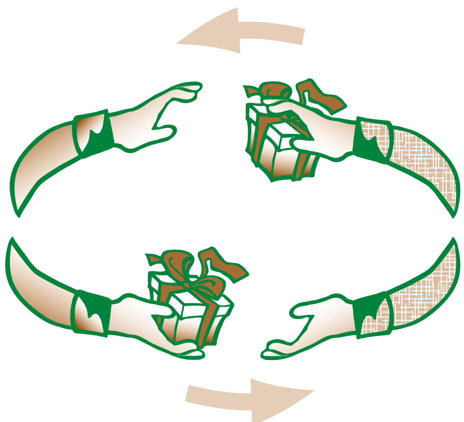
Messages with incentives and rewards

Using financial incentives is one of the best ways to initially get people involved in your cause. Financial incentives can help change the behaviors of people who believe that protecting the environment is too time-consuming or expensive. Financial incentives are best used when research on the target audience suggests that people are unlikely to change their behaviors without an incentive. For example, providing discount cards from local businesses for participating in a household hazardous waste recycling event could encourage more residents to participate than might have otherwise. Other examples include paying homeowners a small stipend for agreeing to participate in focus group meetings, offering rebates for purchasing low-flow showerheads, and offering subsidized interest rates or tax breaks. Be sure that you build in ways to make people notice your incentive. Include information on financial incentives at the point of sale or in bill inserts so that people notice them at times when they are already thinking about money. Try to identify incentives that have the potential for long-term impact and create social change (e.g., public recognition of several "best stream buffer" property owners) instead of incentives that will create a behavior change only during the short life of the incentive and aren't likely to result in lasting water quality improvements unless they are repeated (e.g., coupon for one free box of pet waste pickup bags). Incentives are much more successful and cost-effective for one-time behavior changes rather than repetitive behavior change. It may well prove too expensive for your organization to keep providing the incentive over the long haul, and if the incentive is later removed, will the repetitive behavior come to a stop?

The "Get Green" campaign, developed by the environmental advocacy group Environmental Defense and produced by the Ad Council, uses humor to offer viewers simple, everyday ways that they can help the environment. "Get Green" highlights how people can help the environment get green while helping themselves get green by saving money. Five TV public service announcements (PSAs) humorously depict the simplicity of incorporating environmental actions into daily lives. One PSA shows a man inflating his tires properly and saving money on gas. "Yeah," he says. "I save Mother Nature from pollution. But more important, she's already saved me 30 bucks!" Another shows a man who has just had his car tuned. It conveys the same message—saving the environment while saving money.

Using a different spin on incentives, EPA enlisted the help of homeowners in the Cincinnati, Ohio, Mt. Airy neighborhood to install rain gardens and rain barrels in their yards. In this pilot project, EPA tested an auction-based method of encouraging the public to adopt new behaviors. EPA paid those landowners who agreed to install rain gardens or rain barrels at the lowest price. The auction was run in spring 2007and repeated in spring 2008, and it resulted in payouts and the installation of rain gardens and rain barrels. Bids ranged from $0 to $500, with an average bid of $50.27 for a rain garden and $32.06 for a rain barrel. Interestingly, most of the bids were $0, indicating the willingness of homeowners to have stormwater management practices installed on their property for free without any compensation. Read more on the project at *www.mtairyraincatchers.org/index.htm*.

Bear in mind that when people are already motivated to change their behaviors, the use of financial incentives might undermine their motivation. In addition, if the incentive is later taken away, that original motivation might be lost.



On the other hand, disincentives, such as fines for overwatering or cutting down trees within 50 feet of a stream bank, discourage people from taking actions you want them to avoid. Disincentives such as the rising cost of water due to high wastewater treatment costs, can be mentioned in printed materials and on radio and TV.

Setting up a beneficial exchange

Identifying a beneficial exchange is a critical, but often overlooked, component of an outreach campaign. Beneficial exchange is rooted in the idea that actions are taken whenever target audiences believe that the benefits they receive will be greater than the costs they incur by not taking that action. When developing your messages, always consider "What's in it for my target audience?" People will change their behaviors only if there's a benefit for them in doing it. There has to be an exchange. Although your "customers" should be informed of the link between their actions and water pollution, you should also be aware that most people are primarily interested in how it will help them—more so than protecting the environment. Some benefits are tangible, such as saving money or time or becoming healthier. There are also perceived benefits, which revolve around social norms. People benefit from a new behavior if they feel "this is what people expect me to do" or "everyone else is doing it." Hopefully, you have uncovered some of these benefits, or the desire for them, in your audience research during Step 2. For example, if you learned in your research that a fair number of people in your audience have reduced their reliance on household toxics but not as many people as you would like, you might want to use a message like "Your neighbor saved $10 this month by using alternative cleaners. What are you waiting for?" This shows people that they can be smart and savvy like their neighbors if they change their ways.

Free mowers and mower discounts mean more natural lawns

For the past 11 years, King County, Washington, has co-sponsored a program to offer discounts on mulching mowers. The program began in 1998 when a particularly rainy season overwhelmed the local composting facility with grass clippings. The county gave each household in one neighborhood a free Black and Decker electric mulching lawn mower (donated by Black and Decker), free lawn care consultations, and free environmentally friendly lawn care products. In return, residents were asked to pull weeds by hand, water their lawns less, and dispose of all their chemical pesticides. Later the program evolved into a retail program that provided discounts for mulching mowers and natural yard care products. The program was part of the Northwest Natural Yard Days. Since Yard Days began, 34,185 mulching mowers have been purchased.

http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/naturalyardcare/yd-background.asp

Message delivery

The next section (Step 4) discusses formats and delivery mechanisms for your message—that is, how to get the message packaged and distributed. It's helpful to give some thought to message delivery when you're crafting and refining your message because the way it's delivered can significantly affect what happens next.

For example, outreach messages targeting business owners are better received and more powerful if a member of the business community delivers them. Integrating personal communication with a member of the target audience or a person with good standing in that community during message delivery increases the chances that the desired action will be taken. Personal involvement can also help model the desired behavior and provide additional outreach and support for the message—and the target actions—after the initial outreach phase has been completed.

The 4Ps of Marketing

Four key marketing concepts related to setting up a beneficial exchange should be addressed in social marketing campaigns. Marketers call them the "4 Ps":

- ***Product:*** The package of messages, benefits, and collateral materials and activities associated with the desired behavior.
- ***Price:*** The price (e.g., money, time) the target audience pays or believes it must pay in the exchange; what the audience gives up during the exchange.
- ***Place:*** The place where the beneficial exchange occurs. This place must reach the target audience and fit their lifestyle. Place includes things like the Internet and e-mail, grocery stores, doctors offices, mailboxes, outdoor spigots, hardware store shelves, and door-to-door encounters. "Place" includes where the information is conveyed, materials are given out, or desired actions are actually taken.
- ***Promotion:*** Publicize or promote the exchange opportunity in a creative way that maximizes adoption of the new behaviors. Promotion includes the messages, messengers, and distribution methods used to spread the word.

Finding the right angle for your message

The Muncie Delaware County Stormwater Management office in Indiana received a $120,000 grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to install several rain gardens. After heavy rains, water tends to stand in certain parts of the city for days, increasing health risks and contributing to mosquito infestation. Although the CDC is not typically concerned with stormwater or flooding issues, they are concerned with mosquito-transmitted diseases such as West Nile Virus. Communicating the importance of stormwater management to the CDC centered more around public health issues than environmental issues. In that light, CDC could clearly see the public health benefit that could be gained from rain gardens. Refocusing their message around public health helped the locality obtain a grant that would otherwise not have been available to them. For more information on the project, contact the Muncie Delaware County Stormwater Coordinator, Shareen Wagley at *swagley@munciesanitary.org* or 765-213-6468.

Building Blocks:

Step 3: Creating the Message

One of the objectives of the hypothetical Herndon County's watershed management plan is to reduce nutrient runoff coming from residential areas. The county's public outreach committee agreed that focusing outreach efforts on homeowners, homeowner associations, and apartment/condominium landscape managers would greatly improve water quality in the county.

To help the committee members decide which behavior changes would give them the greatest benefit, they developed a behavior change matrix to compare six nutrient-reducing behaviors. The committee scored each behavior based on the results of the research it had conducted when identifying and analyzing its target audience. The behavior that received the highest score, reducing the number of times fertilizer is applied each year from twice to once, is the behavior the committee decided would provide the greatest reduction in nutrient runoff, considering the inclinations of the target audience. The matrix is shown on the following page. (See Appendix C for instructions and a blank matrix for your use.)

After the committee selected which behavior to focus the campaign on, the county set out to create its message. From Step 2 (Identify and analyze the target audience), the county had learned that although many residents are interested in protecting the environment and their water resources, most simply do not have the extra time to take action. The county knew that it would be important to stress that reducing fertilizer application would save residents time and improve water quality while giving them a healthier lawn at the same time. The outreach campaign's message became the following:

Fertilize in the Fall. That's All!

With slow-release or organic fertilizers, you need to fertilize only once in the fall to help your grass grow new roots and store nutrients for next year's growth.

Sample Behavior Selection Matrix

Water Quality Objective: Reduce nutrient runoff from residential areas

Behavior	Evaluation Questions — Score from 1 to 6 (1 being the least likely and 6 being the most likely). Note: Behaviors may receive the same score if applicable.									
	Which behavior will result in the highest reduction in pollution?	Which behavior will be the most affordable to promote to my audience?	Which behavior will be the most affordable for my audience to adopt?	Which behavior is the most attractive to the people in my community?	For which behavior will it be easiest to show a link to the problem?	Which behavior is the most sustainable?	Which behavior will provide additional water quality benefits?	Which behavior will get the highest consumer response?	Which behavior has the fewest barriers to overcome?	Total Score *(sum of columns 1–9)*
Pick up pet waste	4	6	5	1	5	4	1	6	6	38
Reduce fertilizer application from twice a year to once a year	6	5	6	3	6	5	6	3	5	45
Plant streamside vegetation to filter out nutrients	5	2	2	4	1	6	6	4	2	32
Have septic systems inspected every 3 years and pumped as necessary	3	1	1	2	4	3	5	1	1	21
Leave grass clippings on the lawn	2	4	4	5	2	2	3	5	4	31
Plant native plants that require less fertilizer	1	3	3	6	3	3	4	6	3	32

Instructions:

1. Score each behavior based on the evaluation questions (1 being the least likely and 6 being the most likely).
2. Total each behavior score by adding the scores for each question.
3. The behavior with the highest score is the recommended behavior.

Note: *The results of this matrix will vary between communities. The factors may change depending on input from the target audience.*

Positives outweigh negatives

After engaging the members of the audience and exposing them to your message, you can provide other information you feel is important, such as environmental benefits. It's advisable, however, to let the audience members know first what their direct benefit will be. A word to the wise: Studies show that positive messages ("do this") tend to be more effective in changing people's habits than negative ones ("don't do this").

PROCESS CHECKLIST
Step 3: Create the message

- ❑ Is the message relevant and accessible to the target audience?
- ❑ Is the language of the message appropriate for the target audience?
- ❑ Is the message specific for each audience, and will it resound with each?
- ❑ Can the message be understood by the target audience?
- ❑ Is the message framed appropriately?
- ❑ Is the message vivid and memorable?
- ❑ Have I set up a beneficial exchange?
- ❑ Have I road-tested the message with members of the target audience?
- ❑ Can the target audience respond to the message in an easy, convenient way?
- ❑ Have I successfully identified which behaviors to ask the target audience to change?
- ❑ Does the message motivate behavior or attitude change?
- ❑ Have I considered how the message will be delivered?

Step 4: Package the message

You've defined the objectives, assessed the target audience, and crafted the message. Now it's time to determine the best packages or formats for the message for eventual delivery to the target audience. The information you collected in Step 2 will help in determining the most appropriate format. A farming community, for example, might respond positively to field day events, door-to-door visits, and articles in farm publications. When selecting your message formats, think about where the target audience gets its information. This section provides tips on various formats from radio public service announcements (PSAs) to giveaways.

What's in Step 4?

- Linking the audience and formats
- Format considerations
- Using green methods and materials
- Repeating the message
- Borrowing ideas from others
- Using the mass media & advertising
- Making videos
- Using print materials
- Conducting presentations & events
- What does it cost?

Linking the needs of the audience to the format

Making sure you choose the right message format for the target audience is one of the most important steps in outreach. Several factors about the audience come into play:

- ***Size of the audience:*** If the target audience is large, a door-to-door campaign might not be feasible; if the audience is small, a grandiose community festival could waste valuable time and money.
- ***Geographic distribution of the audience:*** If the audience is widely distributed (e.g., across a rural county), presentations given at workshops might not be the best choice because participants would have to travel a long distance to get to them.
- ***Level of awareness and education:*** If the audience consists of people for whom English is not the primary language, newsletters or other written formats in English might not appeal to them; radio or TV PSAs in their native language might be a better choice.
- ***Preferred formats:*** If the research you conducted on the audience revealed that most of the audience members have access to the Internet and use it regularly, a campaign-specific website might be an important element to include in your campaign.

Format considerations

In some cases, the format will define the distribution mechanism (newspaper articles, radio spots, public events). Keeping in mind the possibility of using multiple formats, consider the following:

- Is the package appropriate for the target audience?
- Is it user-friendly?
- Does it clearly communicate the message?
- How will the target audience access and use the information?
- Is it something they will see once and discard, or refer to often?
- Can it be produced in-house with existing resources?

Different audiences respond differently to the same fish fact sheet

In one study that tested a proposed fact sheet on the risks of fish consumption for various audiences, scientists found that African American respondents were interested in health risks from contaminated fish, whereas White respondents were interested in the level of contamination in the fish themselves.

—J. Burger and L. Waishwell
"Are we reaching the target audience? Evaluation of a fish fact sheet"
The Science of the Total Environment 2001

- How much will it cost, and who will pay for it?
- Are there existing formats or templates that can be tapped into?
- Will it work as a self-mailer or fit in a standard-sized envelope?

Be mindful of the links between message, format, and distribution. For example, you might announce a river festival on brightly colored recycled paper or use a radio show on car maintenance to reach automotive do-it-yourselfers.

Greening up your outreach methods and materials

Another important consideration is whether your outreach methods and materials are as environmentally friendly as possible. Printed materials containing environmental messages are often criticized if they're not produced with high-post-consumer-content recycled stock. On the flip side, make sure that you carefully weigh the results that your methods and materials will achieve against the burden or cost of making those methods and materials more "green." For example, don't blow your budget on plant-based utensils at your watershed conference if you then can't afford to pay for the keynote speaker who will draw attendees. In addition, make sure the products and methods you choose match your audience's needs. Following are a few examples of eco-friendly materials and methods you might consider using:

- Provide virtual/electronic meeting handouts versus hard copies.
- Piggyback events with cell phone recycling events, turn-out-the-lights events (e.g., Earth Hour), and other environmental events.
- Prepare reusable displays.
- Use recycled and recyclable paper, soy-based inks, and green office supplies (*www.thegreenoffice.com*).
- Purchase giveaways made from recycled materials.
- Provide options for recycling and food waste composting at events and publicize these areas.
- Provide biodegradable utensils and other items at meetings and conferences. (There are many online options for buying plant-based utensils.)
- Select hotels and other meeting facilities that practice green hospitality and sustainable practices.
- Don't provide plastic water bottles at events. Use water coolers and biodegradable paper cups instead.
- Use recycled or environmentally friendly shipping materials (e.g., no Styrofoam peanuts), and use recycled paper for letterhead and envelopes.

- Recycle nametags used at meetings.
- Reuse posters from bus boards and other transit systems once their “contract” or period of initial use is over. Share them with schools, libraries, and other public buildings.

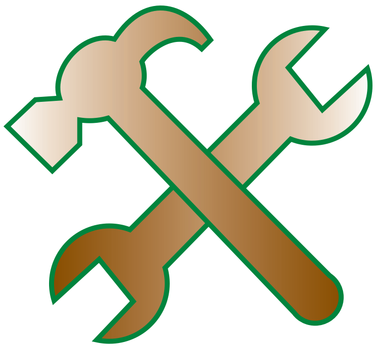
Repeating the message

In addition to being promotional vehicles for messages, formats often dictate the frequency of message presentation. Frequency is important because it determines how well the message will be remembered. Professional marketers know that the more times you see their advertisement for a product, the more likely you’ll remember the product and buy it. Educating stakeholders and citizens on watershed or polluted runoff issues is no different: People remember what resonates with them and what is in front of them. As the saying goes, “out of sight, out of mind.” So if your message is short, you might want to display it on a refrigerator magnet and keep it in front of the audience for months or even years. Other packages—rain gauges, calendars, Frisbees, news media pieces, printed materials, and so forth—all have their own pros and cons. Take time to explore them to see if they fit your program by linking objective, audience, and message.

Sharpen your writing skills

There are no hard-and-fast rules or magical formulas for good writing, but these guidelines could add sparkle and strength to almost anyone’s words:

- Make sure your message targets the audience and will resonate favorably. Write simply and directly.
- Pay attention to grammar and punctuation, and avoid careless mistakes and typos. Consult a writing stylebook to double-check just where that comma or apostrophe should go, or ask someone with experience and a keen eye to edit the piece.
- Use the active voice.
- Write in simple declarative sentences. Make each word work. Avoid overuse of the thesaurus, or your writing will sound stilted or pretentious. Use descriptive adjectives, but not too many.
- Make sure your writing conveys your intentions.
- Sometimes a new perspective and a fresh start are needed, so don’t hesitate to start over if necessary. If you come down with a case of writer’s block, you might be making too great a fuss over what you’re writing. Sometimes it helps to just start writing, even if you begin at the middle or end of a piece. You can always go back to edit or enhance it later. Getting something on paper is the most important part.
- Avoid the use of technical terms, jargon, and acronyms unless the audience is familiar with them. Instead, use words that are simple and easily understood by all audiences. Use the same words in your messages and materials that you would if you were talking to your mother or a neighbor.
- A picture really is worth a thousand words. Use pictures of people engaging in the behavior you want the audience to adopt so that they can imagine themselves doing it. In addition, make sure you can clearly see the faces of people in your pictures. Use faces that look like people in your target audience (i.e., appropriate age, race, sex or lifestyle).



Don’t reinvent the wheel!

Before you spend a penny designing, writing, or recording any outreach materials, be sure that you take some time to see if similar materials have already been developed by other organizations in your state or other states that you can use without having to create something new yourself. Start by searching through EPA’s Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox (*www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*). The Toolbox contains a variety of already-developed outreach materials from all over the country to help you get started on developing an effective and targeted outreach campaign. It has more than 700 viewable or audible TV, radio, and print ads and other outreach products to increase awareness or change behaviors across the following six topics:

- General stormwater and storm drain awareness
- Lawn and garden care
- Household chemicals and waste
- Motor vehicle care
- Pet care
- Septic system care

You can search by media type, topic, or by state. Permissions for using the cataloged products are disclosed (and in most cases, granted) by the product owners, and contact information, campaign websites, and other pertinent details are provided (select “Find out more” for any product listed).

Format options

The following is an overview of some popular formats, but it is not meant to be comprehensive. Choose one format (or more) that helps achieve the desired result with your available resources. Combining formats can reinforce your message considerably. For example, promoting environmentally friendly agricultural practices through newspaper articles, farm field days, and “conserve our soil” ball caps can create interest in and support for such practices. Keep the target audience in mind while considering various formats.

If your campaign will last for a relatively long period, you have the option of using multiple formats over time. In fact, formats should change over the course of your outreach campaign to reflect the different phases of outreach—awareness, education, and action. This continuum calls for a broad, generic message at the outset to raise and increase awareness. As the target audience becomes aware of and interested in the issue(s), the messages and formats should become more specific. For example, general stormwater-focused radio and TV PSAs can lead into specific ads regarding pet waste, fertilizer use, and vehicle care.

Each format has advantages and disadvantages, and you need to weigh them as you decide which format will resonate most and is most appropriate for the target audience. Other considerations include cost, staff time needed, setup time, production time, schedule, legal requirements, and audience type, level of education, and involvement in the issue. The table on pages 61 and 62 lists some of the pros and cons of each format and the circumstances under which each format is best applied.

The following sections present the formats from the table and provide tips for increasing the effectiveness of these formats.

Mass media formats

If your message needs to be understood and embraced by the public, it must be covered by the mass media. The media are the most cost-effective and efficient way to get your message delivered. Partnering with the news media—newspapers, TV, magazines, radio—is not difficult, but it requires some orientation and basic training on how to involve them in your outreach effort.

Opportunities to place your message in the media include informational news stories, people features, issue analyses, PSAs, interview programs, call-in shows, editorial columns, and feature items related to sports, recreation, or outdoor living. The various formats require different techniques, which are discussed below.

Formats using the mass media can be broken down into two major categories, news coverage and advertising. News coverage includes interviews, news stories, letters to the editor, and event coverage. Advertising includes the development of PSAs. Publicity generated from news coverage is dependent on the news organization, whereas you create radio, TV, and newspaper advertising yourself. In many cases the advertising that you do can be leveraged later into news coverage. For example, one state bought informational ads on agriculture-related water quality issues from a country station and received as a benefit some free news coverage of the issues during the year.

News coverage

Why use the news media?

Americans are voracious consumers of news and information, and information on water and other science issues is not much different from information on health, economics, or sports. A survey conducted by the University of North Texas in 2006 found that 41 percent of residents get their information from TV news, 20 percent from the Internet, and 19 percent from newspapers. Only 7 percent of those surveyed mentioned things like environmental mailings as their news sources, and meetings didn't even make the list. Nearly every study conducted in the United States over the past decade has concluded that most people—even those involved in scientific or water resource issues—get their environmental information from the news media. Obviously, the news media have tremendous reach when it comes to communicating watershed messages to both targeted and broad audiences.

The news is free!

The news media are effective, available, and free. Surveys repeatedly show high public interest in environmental issues and in water quality, particularly as it relates to drinking water, public health, and recreational uses. Reporters are always looking for news—informative articles, features on people or issues, or regular columns—to fill their pages or broadcasts. Packaging your messages as news stories can help distribute your information to mass audiences at virtually no cost. You have to buy an ad, but placing your message in the news is free. The trade-off is that you do not control the message, timing, or frequency of the news story.

Reporters often cover water quality issues debated at public meetings and other events. Expanding coverage through a planned, proactive approach can help build and support new attitudes, generate interest in remediation projects, promote possible solutions to water quality problems, introduce and explain policy or funding proposals, and motivate or reinforce volunteers in the field. Public agencies are discovering that working with the media helps in building awareness of agency activities, responding quickly to public concerns, explaining technical issues, and clarifying enforcement programs.

Becoming a student of the media (rather than just a consumer) can help you discover important information about how a particular media outlet covers the news—things like who reports on environmental issues, what's been covered so far, and what topics are the subject of editorials. Developing some knowledge of a media outlet will help later, when you're discussing possible coverage for your events or issues.

What makes the news?

Certain key elements apply to what is covered as news. Good news stories have at least one of the following attributes:

- Involve either local people or local issues or documented statistics of local importance
- Focus on attributes perceived to be unique or unusual
- Relate to significant issues or events
- Quote well-known or respected members of the community
- Affect (or potentially affect) many people throughout a region
- Involve controversial issues or strong emotions
- Include a celebrity figure
- Are timely.

Your outreach or educational messages won't be required to have all of these significant elements; but the more they have, the more likely they'll be covered by the media. This aspect of media involvement shouldn't be discouraging: A quick look at any newspaper or TV news

Choosing the Right Format

Format	Pros	Cons	Uses
TV news coverage	• Creates awareness, publicity, and recognition • Most popular source of environmental information • Free • Can reach a large captive audience • Can include graphics and video • Most people would rather watch than read	• Working with reporters takes time and patience • Reporters might change focus of desired coverage (e.g., reporters often want to focus on "people" issues, rather than aquatic biota or habitat concerns) • Training on giving interviews might be needed • Providing education on technical issues requires boiling them down to basic bullet points	• Events • Weekly reports • Hot topics • Controversial issues • Public education • BMP installations that reduce water pollution
Advertising with TV or Radio Public Service Announce-ments (PSAs)	• Can be free to air • Can reach a large audience • Can focus in on target audience • Can provide follow-up through toll-free medium (hotline or website) • TV ads provide high impact and the ability to demonstrate a behavior	• Stiff competition for air time • Easy to tune out • Difficult to evaluate effectiveness • Can be expensive to produce TV PSAs of suitable quality • Short format does not allow for more than awareness unless behavior change is simple • Little control of time of airing without paying; sometimes aired late at night • Message can be obscured by commercial clutter • Target audience might not be watching/ listening when advertisement is aired unless advertising is paid for	• Events • Fundraisers • Building awareness • Promoting simple behavior change
Print Ads	• Usually offer different rates and sizes; flexible • Local papers can reach a specific community • Large papers can reach a large number of people • Graphics can help brand your cause/ organization	• Limited readership due to increasing use of Internet • Generally high cost • Short shelf life	• Events • Awareness and recognition • Public education • Recruit volunteers or website visitors
Printed formats such as newsletters and brochures	• Can reach a large audience • Can be more technical than other formats • Can tailor messages for specific audiences for different publications • Go beyond building awareness by providing detailed information • Reach more educated audiences • Audience can clip, reread, and think about the material • Might provide more credibility • Often low-cost (with unit prices decreasing with quantity) • Good to use as a follow-up mechanism	• Printing and mailing are costly • Passive, not participatory • Only as good as the mailing list used or websites, kiosks and help desks where placed • Audience must have the interest to pick them up and read them	• Articles and interviews • Events (announcing and summarizing) • Workshops • Scientific data • Requesting feedback from public • Public education • Easily transferrable to Web formats in most cases

Choosing the Right Format *(cont)*			
Format	**Pros**	**Cons**	**Uses**
Videos	• Can discuss an issue in depth • Allows control over the content • Can be visually appealing • Can air on cable TV stations • Can air on a website	• High costs • Hard to do well • Need a good distribution mechanism	• Workshops • Public education • Schools
Events	• Good for persuasion • Can model positive behavior • More personal • Offer two-way communication	• Might be difficult to reach entire audience • Could be expensive • Potential low attendance • May be dependent on the weather • Require significant planning time • Require publicity for success • Can damage reputation if not done well	• Awareness and recognition • One-on-one communication • Encouraging and modeling behavior change (motivating action)
Presentations - *workshops* - *conferences* - *group meetings*	• Can be participatory • Good for persuasion • Can model positive behavior • Personal	• Reach small audiences • Can be too technical • May be hard to get commitment to attend; may need to offer incentives • Person delivering the presentation can make or break it	• Getting feedback from attendees • Awareness and recognition • Public education
Giveaways	• Increase awareness • Can be inexpensive • Easy to produce	• Very short message • Often not very persuasive • Materials themselves might be considered wasteful	• Awareness building • Distribution at events and workshops • Incentives for participation • Behavior reminders (prompts)
Websites	• May reach a large audience • Inexpensive • Easily maintained • Offer up-to-date information • Ability to include technical and other information, with links to even more resources	• May not reach the right audience • A challenge to market • May be difficult to evaluate effectiveness • Requires time and commitment to maintain • Requires staff with coding skills or budget for contractor support	• Public education • Returning visitors if material is updated regularly
Web 2.0 formats	• Relatively inexpensive • Allows for easy cross-media marketing • Growing in popularity across many audiences	• Rapid changes in technology make it challenging • Requires tech saavy staff • Currrently appeals primarily to younger audiences	• Building awareness • Public education • Events • Piggybacking messages
E-mail distribution lists	• Can reach a discrete audience • Inexpensive • Easily maintained	• May be spreading the message to an already educated audience • Long-term project	• Ongoing projects or complex campaigns • Public education
Displays - *libraries* - *malls* - *fairs/events*	• Can reach a large audience • Visually pleasing • Reusable • Useful for point-of-sale messages tied to specific behaviors	• Must be durable • Can be specific to an event, which can date the materials	• Awareness and recognition • Behavior prompts (e.g., recycle used oil display at auto parts store)
Billboards	• Newspapers offer different rates and sizes • Can reach a large and diverse audience • Good for targeting commuters, drivers • Good for visual messages	• Very short message • Drivers might not read billboards that require high amounts of attention • Generally high costs	• Awareness and recognition • Behavior reminders (prompts)

broadcast provides a glimpse of how thin the thread of "significance" can be. The news is filled with information on research studies, government activities, business developments, societal trends and fads, sporting events, and other sometimes less-than-weighty concerns. The involvement of a celebrity can provide a huge boost to your outreach effort by generating significant media interest. When Backstreet Boys singer Kevin Richardson created the Just Within Reach Foundation to push for greater environmental responsibility in his native Kentucky, media coverage of water quality and other issues skyrocketed. With a little thought and planning, you should have no problem placing your message in the news.

How do I "do" the news?

If you've considered what makes a message newsworthy, you'll have no problems packaging your watershed outreach and educational information for reporters. The simple recipe is to identify the nugget of your message that contains the news (the elements noted in the previous section) and incorporate other information designed to educate, engage, or motivate the audience. The news nugget (think "headline") will determine the likelihood and type of coverage, so it's important to think about how it can be presented best to achieve the intended outreach objective without boring the audience. To educate or motivate, it's necessary to attract and hold the attention of the target group. Watershed issues can be vibrant, complex, engaging, compelling, and incredibly interesting—much like the watersheds themselves. Reflect this in your messages.

How can you do this? First, think like a reporter: What would be interesting? It doesn't have to be earth-shattering. Consider the following headlines, which summarize news nuggets around which you can build an article or broadcast feature:

- Monitoring results show no gains in water quality
- Workshops improving sediment controls on building sites, group says
- Neighbors take a break from lakeside mowing, watch wildflowers bloom
- Health Department urging septic system inspections
- Mayor Smith to host stream restoration workshop at local restaurant.

You get the idea. You're doing a lot of interesting stuff. Make your news appealing to reporters so they can make it interesting to the target audience.

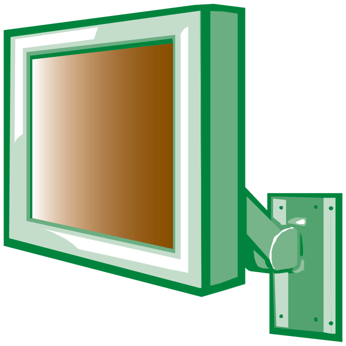
Keep in mind that our society is experiencing information overload, so it's crucial that you get your information out in plain language, in easily digestible chunks, and in a form that will be used. Because of the immediacy of the Internet, many reporters and writers no longer have daily deadlines. Stories are often posted as soon as they're written.

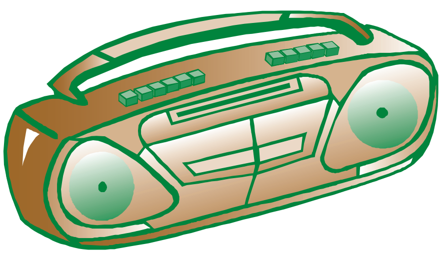
Making contact with reporters in person or by phone is probably the most effective way to engage them in what you're doing. Be ready to answer many questions!

Get the reporters in your corner

In Utah, Kids Organized to Protect Our Environment (KOPE) developed a personal rapport with local TV news reporters to gain coverage of their efforts to prevent part of an urban stream from being converted to a shopping center parking lot. The reporters, who then became advocates on a personal level, turned out to cover city council meetings, clean-up days, and community festivals organized by the kids to protect the stream. According to Lynn Olsen, a parent volunteer for KOPE, "The reporters would write their stories in order to tell the children's point of view."

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.





Establishing a relationship with the media

After you've become oriented to the perspectives of the media and have packaged your outreach information accordingly, you'll be ready to discuss coverage with reporters or news editors. Establishing a relationship with reporters and editorial staff is as important as developing the news element of your message—perhaps even more important. This point cannot be overemphasized. In fact, it's highly recommended that you introduce yourself to the news staff and start developing a relationship before you submit anything for coverage. Establishing a dialogue with reporters on what you're trying to accomplish with your outreach program will help both of you determine how to meet each other's needs.

After the reporting staff knows who you are and what you're doing, they might call and ask you to respond to questions on other water quality news stories. If you don't have anything to offer on the spot, ask them about their deadline and try to get an informed response to them before the deadline. You're trying to establish and maintain a positive, helpful relationship with the news staff so both of you can better serve the public.

It's important to realize that reporters are usually working under the pressure of a deadline and don't like runarounds. They become agitated and suspicious if you are slow to release information, especially if it's public information subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Also, remember that very few reporters are trained in the sciences. It will be your job to provide a rudimentary education on watershed science—why things like suspended solids, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, bacteria, and riparian cover are relevant.

Developing a relationship with reporters and helping them to understand your issues will pay off in increased reporting, better media relations, and fewer factual distortions. Providing reporters with appropriate background information (no more than three or four pages unless asked) and identifying interview subjects also helps. Be proactive rather than reactive.

Levels of doing the news

At the most basic level, "doing the news" means providing a steady stream of interesting, educational, informative material related to a news nugget that appears in the first paragraph of the release. In a watershed outreach program, releases should support objectives identified in Step 1. They should be designed to educate, inform, engage, or motivate members of the target audience or to build general awareness, support, and interest. If an event is being planned, a news advisory can be issued to tell the media where, when, and why it's occurring and who will be there.

If there is significant interest on the part of the media and their audience, you might consider proposing more in-depth coverage. Feature articles, interview programs, status/trends analyses, and news forums all provide an opportunity for informing and educating the public and policy makers on the sometimes complex array of issues and answers related to water quality problems. Be forewarned: These projects can involve a lot of research and a lot of work. Producing a biweekly column on water monitoring trends for Ten Mile Lake, for example, will entail a significant commitment to collect the data and meet printing deadlines. But the opportunity to reach thousands of people with this information might make such an endeavor worthwhile. To a large degree, people think primarily about what's in front of them. Water quality issues are for the most part public policy issues, and the more you can help the media explain these issues and review what needs to be done, the better the ultimate solutions are likely to be.

News coverage formats: News releases

News releases provide reporters with the basics they need to develop a news story. They can be written in a news style so that they can be used as is, although good reporters will likely prefer to rewrite your story in their own words. News releases include the who, what, when, where, why, and how of your story. In large cities TV stations and newspapers receive many releases each day, so it's important to hit the high points without going in too much detail. One- or two-page news releases are standard. If a reporter chooses to expand your news release into a longer story, he or she will contact you for more information.

When reviewing news releases, reporters typically look for one primary element—a local connection. Releases that indicate reporters should "insert name of county here" are often tossed immediately. Mention a local person or the appropriate city, county, river, lake, or stream in the first paragraph to generate maximum interest.

News releases are an efficient way to alert the public about a wide variety of issues. Use them to announce public events, summarize water monitoring information, discuss policy development issues, provide perspectives on improving water quality, or encourage the adoption of appropriate management practices. "Think Blue," San Diego's stormwater pollution prevention outreach program, protects local beaches with TV and radio PSAs, brochures, fact sheets, and more. When the program won four Emmy awards for its TV PSA, it announced the win in a news release (see box on page 68). Note the mention of the local city, San Diego, in the first line of the release.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Be sure to send the news release in a timely manner. Releases sent too early might get lost on the reporter's desk, and releases sent too late might not make it into the newspaper. If you'd like reporters to attend a coming event, send releases five days in advance. Other releases should be sent a few days before the newspaper's deadline. Make a follow-up call to each reporter to confirm receipt of the release and respond to any questions.

Bringing the media to you

Taking reporters out on monitoring field trips in the summer might be the most beneficial thing a public agency or private organization can do to further the education of reporters—and, more importantly, their audiences—on water quality issues. The news business is typically slower in the summer, and reporters often have time to spend in the field. Taking them out to collect macroinvertebrates, monitor lake water quality, conduct field surveys, sample dissolved oxygen and pH, or count bacteria colonies in the lab gives you an opportunity to get to know them on a more personal basis, without the pressure of phone-tag, deadlines, or hot issues.

Reporters are naturally inquisitive people, but most know little about terms such as designated uses, use-based water quality criteria, TMDLs, best management practices, and the like. In the field, you can explain the role of your organization and provide a summary education to reporters on water quality issues of importance to your area. Later, when an important or controversial related issue arises, the reporters will have a good idea of who you are and what you're doing and will likely call you to discuss the perspective of your group before releasing a story.

How to write a news release

News releases are usually one page long, but they can be longer if the subject is important enough. When writing a news release, start with the local connection and news nugget—the most important element—first. Then present supporting information, putting the least important material at the end. It's important to grab the reporter's attention in the first paragraph. Quotes from a spokesperson can be included, although many newspapers might want to confirm direct quotes before publication.

What makes the news? To increase the chances that your release will be used, keep in mind the elements reporters look for in a news story. Your release doesn't need to have all the elements listed below, but the more of them you include, the better your chances for coverage:

- Involve either local people, local issues or documented statistics of local importance
- Focus on attributes perceived to be unique or unusual
- Relate to significant issues or events
- Quote well-known or respected members of the community
- Affect (or potentially affect) many people throughout a region
- Involve controversial issues or strong emotions
- Include a celebrity figure
- Are timely.

Sending the news release to the media outlet

The news media are a target audience just like any other audience. Get to know the reporters that cover the environmental beat ahead of time, and ask them how you should format your releases. Many now prefer e-mail but want the text pasted into the body of the e-mail message rather than included in attachments because of potential virus threats. Newspapers and TV news programs often want relevant graphics such as photos or graphs of water monitoring trends. Ask reporters what type of format they prefer and how material should be delivered.

Here are some tips for writing news releases:

- Keep sentences short.
- Avoid jargon.
- Write in the active voice.
- Keep paragraphs short.
- Ask for peer editing.
- Proofread, proofread, proofread!

News release nuts and bolts

- Include "For immediate release," the date, and the name and phone number of the contact person at the top.
- Use a catchy headline, touching on the news nugget.
- Include short paragraphs telling who, what, where, when, why, and how.
- Add "###" at the bottom center of the page to indicate the end of the document.
- If the document has two pages, put "more" at the bottom of the first page rather than "###."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Storm Water Pollution Prevention Division, City of San Diego, (858) 541-4300

"THINK BLUE" PSA TAKES HOME FOUR EMMY AWARDS

San Diego—June 17, 2002: The City of San Diego's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program and American Dream Cinema were big winners at the 28th annual regional Emmy Awards Saturday, June 15. Nominated in six categories, the "Think Blue: Roads to Beaches" Public Service Announcement (PSA) dominated, winning in four of the six categories.

The awards were handed out by the Pacific Southwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences in a ceremony at the U.S. Grant Hotel. Taking home the Emmy were Greg Youtsey for Outstanding Achievement in Audio for a Spot, Jim Orr for Outstanding Achievement in Photography (Spot), and Ernie Anderson, Deborah Castillo, William Yancey and Jeanne Scott for Outstanding Achievement in Writing (Spot) and Outstanding Achievement for a Public Service Announcement.

The "Roads to Beaches" PSA was one of three produced by the City's Storm Water Program in the first year of its media campaign. In addition to "Roads to Beaches," the Storm Water Program produced two other PSAs with Four Square Productions, which was also nominated for its "Think Blue: Water Babies" PSA.

"This is a wonderful achievement for the City of San Diego and our program," said Program Director Ernie Anderson. "It is not often that a government agency has the opportunity to do something like this and attain such wonderful recognition."

The emphasis of the "Think Blue" campaign is to educate San Diego residents, businesses and industry about storm water pollution, which accounts for approximately 90% of all beach postings and closures in the City and threatens the quality of living that San Diego is known for.

###

News coverage formats: Video news releases

A video news release (VNR) is the TV equivalent of a written press release, and it is becoming an increasingly important piece of outreach campaigns. A VNR greatly increases your odds that TV news programs will cover your story. As you would for a written news release, you establish the story angle and control the content, but stations are free to embellish or otherwise change the story before they decide to run it. And just like a news release, the media may reject your story altogether. That's why it's important to ensure that your message is newsworthy, well presented, and well produced.

A VNR is a pre-produced (pretaped, edited, and narrated) news item for TV. It is typically one to three minutes long, often with an additional three to six minutes of b-roll (raw footage). A VNR often includes interviews with experts who provide effective sound bites that bring out the core of your message, as well as supporting visuals. It usually opens with a background slate (a text screen that contains summary information such as the date, the name of your organization, the name of the project, and contact information), which stays on the screen for about five seconds. The VNR should be shot in a broadcast news style with quick cuts, steady shots, offset interviews, and the like. Here are some other tips for creating effective VNRs:

- Hire a professional production company to do the script-writing, shooting, and editing, unless you have access to staff members or partners who have such talents.
- Include a very brief, one-sentence summary of the story on the opening slate as the "Suggested Anchor Lead," which a local news anchor can read at the top of the story.
- Ask the experts interviewed for the VNR to look at the interviewer slightly off-camera to the right or left, not directly into the camera.
- Encourage the press to call the key interviewers or other experts directly to confirm the information they have received.
- Use graphics and animation to illustrate key points of technical or complex stories.
- Ask the production company to present all the names and titles of people interviewed in or speaking on the video (called "supers" or "chyrons") on a slate at the start of the VNR rather than on the tape during the VNR. This approach will allow a station to recreate this information in its own type style. Be sure the sequence of names on the slate matches the order of appearance in the VNR.
- Shoot, edit, and reproduce the VNR in a broadcast-quality format such as Betacam, DVC-Pro, or Mini-DV. Check with the station to find out which format(s) it uses.

The VNR is an effective way to get press coverage of a particularly newsworthy issue or event. With TV news budget cuts, there is an escalating demand for more preproduced material. A well-produced VNR can often receive excellent pickup from local news stations.

The VNR is sent directly to local TV stations or can even be transmitted via satellite feeds to regional or national audiences. For local or regional campaigns, follow up by calling the stations on which you would like to see your VNR aired. Many stations use VNRs because VNRs save them time and effort they would otherwise spend producing stories from scratch. Though more costly than a press release, a well-produced VNR can potentially propel your message into millions of homes. Many companies can provide this service or assist you in this effort.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources spends about $80,000 annually to produce VNRs that reach more than 8 million viewers each year (a cost of about one cent per person—an extremely low delivery cost). Sample VNRs from Minnesota can be found at *www.dnr.state.mn.us/news/video_nr/index.html#2*.

News coverage formats: Letters to the editor

A letter to the editor is a good way to raise awareness of issues, concerns, or conditions that should be brought to the attention of the public. Individual citizens and organizations often write letters to the editor to clarify previously printed articles or to introduce a subject that someone believes should be discussed. When sending a letter to the editor, check out the newspaper's requirements. Most papers ask that letters be 250 words or less and reserve the right to edit letters before publishing them. Include your contact information in case the paper would like to speak with you further. Many newspapers have a page on their websites where you can submit your letter online.

Tips for writing a letter to the editor

- Be brief, clear, and to the point.
- Sign your name and note your affiliation.
- Talk about the issues; don't get personal or petty.
- Type your letter and limit it to the paper's length restriction (make it significantly shorter if possible).
- One letter per month per person is the limit for most papers.
- Send your letter to a single paper; most papers require published letters to be exclusives.

News coverage formats: Query letters

A query letter is sent to the editorial staff to determine potential interest in a story idea. Prior contact with the staff is recommended before you submit a story or even write it. Give the editor a chance to reject or redirect it before you expend any significant resources. Usually the query is made through a letter, but e-mails can be sent if the editor accepts them. Check each organization's website or call and ask the news desk for its preferred format. The inquiry should describe the general content of the proposed piece; state the title or working title, if there is one; and address why the issue is relevant to the community. The topic should be well researched, and the query letter should be no longer than one page.

News coverage formats: News conferences

If you have some breaking information or an event that's too important for a news release, a news conference might be appropriate. Don't call a news conference unless there's big news. Calling a conference to cover routine issues or to generate publicity is like "crying wolf" to the media and could hurt your turnout for more important news conferences.

News conferences are important events that require thoughtful planning. A good moderator—one who can control the event without stifling the reporters—is needed. Usually a news conference opens with the distribution of a news release that explains the reason for the conference and provides informative quotes from people involved in the issue, background information, and contact information. The moderator then makes a few welcoming/introductory remarks and introduces other speakers or makes a statement (which is often read). Remarks by all speakers should be carefully prepared. The floor is then opened for questions, which usually can be anticipated and prepared for beforehand. Spend a little time in the days or hours before the news conference generating a list of likely questions so you'll be able to respond confidently and accurately.

Make sure you invite all news outlets in the area to your conference, and send a news release immediately afterward to those who didn't show up. News conferences can be held almost anywhere but are usually indoors with plenty of seating provided. Backdrops and other props are good elements for enhancing TV potential. Holding a news conference at the edge of a polluted stream, in front of a storm drain, or at another location that leaves a lasting impression will add interest to your news; however, you should arrange for a contingency location in case of bad weather. After the news conference (usually a half-hour), invite reporters to accompany members of your group on a prearranged tour, if appropriate, to provide additional insight on the issue.

Advertising

Advertising differs from news coverage in that you are in control of what is aired or printed. Videos are increasingly becoming popular formats to showcase projects or organizations. However, the most common form of advertising is the public service advertisement (PSA). A PSA is an effective way to use TV or radio airtime to raise public awareness about an issue, inform the public about a coming event, or recruit volunteers. A PSA can be written or presented in audio or video format. Though PSAs cover less material than news releases, they include the same "who, what, where, when, why, and how."

Advertising formats: The radio PSA

Even in this TV-focused world, radio remains a strong media contender because of its affordable production cost and creative possibilities. Radio is everywhere and nearly everyone hears it sometime, somewhere, every day. According to Arbitron, an international media and marketing research firm, in 2009, radio reached 90 percent of people over age 12 each week—which is a greater penetration than TV, magazines, newspapers, or the Internet! People between the ages of 45 and 64 listen more than anyone else. Of course, those same universal qualities are what dilute its impact: It can become background noise. Your message must be repeated often to reach listeners at various times. Targeting specific audiences—young people, farmers, public radio listeners—is relatively easy to do in radio, given the specialized formats in most markets. To saturate whole markets, you'll need to distribute your message to many stations. Get right to the central theme (the point you want to project) because you don't have much time.

This media is evolving as the satellite, HD (Hi-Definition), and Internet radio market segments grow and formats change with the times. As people move to subscription-based radio and/or Internet radio, the reach of traditional radio will likely diminish.

Getting the facts from the station. Radio stations play PSAs on free or purchased airtime. Purchasing airtime will increase the frequency at which your PSAs are played. Use the target audience demographics to help select the radio stations on which you want to broadcast your PSAs. Request a rate kit from all the AM and FM radio stations in your geographic area. The average rate kit should contain statistical profiles of the age, gender, and consumer buying patterns of the station's audience; a breakdown of listener activity by time; descriptions of network affiliates; sample advertising packages; and a rate card. The rate card is a cost guideline only; in broadcasting, nearly all prices are negotiable.

To pay or not to pay

Although you can sometimes have your PSAs aired on TV at no cost (free airtime), you will not necessarily hit your target audience. By purchasing airtime, you can ensure that you'll reach your audience and can often leverage additional coverage.

The Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners, a collaboration of 16 counties, cities, towns, and other organizations, aired radio PSAs from 2005 to 2009 targeting fertilizer use, pet waste disposal, and used motor oil. They used an already-developed ad from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission called "The Call" to save on development costs (available through EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*). They chose the ad because their market research determined that the ad got positive responses from their audience. The group aired the ad about 1,000 times each year of the campaign for an average annual cost of about $162,000. In addition to the paid air time, the group leveraged more than $500,000 over the five-year campaign in free PSAs given by local radio stations. The partners continue to air ads each year. Pre and post surveys have indicated positive behavior changes after hearing the ads.

To hear the ads in both English and Spanish, visit *www.onlyrain.org* (click on About Us). For more information, contact Aileen Winquist, Arlington County, *awinquist@arlingtonva.us*, (703) 228-3610.

You can learn more about radio usage and statistics in various locations around the county from Arbitron's *Radio Today 2009 Edition* at *www.arbitron.com/study/grt.asp*.

The station's advertising sales representative will work with you to assemble a media schedule that fits your objectives and your pocketbook. Remember the reach and frequency factors. When working with a small budget, frequency is what matters most. That's because you might need to run your ad several times a week to make your message sink in. If you spend your advertising budget reaching many people just a few times, your investment will be in vain. Instead of reaching 100 percent of a broad audience once, target the key 10 percent and reach them 10 times. That's the best way to get quality results on a limited budget.

Radio stations typically do not guarantee the frequency or times for playing PSAs during free airtime. Many people think that the Federal Communications Commission requires radio and TV stations to allocate a certain amount of time to public service. However, the National Association of Broadcasters says that broadcasters are under no obligation to grant time to any specific group. In recent years, the government deregulated the industry to reduce the amount of paperwork required for radio and TV stations, and it gave stations the ability to set their own standards for PSA usage on both free and paid airtime.

Local radio stations often have feature programs but don't cover news in depth. Public stations might devote more time to news, analytical, or educational programs, but they might not reach the target audience. Although the extremely short nature of spot news coverage on radio does not lend itself well to deep analysis and lengthy information delivery, radio can play a valuable role in building awareness and reinforcing other outreach efforts. To achieve even greater success with a radio campaign, you might consider approaching the station about becoming a project partner. For example, Shedd Aquarium and the Alliance to Save Energy partnered with Illinois radio station WDRV-FM to launch a "Get Green" campaign, providing listeners with nearly 1,000 PSAs about small changes that collectively can have a big impact on the earth. In Latham, New York, WGY-AM runs a weekly Eco Radio Show that covers a wide range of topics.

What does it cost? If you plan to produce a recorded PSA, first determine how you will produce the message itself. Because radio is not a visual medium, a radio PSA "must be even better and more creative than TV, even though you will spend a lot more on TV production," notes Roger Vilsack, an award-winning producer with more than 25 years of experience. "Because you don't have visual images, you have to create them with words and sound effects." Hire talented persons comfortable with acting out their parts rather than simply reading aloud. Vilsack recommends budgeting from $1,500 to $10,000 for the radio production, depending on the number of actors, music, and sound effects. If you hire a director, writer, or actor, the cost could increase an additional $2,500 to $5,000.

Asking a college or public radio station to help produce your radio spots might pay off. College students are usually interested in watershed issues and are often looking for projects that can be listed on

How to write and format a radio PSA

1. Use paper with your organization's letterhead.
2. Type "Public Service Announcement" at the top middle of the page.
3. Skip a few spaces.
4. Type the requested air date.
5. Insert the organization's contact name, phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and PSA length.
6. Skip a few lines.
7. Insert the PSA's title in bold letters.
8. Provide a brief description of the event/issue, including the who, what, when, where, why, and how.
9. Close with the name of your organization and where to go for more information.
10. Close the document with "###" at the bottom middle of the page.

Example

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Requested Air Date: February 15, 2012

River Radio
Franklin Environmental Research Center
Jane Doe
Phone: (301) 555-5358
E-mail: jane.doe@franklin.org
PSA Length: 60 seconds

From the Blue Ridge to the Bay, It's Watershed...

(music)

Nutrients, like phosphorus and nitrogen, from urban and agricultural areas are polluting the Chesapeake Bay. This is called nonpoint source pollution because it cannot be traced back to one particular source. Scientists, like those at the Franklin Environmental Research Center, measure nutrient levels in bay tributaries and, with the help of aerial photographs and many hours in the field, relate those nutrient levels to information about land use, especially in areas close to streams. The work is very labor-intensive, but the better we understand the source of the pollution, the more we can do to clean up the bay.

River Radio is produced by the Franklin Environmental Research Center. For more information, visit riverradio.org.

###

Going online?

According to the Census Bureau's 2007 Population Survey, 62 percent of American households had Internet access at home. With the increased household use of the Internet, many outreach campaigns are increasingly relying on placing PSAs online. Leading market research firms believe that before this decade ends Americans will get most of their information from the Internet and other interactive technologies.

The Ad Council reported that in 2007 donated media support (e.g., free ad space) in the areas of online media, blogging, and viral marketing increased a whopping 255 percent over the previous year as a result of up-front media commitments, aggressive outreach, and the development of alternative types of new media (such as text messaging, streaming, and rich media). Donated ad space for such things as placing PSAs in movie theaters, airplanes, elevators, and convenience stores have increased by 176 percent from 2004 to 2007.

resumes for consideration by prospective employers. Your campaign can help students develop experience and professional skills while raising awareness and support for watershed issues.

Tools of the trade. Once you've determined how you will produce the radio PSA, find out which format you need to use for submission. The preferred format is CD-ROM. The production company will provide a music disc with the PSA track included for you to distribute. If you produce multiple PSAs or one PSA in multiple languages, include them all on the same CD-ROM to save time and money.

Remember to label your CD-ROM and its case with the PSA's title and length, and your contact information. Some types of CD-ROM packages are DiskPac (lightweight plastic case with a four-color printer cover that is glued to the plastic shell), wallet style (wallet-sized pocket folder printed on heavy-duty card stock), and script booklet style (an 8½-inch by 11-inch folder that can include a script booklet, CD-ROM, and evaluation reply card).

Script booklets can help radio stations learn more about your topic and your organization. They can include the recorded PSA script, additional live announcer scripts, and contact information. The Make-A-Wish Foundation, for example, used a script booklet to provide additional media information for the radio stations and a list of its local office locations.

To minimize production costs, prepare and send in scripts for live radio. Typed and double-spaced copy is required for community calendars and other public notice programs. Tying your release to a special day or event (such as Earth Day) and updating it with different angles later will make it more attractive. Take time to ensure that scripts are written for the ear, and support your submissions with follow-up calls or letters, or even promotional items such as posters. Remember that airtime for PSAs is available for free, but sometimes the time slots are late at night or very early in the morning. Avoid basing a significant part of your outreach campaign on free radio PSAs unless you are sure that this is the best way to reach the target audience. If possible, purchase airtime for your PSA to expand its reach.

Find a good radio voice to deliver your message (if the radio announcer is not the reader). You'll know such a voice when you hear it: It's full, rich, and resonant with good intonation and pronunciation. The pace must be comfortable and natural, not racing or languid. The voice embodies the message, so consider the relative merits of a man's voice or a woman's, a young voice or one that's more mature, the smooth professional sound or the homey conversational tone. As always, consider the target audience. Pay similar attention to other sounds that will be used because in radio the picture is painted with sound. Sound effects and background music are now available on compact disc or the Internet. Make sure it's legal to use the sounds or music you're considering. When in doubt, leave it out.

Advertising formats: The TV PSA

According to the Nielsen Company's *2009 Three Screen Report*, Americans watch an average of five hours of TV a day, or two and a half months of TV a year (including TV over the Internet and on mobile phones). TV is picture-oriented and action-driven. TV news is always about people. Therefore, TV stations search for stories that have emotion, controversy, conflict, and great video and are engaging and compelling. According to a 2002 survey of public affairs directors and others involved in PSA placement conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation, 75 percent of the affiliates tend to give priority to PSAs that focus on local issues or come from local organizations. In addition, many local stations reported that they more frequently select PSAs that are focused on family, children, or teens; community issues; and health issues.

TV PSAs are a very effective way to educate the public. The TV PSA format varies from a short announcement on the local news to a professional video resembling a commercial, depending on the organization's priorities and budget. TV stations put PSAs at the bottom of the advertising ladder (paid commercials get first choice, followed by station promotions). Look closely at PSAs currently on the air, and develop your PSA in a similar manner. TV PSAs typically last 30 or 15 seconds or less, similar to the length of a commercial. Short PSAs are more likely to be aired.

EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox (*www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*) contains more than 100 TV PSAs that you can browse through and watch to get ideas for creating

"Squishy Feet" PSA uses humor to encourage septic tank maintenance

The National Environmental Services Center at West Virginia University developed three PSAs that explain that sound operation and management practices keep septic systems operating effectively and keep source water clean. One of the PSAs, called "Squishy Feet," shows prospective homeowners touring a new home with their realtor. When touring the backyard, they quickly learn that the sellers have not had their septic tank inspected or pumped. To view all three PSAs, visit *www.nesc.wvu.edu/subpages/psa.cfm*. The 30-second PSAs are free for any organization to use online or on TV. For more information, contact *info@mail.nesc.wvu.edu* or call (800) 624-8301.

"Clean Paws" PSA wins People's Choice Award

Many of the creeks in Alachua County, Florida, are on the state's Impaired Waters List due to high concentrations of fecal coliform bacteria from dog waste and other sources. The Gainesville Clean Water Partnership, of which the county is a member, developed two humorous TV PSAs on proper pet waste disposal. Their "Clean Paws" PSA was deemed "Best Television PSA for Pet Waste" at the Fifth National Conference on Nonpoint Source and Stormwater Outreach in May 2009 during the People's Choice Awards. *www.alachuacounty.us/government/depts/epd/waterquality/petwaste.aspx*.

You can check out all the People's Choice Award winners for ideas and inspiration at *www.epa.gov/nps/outreach2009/pca.html*.

A face is worth a thousand words, and a famous face...

When possible, use local or national celebrities in your PSA. Many organizations have used celebrities or elected officials to relay their messages. In 1999 the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources released broadcast PSAs for the "Save Louisiana Wetlands" campaign starring performers Harry Connick, Jr., Aaron Neville, Chef Paul Prudhomme, and Kermit the Frog (*www.lacoast.gov/media/videos/index.htm*).

your own, or contact the PSA owner/creator to use or modify their PSA for your outreach campaign. Each product in the toolbox contains information detailing whether the organization allows others to use or modify their materials.

TV production can be expensive and requires experienced technicians and costly camera equipment. For example, the organizers of "River Smart," a national campaign from River Network, to encourage people to make simple changes in their everyday activities to help protect rivers, created three creative, professional TV PSAs at a total cost of $30,000. (See EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox to view these PSAs *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*.) With today's digital technology and software capabilities, however, video production doesn't have to be cost-prohibitive. If you know someone who's good at shooting video, ask that person to volunteer to help. In addition, journalism students at local colleges and universities might be willing to help out. Talk to some professors about setting up a class project focused on your effort. Also consider the use of local public access cable, a format growing in popularity because organizations can broadcast messages without station oversight. Public access cable studios and their technicians might provide an additional resource option for developing your PSA. In addition, many TV stations will air PSAs for free if they are persuaded to be sufficiently interested in the issue. In fact, 50 percent of stations say they donate time to free announcements and content that could have been sold to a paying advertiser.

If you're using TV PSAs, keep in mind that TV stations receive many PSAs from a wide variety of organizations every day. To increase the chances of having yours aired, keep your copy simple and to the point, highlighting the essentials. You should approach stations about six weeks before the PSA will run. Most stations accept videos on Betacam. DVC-Pro, DV-Cam, and mini DV are digital tape formats that are growing in popularity.

Maine DEP's watershed TV PSA

Script: Patsy, voice over, :30

Polluted runoff... A lot of it starts with you and me... From the things we do every day.

We all live in a watershed. A watershed is the land area... like a bowl... across which water flows downstream to our lakes, streams, or oceans.

Because we all live downstream, everything we do, from fertilizing our lawns to spilling motor oil, contributes to water pollution.

Call today for tips on protecting our lakes, streams, and coastal waters... because clean water starts with you.

Environmental PSAs might feature various landscapes or citizens in action as a background with a narrator emphasizing the highlights. Organizers of Maine's "Nonpoint Source Awareness Campaign," a collaborative effort between the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and the State Planning Office, developed a 30-minute TV show and seven PSAs. The PSAs showed various scenes, including a dripping pipe, a fly-over view of a meandering stream, water flowing over rocks, and their logo and contact information. Maine PBS journalist Patsy Wiggins provided the narration. Visit the campaign's website for more information: *www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/doceducation/nps/npscampaign.htm*.

Advertising formats: Online ads and other media

In addition to traditional radio and TV advertising, online advertising is increasingly being used by localities and organizations to get their watershed outreach messages in the public's eye. There are many different types of online advertising, and each type has its pros and cons. Brief descriptions of the main types of Web advertising are provided below.

Banner ads

A banner ad is an image (usually 468 pixels wide by 60 pixels high) created with the information pertinent to the ad and linked to the advertiser or organization's website. A banner ad is usually placed horizontally at the top of a Web page and is visibly different from the rest of the content on the page. It serves as a sort of electronic billboard.

Floating ads

Floating ads hover over the content of the website and are not affected by scrolling up or down.

Pop-up and pop-under ads

Pop-up ads appear in a new window in front of a page that a user has clicked on to view. A pop-under ad appears behind the page that the user is viewing so that it is not viewed until the user minimizes or closes the page he or she is viewing.

Rich media ads

Rich media ads use advanced technology to create a more visible, eye-catching display. Media types can include streaming video, coding that allows the ad to interact instantly with the user, and ads that change when a mouse passes over them. You might have seen one of the rich media ads for tooth whiteners that show you how the product whitens teeth when you move your cursor over the picture of the teeth.

Text ads

Text ads are simple, hyperlinked text that sometimes includes a short description of the site content below the ad.

Banner ad from City of Dallas, Stormwater Management Department

Where to place your ad

The best Web sites on which to place your online ads on are the sites that are frequented by members of your target audience. For example, if your message centers around reducing fertilizer use, you might contact hardware stores or garden centers about posting your watershed ad on their websites. Many organizations have standard advertising rate packages and can send you information about how to place and pay for ads. websites for newspapers, radio stations, TV stations, and other news outlets are also good mechanisms for distributing your ads.

The City of Dallas's Stormwater Management Department paid approximately $1,800 to $2,200 per month per website to have banner ads (like the one shown above) posted on the websites of several local news stations for a six-month period as part of its "Where Does It Go" campaign. The banners rotated to provide information on the harmful effects of pet waste, used oil, grass clippings and fertilizers, and pesticides and herbicides. The original banners were created using a media consultant. The second and third generations of banners were created by one of the city's in-house graphic artists. The total cost, including production of the banner ads and their run times, came to approximately $10,500. The campaign delivered more than 1 million impressions with nearly 1,700 click-throughs. Using these numbers, the city calculated a click-through rate of 14 percent, which according to the city, is higher than the national average of 10 percent.

Pay structure for online ads

There are several different ways to pay for online advertisements. Cost per impression means that the advertiser pays a set fee every time the ad is viewed a set number of times. An example is paying $100 for every thousand times the ad is viewed on the Web. Not all views are necessarily counted in the total (e.g., reloads of the page). Cost per click or pay per click involves ads where the advertiser pays each time a user clicks on the ad. The posting of the ad is free; payment is required only when the ad is accessed by a website visitor. Cost per action is a method where the advertiser pays for every instance of a user completing the "action" of the ad. This can mean signing up for a mailing list associated with the ad or the website, ordering a product from the site in the ad, or entering information into a form. A cost per visitor method, which is also called cost per view in the case of pop-ups and pop-unders, is a method where the advertiser pays each time a user is directed to the advertiser's site through the ad.

Videos

Videos can be produced to visually showcase your project or issue. To generate interest in a cause, it's often better to show people what the problems and solutions are than to expect people to read about them. People are, by nature, picture-driven. That said, producing a video is very resource-intensive, in terms of both time and money. Getting it right takes a lot of experience. Think back on some of the home videos you've watched.

The cost of producing a video can vary widely depending on a variety of factors such as script writing, use of hired talent, production facilities, and location. If you're interested in producing a video, check first with your local public cable access station. You might be able to get the production time and equipment use for free. The cable access station that helps produce your video will typically require you to air it on that station, but that's just free distribution for you.

The Annis Water Resources Institute of Grand Valley State University in west Michigan produced a video on its Bear Creek water quality project to share lessons learned with other interested watershed organizations. The cost of producing the 28-minute video was roughly $3,500. The Institute paid for a script writer, two actors, and the materials. They received many hours of free labor, and this cost did not include staff time. The Institute also had experienced videographers on staff. Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Without donated labor or resources, expect to pay $1,000 to $3,000 per minute of finished video. Thus, a 10-minute video could cost from $10,000 to $30,000.

Keep in mind that cable access stations are different from public TV stations. Public TV stations have specific requirements for the length of the video and quality of the tape. It must be broadcast quality. Production costs are also higher because public TV stations rent out their facilities and equipment.

Print materials

By far the most popular format for outreach campaigns is print. Printed materials include items like fact sheets, brochures, flyers, booklets, posters, bus placards, billboards, and doorknob hangers. The list goes on. These materials can be created easily and the target audience can refer to them again and again. When preparing printed material, be aware of how the target audience will use the information. If it is to be faxed or photocopied, you'll want to use a standard paper size and limit any artwork to line drawings. Dark-colored backgrounds can seriously limit photocopying. Keep in mind that your message will compete with a lot of other printed material. Costs for high-quality color materials can be considerable, and the information can become dated quickly. Don't forget these issues during the planning phase. Check back to pages 61 and 62 to review the pros and cons of various formats.

Calendars

Calendars are a terrific outreach tool. They can be colorful, the messages on each page stay in front of the audience for a month at a time, and everyone uses them. Some groups custom-tailor their calendars and turn them into activity logs. People can keep track of seasonal yard care activities, backyard habitat creation opportunities, wildlife sitings, and the like. You must plan carefully for distribution to hit the market around November when people are shopping for next year's calendar.

Other print format options

- Newspaper insert
- Water bill insert
- Discount card or coupon
- Children's coloring book
- Restaurant placemats
- Curriculum
- Maps

Complex messages are better understood in print format.

Design and production

When designing the layout of your brochure, flyer, or how-to guide, use restraint, consistency, and quality materials. Restraint should be used in choosing fonts; the kinds of graphics or artwork selected should be consistent; and quality materials should be used for photographs and artwork. Invite readers into your material with appealing, user-friendly layouts.

White space

White space is the space on the page that is left blank. It should be treated as a graphic element and used liberally because it is very effective at drawing attention. Remember Nike's "Just Do It" ad campaign—lots of white space, with the Nike logo and that short, simple phrase? People all over the world instantly know the brand name and its products.

To create white space immediately, try expanding the margins on your brochure or flyer. Make your headline wrap onto several lines so white space is created on the right side of the page. Don't full-justify your text. A ragged-right text edge creates more white space at the end of each line. It also makes text easier to read because your brain remembers the last word in the ragged line above the one you're reading.

Fonts

Design your materials so the layout draws the eye into and around the entire work. Select fonts for readability. Provide variety, but don't go overboard. A good font calls attention to the message, not to itself. Choose no more than two or three different fonts for your piece. DON'T USE ALL CAPS BECAUSE IT'S TOO HARD TO READ THE TEXT AND IT PUTS OFF READERS, WHO FEEL AS IF THEY'RE BEING SHOUTED AT. Sans serif fonts (fonts that don't have "feet" on the letters) are a good choice for headlines and subheads. Arial and Helvetica are popular sans serif fonts. Serif fonts like Times Roman should be used for large blocks of text because your eye can read the words more easily. (This guide uses Frutiger font for the headers and ITC Slimbach for the text; they are similar to Arial and Times Roman, respectively.) Hundreds of fonts are available, but resist the urge to use them all in one publication. Experiment with fonts to get the look you want.

Layout of text

Always remember that the ultimate purpose of your materials is to communicate, so make your text readable. Don't organize text into a clever shape (like a circle or a Christmas tree) if it will be difficult to read. Be careful about using graphic images behind the text (watermarks) because they can make the text nearly unreadable if not done skillfully. A general rule of thumb is that the narrower the column of text, the smaller the font size. For example, on 8½- by 11-inch paper, if the text is 6 inches wide, the font size should be 12 point. If you choose a two-column format, the font size may be decreased to

10 point, depending on the font. Most desktop publishing software packages include templates for various publication layouts.

Making your text come alive

Make the text interesting to your readers. Keep the length to a minimum and use the active voice. You can use various formats to make your text more engaging. Consider telling a story or leading off with a letter from a concerned citizen. Always try to include a local angle, and keep your message simple.

Hooks

Hooks are devices that can be used to reinforce information in the text or to grab the reader initially. Your headline can be a significant hook to engage the reader. Headers in the form of a question are always engaging. For example, a booklet on groundwater contamination could lead off with “Is someone contaminating your drinking water?” Consider including a light-hearted quiz at the end of your text to test the reader’s knowledge. Using games, humor, or contests can also encourage the reader to read all the material.

Logos

A logo is a visually distinctive treatment of your campaign or organization. It is the distilled, visual essence of who your organization is or what your campaign is trying to do. Think of your logo as your group or campaign's graphic signature. Plan for it to appear on all of your materials, including letterhead, business cards, brochures, newsletters, and meeting announcements. However, don’t try to convey the objectives of your whole program in one logo. Instead, create a tag line or slogan to accompany your logo to make your message clearer.

The key to a good logo is simplicity—clean, uncluttered lines and shapes. Ideally, people will recognize your materials from the logo alone. Silhouettes of objects often work well as logos. You might be able to start with a stock image or artwork, which will reduce your logo design costs. Creating custom artwork from scratch will increase the cost of your logo design substantially. Keep in mind that a logo must look good no matter how large or small it appears. You might be using it on large posters as well as business cards. Choose an

Keeping costs down

The cost of printing outreach materials varies depending on several factors, such as number of colors used, size and type of paper, and number to be printed. To keep costs down, try the following:

- Always get three quotes for a printing job. You’ll often be surprised at the price differences. Be sure you're comparing “apples to apples.”
- Allow plenty of time for production so you won’t have to pay a rush charge.
- Check for “free color” days. Some printers print certain colors on certain days with no extra setup charges. Be sure to ask first.
- Ask for cheaper paper options. Sometimes printers have an overstock of certain kinds of paper because of job cancellations, prior sale purchases, and so forth.
- Think big. When deciding how many materials you want to print, remember your long-term needs. Printing charges per item diminish considerably after the first 1,000.

Logos from Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District’s (Maine) Yard Scaping program (*www.yardscaping.org*) image that's aesthetically pleasing—something you'll be proud to be identified with and glad to see again and again.

Using artwork and photos

Graphics—photos, logos, artwork, or even well-designed subheads—are great for breaking up long, gray blocks of text, giving readers a visual break. Images of lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and other watershed features are naturals for dressing up your message format. The emotional appeal they elicit can be tremendous. This section presents ideas for incorporating artwork and photos into your watershed message material and presentations.

Incorporating clip art. Clip art refers to drawings or other graphics used in outreach materials. Before clip art made the leap to computers, it was clipped from a booklet for use. Now you can use electronic images to suit your needs. You've most likely seen many examples in newspaper ads, in brochures, and even on websites. Clip art is produced specifically for the purpose of repeated use. It's easily accessible and typically not copyrighted.

The quickest place to find clip art is on your computer. Most word processing and Web development programs already supply many free graphics for your use. If those aren't appropriate, go online, where you'll find hundreds of free or pay-by-image clip art sites.

When you find an online image that meets your needs, simply right-click on the image and click on "save as." Once you've saved the graphic, insert the art into your document by clicking on "insert," "graphics," "from file." At all sites, be sure to read and follow the rights of use. Some sites require citations or references to their sites in return for using their graphics. If you're uncertain about the terms for use of a particular graphic or you can't agree with the terms, you should not use the graphic.

Using photos effectively. Using photographs can reinforce your message dramatically, but it's better not to use a photograph at all if it's of poor quality. Taking effective photographs takes practice and patience. Photos of people, especially children, appeal to many audiences. Show action, such as water quality sampling, tree planting, or festival events, in your photographs. If you borrow photographs, the photographer might require a photo credit.

If you don't have access to a good photographer, consider using stock photos. Sources like iStockPhoto (*www.istockphoto.com*) or ShutterStock (*www.shutterstock.com*) sell high-resolution, royalty-free photos online. You can browse their huge selections of photos and find exactly what you need. As of this printing, at ShutterStock you can download five images for $49 or you can purchase a monthly subscription for $249 and download up to 750 photos. Make sure the resolution of your photos is appropriate for the format used. Print-quality digital files need high-resolution images to avoid a "pixelated" look. Lower

Tips for using clip art and photographs

- Keep all clip art files in a central folder so you can locate them easily.
- Leave white space around the artwork; avoid crowding text.
- Be sure to obtain permission from clip art website owners if required.
- Select graphics that print well in both black-and-white and color.
- Consider using a digital camera for ease of enhancing the image later and for use in electronic layouts, preferred by most printers. (Remember to use the highest-resolution setting on the camera to ensure print-quality photos.)
- Keep the sun at your back to bring out the most color and detail.
- Look for backgrounds that suggest movement.
- Dawn and dusk create soft, rosy, interesting light effects.
- Midday lighting produces flat, shadowless images.
- Take lots of pictures and screen them later.
- People are interested in people, so use human subjects frequently.
- Shoot people up close to avoid tiny, unrecognizable faces.
- Children and animals are almost always good subjects for photos.

Free online photo galleries

You don't have to pay a fortune to find that special photo you need. The following websites provide free, copyright-free photos that are in the public domain. Keep in mind that although they are copyright-free, many request that you provide proper credit. Refer to each website to see how the organization prefers to be credited.

Agricultural Research Service Image Gallery
www.ars.usda.gov/is/graphics/photos
High-quality digital photographs of animals, crops, field research, insects, and other categories.

NRCS Photo Gallery
http://photogallery.nrcs.usda.gov
Natural resource and conservation photos from across the country.

Fish and Wildlife Service Digital Media Library
www.fws.gov/digitalmedia
A wide assortment of images as well as video and audio clips on birds, plants, animals, habitats, environmental science, education/outreach, and many other topics.

Great Lakes National Program Office Image Collection
www.epa.gov/glnpo/image
Images that capture the beauty of the Great Lakes and their surroundings.

EPA's Great Lakes Ecopage Photo Gallery
www.epa.gov/ecopage/photo/wetlands
Photos of wetlands, beaches, and rivers.

NOAA Photo Library
www.photolib.noaa.gov
Photos of the work, observations, and studies carried on by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) personnel, including coral and fisheries studies, sailing, weather, and coastlines.

Bureau of Land Management Photo Library
www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/bpd.html
National and state photos on a variety of land management topics.

Missouri Natural Resources Conservation Service Photo Gallery
www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/news/MOphotogalleryindex.html
Natural resource and conservation photos from across Missouri.

U.S. National Arboretum Photo Gallery
www.usna.usda.gov/PhotoGallery
Digital images of plants and flowers, including notable plants in the arboretum's garden collections as well plants that have been introduced from its research programs.

National Park Service Digital Image Archive
http://photo.itc.nps.gov/storage/images
Links to public domain digital images, including national parks, monuments, historic sites, and related areas.

North American Benthological Society Media Gallery
www.benthos.org/Education-and-Outreach/Media-Galleries.aspx
A collection of digital photographs and drawings of various invertebrates, algae, and other aquatic organisms.

USGS Southeast Ecological Science Center Photo Gallery
http://fl.biology.usgs.gov/Center_Publications/Image_Archive/image_archive.html
Contains several images including flora and fauna, coral reefs, the Everglades, herpetology, and manatees.

resolution might be acceptable for Web-based formats. One good source of online photos is www.flickr.com. Flickr is a photo sharing site that houses millions of photos, including many that are Creative Commons-licensed, which allows you to use photos for non-commercial purposes with proper attribution. The box on page 84 lists some other good sources of online photos. Read more about using Flickr as an outreach distribution method in Step 5 (page 110).

If you use a digital camera, you have an opportunity to take photos of exactly what you need. Use the highest resolution possible, and save the photos as ".tif" (rather than ".jpg") images. This setting ensures the best reproduction and editing capabilities. The higher resolution will help you easily fine-tune and edit each photo's shape and color and allow you to display the image in various sizes.

Prompts should be:

- Noticeable
- Self-explanatory (use graphics or words to show or tell what should be done)
- Placed as close as possible to the desired behavior

Prompts

We all know how important it is to takes steps toward living in a more environmentally friendly way. Unfortunately, however, there are times when we might have the best of intentions but simply forget to act or forget what we're supposed to do. That's where prompts come into play. Prompts help to promote sustainable behavioral change. A prompt is a visual or auditory reminder to perform an activity that they might otherwise forget. These behavior reminders can be effective for encouraging one-time and repetitive behaviors that promote sustainability. One-time behaviors include actions (such as purchasing a low-flow toilet) that result in ongoing environmental protection. Repetitive behaviors include actions such as using recycling bins at home, reading the labels of hazardous products, and picking up after pets. Pet waste bag dispensers and trash cans at dog parks are good behavior prompts, as are storm drain stencils and markers. Prompts can be signs, stickers, labels, displays, promotional products such as key chains, alarms, announcements, or any other kind of clue to remind people of the behavior in which you want them to engage.

To be effective, prompts should be easily noticeable, self-explanatory, and placed close to where the desired behavior would be carried out, which is called the "point-of-sale." You want the target audience to see the prompt right before they have to make a decision between, for example, hosing dirt off the driveway or sweeping it up. Commercial marketers use prompts virtually everywhere—grocery store shelves (known as shelf talkers or wobblers), oil change reminder stickers on windshields, and smoke detectors with battery replacement reminder buzzers. Health-focused organizations also know the power of prompts. Shower hangers that remind women to do monthly breast self-exams are great prompts that help women remember to check themselves for abnormalities. Placing prompts in calendars is a another way to reach your audience if you are focusing on time- or date-sensitive behaviors (e.g., get a soil test at the beginning of October, check your car for oil leaks once a month).

Be careful not to confuse slogans with prompts. Prompts target a specific behavior change or reinforce an action. Slogans are short attention-getting phrases that might or might not be focused on a particular behavior. For example, "Think Globally, Act Locally" is a slogan but not a prompt because it doesn't tell you specifically what action to take. Some slogans can be used as prompts depending on how they are worded and how they are used (i.e., what they appear on).

Brochures

Brochures are an effective way to present and explain your watershed message. Unlike many other communication vehicles, brochures can be distributed in many places. Racks can be set up at libraries, marinas, and fairs. You can pass out brochures at meetings. You can even organize a direct mail campaign. Think through the purpose of your brochure and its intended audience before you begin. You might use the brochure as a way to solicit interest and involvement, or to promote watershed education and positive behaviors. Its purpose will significantly influence its appearance and content.

Flyers

Flyers can be extremely effective if they're engaging, concise, and memorable. They're often used to impart brief, important messages or implore people to take simple actions. Explore your options regarding paper and ink colors, fonts, and type sizes. Keep the text brief, the letters fairly large, and the design attractive. If your production involves manual cut-and-paste, incorporate artwork or pictures by photocopying or by attaching them with spray glue or double-sided

Tips for better posters

- Focus on the objective, target audience, and message.
- Sponsor a photo or design contest to obtain original artwork.
- Use a catchy slogan or theme.
- Choose graphic elements that immediately convey the message.
- Make sure the desired size is economical and shipping tube-friendly.
- Use large, bold graphics to command attention.
- Use a standard size so it's easy to obtain a frame for the poster.
- Think about how the viewer's eye will flow across the poster and take in the message.
- Consider balance, contrast, and other aspects of good design.

Tips for better brochures

- Use an audience-targeted layout with graphics and consider using colored or textured paper.
- Explore various sizes and folds, taking care to fit the layout to the fold.
- Collect and review samples to get an idea of what you like and don't like.
- Produce enough extras on the first run to handle additional demand.
- Using colored ink can result in interesting combinations.
- Leave plenty of white space; don't crowd the content.
- Include variety in design, but watch out for an overly busy appearance.
- Use subheadings to break up massive blocks of text.
- Use bullets for quick and easy reading.
- Ask several people to edit, critique, and proofread.
- Avoid acronyms and technical jargon; for instance, call nonpoint source pollution "polluted runoff."
- Don't forget to include an address and contact number for more information.

tape. Don't forget to consider the target audience in the design, composition, and distribution.

Posters

Posters, displayed for months or even years, can be an excellent option for message delivery. Text, photos, slogans—even graphs—can be presented effectively on posters. Mostly, however, posters are used to build awareness, provide inspiration, or deliver a message to change a simple behavior. Most posters are produced in full color; however, even less expensive black-and-white or one- or two-color posters can be compelling if designed well. Be aware: Production and distribution costs can be considerable. Mailing tubes and postage can cost even more than the poster itself. Folding and mailing in large envelopes causes creases that detract from appearance, but this does not necessarily mean abandoning the approach. Posters might pay for themselves through sales, but only if the design and production are exceptional and prove to be popular.

Displays

When composing any large-format display, treat the entire display space as if it were a page layout, a photograph, or a painting. The same basic elements of composition that govern good design and flow apply. You might consider producing an informative companion piece, such as an illustrated fact sheet or simple brochure, to accompany the display.

Watershed project displays at conferences, seminars, or outdoor events provide an excellent venue for sharing information, educating and involving citizens, promoting helpful actions, creating linkages, and building general awareness. You need to compose a display so it's as aesthetically appealing as a well-designed page. Use an engaging, flowing design that attracts attention, invites the viewer in, and leads the eye throughout. For example, if your display highlights your volunteer monitoring program, use a dipnet as the backdrop and include various sampling instruments in the display. Experiment with different fabrics to drape over the backdrop of your display to add texture. Whenever possible, show your program instead of telling it.

Avoid the common pitfall of pasting up dozens of 8- by 10-inch photographs with tiny captions. Try blowing up a significant photograph to poster size and then carefully consider whether or not to use additional photographs to support the primary theme. Produce and distribute brochures or flyers to convey the details of your project. Again, focus on the objective—why you're at the event, what message you hope to deliver to which audience, and what you want to accomplish.

Billboards

Billboards, like posters, can effectively present an outreach message or raise awareness if they are well designed and attractive. Remember to link the billboard location to the target audience. For example, if your message is targeting boaters in coastal areas, your billboard lo-

Tips for better displays

- Make sure you can read the text from a comfortable distance.
- Interactive displays are ideal; doing is always better than just seeing or reading.
- Interest kids with something fun, and their parents will follow.
- Refrain from using long, exhaustive wording
- Be creative with design and layout, and do things on a big scale.
- Use fabric and materials to make the display three-dimensional.

Billboards in action

The Pima Association of Governments' annual stormwater campaign called "Clean water starts with me" includes TV commercials, billboards, bus ads, posters, and a brochure. The Association ran 15 billboards in Tucson from July to August 2009 to promote stormwater pollution prevention during the monsoon season. The cost for the subsidized billboards was $1,500, including space and printing costs. Surveys indicate that of all the outreach materials in the campaign, the billboards had the greatest success and visibility. For more information, visit *PAGstorm.com*.

cation should be within a few miles of the coast. Outdoor advertising venues can expose tens of thousands of people to your message, but be sensitive to the fact that some people find billboards objectionable, especially on scenic rural roads. Billboards offer a chance to present highly compelling, noncommercial messages that can be engaging, artistic, and memorable. Other positive aspects of using a billboard include high reach (number of people), immediacy, and high frequency (number of times seen). A downside is that you can convey only a short message to a relatively nonspecified audience. In addition, it's difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the message. Costs can also be considerable and are based on how many you buy, how long they are up, and where they are located. If you're considering using billboards, keep in mind that they are most effective at generating awareness or prompting people to take a simple action.

Presentations

If you've spent any time at conferences and meetings, chances are you've seen lots of electronic slide shows. Presenting a 60-slide PowerPoint presentation is not inherently the best way to convey information or pitch an idea in a live group setting. In fact, sometimes PowerPoint is not the right fit for your audience or topic. Consider different presentation formats such as using a short video combined with talking without slides, doing group exercises to get your point across, or including a skit in your presentation. Be creative and come up with unique and interesting ways to get your information to the audience without inducing a PowerPoint stupor.

Other things to consider before you start developing your presentation include researching the affiliations of those who will be in attendance and making sure that you are extremely familiar with the topic you're covering. Ask organizers for a copy of the pre-registration list for the meeting so you can look at the organization names and titles for each attendee to get a better feel for what kinds of questions they might ask, what aspect of the issue they are most likely to be

Tips for better billboards

- Change the message every 60 days, or it will blend into the background.
- Investigate display opportunities before designing or producing the ad.
- Obtain at least three production/printing/display estimates.
- Approach local businesses to request free display for public service ads.
- Design a strong, simple ad that can be understood quickly at a distance.
- Minimize the text and let the visuals make your point as much as possible.

interested in, where they are from, and their likely level of knowledge on the issue. This information can help you tailor the best presentation for your audience. Be sure to do your homework on all the issues, facts, and figures concerning your presentation so you are seen as a credible, knowledgeable presenter. And finally, if you are giving a presentation in an unfamiliar location, such as a school auditorium or community center, consider visiting the site before the meeting day so that you know how the room will be set up, how close to the audience you will be, whether you will need a microphone, whether you'll be able to walk around during your talk, and so forth. Knowing what the meeting room looks like and where you will be standing can do wonders to boost your confidence and message delivery.

If PowerPoint is the route you choose for your presentation, understand that it takes planning and practice to present your story in a way that creates a coherent and aesthetically pleasing visual journey. Go through the presentation several times out loud. Get comfortable with it, but don't memorize it. Avoid saying “ah” or “um.” Practice using pauses instead.

Gear the content and style of your presentation to the audience. Once you have a stock of photos and slides to choose from, it's simple to go back in and add, switch, or delete slides as appropriate. Avoid reading text slides during a presentation. Use the time to talk about the subject matter in the text. Focus your slide configuration and vocal presentation on telling a story based on your knowledge,

PowerPoint pointers

PowerPoint is the preferred medium for slide presentations. Avoid these pitfalls:

- *Color choices.* In general, if you are showing your slides in a very dark room, a dark background like black or royal blue with light text is best. If the room has some ambient light, a light background with black text is best.
- *Color scheme.* PowerPoint has a variety of templates and color schemes that help to make a unified presentation. Don't introduce more than three colors, and keep the background color the same throughout.
- *Sound effects.* Attaching sound effects to your text as it flies onto the screen can be amusing for the first few slides, but it will grow annoying. Use sound effects sparingly to emphasize key points.
- *Keep it moving*. Introduce your text in groups, or the whole slide at once, instead of line by line.
- *Monotony busters.* Break up the text slides with full-color photographs or cartoons to avoid the appearance of the same slide being repeated.
- *Animation.* Introduce some movement to your slides through arrows appearing to highlight a key bullet or graphics “dissolving” on the screen.
- *Text movement.* If your text flies onto the screen from the left, keep it consistent to avoid making the audience queasy.
- *Bells and whistles.* Keep the special effects to a minimum so your listeners will be more interested in the content of your presentation.

experience, insight, and perspective. It's a good idea to create an outline to make sure that your presentation has a central focus and a beginning, middle, and end. Self-directed humor is often effective if used sparingly. Make handouts of the slides so the audience has something to refer to and can take notes.

Use only visually pleasing, in-focus photos and graphics. Avoid slides that require introductory apologies ("I know this is hard to see, but …"). Flow charts are notoriously indecipherable from a distance. Break down the chart items to several slides, or summarize the process being depicted in a larger format. Monitoring data charts can look busy or crowded unless carefully thought out in advance. Often, slides of water quality data are more meaningful and powerful if the data are summarized or distilled to an essential point. Keep in mind that the audience has only about 30 seconds per slide to digest the information. Always make sure text slides are readable, even from the back of the room. Don't be afraid to explore different choices of background themes and color schemes, but once you determine your choice, maintain it consistently throughout the presentation. Using default color schemes in presentation software will ensure appropriate contrast between background colors and text colors to help prevent the design from interfering with the message. Finally, consider using a rapid-fire photo montage at some point in the program: Present a succession of photos with little or no commentary, reinforcing your message with visual images that create a memorable impression.

Events

An event can be the most energizing format for distributing messages targeted at awareness, education, or direct action. An event is an opportunity to present your message and also help to meet other goals and objectives in your watershed planning effort. A community event plays into audience members' desires to belong to a group and have shared goals and visions for the community. They can also help to create new social norms that become incentives for others to take part in the behaviors you're promoting. In urban areas, where knowing your neighbors and other members of your community is the exception rather than the rule, community events can help to strengthen the fabric of the community by creating and enhancing community relationships, building trust, and improving the relationships between government agencies and the public. And frankly, if done well, they're just plain fun.

If resources are limited and the message is fairly focused, try to piggyback onto an existing event that involves the target audience. Trade shows and other events for farmers, developers, boaters, anglers, the automobile industry, and other groups can often be accessed with a little research and a few phone calls. If you're hosting your own event, nothing can substitute for planning. No detail is too small, and no aspect is too insignificant to be thoroughly examined, reexamined, and subjected to contingency planning. Major events are much like military campaigns. You'll need plenty of advance time,

Festival resources

The Groundwater Foundation's watershed festival series provides lots of tips for putting on a community or school festival:

- *Making Waves: How to Put on a Water Festival*
- *Making Ripples: How to Organize a School Water Festival*
- *Making More Waves: Ideas for Organizing Your Festival*
- *Making A Bigger Splash: Best Ever Water Festival Ideas.*

Order them online at *www.groundwater.org* or call 1-800-858-4844.

information on the site, logistical plans, contingency plans (e.g., rain dates), a workforce commensurate with the objective, and the capacity to accommodate plenty of action.

A major consideration in planning an event is how you intend to attract attention. As in all outreach, you can't deliver a message to the target audience if you don't have access to them. Approaches for generating interest and attention are limited only by your creativity. Watershed groups have used blues bands, balloons, face-painting, mascots, dunking contests, interactive displays, video games, giveaways, clowns, jugglers, and celebrities to draw crowds. Nearly any idea that works and does not detract from the message is acceptable. Increase the exposure of your event by inviting local TV and radio stations to cover it.

Community fairs and festivals

Festivals and fairs provide great opportunities for hands-on learning and can be fun for all ages. These types of events get people involved in different activities that show them that converting their behaviors to sustainable ones is easier than they thought. When people are actively and publicly involved at an event, they're more likely to commit to engaging in an activity at home. In addition, getting people to commit to a small, upbeat activity at a community fair increases the likelihood that they'll agree to commit to a subsequent, more demanding activity, such as building a rain garden.

Some things to consider when organizing a fair or festival:

- ***Time and date.*** Choose an appropriate time of year based on your geographic location and climate, particularly if your event will be held outside. Schedule a rain date, if appropriate.
- ***Size of the event.*** Decide on the number of attendees (as a range or target) you hope to have at your event.
- ***Facility/location.*** If you need to reserve a banquet hall, community club site, or fairgrounds, be sure to check availability far in advance. Make sure the venue fits the message and the audience.
- ***Types of activities.*** Think about the types of activities you'd like to have at your fair or festival. Will there be games geared toward

Water Fest keeps growing

The Bear Creek Watershed Project hosts an annual water festival called "Water Fest." It started in 1993 with about 50 participants; in 2009 an estimated 250 people attended. New activities are added each year. Kids love collecting bugs in Bear Creek and then sorting them. One year the project organizers added a Mexican folk dancing group, which brought out members of the Hispanic community, who hadn't participated previously. In 2009 the Microscope Magic activity was added, giving kids the chance to view a drop of water up close and personal to see the microorganisms living in it. Children of all ages also took part in a rubber ducky race. The Bear Creek Watershed Project holds a pancake breakfast before the festival every year to attract a crowd.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Passport to your watershed

Water quality managers in Rockdale County, Georgia, organized a watershed fair to educate citizens about the development of a new watershed management plan. The county teamed with several local businesses to produce giveaways and staff the fair. A local developer paid for the production of watershed stickers and a local paper company provided and staffed a recycling exhibit at the fair. The county also worked closely with the local news media to cover the fair and other events related to the watershed management plan in a series of newspaper articles.

At the fair, county residents and students were given watershed passport booklets in which they received stamps for completing various activities, such as solving a watershed knowledge crossword puzzle, identifying stream macroinvertebrates, and marking which subwatersheds they live in by placing push pins on large subwatershed maps.

In 2000 the county received an award from the Georgia Water & Pollution Control Association for the Best Public Education Program for a large utility. The award cited the county's foresight in creating a public outreach strategy to guide the program and ensure the success of the watershed fair.

children? Will there be more complex concepts geared toward adults? Do you want attendees to visit each activity in a specific order or at their leisure? Choose activities that will help meet the objectives of your water quality improvement project. Make your activities interesting and enjoyable.

- ***Staffing the event.*** Choose appropriate personnel to staff each activity at the event. Use experts from outside your organization when appropriate to lend weight and knowledge to an issue.
- ***Be creative.*** Use creative titles for your activities, such as "What's Buggin' You?" for a stream macroinvertebrate identification booth. Ask a local band to play, organize a fly fishing demonstration, or arrange to have costumed characters or local celebrities talk to kids and have their pictures taken with them. At the Southern Maine Children's Water Festival, local TV and radio personalities serve as emcees in a water trivia contest. The arrangement gets kids interested in participating and enhances media coverage at the same time.
- ***Use cosponsors.*** Identify cosponsors early to help support various aspects of the event, such as paying for promotional items, sponsoring a booth, or providing food or music. Solicit cosponsors by offering to include their names and logos on all the event materials. Select your cosponsors wisely. Make sure they are well liked and trusted by the members of the target audience. You wouldn't want to ask a local paper product company that's been involved in litigation for environmental rule-breaking to support your tree-planting festival!

- ***Encourage future participation.*** Provide reminders or incentives for participants to continue their good stewardship at home or at work. Bookmarks and refrigerator magnets serve as prompts to remind people of actions to improve or protect water quality while at home. Pledge cards can be used to gain small commitments that participants will change their behavior permanently. For example, in Whatcom County, the Washington Department of Ecology developed a pledge program that encourages residents and businesses to reduce watershed pollution through activities such as redirecting downspouts away from impervious surfaces and leaving grass clippings on the lawn. Upon signing up, residential participants receive a personalized "To Do List" to hang on their refrigerators and a recycled glass sun catcher. Businesses receive recognition in local publications and a pledge plaque to display in their stores or offices.

Field trips

Providing tours and field trips for members of the target audience—especially elected officials, watershed committee members, and the media—is a great way to communicate your message. It is also a good opportunity for photo taking and media coverage. What would have taken more time to explain on paper or in words often can be conveyed more easily and more powerfully through field trips to farm demonstration sites, stream restoration sites, or backyard wetlands. Field trips allow people to see for themselves how your water quality improvement efforts are making a difference or what still needs to be done.

River Network sponsors a River Rally each year for its partners to meet colleagues, talk to funders, and keep staff and volunteers of river organizations up-to-date on the latest watershed issues. The rally includes whitewater rafting, canoeing, fishing, and wildlife-viewing field trips. The Saugus River Watershed Council in Massachusetts also sponsors a series of canoe trips to gain support for improving the natural resources of the watershed.

Open houses

An open house allows the public to tour a facility or displays at their own pace. No formal presentations are made. This method works well if you're trying to educate the public on multiple issues at once or collect public comments and feedback. Open houses foster one-on-one communication and build the credibility of the organization or issue. Keep in mind that open houses can be more staff- and resource-intensive than other public meetings, depending on the number and kinds of displays used and the type of information being presented.

Public hearings and meetings

Public hearings—formal meetings with scheduled presentations—provide an opportunity for the public to make formal comments on an issue or document. Public hearings are often required when government agencies develop new rules or regulations or make some other proposal that might affect the public. However, public hearings do not allow for dialogue between the commenters and the presenters, which often creates an “us versus them” setting. In addition, because many people are not comfortable speaking in front of a group, comments received might be biased toward more outspoken groups or individuals.

Public meetings are less formal than public hearings and often include presentations coupled with question-and-answer sessions. Although public meetings on charged issues might spark more debate than education, most allow open, friendly dialogue among participants and presenters.

The stakeholder roundtable is another effective way to provide education and discuss issues with concerned citizens. It is also an excellent forum for networking and sharing practices, and the atmosphere of the roundtable can be one of openness and continuous learning. In 2001 EPA provided Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Listening Sessions for the public to help improve understanding of the TMDL program from all perspectives and to identify and discuss ideas for addressing issues related to the TMDL program. People were provided an opportunity to talk in small groups with the help of facilitators. You can find more detailed information on how to host productive meetings in Section 4 of EPA’s *Stakeholder Guide*.

Interactive and facilitated meetings

Sometimes meetings in which there is a one-way flow of information do not achieve project goals and objectives. For example, if you want input on a newly proposed riparian buffer ordinance, you’ll need to come up with a way to gather feedback in a nonconfrontational way during meetings with landowners. In such a case, find or hire an unbiased facilitator who is skilled at collecting accurate and clear opinions from members of the community. Refer to Sections 4 and 5 in the *Stakeholder Guide* for more tips on running successful meetings through a consensus-based process.

Diversify your presentation and meeting methods whenever possible to better engage your audience and hold their interest. Use a combination of group exercises, individual exercises, flip charts, lectures, storytelling, role-playing games, and field trips in your meeting agenda. At the start of the meeting, tell each attendee that before the day is over, he or she must meet one new person and ask that person three questions including ice-breaker questions, such as: What kind of pet do you have? What is your favorite food? What do you hope to learn from the meeting today? Then select a few participants to share what they learned at the end of the meeting. Even a show-and-share session could help get your message across in a more memorable way if, for example, you are holding a meeting about how to dispose of household hazardous materials. Pass around three or four products and have everyone in the audience guess whether the product can be poured down the drain, can be poured on the grass, or needs to be taken to a hazardous waste facility. Seeing and touching the product container might make it easier for them to remember what to do, rather than just seeing a list on a PowerPoint slide.

During a series of stormwater workshops, staff from EPA's Office of Wastewater Management used a group exercise charette approach to demonstrate the web of issues related to minimizing water quality impacts from new development and redevelopment. The exercise featured a poster-sized layout of a small urban and rural landscape, along with current land uses, land cover, and surface water resources. Participants were given small colored blocks representing residential and commercial structures and were asked to decide where to site the "new development." Objectives included minimizing water quality impacts from post-construction runoff, accommodating the "retail follows rooftops" phenomenon, and integrating the new buildings with existing land use patterns in hypothetical Elk County. The exercise provided participants with an opportunity to explore a wide range of issues, such as development density, impervious cover increases, considering existing development patterns, protecting valued water resources, transportation impacts, and other stormwater and non-stormwater topics. The charette sessions were lively, and participation levels were high as the "county planners" discussed topics that can be a bit dry when presented on slides during workshop sessions.

Hands-on events

Events focused on a specific activity can help generate support for your cause by providing the target audience with hands-on experience that will help them understand the specific water quality problem or issue. Volunteer stream cleanups, household hazardous waste pickup days, photo contests, nature walks, workshops, wildlife watches, or other hands-on activities can be used to generate awareness of your issue, communicate your message, recruit people to support and distribute your message, and motivate participation in sustainable behaviors.

The Bear Creek Watershed Project focused on area schools by hiring a professional playwright to form a theater troupe called the Bear Creek Players. The group of actors performed at schools and at area festivals (including the Water Fest), presenting short skits centered on water quality issues. The stories gave members of the target audience a better awareness of different issues in the watershed.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

These types of events are best carried out with the support of one or more cosponsors. Teaming up with local conservation districts, businesses, or environmental organizations can bring more people to the event, help defray the cost of the materials or staff needed for the event, and lend credibility to your cause.

Other formats

Giveaways

Almost everyone loves getting free stuff! Whether it's pens or coffee mugs, giveaways are often snatched up quickly. See the list under "What to Give Away" for some ideas. Giveaways are good for promoting watershed organizations, simple actions, and general awareness. They show others that the participant is actively involved in the cause, helping to create social norms and encouraging others to get involved.

Giveaways are also visual prompts that remind people to choose behaviors that protect and improve water quality. A toothbrush imprinted with the message "Turn off the water while you brush!" will remind people to conserve water every time they pick it up. To make your giveaways more successful, make sure the message they convey is related to the type of giveaway handed out and that the item will be used repeatedly when the person needs to choose the most appropriate behavior.

Giveaways vary greatly in cost and desirability. Most expensive and more desirable giveaways can be reserved for rewarding a certain level of participation or commitment. Examples include T-shirts or baseball caps (e.g., for event organizers or runners that raise money for an environmental cause) and coffee mugs or beach towels (for volunteers at storm drain marking events or stream cleanups).

When choosing a giveaway, be sensitive to any perceived alternative message it might convey—for example, "too much plastic is being used"—which could counteract the environmental benefit intended by the message. And keep the target audience in mind. Don't give away golf balls with your logo to elementary school kids!

What to give away

- Bumper stickers
- Calendars
- Temporary tattoos for kids
- Bookmarks
- Refrigerator magnets
- Stickers for kids
- Pens and pencils
- Pop-up sponges
- Caps
- Mugs
- Beach towels
- Beverage holders
- Key chains
- Barbecue aprons
- Hot pads and oven mitts
- Reusable water bottles
- Bottle openers
- Buttons and lapel pins
- Tote bags/reusable grocery bags
- Salt and pepper shakers
- Pennants or flags
- T-shirts
- Frisbees
- Baseball caps
- Rulers
- License plate frames
- Toothbrushes
- Rubber jar openers
- Note pads
- Compasses
- Seed packets

Tips for better T-shirts

- L, XL, and XXL are the most popular sizes.
- Select 100% cotton or a blend of recycled cotton and other post-consumer recycled materials. For instance, Fortrel Eco-Spun is made from recycled plastic bottles and is just as comfortable, durable, and attractive as cotton.
- Don't forget the popularity of long-sleeved varieties in cool climates.
- Explore options in shirt and ink colors for variety.
- Get quotes from several suppliers and estimate quantities carefully to avoid overstocks.
- Use your logo and watershed name.
- Try to get a picture of a local celebrity wearing your shirt.
- Caution: Dated materials are harder to sell after the event.

Tips for better bumper stickers

- Check popular sizes before finalizing your design (and you might want to make sure they fit in mailing envelopes).
- Present a brief message in large, bold letters, and keep graphics simple and recognizable.
- Attach a mock-up to a bumper to ensure readability.

Bumper stickers

Bumper stickers are highly individualized traveling billboards, which means that some people love them and others are turned off by them. (Some people collect them but will not display them on their vehicles.) Because many Americans spend considerable time on the road, the chances for message exposure through bumper stickers are excellent. Keep your messages positive and focused on the objective (e.g., Save the Bay!). Composition is easy: Combine a catchy message with a piece of art or a simple background, and you're in business. Production options range from professional print shops to at-home silk-screening. Choose a design that can be seen from a distance and a color that will beckon from a bumper. Bear in mind that bumper stickers are usually much better at raising awareness than at promoting behavior change.

T-shirts and promotional items

T-shirts and caps are popular items and really get around to help spread your message. Use your imagination or work with a graphic artist on how best to conceive, design, and distribute them. Be sure to carefully consider cost, and don't be overly optimistic about sales income because sales rarely achieve expectations.

You can also order any number of other customized items emblazoned with your logo and message. Prices go down with quantity, but make sure you'll be able to distribute your supply within a reasonable amount of time.

Tips for better giveaways

- Check with a professional printer to see if your design can be reproduced effectively and inexpensively on a number of different materials.
- If you're developing a two-color design, make sure it also reproduces well in black-and-white.
- Allow plenty of time for design, production, printing, and distribution.
- Carry the design theme or logo throughout all literature and accessory items.
- Consider packaging method and costs for mailing or other distribution.
- Check with a promotional items vendor for ordering in quantity.
- Conduct a program to market or distribute the products.

Mascots

An effective way to communicate your message to the younger set is through mascots. They become familiar faces that can take on personalities, stories, and lives of their own. Consider adapting child-friendly characters into puppets, comic strips, posters, banners, displays, festivals, parades, calendars, contests, skits, student lessons, or activities.

What does it cost?

Outreach campaigns can be costly and labor-intensive, especially those that use TV PSAs, special events, printed materials, videos, or targeted mailings. The table on page 99 provides estimated costs for some types of outreach formats. Contact individual vendors for actual prices. When you defined your goals and objectives in Step 1, you determined available funding and staff members for the project, as well as potential partners. This is a perfect opportunity for your partners to lend a hand (or funds). Ask them to volunteer to pay the production or shipping costs of materials. For more information on how to obtain funding or in-kind services, refer to Part 3: Implementing the Campaign.

Ollie the Otter

Ollie the Otter was born June 12, 1996, at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Central Wyoming Regional Water District in Casper, Wyoming, and Colorado Springs Utilities both use Ollie to teach kids about the water cycle, water treatment and distribution, and water conservation and protection.

Ollie has made community appearances, thrown out the first pitch at a baseball game, and even ridden in parades. Ollie says, "Every Drop Counts." To learn more about Ollie, visit *www.csu.org/residential/about/community/education/kids-corner/ollies-water-world/item1000.html*

Building Blocks:

Step 4: Package the Message

With the message "Fertilize in the Fall. That's All!" in hand, the hypothetical Herndon County now needed to choose the package that would be most effective. Because most members of the audience are homeowners who do not have much time to spare, the county researched the time of day that most of the audience would have the greatest attention span—during their commute.

By reviewing a recent subway transit survey conducted by the Greater Herndon/Carlisle Metropolitan Transit Authority, the county learned that more than 60 percent of its residents ride the subway twice a week or more. The county therefore developed five eye-catching subway transit posters centered around its fertilizer reduction campaign. The posters were displayed over the course of six months. The transit poster artwork was also used for full-size educational posters and water bill inserts.

Costs for various outreach products, 2009 estimates*

Category	Item	Cost (per 1,000) unless otherwise indicated)*
Giveaways	Magnets	$220 for 2-color business card size
	Posters (11″ x 17″, 4 colors, 100-lb glossy paper)	$300
	Canvas tote bags 1 color, 2 sides 2 colors, 2 sides	 $3,680 $4,900
	Stickers (1-color, 3″ diameter, white high-gloss, roll of stickers)	$100
	Lapel pins	$1,150
	Stainless steel reusable water bottles with logo/message	$5–$7 per bottle for 100 bottles
	Key chains/holders	$500–$1,500 (price depends on material, size, and shape)
Printed materials	Printed fact sheets (2-sided) 1 color 2 colors 4 colors	 $250 $350 $350
	Trifold brochure (11″ x 25.5″) 1 color 2 colors 4 colors	 $650 $750 $750
Display booths	Tabletop	$300–$1,000 (price depends on size, material, and shape)
	10′ x 10′	$1,500–$4,000 (price depends on size, material, and shape)
Bus advertisements	Panels on bus interior (bus boards)	$4,850 for ads on 300 buses (includes printing and space costs)
	Vinyl panels on entire bus exterior	$2,000–$5,000/month per bus (fees may be higher in large metropolitan areas; production costs vary from region to region)
Billboards	Billboard (printed on indoor/outdoor vinyl in full color)	$700–$2,500/month per billboard for space rental $500–$1,000 for panel design/printing
Web sites	Register domain name	$30 per year (possibly lower if registering with your Web hosting provider)

Costs for various outreach products, 2009 estimates* *(cont)*

Category	Item	Cost (per 1,000) unless otherwise indicated)*
Newspaper ads	4″ x 6″ ad	$400 for weekday run $750 for Sunday run (Prices depend on which day the ad runs, as well as readership/size of the paper.)
Movie theaters	1 PSA (e.g., PowerPoint slide)	$1,400/week in 16 theaters
Radio PSA	Airtime for 30-second and 60-second spots	30-sec. spot: $30–$125 60-sec. spot: $40–$200 30 days of 30-sec spot once a day: $900–$3,750 30 days of 60-sec spot once a day: $1,200–$6,000 (All prices depend on market size.)
Photos	Stock photos purchased online	$1.50–$40.00 per photo (price depends on desired resolution)

**Cost estimates were obtained in 2009. Contact individual vendors for actual prices.*

PROCESS CHECKLIST
Step 4: Package your message

- ❑ Am I getting the message to my target audience with this format?
- ❑ Is the format appropriate for the message?
- ❑ Is the format appropriate for the target audience?
- ❑ Does the format exclude any members of the target audience?
- ❑ Does the format favor any members of the target audience?
- ❑ Does the format grab the attention of the target audience?
- ❑ Do I have the resources necessary to prepare and use the selected format?
- ❑ Do I have access to the skilled staff needed to prepare and use the selected format?
- ❑ Will I have enough time to produce and distribute this format?
- ❑ Will I be able to distribute messages in this format effectively?
- ❑ Will I have the right amount of materials for the entire target audience?

What's in Step 5?

- Who delivers the message?
- Distribution methods
- Timing is everything
- Staffing the effort
- Piggybacking your message

Step 5 Distribute the message

In Step 3 you honed your message. In Step 4 you selected formats for your message. Now, in Step 5 you are ready to distribute the message. Fortunately, you've already considered distribution mechanisms somewhat while researching the target audience and selecting a format. During this step you'll need to consider your timeline, goals and objectives, and the target audience's needs and interests, narrowing down and selecting the most appropriate distribution methods for your project. Further activity during Step 5 includes taking a close look at the resources and work required for distributing the message. Are you going to mail all those posters? Do you need to buy mailing tubes? Do you have the addresses? Better still, is there an existing publication you can piggyback onto so you can reach the target audience without the hassle of mailing anything yourself?

Common means of distribution are using direct mail or e-mail, going door-to-door, making phone calls, relying on targeted businesses, making presentations, offering hand-outs at events, using media outlets, using a website, and posting the message in public places. Consider which distribution method(s) is best for your group. Local governments, for example, might choose to add inserts to utility bills, whereas community groups might prefer door-to-door visits.

Who delivers the message?

In addition to how you are going to deliver the message, you should decide who will deliver the message. Analysis of the target audience can help you identify the most trusted members of the community.

Meteorologists used to spread the word

Recognizing that television weather forecasters are very effective at explaining complex scientific issues and concepts (e.g., doppler radar) and that they are trusted and well respected in the community, EPA joined with the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (now known as NEEF) and the American Meteorological Society to develop Earth Gauge®. Earth Gauge is a free e-newsletter tied to the three-day forecast in markets across the United States. It makes clear, causal connections between current weather and environmental topics—water quality, air quality, wildlife, public health, energy efficiency, and more. It also includes scientific facts about the impacts of climate change and weather patterns, as well as links to articles and studies.

Earth Gauge is distributed in 115 media markets across the country and to more than 215 local broadcast meteorologists, radio broadcasters, and newspaper journalists. Local TV markets reach more than 241 million television viewers, and through their partnership with The Weather Channel, they reach 91 million households every day. Earth Gauge is also distributed to National Weather Service Warning Coordination meteorologists, educators, nonprofit organizations, and other interested subscribers throughout the United States. Visit *www.earthgauge.net* for more details.

An organization trusted by the public can use a staff representative of its own. If the organization is a government agency, it might be effective to have a member of the target audience deliver the message. Many groups select local celebrities, news reporters, or other respected members of the community to be their spokespersons.

The organizers of the Pequea-Mill Creek project in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, had their work cut out for them when trying to reach area farmers with their message. Project staff knew that the farmers would be tough to sway if the message came from the wrong person. Rather than using only participating local, state, and federal staff, they asked local veterinarians interested in water quality and herd health to get involved. The vets spoke to the farmers in the area and encouraged them to implement the recommended BMPs. The organization also used the farmers themselves to help spread the word. They formed teams of two or three farmers and took them to participating farms, where the farmer teams talked about the BMPs and their pros and cons.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Persuasion from peers can be a good way to encourage positive lifestyle changes. As mentioned in Step 2 and in the box to the left, the Empowerment Institute's Sustainable Lifestyle Campaigns use neighbors to create social cohesiveness and get citizens involved. Five to six neighborhood households—an EcoTeam—meet several times over a four-month period, with the help of a step-by-step workbook and a trained volunteer coach. The team members support each other in reducing waste, conserving water and energy, buying environmentally protective products, reducing air and water pollution, and encouraging other neighbors to get involved. Using the residents of the community can be a great option for spreading your message.

Distribution methods

Taking the time to carefully research and select the right distribution method is a very important part of distributing your message. All the research you conducted in Step 2 to learn about your target audience will come into play again when determining distribution methods. For example, you might be really excited about using the latest technologies, such as social networking websites, to get your message out, but understanding how they are best used and to whom

The ripple effect

By building partnerships with diverse members of the community, you can educate them first on the issues; then they can communicate this information to their constituents. For example, ranchers are more likely to believe information and accept recommendations from other ranchers than from another source.

A member of the target audience is often the most effective message delivery vehicle. Recruiting audience members—or piggybacking on publications, activities, or events sponsored by the audience—should be a primary consideration during any message distribution effort.

they're targeted is even more important than keeping up with the latest trends. Some social networking sites are pitched more toward teens and tweens than adults, others to music lovers and musicians. No one site is a catch-all for everyone, and not all sites remain the same over time. The same kind of scrutiny applies when considering face-to-face methods or e-mail distribution. Will your audience be open to the methods you choose? Are they likely to actually receive the message through that method? Will they trust the message they receive through that particular mode of distribution? And most importantly, are they more likely to take the desired action when delivered through a particular means? If your organization doesn't have the trust it needs to conduct face-to-face outreach message distribution, you should consider a different method.

Face-to-face

Even in today's hi-tech, rapidly changing world, face-to-face communication is still one of the most effective ways of reaching the public. Why? Because it takes two to communicate in a conversation. During a face-to-face dialogue, each person is an active participant—whether that activity is verbal or not (e.g., body language, facial expressions). E-mail and printed brochures are great outreach tools, but they lack the personal touch that face-to-face communication brings. E-mails and brochures are easy to put off until later, but a person right in front of you is not so easy to ignore. Face-to-face encounters at meetings, watershed fairs, schools, community events, and front doors can help to build trust in your program and increase the likelihood of personal commitments to make changes.

Organizers of the "Seeding Sustainable Communities" project in England conducted face-to-face residential surveys by knocking on doors. At the same time they gave each resident a Sustainable Living Bag. The tote bags included giveaways such as energy-efficient light bulbs, a fat trap for the sink, wild bird seed and vegetable seeds, samples of eco-friendly soap and laundry detergent, coupons for local organic vendors, and information on environmental issues and tips for living sustainably. The bags and their contents enabled residents to implement immediate lifestyle changes by using the bags for grocery shopping or changing their light bulbs. After the campaign, 100 percent of residents in a neighborhood encompassing nearly 4,000 households had adopted at least one new sustainable behavior. Seventy percent had implemented five or more changes! *Most report that the change was a result of the face-to-face personalization of the program, coupled with the giveaways.*

The Internet

Increasingly, the Internet is becoming a powerful means of communication. According to a 2008 Neilson survey, more than 80 percent of Americans now have a computer in their homes, and of those, almost 92 percent have Internet access. More than half of all American homes have high-speed Internet access. The Internet provides worldwide access to hundreds of thousands of sites containing millions of documents, chat rooms for special interest groups, and database/

mapping features that are almost mind-boggling. Websites can reach large audiences with relatively minimal effort.

Although the Internet is used regularly and extensively by agency personnel, environmental group leaders, and the business community, most citizens still get the great bulk of their environmental messages from more traditional venues—especially the TV and radio news media. Remember, too, that a Web-based approach is very narrowly segmented, so the odds that you'll be able to reach your intended audience solely through the Web aren't good. Many groups find that approaches based on the news media, targeted presentations, printed materials, events, and giveaways are effective ways to draw the audience to a website.

Creating a website

Before deciding that your organization or cause needs a traditional website, consider whether a blog will suffice. For instance, consider the Huron River Watershed Council's blog site at *www.hrwc.org*,

Tips for designing a website

- Keep it simple to keep download times short. Surfers will move on quickly if the site takes too long to view.
- Use colors and fonts that are easy to read, and work together as a well-designed theme.
- Provide contact information, including mailing address, phone number, and e-mail.
- Use a few attractive graphics to make your site more interesting.
- Make sure the site can be viewed properly with both Internet Explorer (versions 7 and 8) and Mozilla Firefox. Google Chrome, Apple Safari, and Opera have made in-roads into the browser market, and should be considered, as well.
- Be sure to use alternate text tags (image tags) for photos and graphics for better accessibility. Consider the accessibility of your website by testing it at *http://wave.webaim.org*. WAVE is a free Web accessibility evaluation tool designed to help expose and repair barriers to accessibility and encourage compliance with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 508 requires that federal websites allow users with disabilities to have access to the same information as those without disabilities. Even if your organization is not a federal agency, ensuring that your site is accessible by all members of the target audience will broaden the reach of your campaign.
- Limit the use of plug-ins such as Flash or Shockwave that have to be downloaded. If a free plug-in such as Adobe Acrobat (for viewing PDF files) is necessary, include a link to the page where that plug-in can be downloaded.
- Make your site interactive by including hot-links, online quizzes, or other features that draw interest. Remember that surfers tend to scan a site for only 10 seconds or so before they move on.
- Update your site frequently! A stagnant website will lose the audience quickly. When developing your outreach plan, build in time (and resources) to maintain an up-to-date website with press releases, new monitoring data, and support.

On the Web...

To design websites that attract the audience and keep them coming back, understand that people don't read Web pages like they read the paper. The Communicators Guide (*http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/papers/bkgrd/communicators.html*) notes the following:

- Reading rates slow by 25 to 40 percent, so don't include lengthy blocks of text.
- The flicker effect in older monitors (not flat screens) causes eyestrain.
- Almost 80 percent of readers scan text; only 20 percent read every word.
- Readers scan a site for about 10 seconds before they click on something else, so make your text count. Put the most important and interesting information near the top of the page.

In addition, on average, online users read only about 20 percent of the text on any given Web page.

which was created with a free, simple blogging tool called Word Press. Blogs are simpler to create and update, and are explained more fully later in this section.

Registering a domain name

When you're ready to develop your organization's website, a few simple steps can help you get started. You may use free website hosts that allow you to use their domain to host your site (e.g., *www.atspace.com*, *www.orgsites.com*), but in the long run it's better to register your own domain. When choosing your site's name, try to pick a domain that's easy to identify with your group and easy to remember. If your organization has a long name, think about using an acronym or abbreviation that can be remembered easily. There are many domain registrars on the Web with varying services and fees, such as *www.registernamescom*. Each site provides a chance for you to enter the website name you want and takes you through the registration steps. Search around to find the one most appropriate for your organization. Fees range from $8 to $70 for the first 2 years, with additional (slightly lower) annual fees until your website is removed.

Designing your website

Designing an attractive, interactive website is crucial if you want the target audience to visit your site often. If your organization already has a homepage you can link to and a Web programmer in-house, soliciting that person's services will be the most affordable option. If not, several software packages, such as Macromedia Dreamweaver and Microsoft FrontPage, allow you to design a website without having to learn any complicated programming languages. Internet-based content management systems (CMS), such as Drupal (a free open source CMS), are growing in popularity. Other options include hiring a website design firm, if funding is available, or recruiting college students majoring in information technology.

Marketing your website

Once your website is online, it's time to promote it to the public. Publicizing your Web address—the Universal Resource Locator, or URL—to the target audience is the most important step in developing a website. Many organizations overlook this step, essentially wasting their websites' potential. Send information on your site to newsletters, organizations, list servers, or other websites that the target audience frequents. Include the URL on all of your outreach materials—letterhead, giveaways, brochures, and so forth.

You can add the URL to many online search engines such as Yahoo, Google, Bing, and Infoseek. Each site can be registered individually for free, or you can use a service like Microsoft Central Submit It at *www.submit-it.com* to submit your listing to about 20 search engines for an annual fee of $49. You'll need to select about 20 keywords for the search engine to use. Be sure to choose your keywords carefully. They should be common things people search for when looking for information provided by your website. Including a mix of casual terms and technical terms will help you reach both broad audiences and specific sub-audiences. Even if you don't register directly with these search engines, most will catalog your site automatically within a few weeks. However, the registration process might give you a better idea of how to make your site more visible to each particular search engine.

Keep in mind that different search engines key in on different components of your website. For example, the Excite search engine looks at the text on the main pages of the website and pulls key words and phrases from there, whereas AltaVista looks at only page titles and metadata tags (keywords listed in the website's HTML code to help search engines tag your site). Since the Web is evolving at a fast pace, use it to research new developments in search engine design. A strong presence on the Web is an excellent way to increase the exposure of your group and communicate your messages more effectively.

Partnering with other website hosts

The Internet is becoming more important to local watershed outreach efforts by the month. Its primary value lies in providing access to general water science information, databases like EPA's Surf Your Watershed (*www.epa.gov/surf*) and those hosted by other public agencies, and environmental news from state and national groups like the Conservation Technology Information Center at *www.ctic.purdue.edu*.

Consider asking to have your website's URL added to other organizations' links pages. This approach increases the number of visitors at your website without costing an arm and a leg. Visit various related websites, and send them e-mails with a request to add a link to your site on their site. Offer to add their link to your site as well. This is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to spread your message.

There are opportunities to reach other audiences through the Internet by using interest group websites (e.g., off-highway vehicle users, anglers, farmers). However, you'll probably reach national audiences, not necessarily the citizens of your watershed, through such websites. Explore these sites before deciding to use them in your program.

E-mail distribution

E-mail is the preferred communication medium among many citizens, business people, and agency officials because it can be accessed at convenient times and provides a written record of the communication. It is also a cheap and fast way to spread a message. Active watershed projects often find it useful to establish e-mail lists through the help of e-mail marketing software, such as Constant Contact, iContact, or Vertical Response to keep participants updated on meetings, policy discussions, and other matters. Implementing this communication link is simple and allows stakeholders to keep abreast of developments at their leisure.

EPA discussion lists

EPA's nonpoint source pollution and septic system discussion lists host lively discussions on issues of interest to watershed groups. Visit *https://lists.epa.gov/read/all_forums* to learn how to subscribe to both lists.

The percentage of adult Internet users who have a profile on an online social networking site such as Facebook or MySpace has increased dramatically in the past four years—from 8 percent in 2005 to 46 percent in April 2009, according to the Pew Internet & American Life tracking survey, *www.pewinternet.org*.

Seventy-five percent of online adults ages 18 to 24 have social network profiles, as compared to 57 percent of online adults ages 25 to 34.

Newsletters, flyers, calendars, and more can be sent with the click of a few buttons. Since most e-mail software now allows HTML e-mails, you can now send e-mails that include photos, hotlinks, and other content that looks more eye-catching than typical plain-text e-mails. This format offers greater control over formatting, layout, color, fonts, graphics, and branding. Some e-mail readers can't properly read HTML-formatted messages. This may be particularly true when sending a message to a distribution list. If you want to be sure that everyone can read your e-mail, whether they can read HTML messages or not, be sure to include the URL for any websites along with the HTML link, provide separators between sections so that it is clear to text recipients when topics change, and use capital letters in headlines so the headline is distinguishable from the description in the text format, where no variations in bold, italics, fonts, and sizes are available to provide visual clues.

Be sure to keep your e-mail address list up-to-date. Don't send more than a few messages a month, or you might risk becoming "spam." Also be sure to include an appropriate specific subject in the subject line so that recipients quickly know what the e-mail is about. Keep your messages brief and to the point.

E-mail discussion lists

Establishing an automated e-mail discussion or information distribution list is not difficult. It can even be done in the form of a round robin exchange, in which list members are the designated recipients of the first message and simply click on "reply to all" to post messages to the entire group. Many state and federal government agencies already host lists in-house, and you might be able to add a new list to their servers easily. Other independent organizations might choose to start lists through websites.

Another option is to use a list management program. Some e-mail list management programs are PC-based and must be installed on your computer. Others are Web-based and enable you to access and manage your list online. One PC-based program that is popular is *Majordomo*. Majordomo is a free program that automates the management of Internet mailing lists. Commands are sent to Majordomo by e-mail to handle all aspects of list maintenance. Once a list is set up, virtually all operations can be performed remotely, requiring no intervention on the part of the list manager. Majordomo automates the administration of mailing lists by allowing users to perform the most frequent operations (subscribe and unsubscribe) themselves, while allowing the list manager to either "approve" each of these operations (or initiate them on behalf of a user), or merely monitor them as they are automatically approved. Visit *www.linuxwebmasterfree.com/majordomo.html* for more information. Other sites that offer free online list management and online message boards include *http://groups.yahoo.com*, *www.freeboards.net*, *www.freelists.org*, and *http://lists.topica.com*.

Using social media and other Web 2.0 tools

The term Web 2.0 refers to the second generation of Internet-based content. This new iteration is different from the first generation, which held mostly static pages of text that users could only scroll and read to access content. Web 2.0 provides for much greater (and instantaneous) interaction between viewers and the site owners and in many cases allows users to add or change page content live. Web 2.0 does not refer to any specific change in the technology of the Internet, but rather to how people use the Internet and the social networking tools to provide and access information. The content is based primarily on user participation. A large part of what makes social media tools popular and successful is the online tools that facilitate collaboration and information sharing. Examples used by outreach groups include social networking sites, media-sharing sites (including photos and videos), wikis, blogs, and podcasts. Social networking tools, or social media, readily accommodate user-created video, audio, text, or multimedia in an online social environment.

Even the White House has jumped on the bandwagon of using social media to get the word out about various issues and activities using Facebook, blogs, and Twitter. Social media tools are a great way distribute your watershed outreach message—and it is relatively easy to get that process started using a number of free or low-cost options. Following are brief descriptions of some social media tools you might want to consider when distributing your message.

Social Networking Sites

A social networking site is centered on the building of virtual communities with members interested in similar causes, activities, or concepts. Members join a site and create a basic profile with their interests and then search for others with similar interests. Once they find other members, they often add a link to the other member's profile. (Most sites give the other member a choice whether to allow the link.) Users use keywords in their profiles and customize content with blogs, video clips, and photos to allow other users to find their profile more easily.

Facebook

www.facebook.com

Facebook is a free service that lets your organization or cause create a profile, upload photos and videos, write journal entries, and post news items to a dedicated Web page. You can create groups, join groups and networks of people, and create and participate in online quizzes. One of the advantages of Facebook is that members' posts (called status updates) show up in the newsfeed of people they have approved as their Facebook friends. This can keep people updated on events. You can join networks that include schools, businesses, and geographic areas that make your profile more easily found by those seeking out interests. For example, the Huron River Watershed Council, a coalition of stewards including volunteers, municipal governments, and businesses actively working to protect and rehabilitate the Huron River

Watershed groups develop Facebook profiles

The San Diego Watersheds Facebook profile is run and updated by the San Diego Coastkeepers. The profile includes a notes section where articles of interest to members are posted, photo albums of the San Diego Watershed are shared, and a video of the Otay River can be downloaded. Posts include news items, event invitations and announcements.

San Diego Watersheds Facebook Page (*www.sdwatersheds.org*; *www.facebook.com/people/San-Diego-Watersheds/1298972984*)

The Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) Facebook profile is maintained by one person who dedicates one hour per week. HRWC advertises its Facebook page through e-mail blasts. Approximately 75 people per month are added as friends. Because of the development of HRWC's Facebook page, there has been in increase in the number of new memberships and new volunteers.

Huron River Watershed Council Facebook Page (*www.hrwc.org; www.facebook.com/pages/Huron-River-Watershed-Council/99590498013*) watershed, has an active Facebook page that has more than 300 members (called fans). The group's profile includes a notes section that lists 10 simple things people can do to protect the Huron River.

Twitter

www.twitter.com

Twitter is a free Web application that allows you to send and receive messages (called tweets) of 140 characters or less to all e-mail addresses or mobile phone numbers that sign up to follow your feed. (A feed is a data format for Internet tools that provide frequently updated content.) The system is versatile, allowing feeds to be sent via computers, mobile phone texting, instant message, or e-mail. Twitter allows you to continuously update your followers on what's going on with you or your organization. You can use it for event invitations and reminders, to call attention to press releases or news articles, or to share breaking news important to the people who are following your feed. Be warned that overuse of Twitter to announce items of trivial interest will turn off potential followers.

Web syndication

Web syndication is a means of getting content from a person or organization to thousands of others using the Web. Think of what syndication means to print media: A syndicated comic strip is produced in one paper but distributed through many newspapers every week. Web syndication allows you to electronically publish your information to those interested in your area and all over the world.

RSS feeds

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. An RSS feed (also called a news feed) allows you to send news published on your website directly to those who are interested in it. It is similar to offering a subscription to a publication: When something new is published on your website, you add it to a list on your RSS feed page. People who subscribe to your RSS feed will be able to access it directly by clicking a link (they won't have to navigate to the page). RSS feeds are a quick, easy, and efficient way to publicize new information on your website. They can be used to send text, audio, or video files.

There are many different ways for people to access your RSS feed. They may choose to access it through their Web browser (if they have a version that supports RSS feeds), through a Web-based RSS reader, or through a desktop-based RSS reader. An RSS reader allows one person to subscribe to many different feeds and read them all in one place. The Web-based version can be accessed through a website, and the desktop version downloads RSS feeds and stores them on the user's computer. Both versions require an Internet connection.

An RSS feed is fairly easy to create and maintain, but someone with Web development skills is needed to develop it. There are a number of resources on the Web that will help with some initial coding and give instructions on posting the feed to your main site. You'll have to update the page yourself. An RSS feed page is not an application, and it will not automatically search your site for new content and post it. EPA has more information on RSS feeds on its website at *www.epa.gov/newsroom/rssfeeds.htm*.

Podcasts

A podcast is a series of audio or video files distributed on the Web for downloading and playback on personal devices such as iPods. The most popular format for podcasts is the MP3 audio file format. The difference between a podcast and an audio file posted on your website is the method of delivery: Podcasts are delivered to users when they sign up for the associated RSS feed. You set up the RSS feed for your podcasts, and people sign up to receive the feed through their chosen "podcatcher," such as iTunes or Juice. A podcatcher is software that automatically downloads the newest podcasts each time it is opened. Most offer a way to download these to your MP3 player when it is connected to the computer.

If your group or organization frequently records audio or video content, such as information webcasts or videos of events, you might want to considering offering that content as downloadable podcasts for people who missed the live event or offering. They can listen at their leisure, and they'll automatically receive any new information or podcasts that you produce because they are subscribed to your feed.

Blogs and vlogs

Simply put, a blog is the Web version of a journal or diary. The word *blog* is a contraction of *Web log*. A vlog is a video blog.The content can be managed by a single user, a group of users, corporations, agencies, or other organizations. Blogs can be written solely by individuals or can be composed of contributions by many authors. They offer an excellent forum for discussion, debate, and information dissemination. Most blogs have comment features that can be turned on or off at the author's discretion. Comments can be helpful when you need to know what readers think of specific issues.

Some examples of free blogging hosts (most of which have premade templates to get you up and running quickly) follow:

- *Blogger.com*
- *Blogagotchi.com*
- *DiaryLand.com*
- *Livejournal.com*
- *JournalHome.com*
- *WordPress.com*
- *Weebly.com*
- *Metaopic.com*

Plymouth watershed blog

This blog is used to document the Plymouth watershed improvement efforts in the town of Plymouth, New York. It also allows the Plymouth Watershed Committee to communicate information to the town's residents and taxpayers. (*www.plymouthwatershed.blogspot.com*)

Interactive Watersheds vlog

Mountain Visions, collaborating with several partners, produces unique interactive multimedia websites for several watershed partnerships. Five of these now include fully interactive, 360-degree panorama virtual tours. Visit *http://gogrimm-vlog.blogspot.com/2006/09/upper-sevier-river-watershed-videos-1.html* where you can provide comments on the Upper Sevier watershed virtual tour. (*www.interactivewatersheds.net/uswtrmap.html*)

Thanks to interoperability between Web 2.0 technologies, it is a relatively simple matter to insert videos, interactive maps (i.e., mash-ups) and other types of content into a blog or traditional Web page.

Media-sharing sites

Flickr

www.flickr.com

Flickr is an online photo-sharing Web service that allows people to share photos with others at little or no cost. Simply having a Yahoo! account allows browsers to join Flickr. Once you have joined, you can set up a profile for your organization or campaign that includes all of your websites, contact information, a short introduction of your purpose, and other information. You can also add key words for browsers to search and find your photos. If you want to control the content that is posted, you need only to set up a profile. However, if you want to solicit content from others in your watershed or from other project partners, you need to create a group. In a group, any of your members can upload pictures to the group photo stream. As the administrator of your group, you'll be able to delete and rearrange content.

A Flickr account can be a good way to promote your organization's goals, reach new audiences, educate others on your group's activities, and share photos of outreach materials, low impact development projects, stormwater flooding, or anything else. You can tag each of the images you upload with as many key words as you like. If someone searches the key word "river" and you have beautiful river photos tagged or photos of volunteer activities involving rivers, they can add you as a friend and see all of your new photos from their homepage when you update. The Flickr network is a lot like the other social media tools covered in this section: People log in to seek out and become part of networks pertaining to their interests.

YouTube

www.youtube.com

YouTube is another media site that allows anyone with an Internet connection to upload videos in a number of different formats, which can then be viewed all over the world. Anyone can view videos on YouTube, but you need to set up an account to post videos. Your account, once active, is then called your channel. Any person or group (e.g., private citizen, organization, or government agency) can set up a channel. Viewers who access your channel can view all of your public videos, search for their favorites, and add comments below the videos. YouTube automatically tracks how many times your video has been accessed, which makes it a useful tool when evaluating the effectiveness of your campaigns. Some YouTube videos achieve quite a bit of fame and become extremely popular "viral videos" that are passed around the world by e-mail, social networking sites, blogs, or even national media. Wouldn't it be nice if viral videos on stormwater or nonpoint source pollution circulated around the country? It's a lofty goal, but certainly achievable with the right video.

Your channel page can be designed to look like your organization's website. The EPA YouTube channel page (*www.youtube.com/user/USEPAgov*), for example, is designed to look like the EPA homepage at *www.epa.gov*. It uses a similar banner and system of links that take the viewer back to the EPA site to view more in-depth information. EPA's YouTube channel currently has nearly 2,000 subscribers. EPA primarily posts videos of speeches and events on current environmental topics.

YouTube videos can be embedded in your blog or homepage. This simply means that a link to the video is put into the code of your Web page and viewers of your site will be able to play the video directly without having to go to *www.youtube.com* to start the video.

Other Methods of Online Information Sharing

Wikis

A wiki is a type of collaborative information site that allows users to create content and edit existing content. It consists of many interlinked, searchable Web pages that hold information specific to the theme of the wiki. Wikipedia is one of the first wikis to become mainstream and is certainly the best known. It functions as a virtual user-generated encyclopedia, where content is fact-checked by users and new content is added continuously. Wikis are among the most powerful information-sharing tools to come out of the online social media revolution.

You can create your own wiki or join wikis that already exist. Wikis are an effective way to share best practices, case studies, and lessons learned and to see what other watershed organizations are up to and learn from them. Wikis can also be used to identify partners and publicize documents, reports, and events. They can help to build a community knowledge base that can spur sustainable behavior change.

Widgets

A widget is a small piece of code that can be programmed to perform a function. A Web widget can be inserted into the code of your Web page or downloaded to a user's Web page, blog, or social profile to provide automatically updated information tidbits. Many Web widgets display interesting facts about subjects such as water conservation, green living, or safe drinking water. Other widgets can be designed to run on a user's desktop or mobile phone. These widgets can do things like display the five-day weather forecast on the desktop or pull stock quotes for the user's portfolio.

EPA has a number of widgets available. For example, the EnviroFacts widget (*www.epa.gov/widgets/#envirofacts*) allows visitors to your page to search several EPA databases for information about environmental activities that might affect air, water, and land in the United States. The Daily Actions widget (*www.epa.gov/widgets/#dailyactions*) displays a daily suggestion for things people can do to promote conservation and green living.

Watershed wikis provide platforms for information sharing

EPA's Watershed Central wiki integrates watershed groups, tools, and processes around the watershed management approach. For more information, visit EPA's website at *www.epa.gov/watershedcentral/wiki.html*.

The San Diego Coastkeeper wiki (*www.sdwatersheds.org*) is a platform to share information and data about the San Diego region's watersheds, along with the data collected through San Diego Coastkeeper's water quality monitoring program.

Text messaging

Mobile phones have become ubiquitous in society. The newest phones have e-mail and Internet capabilities that allow users to do anything from checking their e-mail and getting driving directions to rearranging their stock portfolios. People rely on their mobile phones for more than just calls; text messaging is now a staple of society. Text messaging is a powerful tool for keeping in touch with your audience. Creating a text messaging list (similar to an online mailing list) can be an excellent way to remind members of your audience about your events and issues. Text messages sent a day or two before an event can be a reminder to people already planning to come or an announcement to subscribers who were unaware of the opportunity. Text messages can keep subscribers up-to-date with new developments and updates to your website. With many phones having Internet capability, it is possible to text the URL of your mobile-accessible website and allow people to check it as soon as they get the message.

Text messaging campaigns can be less time- and labor-intensive than traditional print campaigns. You'll need to advertise the service both on your website and on any other publicity materials you produce. Once you have a growing subscriber list, however, sending out messages is relatively inexpensive and quick. Many colleges and universities are using this kind of system to keep in touch with their student populations. Many of them began as alert systems for times of crisis, but now they tend to offer information about on-campus events and meetings as well as safety information and even weather updates. As per the advice for using Twitter, take care to not send trivial or too-frequent text messages to your group to avoid annoying them.

The future of the Web and outreach activities

Web 2.0 and new social media advancements have made it easier than ever for users to access and create online content that suits their needs and interests. The outreach professional is now empowered to take control of Web content. You can update your information instantaneously and customize the text with images, videos, and widgets that make your site ultimately more useful for the public and more popular because of its usefulness. New ways to remind people about events and keep your finger on the pulse of your target audience can have positive effects on how your message is spread. Ultimately, harnessing this new technology can grow your program and springboard you toward reaching your program goals and objectives. Keep in mind, though, that Web technologies evolve quickly. What's popular today might not be popular two years from now. Try to keep up as much as possible with the latest trends. Finally, remember not to become overly enamored with the technology, which must take a back seat to your messages. Your content must be compelling in its own right.

Mail

The mail delivery system can be a good distribution vehicle if the target audience can be defined geographically or if you have access to a mailing list that encompasses your audience (e.g., developers, teachers).

Want to know about watersheds in Sarasota County, Florida? Just call!

The Science and Environment Council of Sarasota County (SEC), with partial funding from the Southwest Florida Water Management District, developed a free watershed audio tour. Fifteen unique watershed-related topics are highlighted on the tour, which is narrated by staff from different SEC member organizations.

Easily accessed from any cell phone, the Watershed Mobile Phone Audio Tour is the first of its kind in Sarasota County. Dial (941) 926-6813 and listen to messages about topics such as how litter and pollution affect sea life and how wetlands play important roles in watersheds. Although you can listen to a message from anywhere, visiting the sites listed on the menu provides an up-close and personal experience. For more information visit *www.secsc.org*.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has established procedures for bulk mailings, and it's advisable to contact the post office early to discuss the pros and cons of this delivery approach. For more information on bulk mail, visit *www.usps.gov*. Whether sending envelopes, post cards, or CDs to your audience, be sure that you know exactly what rate applies to each piece of mail so you can stay within your budget. For example, to qualify for USPS post card rates, a card must be rectangular, at least 3½ inches high by 5 inches long by 0.007 inch thick, and no more than 4¼ inches high by 6 inches long by 0.016 inch thick. Stickers, magnets, and other items should not be attached to postcards.

To be eligible for mailing at the standard postage rate for First-Class mail, a piece must fit into a rectangle at least 3½ inches high by 5 inches long by 0.007 inch thick, and no more than 6 inches high by 11½ inches long by ¼ inch thick. The postal service charges extra postage for mail that's too stiff, too square, or unusually shaped. Such mail can jam postal equipment and make processing difficult. These problems cost the USPS time and money—and could ruin your mailing.

Another option for mailing larger items (e.g., posters, large news letters) is to fold them into letter-size pieces. Folded pieces can save time and money because you're not paying for envelopes or stuffing them. A good way to close the documents is to use wafer seals or tab stickers. Don't use staples because they can catch in postal equipment.

The USPS uses the words *flats* and *non-letters* to refer to large envelopes, newsletters, and magazines. Whatever you call them, flats must have one dimension greater than 6 inches high or 11½ inches long or ¼ inch thick and be no more than 12 inches high by 15 inches long by ¾ inch thick.

The maximum size for a flat gives you plenty of room to put lots of material in the envelope. But keep in mind that the more you put into an envelope, the more it weighs. And the more it weighs, the more postage you pay, especially for First-Class mail.

News media

The news media can provide a fast and effective way to distribute your message. Step 4 describes working with the new media in greater detail since in this case format and distribution are so closely linked. Keep in mind that when using the media, or any other message distribution format, it's helpful to remember the standard formula for producing results in marketing campaigns:

Reach X frequency = results

The number of people receiving your message (reach) multiplied by the number of times they receive it (frequency), along with the quality of your message, will determine the impact of your effort. Hitting the target audience once with a great message just won't do the job. They

Bulk mail 101

The USPS offers discounts for bulk mailings because you do some of the work that the USPS would otherwise do. To mail at bulk rates, you need to:

- Get a mailing permit (one-time fee of $150) and pay an annual mailing fee ($150 per year).* To keep your mailing permit active, you must send a mailing at least once every two years.
- Pay postage using pre-canceled stamps, a postage meter, or a permit imprint.
- Make sure your addresses are current.
- Presort the mailings by ZIP Code.
- Take your mail to the post office where you hold your mailing permit.

To qualify for bulk mailing discounts, you must mail at least 500 identical pieces for First Class (maximum weight of 13 ounces) and 200 pieces for Standard mail (maximum weight of 15.99 ounces). "Identical" means they are the same size, shape, and weight.

In addition to bulk mail rates, nonprofit organizations might be eligible for additional mailing privileges. The post office offers nonprofit groups discounted mailing rates. To apply for nonprofit mailing rates, visit the USPS website. *www.usps.com/send/waystosendmail/senditwithintheus/nonprofitstandardmail.htm*

*2009 prices

have to hear it over and over again—just like preschoolers learning their ABCs. That's why you see the same ads broadcast time after time on TV and radio. After a while, the marketers know their message will break through the clutter and resonate with you, possibly motivating you to buy a particular product or vote for a particular candidate.

Delivering educational, promotional, or motivational messages through the news media is similar to distributing them through other mechanisms. If you want results, you need to repeat the message frequently and link it to something the audience values. Covering watershed issues from several different angles can help accomplish this. Orienting yourself to the workings of the media and the needs of reporters will help keep your program focused and effective.

Timing is everything

Once you've figured out how to deliver your message, the next step is to figure out when to deliver it. For a major community event, give the community plenty of time to add it to their calendars. And as described in Step 4, any distribution to involve the media must be sent well in advance.

The response you're looking for from the target audience can affect when you distribute your message. For example, if you have prepared calendars, you need to have them distributed in November, when people start shopping for the next year's calendar. If you're promoting fall fertilization, residents need to receive the flyers at the beginning of spring before they consider purchasing additional fertilizer, and possibly again in early fall.

Once your message has been distributed, it's likely that your organization will be deluged with questions from the media, local businesses, schools, and members of the public. Be prepared for both positive and negative comments. Once you get an idea of what they want to know, prepare a list of Frequently Asked Questions (with answers, of course!) for your staff members or volunteers to have on hand.

Staffing the effort

Now that your organization has created a message and chosen its format and means of distribution, the question of resource needs is likely to come up. Think about forming partnerships with local and regional organizations that work on related issues. Also look to businesses and schools that might be interested in providing funding or staff time. Think about tying your message into a business or organization activity already in place to save time, money, and effort.

Recruit volunteers and interns

A massive outreach campaign can take up considerable staff time to ensure success. The cost of door-to-door visits, phone calls, and other in-person activities might exceed your current means. The KOPE kids of Utah overcame this barrier by partnering with local artists, biologists, horticulturalists, and others to get the message out in their fight to save Hidden Hollow from development. These people had a special interest in the project that made them willing to volunteer on behalf of the creek. Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

A large organization might be able to donate staff from other departments until the campaign ends. If funding is available, hire a few part-time interns or an entry-level person. Also look to your partner organizations for additional staff members. They might be willing to pay their employees for their time, saving you valuable funding. It's likely those employees are already involved with and knowledgeable of the issues, saving training time as well.

A more affordable method is to poll for volunteers. Recruit through the newspaper, on the local college campus, or during community events. It's quite possible you'll run into several citizens who are already interested in the issue. In turn, their increased knowledge and participation will help them spread the news in their peer groups. Ensure success by gathering volunteers from the target audience.

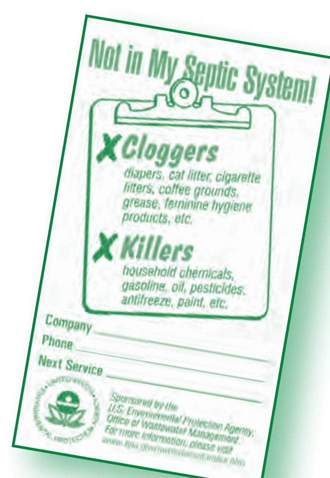
If you're strapped for staff, you should also consider using interns, in addition to volunteers. If students can work for college credit instead of monetary payment, your bottom line will be better off. Obviously, students in environmental science-related majors would be ideal; however, students in the journalism, marketing, and media production programs at local universities and community colleges can also be recruited for outreach projects. Contact the universities and colleges in your area and ask about working together to set up an internship program or a senior or master's project program.

Piggybacking your message

Piggybacking, or attaching your message onto someone else's message, is the easiest and usually most effective way to distribute the message. If the target audience receives a certain periodical or service (e.g., town newsletter, utility bill), it will be more effective to include your message in that publication than to send it separately. For example, if you're trying to reach pet owners, you might want to advertise your message in the local vet's newsletter. It will also increase the likelihood that members of the target audience will actually read your message because they're already familiar with the publication. Piggybacking helps you to reach the audience, and it helps the editor of the host publication generate content for the next issue—a win-win situation for everyone.

Go on the road

Conferences, workshops, and other events are also ideal for piggybacking because they can be fairly expensive to conduct on your own. If a local kennel club is sponsoring a dog show, ask if you can set up an exhibit on the importance of picking up after pets or if the show organizers are willing to distribute free pick-up bags with your program logo to the attendees. Keep yourself informed of conferences and events in which members of the target audience will be involved, and contact the event organizers to see how you might be able to piggyback your event or message. Of-



Building Blocks:

Step 5: Distribute the message

In Step 4 (Package your message), the hypothetical Herndon County developed water bill inserts, subway transit posters, and full-size educational posters. County staff made arrangements with the local water authority to include the water bill inserts in their quarterly bills to county residents. The water authority was eager to oblige because it had been looking for ways to reduce drinking water treatment costs. It knew that if residents were able to significantly reduce water pollution to the local lake (also the county's drinking water supply), water treatment costs would drop.

The county also used a bulk mail account with the postal service to send the posters to targeted audiences (e.g., lawn and garden stores, garden clubs, homeowner associations, lawn care companies), as well as the local community college.

To help pay for the cost of displaying the posters in the subway, the county teamed up with the Herndon chapter of Trout Unlimited. The chapter paid the subway poster fee for six months and also donated $1,000 for printing costs.

fering staff time and other in-kind services will make your request more appealing to the event organizers.

Work with local businesses

Using selected businesses to deliver your message can increase the likelihood of reaching the target audience and save money on postage. For example, if you develop a brochure on oil recycling, ask to display the brochure at auto parts supply outlets. Keep in mind that businesses will be more likely to distribute your materials if there is an added benefit to them. So if you ask septic tank pumpers to distribute refrigerator magnets containing information on what should and should not go into a septic system, include a space on the magnet for the customer to write down the hauler's name, phone number, and next service date.

PROCESS CHECKLIST
Step 5: Distribute the message

- ❑ Do I have the resources necessary to distribute the message?
- ❑ Will I have enough time to distribute the message?
- ❑ Will I be able to distribute messages in this format effectively?
- ❑ Have I chosen the appropriate marketing method for my message?
- ❑ Do I have the right messenger?

Step 6: Evaluate the outreach campaign

Evaluation provides a feedback mechanism for ongoing improvement of your outreach effort. Many people don't think about how they'll evaluate the success of their outreach program until after the program has been implemented. Building an evaluation component into the plan from the beginning, however, will ensure that at least some accurate feedback on outreach program impact is generated. Ideally, feedback generated during the early stages of the project will be used immediately in making preliminary determinations about program effectiveness. Adapting elements of the outreach effort continually as new information is received ensures that ineffective components are adjusted or scrapped while pieces of the program that are working are supported and enhanced.

Why evaluate?

Outreach programs often involve a tremendous amount of effort and resources, and evaluation will help you build support for ongoing funding and save you time and money. Justifying the program—showing how it supports achieving the overall goals and objectives—means identifying what worked, fixing what didn't, and ensuring that outreach continues to enhance the watershed program. You need to know what worked and why so you can build on successes or make adjustments in the future. Perhaps you used foundation or other funds that require a demonstration that water quality actually improved or other measurable progress was made. Whether soliciting funds from private or public sources, you'll be in a much stronger position if you can show that your program is working.

The success of outreach programs depends on how well they're conceived, planned, implemented, and adapted. Evaluating success is not difficult if you initially develop concrete, measurable objectives against which your achievements can be compared. In addition, focusing the outreach effort on discrete target audiences provides a manageable approach for both implementing the outreach program and measuring its success.

When to evaluate

Although evaluation is the final step in a multistep process, it starts at the beginning of the project. As explained in Step 1, evaluation tools must be built into your outreach campaign at the beginning and along every step of the way to ensure that accurate feedback is generated. This method is commonly called adaptive management. Adaptive management is a process for continually improving your goals and objectives, messages, formats, and distribution mechanisms by learning from the tasks you've implemented. Adaptive management keeps you from charging ahead blindly and being paralyzed by

What's in Step 6?

- Why evaluate?
- When to evaluate
- Types of evaluations
- Where do I go from here?

North Carolina television PSAs show results

The North Carolina Clean Water Education Partnership (CWEP) ran a TV PSA campaign in the spring, summer, and fall of 2007 on general stormwater pollution, buffer care, motor oil disposal, and car washing. CWEP aired 2,674 spots across seven TV stations in the Coastal and Triangle media markets in North Carolina at a cost of more than $150,000 (less than $60 per airing).

Following the campaign, survey results showed a statistically significant increase in the number of respondents who know that nonpoint sources are the major source of water pollution, that stormwater flows to creeks and streams, and how to properly dispose of motor oil and lawn clippings. CWEP also found that the TV ad drove visitors to its website at the start of the campaign. CWEP also ran corresponding bilingual radio ads.

For more information, contact Sarah Bruce at (919) 558-9343 or *sbruce@tjcog.org* and visit CWEP at *www.ncCleanWater.org*.

indecision later. It helps you learn from your mistakes and build on your successes.

Because you're selling ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors with your outreach campaign, rather than products and services, you won't have product sales goals to help you evaluate your success. Therefore, you need to be in tune with your campaign so you can set measurable benchmarks along the way. Be on the lookout for evaluation opportunities when creating formats or deciding on a distribution method. For example, when you're building a website for your campaign, make sure you monitor Web traffic so that you can see how many more people visit the website after PSAs are run on TV or after a community event. Don't leave evaluation until the end of the project.

Google Analytics is one easy way to monitor Web traffic. Google Analytics (*www.google.com/analytics*) is a free service that gives you insight into your website traffic and outreach effectiveness. By adding a short piece of code (provided by Google Analytics) to your website, it will track things such as number of Web visitors from all sources (e.g., search engines, referring sites, e-mails, etc.), which pages get the most hits, how long viewers spend on the site, what state or country they are from, and many other statistics.

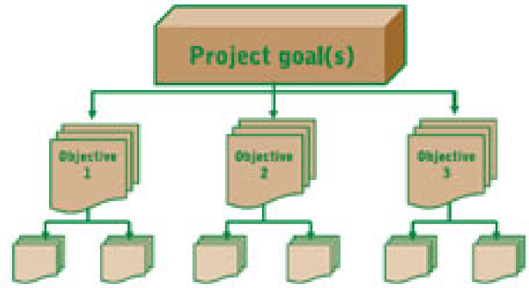
Types of evaluations

Outreach programs typically have interrelated sets of objectives and tasks linked to a specific goal. The goal of the program—improving water quality or, more specifically, reducing phosphorus loadings by half over the next five years (for example)—is typically supported by a number of objectives, which might or might not have specific outreach components. An outreach program evaluation includes the following three types of evaluation:

- *Process evaluation:* Includes indicators related to the execution of the outreach program itself (activity indicators). For example, what effect did the effort have on the process? Did people attend the meetings? Did the message get to the media?
- *Impact evaluation:* Includes indicators related to achievement of the goals/objectives of the program. These could be social indicators (behavior-based) or environmental indicators. For example,

EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox houses past surveys

You can find a collection of baseline attitude surveys, stormwater program-related surveys, and evaluations of media campaigns from around the country in EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox (*www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*). From the main page, click on "Surveys & Evaluations." Review any surveys or evaluations conducted in your state or beyond to obtain information on local or regional nonpoint source attitudes and behaviors. You will also find statistics related to how successful various related outreach campaigns have been. In addition, many of the surveys provided in the Toolbox include the survey instrument itself, which you can use as a basis for developing your own survey questions.



Tasks or activities required to achieve each objective

did the audience adopt the new behavior? Have nutrient levels decreased as a result of the behavior change?

- *Context evaluation:* Includes indicators related to how the project functions in the community as a whole, how the community perceives the project, and the economic and political ramifications of the project. Context indicators can provide some background and perspective on why certain approaches appear to be working well while others are not. For example, was the effort well received by the public?

The following table presents a hypothetical set of indicators related to a watershed outreach program. Note that some of the indicators measure direct environmental impact (e.g., phosphorus or solids concentrations), whereas others measure attributes of the process employed to achieve those impacts (e.g., number of workshops). The worksheet in Appendix A (page A-3) can be used to build evaluation measures into each step when you first develop your outreach plan. Appendix D provides an evaluation worksheet that you can

Examples of indicators for various goals, objectives, and tasks

Goal	Objective	Task/Activity	Indicators
Improve Water Quality			Overall Indicator: Attainment of water quality criteria and designated uses (impact)
	Objective A: Reduce phosphorus loadings from subwatershed X		• Reduction in soluble reactive phosphorus concentrations (impact)
		Offer free soil testing to row crop farmers	• Total acres of soil tested; farmers reached (process) • Number of farmers applying fertilizer based on soil tests (impact)
		Conduct workshops for homeowner lawn care	• Number of workshops held; total attendees (process)
	Objective B: Reduce erosion and sediment from construction sites		• Target: 40 percent decrease in total suspended solids and turbidity measurements (impact)
		Train job site superintendents in proper erosion and sediment control practices	• Number of training sessions held; total number of attendees (process) • Pre/post tests on knowledge of erosion and sediment control practices (impact)
		Conduct random inspections of construction sites to review erosion and sediment control practices	• Inspections conducted; resulting scores; referrals of low-score sites to training program (impact) • Inspection score trends over time (impact)

use when evaluating your campaign during and after the steps are implemented.

Process evaluations

Process evaluations focus on the implementation of activities related to budget requirements, schedules, staff resources, and tasks or activities. Process evaluation occurs as the program is being implemented, early enough in the outreach delivery process to allow modifications before too many resources have been expended. Evaluating planning processes and program activities as they occur increases the likelihood that outreach programs will achieve their objectives. The evaluation resembles a plan–do–check–act procedure.

Process evaluations help determine whether sound objectives were developed, target audiences were properly analyzed, and appropriate messages were crafted. Continuous evaluation during the planning and implementation process helps clarify program objectives and keeps activities sharply defined. Evaluations can also occur after completion of each step in the process by reviewing the proposed plan with staff and analyzing decisions at each phase or after each task or activity. Conducting cursory pretests of materials on representative samples of the target audience and confirming tests with focus groups also provide valuable evaluation information.

This sort of "early warning system" can include logging the costs of specific activities, checking the frequency of material distribution, making contact with distribution outlets to see if materials were received in a timely manner, reviewing media clippings to determine

Hotlines help in evaluation

The Bear Creek Watershed Project in western Michigan set up a hotline for homeowner associations to use when they see that builders or residents aren't complying with the new stream buffer ordinances. Project organizers monitor the number of calls received.

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Georgia surveys elected officials to focus coastal outreach efforts

The Georgia Coastal Management Program (GCMP) was faced with the challenge of educating a rapidly growing public about the natural resources on which its sought-after quality of life is based. Because most land use decisions are made at the local level, much attention has been focused on local government and elected officials.

To develop a personal relationship with those local officials, staff from the GCMP conducted face-to-face surveys with more than 80 of them. "We asked them what the most important natural resource issues were in their communities and how they thought the Coastal Management Program should focus its efforts," said Beth Turner of the GCMP. The results showed that 75 percent of local government officials recognize the importance of protecting groundwater resources from saltwater intrusion and contamination, but only 25 percent of the officials mentioned nonpoint source pollution as a natural resource issue for their communities. "We know that nonpoint source pollution is a widespread problem in our coastal area, and the fact that the elected officials are not aware of it shows us where to concentrate our outreach efforts," Turner stated.

—Beth Turner, Georgia Coastal Management Program

how news releases and articles are being published, monitoring the number of responses to messages (attendees at an event, responses to surveys, callers to information lines), tracking workshop attendance registration, and gathering information through focus groups or surveys to determine distribution effectiveness.

Impact evaluations

Impact evaluations assess the outcome or impacts produced by the outreach program and are directly tied to the original objectives. This type of evaluation measures the effect of an outreach program on the target audience by asking, “To what extent did we achieve our objective?” Typical performance measures under impact evaluations include increased awareness, knowledge of an issue, changes in perceptions or behavior, repeat participation in a targeted activity, and goal-oriented measures of water quality improvements. Be aware that sometimes unintended outcomes can result from an outreach program, and if there is evidence that such outcomes are prevalent, the evaluation can attempt to capture and define them so the program can be revised. When conducting impact evaluations, you need to use both water quality indicators and social indicators.

Water quality indicators

Water quality indicators are where the rubber meets the road. Indicators are measurable parameters used to link pollutant sources to environmental conditions. EPA’s Stakeholder Guide provides a list of example environmental indicators, such as number of permits reissued with new limits, stability and condition of riparian vegetation, and amount of fertilizer sold or used. The water quality indicators you choose should be directly related to your goals and objectives so that you can more easily determine project successes and failures. Keep in mind that although measuring environmental success is not difficult, in outreach programs it can take years before environmental improvements can be seen.

Social Indicators

Social indicators are those indicators that describe what behavior changes have taken place. In *The Social Indicator Planning and Evaluation System (SIPES) for Nonpoint Source Management: A Handbook for Projects in USEPA Region 5*, the Regional Social Indicators Team describes a step-by-step system for using social indicators to help plan, implement, and evaluate nonpoint source projects. The handbook defines social indicators as measures that describe the capacity, skills, awareness, knowledge, values, beliefs, and behaviors of individuals, households, organizations, and communities. A list of core social indicators is provided to address various components of the behavior change process:

- Increased awareness of technical issues or recommended practices
- Changed attitudes to facilitate desired behavior changes
- Reduced constraints (barriers) to behavior change

Mill Creek project combines process and impact evaluation to show results

To evaluate whether stream bank fencing improved water quality, Natural Resources Conservation Service project staff used several different indicators. Some measured changes in water quality, while others measured how successful they were at reaching the audiences. All of these indicators strengthened the evaluation program so that NRCS could make adjustments based on the information collected.

Some indicators measured were the following:

- Number of farmers who showed interest by contacting project staff (impact and context)
- Number of articles published in the local media outlets (process)
- Number of farm tours given (process)
- Miles of stream bank fenced (impact)
- Water quality measurements of suspended solids and fecal coliforms (impact).

Check out the *Getting In Step* video.

Measuring online success

Fortunately many sites for blogging, media sharing, and social networking have built-in ways that help you keep track of usage and other statistics. For example, YouTube has a video view counter that can be used to track how many times your video is viewed. Following are several other others ways to evaluate online success.

Hit counters and website traffic reports

Web designers can easily build hit counters into websites to help track site use and activity. There are also a number of free services that you can find online that will track hits and send you e-mail statistics about website traffic. One example is Google Analytics, a free service that involves including a specific piece of code in your Web page coding that allows Google Analytics to automatically track a variety of things. These include number of unique visitors, how people find your site, how they navigate through it, what key word they searched on to find your site, visitors' organizations, and whether visitors are being directed to your site from another site. The Northern Virginia Clean Water Partners used Google Analytics to track Web traffic in its "Only Rain Down the Storm Drain" campaign.

Polls and surveys

The number of responses you get on polls and surveys can tell you something about who is on your website and who is interested in the subject presented. Short, easy polls and surveys are most likely to garner a response from users. There are also a number of free polling services online, including Go2Poll (*www.go2poll.com*) and Independent Poll Service (*www.yourfreepoll.com*).

- Increased capacity to leverage resources
- Increased capacity to support appropriate practices
- Increased adoption of practices to maintain or improve water quality.

The social indicators handbook provides detailed examples of each type of social indicator listed above. To download it, go to *www.uwex.edu/ces/regionalwaterquality/Flagships/SI-Docs/SI%20Handbook6-08.pdf*.

Other social indicators include the kinds of things you would ask about in a public survey following your outreach campaign. For example, you might want to know what percentage of all the residents who reportedly saw your TV PSA on picking up pet waste now pick up after their pets compared to how many did so before the TV PSA aired.

In addition to surveys, assessment tools for impact evaluations include focus groups, interviews, and, of course, actual measurement of improvements in water quality. A common impact evaluation tool is to compare behaviors, attitudes, or beliefs of the target audience before and after the outreach program is implemented. If you intend to use the pretest/posttest approach, it's critical to obtain target audience baseline information on the issues linked to the program objectives before the outreach program is implemented so valid comparisons can be made.

Design your pretest and your program with the end result in mind—attainment of the objective, whether it be related to knowledge or awareness of an issue or a change in behavior (e.g., adopting BMPs). When planning an impact evaluation, it's important to clearly identify the time frame for measuring results because the true impact of a number of programs is realized long after the activities have ceased. It can take up to 10 years for water quality improvements associated with the implementation of BMPs to be detected.

Another impact evaluation approach is direct measurement of actions taken by the target audience. For example, if your outreach program encouraged residents to leave grass clippings on their lawns, you could measure the amount of yard waste going to the landfill before and after the program is implemented. Oil recycling can be measured by tracking recycled oil drop-off trends at area collection centers. The Empowerment Institute's Sustainable Lifestyle Campaign, which uses neighbor-to-neighbor outreach to encourage natural resource conservation and protection, measures success in terms of household utility cost savings.

Setting targets in terms of the indicators that will be used during the evaluation provides a yardstick against which progress can be measured. For example, the target value for total suspended solids and turbidity might be 40 percent less than current readings. A target for soil testing might be to test 80 percent of all row crop fields within 300 feet of a waterway.

Context evaluations

Finally, examining contextual information related to the audience, the outreach program, and the watershed issues under study can provide some perspective on what's working, what's not, and why. Assessing how the project functions within the economic, social, and political environment of the community helps to uncover aspects of the objective, message, audience, format, or distribution mechanism that might be affecting results. For example, choosing an inappropriate messenger can compromise the success of a project regardless of other factors. Other community or cultural factors can also play a huge role. Such factors include perceptions that one group is bearing a disproportionate burden for correcting water quality problems, cost-share funding eligibility criteria are unfair, or preferential treatment is being afforded to some stakeholders. Focus groups that examine the social, economic, political, and cultural context of your project can identify problems that weren't noticed during the planning or execution phase.

Care must be taken when designing evaluation tools to ensure that targeted variables are being accurately assessed. It is often difficult to trace water quality improvements directly to a specific program or action, just as it is difficult to attribute purchasing behavior to a

Several baseline attitude surveys, stormwater program-related surveys, and evaluations of media campaigns from around the country can be found in EPA's NPS Outreach Toolbox (*www.epa.gov/owow/nps/toolbox/surveys.htm*).

Building Blocks:

Step 6: Evaluate the Outreach Campaign

After running the transit ads for six months, distributing the water bill insert in two bill mailings, and distributing more than 500 posters, the hypothetical Herndon County conducted a post-project, random-digit-dialing survey of county residents to measure the impact of its "Fertilize in the Fall. That's All!" outreach campaign on local attitudes and behaviors. The county found that 70 percent of county residents were aware that lawn fertilizer is a significant contributor to local water quality degradation (a 50 percent increase from pre-campaign estimates). In addition, more than 55 percent of residents said they planned to change their fertilizer habits and fertilize only in the fall.

specific advertisement or product attribute. A little creativity, some insight, and a variety of different perspectives are important ingredients in designing evaluation programs.

Where do I go from here?

Congratulations! You've just completed all the steps necessary to develop an effective, executable outreach plan. Use the worksheets in Appendix A to help organize your plan and identify possible gaps. In Part 3, Implementing the Campaign, you'll learn how to put your plan into action.

PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 6: Evaluate the outreach campaign

- ❑ Do I have a baseline on the target audience's behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes?
- ❑ How will I know whether the target audience has received the message?
- ❑ What tools will be used to assess the impact of the outreach campaign?
- ❑ Can those tools be used if the campaign changes?
- ❑ What will be done with the results of the evaluation?
- ❑ Who will be responsible for tracking budgets and schedules?
- ❑ Do I have the resources to use pre/post survey or evaluation techniques?
- ❑ Is the outreach campaign accountable to the public, government agencies, another organization, or other funding sources?

Part 3: Implementing the campaign

In Part 1 you learned how to get started, and in Part 2 you learned about the six steps of outreach and how to develop an outreach campaign plan. In Part 3 you'll learn some tricks of the trade to get you started on implementing the campaign you've planned.

Developing an operating plan

From the outreach plan you developed in Part 1, you need to create a "to do" list in tabular format (like the one on page 126) to figure out who's going to do what and by when, and to identify how much each task will cost. This table will become your day-to-day operating plan. Don't worry if there are holes in it. You can beef up staff numbers by forming partnerships with other local agencies and organizations, and you can increase your budget by applying for grants or obtaining in-kind services. Tips are provided below to help you secure additional resources—both people and dollars.

The key is to outline your operating plan based on what will achieve the objectives in the overall campaign plan you developed in Part 1. When you first create the table, focus on the activities and the time frame needed. If you determine that you can't complete the activities because of lack of funding or staff, you can make choices to scale back certain activities or phase in activities over time. You can find a blank operating plan matrix to use in implementing your campaign at the end of Appendix A.

What's in Part 3?

- Developing an operating plan
- Scheduling
- Determining resources and support
- Maintaining the momentum
- Overcoming barriers to success
- A final thought

Sample Operating Plan Matrix

Goal: Increase awareness of residential nutrient runoff and encourage behaviors that will reduce nutrient pollution in local streams and lakes.

Objective: Post educational posters in Greater Herndon/Carlisle Metropolitan Transit Authority subway stations by Earth Day.

Activity/Product	Evaluation Indicators	Time Frame/Due Date	Reponsible Party	Resources Needed	Status/Comments	
Develop 5 posters for 7 subway stations and post them.	• Number of posters hung • Number of hits on county website before and after posters are hung • Post-project random phone survey to measure impact of posters	• Contact subway authority: February 1 • Develop text/theme for each poster: February 15 • Develop layout: March 17 • Send to printer: March 24 • Hang posters: April 1 (before Earth Day)	*Communications director of county Water Division in Public Works Department*	**Staff time** *40 hours*	**Dollars** • Printing: $2,000 ($1,000 to be donated by Trout Unlimited) • Subway ad fee: $3,000 per ad for 6 months (possibly donated by transit authority)	*Communications director will contact Greater Herndon/ Carlisle Metropolitan Transit Authority director to inquire about procedural requirements and whether they might be willing to waive subway ad fee for 6 months.*
Objective: Educate local businesses about proper nutrient management by developing and implementing a speakers bureau within 3 months.						
Develop slide show, handout materials, and evaluation form	• Based on evaluation forms collected, how well the materials were received	• Develop draft slide show text: January 17 • Identify appropriate photos: January 17 • Develop 1-page evaluation form: January 21 • Submit materials to reviewers: January 22 • Finalize all materials and make copies: January 31	*Public affairs assistant*	**Staff time** *60 hours*	**Dollars** *Handouts: $10* *Name tags: $5*	*Try to have a good mix of business types in each presentation.*
Conduct three 2-hour presentations	• Number of attendees at presentations • How many presentations were made • How many follow-up phone calls were received because of infor-mation presented • Based on evaluations, whether attendees benefited from the presentations	• Develop list of targeted businesses with contact info: January 3 • Make initial calls to businesses to gauge interest: January 10 • Secure meeting locations: January 20 • Send invitations: January 27 • Conduct presentations: February 19–21	*Public affairs assistant to schedule presentations* *Community liaison to give presentations*	**Staff time** *Schedule presentations: 15 hours* *Presentations: three 2-hour presentations + travel time + setup time (9 hours)*	**Dollars** *Handouts: $10* *Name tags: $5*	*Try to have a good mix of business types in each presentation.*

Scheduling

Your day-to-day activities can be translated into a working calendar. Update it frequently and provide it to your workgroup. You can show when items need to be mailed, who needs to be called, when press releases have to be e-mailed, and so forth.

Determining resources and support

Once you've started filling in your operating plan and your working calendar, you'll know why determining available resources and support to implement your campaign is the next critical step. You'll need three basic things to launch your campaign: staff, technical support, and financial support. Do you have the resources to conduct the background research to develop your plan? Do you have the resources to implement your plan? If your plan is larger than your budget, think about ways you can alter the plan or consider looking outside your organization for support. In addition, consider forming partnerships to pool funding and expand potential impact. Partnerships can often help sustain an effort after initial seed money has been spent. Refer to Part 1, Getting Started, to read more about setting up partnerships.

How partnerships can help

Partnerships can be well-planned campaign components or they can be a natural outgrowth of your objectives. Either way, they can help you achieve things you might not otherwise be able to do on your own. For example, if one of your objectives is to create door hangers with tips for homeowners, the local Girl Scout council would be a logical partner to help strengthen the message and distribute the flyers. Although informal groups might not be eligible to receive as many grants or resources, by aligning themselves with nonprofit organizations or public agencies, they can often find access to funding without having to go through the hassle of setting up a corporation or applying for tax-exempt status, allowing them to focus instead on the issue of concern.

Formal partnerships are those established by law, initiated through formal public agency action, or incorporated under the laws of a state. Most formally organized watershed groups are nonprofit organizations that meet the charitable, education, scientific, or other requirements outlined for tax-exempt corporations under section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code.

Whether formal or informal, partnerships can provide critical input and support for your outreach campaign throughout all six steps of the process.

Where to find partners

State or local environmental organizations and regional planning agencies (sometimes referred to as councils of government) should be the first place to start looking for partners. Key partners also include

Media partners help carry the load

When tasked with increasing public awareness and understanding of watershed issues, the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) turned to its local NBC television affiliate, WPTZ, in February 1999. WPTZ's broadcast region nearly mirrors the Lake Champlain watershed, reaching 600,000 residents of New York, Vermont, and Quebec. After several scoping meetings, WPTZ and the LCBP began a unique partnership—Champlain 2000.

What originally began as Champlain 2000, which aired nine special reports from 1999 to 2004, later evolved into what is now Champlain Connection. The program promotes successful projects that protect and enhance the Lake Champlain Basin's water quality, natural resources, and cultural heritage through a special news segment that airs Mondays at 6:00 p.m. The LCBP's outreach staff provides story concepts, contacts, and further information about each story on the website (*www.lcbp.org*). Although WPTZ maintains all editorial control, the news team solicits the LCBP's help to maintain a balanced viewpoint in all stories. News stories cover issues like urban lawn and garden runoff, buffer strips, and volunteer watershed groups. By leveraging outreach staff time with WPTZ's estimated $200,000 commitment to Champlain Connection, the LCBP is increasing awareness and understanding of watershed issues at a minimal cost.

In 2008 organizations focused on the environment received $6.58 billion in financial support from individuals and foundations.* Developing a partnership can be a valuable tool to help your group tap into new funding sources.

—Giving USA 2009 (Giving USA Foundation)

**Giving USA 2009 lumps environmental and animal-related organizations into the same category.*

organizations representing important stakeholders in the watershed, such as farm organizations, developers, or property managers. Identify local organizations likely to be interested in watershed issues, such as the local Farm Bureau, the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, local stormwater utilities, or watershed and other environmental organizations. Then look to local agencies and organizations charged with protecting water resources, such as sanitation districts, local planning commissions, water authorities, or other county or municipal government agencies. Federal, state, regional, or local agencies might also have programs with goals and objectives similar to yours. Federal agencies such as EPA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, and others are often looking for ways to partner with local governments and the private sector to help them get more bang for their environmental buck. They see local agencies, nonprofits, and private organizations as credible sources of local environmental expertise. Smaller and more local interests can offer the ability to generate the public buy-in that often can't be obtained by the federal government.

Businesses tend to look for projects that help the communities where their employees live or where their customers purchase and use their products and services. Businesses can be persuaded to take part in the partnership to improve their public standing and eventually increase their profits. Also, some businesses set aside a certain percentage of their profits for charitable organizations or causes. Why not to your cause? Many private firms jump at the chance to donate what they consider "small potatoes" ($500 to $2,000) to pay for giveaways, event space, or printed materials in return for positive press coverage. Other businesses might be interested in supporting events by sending staff volunteers to help with cleanup events, collect monitoring data, plant trees along streambanks, and so forth.

For more information on involving stakeholders in your partnership building process, check out EPA's *Stakeholder Guide*.

Securing funding

Although partnerships can help spread the workload and provide some resources, eventually you might discover that you still need to secure additional funding to launch various aspects of your outreach campaign. Develop a project expense budget sheet or use the "Resources Needed" column of the sample operating plan matrix on page 127 to list all the required goods and services you'll need, along with an estimate of the cost for each. Don't forget to include travel expenses, supplies, and vendor services, in addition to direct labor. Also note the in-kind services your project partners have offered. Once you know what you have and what you need, you can set out to secure funding to take up the slack.

Whether you decide to apply for grants, solicit donations, or tap into in-kind services from potential project partners, funding sources can be found in all sectors. The more sources you identify, the better your chances of finding the funding you need to meet your campaign objectives.

Foundations

Because foundations are legally required to donate at least 5 percent of their assets each year to qualify as foundations, being in the right place at the right time can put you on the receiving end of such donations. Be sure to check each foundation's guidelines and deadlines for funding proposals. In addition, most foundations have specific mission statements, so make sure when applying for funds that your application focuses on their needs and goals. Visit The Foundation Center (*http://fdncenter.org*) on the Internet to learn about foundations in your area. For a small fee you can access an online searchable foundation directory to search more than 98,000 funders and more than 1.7 million recent grants.

Nonprofit organizations

Nonprofit organizations, professional societies, and associations might also be willing to provide financial support for your campaign. The Chronicle website (*www.philanthropy.com*) includes articles and grant announcements from nonprofits. You can search the Chronicle database to find out what funders have provided money for projects like yours in the past. The site also provides links to information on fundraising, volunteerism, technology, academic centers on philanthropy, and publications for nonprofit professionals.

Federal funding sources

Hundreds of federal agencies and organizations provide grants and other assistance to aid in watershed protection projects. The primary advantage of federal grants is that state and local governments and other eligible recipients do not have to use their own resources to pay the specific eligible costs that the grant monies cover. Some grants, specifically challenge grants, are designed to help you leverage resources or raise more money. For example, an agency might provide a grant on the condition that you match it, dollar for dollar, with donations from your members.

For a complete listing of federal funding sources, visit the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (*www.cfda.gov*). This website provides access to a database of all federal programs available to state and local governments; federally recognized Indian tribes; domestic public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals. You can use a variety of search mechanisms to find funding sources for your campaign. The site provides eligibility requirements, information on application and award processes, and proposal criteria for each funding source. The catalog can also be obtained in print by calling 1-866-512-1800.

EPA's online Federal Funding Database for Watershed Protection (*www.epa.gov/watershedfunding*) is also useful. The website gives users access to a database of approximately 100 programs offering

Getting help

Many organizations are willing to provide in-kind services such as:

- Accounting/bookkeeping
- Legal counsel
- Fundraising support
- Advertising/public relations advice and support
- Staff training
- Clerical support
- Facility maintenance
- Facility use
- Equipment use
- Transportation
- Volunteers.

financial assistance (grants, loans, cost-sharing) specially geared toward watershed-related projects.

Keep in mind that applying for grants can sometimes be costly and time-consuming. Grant writing requires trained staff to determine grant opportunities and submit detailed grant applications. The awarding organizations often take months to process applications and award grants. Even then, because of the intense competition for the limited pool of grant funds, state and local governments and other potential recipients might find it increasingly difficult to acquire funding for projects. And if awarded, be sure to understand the reporting requirements, which often include quarterly reporting, both financial and activity-based.

State funding sources

Most state environmental, wildlife, or parks agencies offer grant or loan programs (or both) to protect and enhance state environmental resources. For example, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Community Pollution Prevention Grant Program provides $500,000 in grants to local governments and planning agencies to establish innovative, sustainable pollution prevention practices. In addition, all states provide grants for the control and prevention of nonpoint source pollution through EPA's Clean Water Act Section 319 Grant Program (*www.epa.gov/owow/nps/funding.html*). These grants can fund local field days, demonstrations, tours, workshops, and other educational events and activities that promote the implementation of

Leveraging resources

Making the money you have go further is always a challenge, but it can be done. Here are a few examples of how to leverage resources:

- **Look to partners.** Identify in-kind services that partners or others can contribute, such as volunteer labor, free publicity, food or beverages donated for events, transportation, and technical or legal advice.
- **Buy some ad space and get some more for free.** For example, as mentioned in Part 1, Step 4, the City of San Diego leveraged the media spots it purchased for more than $250,000 to get local broadcasters to contribute 774 free airings of its PSAs.
- **Quid pro quo.** Offer benefits to those from whom you need help. For example, if you'd like the local newspaper to print educational newspaper inserts on your watershed festival for free, offer to list it as a sponsor on all festival materials, offer exclusive interviews on the festival for the paper, and offer the opportunity to have a vendor booth at the festival at no cost.
- **Let others do the work for you.** Train the people that are most likely to act on and spread your watershed message through train-the-trainer workshops. For example, teach local Master Gardeners how to adopt integrated pest management practices to minimize using harmful pesticides. In exchange for the training, ask trainees to conduct at least three workshops on their own to train their friends and neighbors. If you need help developing a watershed logo but can't afford to hire a design firm, ask the local high school art department to host a logo contest. Offer the winner recognition in the local paper along with a $500 college scholarship.

best management practices to protect water quality. Although individual Section 319 grants can be significant, a minimum 40% non-federal match is required (as either cash or in-kind services). State education agencies also offer grants that can be used for environmental education and outreach, especially classroom education. Keep in mind that most state grants require some percentage of local matching funds. Also, certain funds might not be available to all organizations.

Local and private funding sources

Banks and some corporations offer charitable donations that can help support your campaign. According to the Giving USA Foundation, corporate contributions were 5 percent (approximately $14.5 billion) of all giving in 2008. Amazingly, however, most of the charitable money donated to nonprofit organizations by the private sector comes from individuals (nearly $230 billion in 2008); only a small portion is given by foundations and corporations. In fact, the estates of those who have passed away contribute more money each year than all U.S. corporations combined.

Maintaining the momentum

Achieving a substantial change in behavior doesn't happen overnight. It might take months or even years before you're able to evaluate whether your outreach campaign encouraged behavior change. This lack of immediate results can sometimes discourage campaign organizers to the point that the campaign fizzles out. This discouragement can be worsened when campaign organizers move on to other jobs or out of the area. One way to keep the momentum going throughout the life of an outreach campaign is to set small, achievable goals throughout the process. These mini-milestones can be used to show success and keep your project energized. Keeping your partners actively engaged by periodically checking in with them during slow times can also help keep things moving along.

Overcoming barriers to success

All of us have experienced failure, and watershed campaigns are no different. It's how you learn from the failures that is the true measure of long-term success. Following are several barriers that can keep your campaign from being successful. Understanding what they are, how to recognize them, and how to overcome them will give your campaign the strength it needs to be sustainable. As your campaign progresses, look for areas of concern and respond accordingly. Adapting your program during implementation to adjust to changing conditions is highly recommended.

Poor coordination and planning

Many times failure of a campaign is the result of starting off on the wrong foot. Most often that means stepping forward with no clear strategy or plan on paper for how to conduct a watershed outreach campaign. Your efforts will be in vain if you don't sit down with all the key players in the beginning and define your goals, identify your

Tips to keep your project's wheels in motion

- Develop a slide show or create a one-page fact sheet to keep the process going.
- Use environmental indicators—tools to simply and quickly measure environmental improvements (such as Secchi disk measurements or miles of stream bank revegetated)—to communicate progress rather than complicated indicators like biochemical oxygen demand.
- Identify and commit the resources needed to achieve your objectives early in the process. Running out of money is probably the number one reason why watershed campaigns fail.
- Consider piggybacking your messages onto communication formats produced and distributed by partner organizations.
- Work with the news media to distribute your information. Regular communication with newsletter editors and media reporters about what you're doing, who's involved, and why you're doing it usually reaps benefits.
- Continue to recruit new campaign partners and leaders to avoid burnout and ensure a continual flow of new ideas and resources.
- Build networks with other organizations in the community that are working on water quality issues. Working in coalition with other groups results in new energy and new ideas.

target audience, determine your messages, decide on the formats and distribution mechanisms for those messages, and figure out how you intend to measure your success. And it's not enough to just talk about it. Write it down. Whether it's 3 pages or 30 pages, a well-defined written strategy will ensure that everyone involved agrees on how the project will be conducted and who is responsible for doing what.

The very nature of working at a watershed level requires that you coordinate with all the counties, cities, organizations, and stakeholders in the watershed when developing a watershed outreach campaign strategy. If you don't have all the correct stakeholders involved from the beginning, you can't be sure that your campaign will address all the local social, economic, political, and ecological conditions that must be considered in developing an effective plan. In addition, involving the right key players from the beginning builds trust and support for the project, distributes responsibility, creates more innovative solutions, and is more cost-effective. Including all the necessary stakeholders in watershed efforts is critical to achieving behavior change among those stakeholders. Remember: People don't resist change; they resist being changed. Everyone finds it easier to support ideas they've had a hand in developing. Consider how you can involve the people whose behavior you ultimately want to change.

Lack of communication

When the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing, your outreach campaign will fizzle out. Be sure to keep everyone involved in conducting the campaign informed about issues that arise during various campaign stages, changes to the original strategy, and lessons learned along the way. In addition, be sure to let people know when you achieve successes, whether small ("We got 50 hits on our new website within an hour of the launching!") or large ("Within three years after we started our 'Fertilize in the Fall. That's All!' campaign, the amount of nitrogen entering the lake had decreased by 30 percent").

Political wrangling and changing regulations

Politics plays a role in everything. If the chair of the county board of commissioners supports the goals of your watershed campaign but is replaced by a less-supportive commissioner, your campaign could screech to a halt. Successful watershed groups usually avoid political wrangling and contentious public debate by working quietly and individually with stakeholder groups to address disagreements in a satisfactory manner. For example, who pays for cleaner water is at the crux of many discussions, but nearly all studies on public willingness to pay for better water quality show overwhelming support for higher fees, taxes, and water/sewer bills if it means cleaner water. Identification of key public values, alliances with likely supporters, and aggressive outreach and education programs targeted at important stakeholder groups and the public can help generate support for watershed initiatives and ease resistance among those who will share the financial costs—usually, the public.

Working together

As mentioned throughout this guide, you can find tips on working with stakeholders, reaching consensus, and resolving conflict in the companion guide *Getting In Step: Engaging and Involving Stakeholders in Your Watershed*. It's available on the Internet through the "Getting In Step Series" link in EPA's Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox at *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*.

Regulatory changes also require close communication among stakeholder groups, the regulated community, and elected officials. Changes in local zoning ordinances, permit requirements, or other regulations might affect your campaign. Watershed groups can help regulators stay abreast of the changing regulatory scene by meeting periodically with agency staff, discussing upcoming issues, and offering support for educating key players in the regulatory field and among the regulated community. Stay on top of local politics—who talks to whom and who supports what.

Fear of the unknown

The fear of failing at the daunting task of watershed education and behavior change can cause delays in getting the job done. Likewise, “paralysis by analysis” has ossified many well-intentioned people who aren’t comfortable making a decision until the data overwhelmingly confirm the chosen actions. In the real world, we make lots of decisions (e.g., having a baby, buying a house) with far less data than optimally preferred. There will always be unknowns: People might resign from your staff to accept other jobs, a tanker spill could occur in your watershed, funding could dry up, and so on.

Collecting data and using them to plot a course are important. However, don’t be so distracted by your research or fear of the unknown that you fail to pursue your objectives aggressively. Heed the words of General Patton: A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow.

Letting money drive the process

Although your budget might be limited, developing a plan that fits your budget can be a nearsighted approach. Don't skimp on your goals, but try to match your group's resources to their role in attaining those goals. If you include the goals in the original plan, you’ll be prepared once resources are obtained down the road. Also, along the way you will want to pursue partnerships that provide funding for planned activities you thought you could not afford.

Funding for watershed projects is usually limited. Groups often find themselves chasing limited dollars. The funding “tail” might wag the project “dog” if you don’t take precautions. Successful projects identify the types of actions needed to protect or restore watershed health and then pursue funding or other support for those actions. When opportunities come along for low-priority activities, careful consideration is required to determine whether chasing this funding and executing the associated nonessential tasks will detract from previously identified priority actions. Passing on funding that would reorient your entire project or distract your group from key actions identified to protect or restore the watershed might be tough, but sometimes it’s necessary to maintain your focus, momentum, and progress toward your group’s established goals.

Letting the process bog you down

Means are as important as ends, but take care to avoid letting the process become the goal. Momentum is lost when too much time is spent on the process rather than the project. This phenomenon is summed up in the postmortem phrase “death by meeting.” People don’t mind attending meetings if they’re necessary, short, and results-oriented. However, meetings that occur only because “it’s the third Tuesday of the month” and drag on for hours without any clear sense of purpose are the death knell for stakeholder-based groups. Involve people, communicate, and take time to meet occasionally, but beware of situations where members of your organization are spending more time in meetings than on watershed work. Most action occurs outside meetings. That’s where people are needed, and that’s where they usually want to be. Keep up the momentum by making participation fun and exciting.

A final thought...

We hope this guide and the accompanying video have inspired you to go out and start your own watershed outreach campaign. Remember that there are no hard-and-fast rules. These tips are provided to help you get started, give you some new ideas, or provide more information to expand your program. The most important thing is to believe in your goal and work diligently to meet it.

We’d love to hear how you used this guide, what you liked or didn’t like, and the lessons you learned while conducting your outreach efforts. Please send us your comments through the feedback link at *www.epa.gov/nps/contacts.html*. Good luck!

Appendixes

Appendix A	Building Blocks Worksheets
Appendix B	Identifying and Removing Barriers to Behavior Change
Appendix C	Behavior Selection Matrix
Appendix D	Outreach Campaign Evaluation Questions
Appendix E	Want to Know More?

Appendix A: Building blocks worksheets

Sample Summary Sheet

Driving Force: Serious water quality problems, including phosphorus and nitrogen overloading due to urban runoff, sedimentation and erosion, bacterial contamination, and flooding due to impervious surfaces.

Goal: Increase awareness of residential nutrient runoff and encourage behaviors that will reduce nutrient pollution in local streams and lakes.

Objective	Target Audience	Message	Format	Distribution	Evaluation
Increase awareness of residential nutrient runoff by 25 percent within 1 year and encourage behaviors that will reduce nutrient pollution in local streams and lakes.	Homeowners and homeowner associations (HOAs) and apartment/ landscape managers	Fertilize in the Fall. That's All! With slow-release or organic fertilizers, you need to fertilize only once in the fall to help your grass grow new roots and store nutrients for next year's growth.	5 public transit posters Full-size educational posters Water bill inserts Workshop fo HOA representatives Workshop for apartment/ landscape managers Stormwater hotline	City bus system Light rail system Bulk mail Workshops Stormwater hotline	Pre- and post-project phone survey of watershed residents Number of attendees at workshops Number of calls to hotline during and after distribution of formats Pre- and post-project nitrogen and phosphorus levels in the local streams and lakes

Summary Sheet

Driving Force:

Goal:

Objective	Target Audience	Message	Format	Distribution	Evaluation

Evaluation

Steps	Process	Impact	Context
Goal and Objective			
Target Audience			
Message			
Format			
Distribution			

Operating Plan Matrix

Goal:

Objective:

Activity/Product	Evaluation Indicators	Time Frame/ Due Date	Responsible Party	Resources Needed		Status/Comments
				Staff Time	Dollars	

Objective:

Activity/Product	Evaluation Indicators	Time Frame/ Due Date	Responsible Party	Resources Needed		Status/Comments
				Staff Time	Dollars	

Appendix B:

Identifying and removing barriers to behavior change

Knowing why people do things and what might make them change a particular behavior will help you identify the most appropriate ways to convince the target audience to adopt the behavior you're recommending. Use this worksheet to help uncover the barriers to behavior change so that you can remove or minimize the barriers before you develop your message. Answer the questions in the **Barriers** column on the left; then circle the ways you intend to remove or minimize the barriers in the **Barrier Breakers** column on the right. (Be creative! Develop new Barrier Breakers for your situation and add them to the list.)

Physical or Economic Barriers

Is it expensive for the target audience to perform the behavior?

Why?

Barrier Breakers

- Subsidize the cost.
- Find a cheaper way for the audience to engage in the behavior.
- Use partners to offset the costs.
- Provide incentives to encourage the behavior.
- Piggyback onto an existing activity to lower the cost.
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________

If it's too expensive for homeowners to install permeable-pavement driveways, offer reduced tax assessments to help offset the cost and act as an incentive. Another idea would be to work with homeowner associations to sign up individual homeowners and pool them together for discounted bulk orders.

Because planting trees along streamside property is both time-consuming and expensive for homeowners, partner with a local nursery to provide discounts to anyone planting trees for this purpose. Promote the nursery in your effort, and provide tip sheets on how and when to plant the trees.

If shoppers exhibit an unwillingness to buy recycled products, encourage them frequently with positive messages about how important it is to "close the recycling loop." An annual, month-long "Get in the Loop" campaign in Washington State reminds shoppers to buy recycled products through in-store promotional materials and identifies specific recycled-product choices right on the store shelf.

When recruiting local Girl Scout troops to conduct a beach cleanup, hold a mini trash-pickup training session to show them things to avoid (such as used syringes and toiletries) and when to ask for adult help.

To combat the stigma associated with the real or perceived health risks of picking up pet waste, use humor when developing your message and formats.

Physical or Economic Barriers

Question	Barrier Breakers
Does it take more physical effort to perform the recommended behavior than the opposing behavior? ***Why?***	• Piggyback onto an existing activity to lower the effort required. • Provide physical or monetary assistance to promote the behavior. • Provide monetary rewards or recognition to encourage the behavior. • Highlight others in the target audience engaging in the behavior to show that it's not as difficult as perceived. • ________________ • ________________ • ________________ • ________________ • ________________
Does the recommended behavior present a risk to the health and safety of the target audience or their family members (e.g., area designated for stream cleanup in or near known gang hangout, poison ivy, or fears of disease-causing organisms)? ***Why?***	• Educate the audience on real and perceived risks. • Reduce risks by offering safety tips. • Provide statistics to show real risk levels. • Provide security. • Provide preventive health services (e.g., hepatitis shots). • ________________ • ________________ • ________________ • ________________ • ________________

Physical or Economic Barriers

Is it difficult to get the information or resources needed to adopt the behavior?

Why?

Barrier Breakers

- Educate the audience on how to adopt the behavior.
- Make it easy to get the resources or information needed by posting it online, providing alternative locations to obtain materials/information, and taking needed materials/information to the audience.
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________

Are there other physical or economic barriers?

(Please list.)

- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________

If you're promoting soil testing to home-owners to prevent overfertilization, provide free soil test kits, available at select locations or by sending an e-mail request to the county soil and water conservation district.

Make it socially acceptable to have a not-so-lush lawn by finding homeowners willing to use alternative vegetation or reduce their fertilizer use and asking them to post attractive, desirable signs on their lawn that say they have a water-friendly yard.

Work with local schools to develop household hazardous waste education campaigns. Have students take home "Nontoxic Home" pledge forms to ask parents to commit to reducing their reliance on toxic household products. After the parents have committed to this small pledge, ask them to make a larger commitment by coordinating a community Household Hazardous Waste Pickup Day at the school. Provide refridgerator magnets with recycling dos and don'ts and household hazardous waste information to serve as prompts for the whole family.

Social or Psychological Barriers

Is there social pressure to avoid the behavior?

Why?

Is the behavior contrary to community norms?

Why?

Is there fear of social disapproval or rejection for performing the behavior?

Why?

How do members of the target audience feel they might be perceived by their peers if they adopt the recommended behavior?

Why?

Is the behavior consistent with the target audience's self-image?

Why?

Other emotional or psychological barriers?

(Please list.)

Barrier Breakers

- Research current community norms and reasons for those norms through focus groups.
- Develop messages that make it seem socially desirable to perform the behavior.
- Provide frequent and strategically placed prompts to remind people of the behavior.
- Identify early adopters in the community, and partner with them to spread the word and convince others to adopt the new behavior. They can help develop and promote new social norms.
- Use community gatherings and events to show that social pressure is perceived and not real.
- Clearly communicate the percentage or number of people currently engaging in the recommended behavior.
- Try to gain small commitments from members of the target audience to engage in easier behaviors before asking them to adopt the harder behavior. Sociologists and marketers agree that getting people to say "yes" to something small makes it easier for them to say "yes" to something larger later on because people like to be viewed as consistent. (Remember: Written commitments are more effective than verbal commitments.)
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Knowledge Barriers

Barrier Breakers

Develop train-the-trainer sessions for volunteer stream monitors so that they can train others and expand the volunteer pool.

Does the target audience need to learn new skills to perform the behavior?

Why?

- Provide training on the new behavior.
- Recruit early adopters to demonstrate the new behavior in daily activities, at events, or during training sessions.
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Does the target audience know the benefits of the recommended behavior?

Why?

- Show the immediate consequences of both adopting and not adopting the behavior; convey consequences (positive and negative) in your message.
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Does the target audience know the impacts of the opposing behavior?

Why?

- Identify and communicate actual or estimated environmental, social, or economic impacts (e.g., statistics, before-and-after photos) of the opposing behavior and the recommended behavior.
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________
- ______________________________

Provide statistics on the number of dogs in the county that need to be picked up after, or the number of stream miles owned by private landowners that need to be buffered.

Physical or Economic Barriers

Does the target audience believe that individual actions are not significant enough to improve the environment?

Why?

Are there other knowledge barriers?

(Please list.)

Barrier Breakers

- Provide statistics on the collective impacts of individual actions.
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______

- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______
- ______

Appendix C: Behavior selection matrix

Before you complete the Behavior Selection Matrix, take a few minutes to review the following questions. Remember: There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in the matrix. The answers are mostly subjective and will depend on the circumstances surrounding your locality's issues and concerns.

Which behavior will result in the highest reduction in pollution?

Based on information you have regarding current water quality or environmental conditions in the project area, try to determine which of the behaviors you listed will result in the greatest reduction in pollution if a large majority of the target audience adopts the behavior.

Which behavior will be the most affordable to promote to my audience?

Consider both the short-term and long-term costs that your organization might incur while trying to promote the adoption of this behavior. Think about the costs of outreach materials and formats, how the materials will be distributed, and who will help you distribute them. Consider whether you'll be able to defray some of the costs by piggybacking onto existing efforts. For example, if you're promoting the use of alternative landscaping designs to conserve water resources in a particular community, is there an existing community newsletter you can use to distribute your message? If so, you'll be able to save yourself the expense of printing and distributing your own materials.

Which behavior will be the most affordable for my audience to adopt?

Estimate all the costs that an average member of the target audience will incur when adopting the recommended behavior. Think about expenses related to gas, wear-and-tear on vehicles, the cost of taking time off from work to get to the recycling facility before it closes, expenses associated with alternative or green products (which are usually more expensive than conventional products), and so forth.

Which behavior is the most attractive to the people in my community?

Think about which behavior most resembles current community norms and attitudes. Which one will make people seem like smart, savvy neighbors?

For which behavior will it be easiest to show a link to the problem?

Because most people don't fully understand the link between what they do at home and the quality of our environment, being able to show a clear cause-and-effect relationship between behaviors and their effects on the environment is very important. Agricultural demonstration projects have been a successful in helping people make connections between behavioral changes and environmental results. For example, by planting trees and other vegetation along stream banks, farmers can prevent rapid stream bank erosion. If farmers who have vegetated their stream banks invite their neighbors to come and see how their experiment has slowed erosion, the other farmers might be convinced to do the same on their land. Showing a link for other behaviors might require more complex strategies. For example, because it's difficult to see a septic tank leaking or to understand the impact lawn fertilizer can have on a waterbody, it could be more difficult for people to accept that their behavior might be negatively affecting the environment.

Which behavior is the most sustainable?

Which behavior will promote a solution that will have the greatest pollution reduction effect over the greatest amount of time? Does one behavior eliminate the problem, or does it simply reduce the impact that problem might have? Educating homeowners about the proper type and amount of fertilizer to apply on their lawns will reduce the amount of nutrient runoff into streams, but encouraging alternative landscaping in place of a lawn could eliminate the need for lawn fertilizer altogether.

Which behavior will provide additional water quality benefits?

Sometimes it's possible to kill two birds with one stone. If your community develops a septic system maintenance plan to reduce the amount of nutrients entering a waterbody from faulty systems, it's likely that bacteria levels will decrease as well. Multiple water quality benefits also could result from encouraging homeowners to landscape with native plants. Natural landscaping can reduce the amount of water homeowners need to use for watering their lawns, decrease the use of yard fertilizers that can result in runoff of excess nutrients to streams, and even reduce the amount of stormwater runoff that occurs during rain events. To determine additional water quality benefits a behavior might have, consider whether the behavior addresses a source of multiple pollutants or the possible effect reducing one pollutant might have on other pollutants common in the environment.

Which behavior will get the highest consumer response?

Consider the ways in which each behavior will affect the consumer. If homeowners are educated about the amount and type of fertilizer their lawns need, the homeowners are likely to purchase the correct type of fertilizer if it could reduce their cost or the amount of time needed to apply the fertilizer. Also, a product advertised as environmentally friendly is more likely to be purchased if it is reasonably priced. If such products are noticeably more expensive, however, the benefit of their being environmentally friendly might not affect the consumers' actions.

Which behavior has the fewest or easiest barriers to overcome?

There are many reasons why a person might not adopt a sustainable behavior. The behavior might be too costly to implement, the person could be unaware of the potential benefits of the behavior, or he or she could feel pressured by peers to behave in a certain way. To gain a better understanding of the potential barriers people face, fill out the worksheets provided in Appendix B.

Behavior Selection Matrix

Objective:

Behavior	**Evaluation Questions** *Score from 1 to 6 (1 being the least likely and 6 being the most likely). Note: Behaviors may receive the same score if applicable.* Which behavior will result in the highest reduction in pollution?	Which behavior will be the most affordable to promote to my audience?	Which behavior will be the most affordable for my audience to adopt?	Which behavior is the most attractive to the people in my community?	For which behavior will it be easiest to show a link to the problem?	Which behavior is the most sustainable?	Which behavior will provide additional water quality benefits?	Which behavior will get the highest consumer response?	Which behavior has the fewest barriers to overcome?	Total Score *(sum of columns 1–9)*

Instructions:
1. Score each behavior based on the evaluation questions (1 being the least likely and 6 being the most likely).
2. Total each behavior score by adding the scores for each question.
3. The behavior with the highest score is the recommended behavior.

Appendix D:

Outreach campaign evaluation questions

Process evaluation

Are the planned activities being implemented according to schedule?

Is additional support needed?

Are additional activities needed?

Do some activities need to be modified or eliminated?

Are the resources allocated sufficient to carry out the task?

Did the target audience receive the materials distributed?

What feedback has been received, and how does it affect the remaining outreach campaign objectives and activities?

How do the technical activities related to the campaign issues affect the campaign?

Impact evaluation

Were the campaign objectives achieved?

Did the campaign change the behavior of the target audience members?

Are there measurable improvements in water quality?

Context evaluation

Was the campaign right for the target audience?

Did it effectively address watershed issues for the target area?

Did the campaign compete with other social or economic issues?

Were the formats and messages appropriate?

Was the campaign controversial?

Appendix E: Want to know more?

This appendix provides additional sources of information on outreach programs, social marketing, outreach materials, watershed management planning, media relations, and other tools that might be useful to your program. This list is by no means exhaustive and is intended for information purposes only. EPA does not endorse any product, service or enterprise. Inclusion does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by EPA or the U.S. government,

Developing an outreach program

Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters

This EPA handbook is a comprehensive guide to developing and implementing watershed plans to meet water quality standards and protect water resources—from identifying problems and setting goals to selecting solutions and measuring progress. Chapter 3 provides details on building partnerships and developing an outreach program. Download the handbook at *www.epa.gov/nps/watershed_handbook*.

Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place

Produced by EPA, this guide provides a process and set of tools for defining and understanding the social and cultural aspects of community-based environmental protection. Contact the National Service Center for Environmental Publications at (800) 490-9198, *www.epa.gov/nscep*, or e-mail *nscep@bps-lmit.com* and ask for publication number EPA 842-B-01-003. The guide is also available online at *www.epa.gov/care/library/community_culture.pdf*.

Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection

The Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection is an easy-to-use, searchable website. The site, which is updated annually, provides information for watershed practitioners and others on nearly 100 federal funding sources that might be available to help fund various watershed-related projects including outreach programs. For more information, visit *www.epa.gov/watershedfunding*.

River Advocates Fundraising Guide

This free online fundraising guide includes case studies, examples, how-to information and resources for getting and maintaining the funding that makes watershed work possible. Available at *www.rivernetwork.org/rn/fundraisingguide*.

Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox

www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox

EPA's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Outreach Toolbox is geared for state and local agencies and other organizations interested in educating the public on NPS pollution or stormwater runoff. The Toolbox contains a variety of resources to help develop an effective and targeted outreach campaign, including this downloadable guide.

The core of the Toolbox is its searchable database of more than 700 viewable and/or audible TV, radio, and print ads and other outreach products. On the "Featured Products" page you can find some of Toolbox's best products across six key topics: general stormwater and storm drain awareness; lawn and garden care; pet care; septic system care; motor vehicle care; and household chemicals and waste. You can search by media type (e.g., TV, radio, or print ad), by topic or by keyword or phrase. Permissions for using the cataloged products are disclosed (and in most cases, granted) by the product owners, and contact information, campaign websites, and other pertinent details are provided.

The Toolbox also includes surveys of public attitudes and perceptions regarding NPS problems and solutions, and evaluations of the effectiveness of some local NPS media campaigns.

Getting in Step: Engaging Stakeholders in Your Watershed

This guide provides the tools needed to effectively engage stakeholders to restore and maintain healthy watersheds through community support and cooperative action. Available online at *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox* (select "Getting in Step Outreach Series").

Getting The Word Out in the Fight to Save the Earth

This book includes hundreds of practical and proven examples of how to effectively communicate your environmental message. It explains how any nonprofit group can expand and activate its membership, influence government officials, mobilize the news media, and shape public policy in the fight to save communities, regional ecosystems, and the earth. Available through the Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD 21218; *www.press.jhu.edu*.

How to Save a River: A Handbook for Citizen Action

This handbook presents the wisdom gained from years of river protection campaigns across the United States. It covers the general principles of action, including getting organized, planning a campaign, building public support, and putting a plan into action. Contact River Network at (800) 423-6747 or *www.rivernetwork.org/marketplace*.

Know Your Watershed: Watershed Guides

Want to start a watershed management partnership for your local watershed? This website has eight guides (including *Getting to Know Your Watershed, Building Local Partnerships, Putting Together a Watershed Management Plan, Managing Conflict,* and *Leading and Communicating*). In other words, it includes everything you need to get started. To obtain a copy these guides, contact Conservation Technology Information Center, 1220 Potter Drive, Room 170, West Lafayette, IN 47906-1383. Phone: (765) 494-9555; Fax: (765) 494-5969, Internet: *www.ctic.purdue.edu*. (Click on "Know Your Watershed.")

Making Waves: How to Put On a Water Festival

This publication is a great help in providing direction and ideas for organizing your own festival. Use Making Waves to plan an event in your school, county, or state. The water festival concept has been an enormously successful way to educate children and adults about water and water-related resources. This new version includes updated samples of fundraising letters, forms, news releases, and more. Also check out *Making More Waves: Ideas from Across the U.S. and Canada for Organizing Your Festival and Making a Bigger Splash: A Collection of Water Education and Festival Activities*. All are available through the Groundwater Foundation at (800) 858-4844 or *www.groundwater.org/shop*. (Cost: Less than $20 each.)

National Extension Water Outreach Education

The “Water Outreach Education—Facilitating Access to Resources and Best Practices (BEP)” project is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and other public and private clean and safe water partners. Its purpose is to identify best education practices (BEPs), promote the use of BEPs for water-management education, and improve access to education resources and strategies. The project is conducted by staff of the University of Wisconsin, Environmental Resources Center, under the guidance of a project advisory team of natural resource management, outreach, and education professionals from across the country. For more information and access to many resources, visit *http://wateroutreach.uwex.edu*.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation—Public Involvement Handbook

Community participation, enhancing the public’s trust, managing conflict that might arise, and developing and carrying out a public involvement program are some of the subjects in this handbook. Also included is a section of ideas and techniques that can be applied to a variety of situations. Updated in 2008, the handbook is available through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. For more information, visit *www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/pdDesign.nsf/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20295.pdf*.

River Talk! Communicating a Watershed Message

River Talk! is a hands-on guide for people who want to be more efficient and effective in encouraging key sectors of their communities to become involved in designing river messages that resonate with target audiences. Contact River Network at (800) 423-6747 or *www.rivernetwork.org/marketplace*. (Cost: $15)

Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations

This guide provides information for groups on how to get organized, including funding and procedural advice. Contact River Network at (800) 423-6747 or *www.rivernetwork.org/marketplace*. (Cost: $40)

Watershed Restoration: A Guide for Citizen Involvement in California

Some of the best science and technical tools available to citizens involved in coastal watershed management are available in this guide. Although it was developed for California, this well-constructed guide might spark ideas for use in other watersheds. Published in December 1995, it can be obtained by contacting the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Coastal Oceans Office, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Phone: (301) 713-3338; Fax: (301) 713-4044; or *www.cop.noaa.gov/pubs/das/das8.pdf*.

Watershed Toolshed

The Ohio Watershed Network, a statewide information and education network in support of local watershed protection efforts, maintains an online Watershed Toolshed that includes the module "Planning a Watershed Education Program." The module provides guidance to anyone interested in developing a watershed education program targeting specific audiences to help them make informed decisions to protect water quality. The Network also provides a listing of watershed groups in Ohio, the Ohio Watershed Academy, and other resources and references. Available online at *http://ohiowatersheds.osu.edu/toolshed*.

Existing outreach programs

Maine Department of Environmental Protection's "Nonpoint Source Awareness Campaign"

Maine's "Nonpoint Source Awareness Campaign" started in 1995 as a collaborative effort between the Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the State Planning Office to raise awareness about nonpoint source pollution prevention. Together these agencies produced the "8 Simple Steps" campaign and a series of radio and print messages. In 2000 the agencies began to develop more tailored materials and campaigns for their specific program needs. For more information, contact Kathy M. Hoppe, Maine DEP, 1235 Central Drive, Presque Isle, ME 04769. Phone: (207) 764-0477; e-mail: *kathy.m.hoppe@state.me.us*; or *www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/doceducation/nps/outreach.htm*.

Project NEMO

NEMO uses geographic information system (GIS) technology, targeted presentations, training, publications and cutting-edge resources to educate landowners and municipal officials about nonpoint source pollution and watershed protection. Contact Chester Arnold, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension, Haddam, Connecticut. Phone: (860) 345-4511; Internet: *http://nemo.uconn.edu*.

"Think Blue" San Diego

The City of San Diego believes the key to cleaner ocean waters is public education. That's why it created the "Think Blue" educational campaign. "Think Blue" educates residents, businesses, and industries about the causes of stormwater pollution and the pollution prevention behaviors everyone can adopt. For more information, visit *www.sandiego.gov/thinkblue*.

Americorps Watershed Stewards Project

This community-based watershed restoration program is committed to conserving, restoring and enhancing anadromous watersheds for future generations by linking education with scientific practices. Members join with top resource professionals, forming cooperative relationships between private industry, government agencies, and academic institutions, to build public awareness of the importance of watershed stewardship. For more information, check out the project website at *www.watershedstewards.com* or call 707-725-8601.

Social mapping resources

Following are two resources that can help you develop social maps to characterize and understand the community or target audience that is the focus of your watershed outreach campaign:

Decision Explorer: Getting Started with Cognitive Mapping
by Fran Ackermann, Colin Eden, and Steve Cropper.*www.banxia.com/dexplore/how-to-make-cognitive-maps.html*

Mental Maps
by Peter Gould and Rodney White

Social marketing publications, websites, and organizations

The Academy for Educational Development
AED is a nonprofit organization working globally to improve education, health, civil society, and economic development. In collaboration with local and national partners, AED fosters sustainable results through practical, comprehensive approaches to social and economic challenges. AED implements more than 250 programs serving people in all 50 U.S. states and more than 150 countries. *www.aed.org/Approaches/SocialMarketing*.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have a number of selected health marketing case studies and other resources that use social marketing principles at *www.cdc.gov/healthmarketing*.

Developing a Communications Plan: A Roadmap to Success
This guide provides a roadmap for developing a communications plan. Readers can learn valuable processes, such as prioritization exercises and feasibility screens, as well as how to manage the challenges of building an effective consumer education plan from the ground up. Available from the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC), 1100 North Main Street, Suite 210, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Phone: (313) 769-5123; Fax: (313) 998-0163; or *www.hrwc.org*.

Diffusion of Innovations (5th edition–2003)
Written by Everett M. Rogers and published by Free Press (New York), this book is available at *www.simonandschuster.com*.

Fostering Sustainable Behavior
Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith developed this 175-page book on environmental marketing in 1999. It is a compilation of the strategies and methods that collectively form the basis of community-based social marketing—a proven breakthrough in the field of environmental education and outreach. It was written for those involved in designing, implementing, and evaluating public education programs with the goal of promoting sustainable behavior. For more information, visit *www.cbsm.com*.

Getting Your Feet Wet with Social Marketing: A Social Marketing Guide For Watershed Programs

This resource, written by Jack Wilbur of the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, walks the reader through the social marketing process using water examples from Utah and throughout the country. It also provides case studies of successful water-related social marketing efforts. The appendixes include worksheets, checklists, and lists of additional resources and samples of audience research documents. It can be downloaded for free at *http://ag.utah.gov/divisions/conservation/documents/GettingYourFeetWet.pdf*.

Hands-on Social Marketing: A Step-by-Step Guide

Written by Nedra Kline Wienrich, this guide explains the concepts behind social marketing theory and provides handy case studies and other resources. Available through major booksellers or visit *www.social-marketing.com*.

Health Canada

Social marketing is an integrated part of health promotion strategies at Health Canada. It is used to deliver health promotion messages to specific Canadian populations and is designed to help people make decisions related to maintaining and improving their health and well-being and that of their families and communities. The website provides several campaign case studies that offer good examples of the kinds of things watershed outreach specialists can do in the environmental field. *www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/activit/marketsoc/index_e.html*.

The Institute for Social Marketing

The Institute was established in 2004 at the University of Stirling, Scotland, under a joint venture with the Open University. The Institute conducts research in three key areas: the development and evaluation of behavior change interventions based on social marketing principles, the impact of public policy on health and social welfare, and the impact of commercial marketing on the health and behavior of individuals and of society. To help you check out whether what you're doing is social marketing, there is a quick questionnaire on the website at *www.ism.stir.ac.uk*.

The National Social Marketing Centre

The National Social Marketing Centre is based in London. Its role is to develop capacity and skills in social marketing, and to help embed social marketing into health improvement policy and programs. The website provides a range of resources and tools to support social marketing activities. These include a number of simple guides and practical tools to help people integrate social marketing into existing work practices. The site also has numerous case studies, including some on sustainability and water conservation. Visit *www.nsmcentre.org.uk*.

Social Marketing: Influencing Behaviors for Good

Written by two leading social marketing experts, Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee, this 2008 book provides case studies that include world leaders in social marketing, sharing the background, strategies and results of some of the most well-known social marketing campaigns in the world. Available through major booksellers.

Social Marketing Downunder

Social Marketing Downunder is a website geared for social markets in New Zealand, Australia, and the South Pacific, which includes several case studies. The site is provided by the Health Sponsorship Council which focuses on reducing the social, financial, and health sector costs of various behaviors. *www.socialmarketing.co.nz/casestudies.html*.

The Social Marketing Institute

Based in Washington, D.C., at Georgetown University, the Social Marketing Institute hopes to learn, develop, and facilitate the application of the very best social marketing practices in a wide range of settings all over the world. To join the Social Marketing Institute's e-mail discussion list, subscribe to listproc@listproc.georgetown.edu through e-mail and type subscribe soc-mktg <your name> in the message body (e.g., subscribe soc-mktg John Smith). *www.social-marketing.org*.

Social Marketing Wiki

The Social Marketing wiki has a number of excellent cases in a variety of topic areas: *http://socialmarketing.wetpaint.com/page/Case+Studies*.

Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations

This book, written by Philip Kotler and Alan R. Andreason, forms a conceptual and practical foundation for marketing in nonprofit organizations. Now in its seventh edition (2008), its coverage encompasses the entire marketing process, providing valuable insights on strategic evaluations, positioning, market targeting, and more. Available through major booksellers.

Tools of Change Website

The Tools of Change website, supported by several Canadian agencies and others, offers a broad selection of resources and case studies of community programs across North America. *www.toolsofchange.com*

Social Marketing Online Course

This CDC website offers an online training course titled "Social Marketing for Nutrition and Physical Activity." Although geared to those in the health industry, the online course provides a very good overview of social marketing, and many of the examples and tactics discussed can be tailored for environmental messages. *www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/socialmarketing/training*.

University of Kansas's Community Toolbox

The purpose of the Community Tool Box (CTB) is to make it easier for people to bring about change and improvement in their communities. The CTB connects people with resources for learning the many skills required for this work and applying this knowledge in diverse cultures and contexts. Chapters 45 and 46 provide information on social marketing. Other chapters cover subjects like conducting research, evaluation methods, and financial planning for change initiatives. *http://ctb.ku.edu*.

Electronic Discussion Lists

NPSINFO

NPSINFO is a forum for open discussion of nonpoint source pollution issues. It is sponsored by EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds. Possible topics for discussion include agricultural nonpoint sources, urban runoff, technology, educational and funding alternatives, coastal nonpoint sources, forest management, best management practices, hydrological modification, and aquatic habitat modification. NPSINFO welcomes news articles, short abstracts, announcements, and conference notices, as well as questions, answers, and opinions. For more information, visit *www.epa.gov/nps/npsinfo*. To subscribe, send an e-mail to *join-lyris@lists.epa.gov*. In the body of the message, type: subscribe NPSINFO [your first name] [your last name].

Volmonitor

This discussion list is a national forum for volunteer monitors. EPA established the list to encourage communication and information exchange among the nation's growing number of volunteer environmental monitoring programs. You'll receive news on coming conferences, workshops, special events, and new publications. This site is also a discussion forum and networking tool that volunteer monitors of all types use to ask and respond to questions about volunteer monitoring methods, data quality, data management issues, and more. Whether your group monitors wetlands, streams, or lakes, sign up and get into the loop. To subscribe, send an e-mail to *volmonitor-subscribe@lists.epa.gov*. Leave the subject line and message body blank.

Outreach materials

Nonpoint Source Outreach Toolbox

EPA's Nonpoint Source (NPS) Outreach Toolbox is a searchable database that houses TV, radio, and print ads and other outreach products focused on NPS pollution or stormwater runoff. Permission information for using the cataloged products is provided for each product. Find ready-made materials you can use in your watershed outreach campaign at *www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox*.

EPA Stormwater Outreach Materials

EPA has developed a set of materials that state or local governments can customize and use in their own stormwater outreach campaigns. The electronic files on this website contain space for officials to add their own contact information and inexpensively reproduce door hangers, posters, brochures, bookmarks, and placemats. The site includes materials suited for the general public, homeowners, construction site operators, and children. View or download the materials at *http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwatermonth.cfm*.

California Storm Water Toolbox

The California Water Boards provide a multilingual set of educational and outreach tools developed as part of their "Erase the Waste" campaign. The Erase the Waste campaign is a public education program, working to reduce harmful storm water pollution and improve the environment of the region's coastal and inland communities. All elements of the California Storm Water Toolbox are free and downloadable (including ads, posters, radio PSAs and collateral materials) at *www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/outreach/erase_waste*.

South Carolina Polluted Runoff Outreach Toolbox

This website provides links to outreach materials on a variety of NPS and stormwater topics, tips on developing an outreach program, and other useful resource links. Available at *www.scdhec.gov/environment/water/npstoolbox*.

Clean Water in Your Watershed: A Citizens Guide to Watershed Protection

Using Enviroscape watershed education models, children and adults learn by applying chemicals (drink mix) and loose soil (cocoa) throughout a typical community and then making it "rain" to immediately see the water pollution these activities could cause. Contact Enviroscape, c/o JT&A, Inc., 14524-F Lee Road, Chantilly, VA 20151. Phone: (703) 631-8810; *www.enviroscapes.com* (click on "Order Now"); or e-mail: *learn@enviroscapes.com*.

Nonpoint Source News-Notes

EPA's Nonpoint Source News-Notes is an occasional bulletin dealing with the condition of the water-related environment. To download the newsletter and search back issues, visit the website at *www.epa.gov/newsnotes*.

Surf Your Watershed

Through this online service, you can locate your watershed and discover its condition and the partnerships working to protect it. Find information on population, area, land use, environmental issues, watershed groups, and water quality. You can also generate maps of your watershed at *www.epa.gov/surf*.

Volunteer Monitor

The Volunteer Monitor newsletter facilitates the exchange of ideas, monitoring methods, and practical advice among volunteer environmental monitoring groups across the United States. It's available at *www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer/vm_index.html*.

Water Environment Federation

This website provides a collection of Water Environment Federation resources and outside links related to watersheds. Included are publications, background information, coming events, and networking areas. *www.wef.org*

Watershed Academy Web

Through the Watershed Academy Web, EPA offers a variety of self-paced training modules that represent a basic and broad introduction to the watershed management field. Modules take ½ hour to 2 hours to complete. Courses include "Top Ten Watershed Lessons Learned," "Introduction to the Clean Water Act," "Wetland Functions and Values," and more. For more information, visit *www.epa.gov/watertrain*.

Water Words That Work™

Water Words That Work is a water blog that explores how the conservation community can be more successful whenever setting out to change everyday citizens' minds and behavior. Water Words That Work re-orients nature protection and pollution control experts to the vocabulary and perspective of everyday citizens, and can help you translate your shoptalk into environmental writing that is clear and compelling. *www.waterwordsthatwork.com*

Working with the media

Communications Tips for Positive Media Relations

The following website, hosted by the Mississippi Department of Education's Office of Information and Safety, provides a list of helpful suggestions for organizations working with the media for outreach purposes: *www.mde.k12.ms.us/extrel/network/nettip.htm*.

Media Facts: A Guide to Competitive Media

Published by the Radio Advertising Bureau, this guide will help you understand and evaluate the strengths of various media formats. To download a copy, visit *www.rab.com/public/MediaFacts/mediafacts.cfm*, or call (800) 232-3131.

Press Release Writing

The Press Release Writing website provides several articles and tips for organizations beginning to write press releases. Visit *www.press-release-writing.com* or call (800) 990-5545 for more information.

Public Service Advertising Research Center

The Public Service Advertising Research Center is an online information library dedicated to public service advertising. The site provides a PSA bibliography, media profiles, an interactive broadcasters' café, case studies, and help sites. Visit *www.psaresearch.com* for more information.

The Radio Marketing Guide

Use this guide from the Radio Advertising Bureau to determine how radio can help you attain your outreach goals and market your cause more effectively. To download a copy, visit *www.rab.com* (click on "For Advertisers") or call (800) 232-3131.

Survey and focus group design

Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services

This Northern Virginia county offers a brochure on survey questionnaire design. *www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/pdf/questionnaire design.pdf*

The Focus Group Guidebook

Written by David L. Morgan, Portland State University, and Richard A. Krueger and Jean A. King, University of Minnesota, this series has six volumes (in a Focus Group Kit) that cover all aspects of planning, conducting, and analyzing results of focus groups. It was published in 1998 by Sage Publications and is available from *rder@sagepub.com*.

Statpac Survey Software

Statpac provides information on what makes a quality survey question. *www.statpac.com/surveys/question-qualities.htm*

University of Baltimore

The university offers an informational website on questionnaire design and survey samples. *http://home.ubalt.edu/ntsbarsh/stat-data/Surveys.htm#rss*

Notes:

Notes:

United States
Environmental Protection
Agency

Getting In Step

A Guide for Conducting
Watershed Outreach Campaigns
3rd edition

November 2010
EPA 841-B-10-002

This publication is printed on recycled paper with soy-based inks.