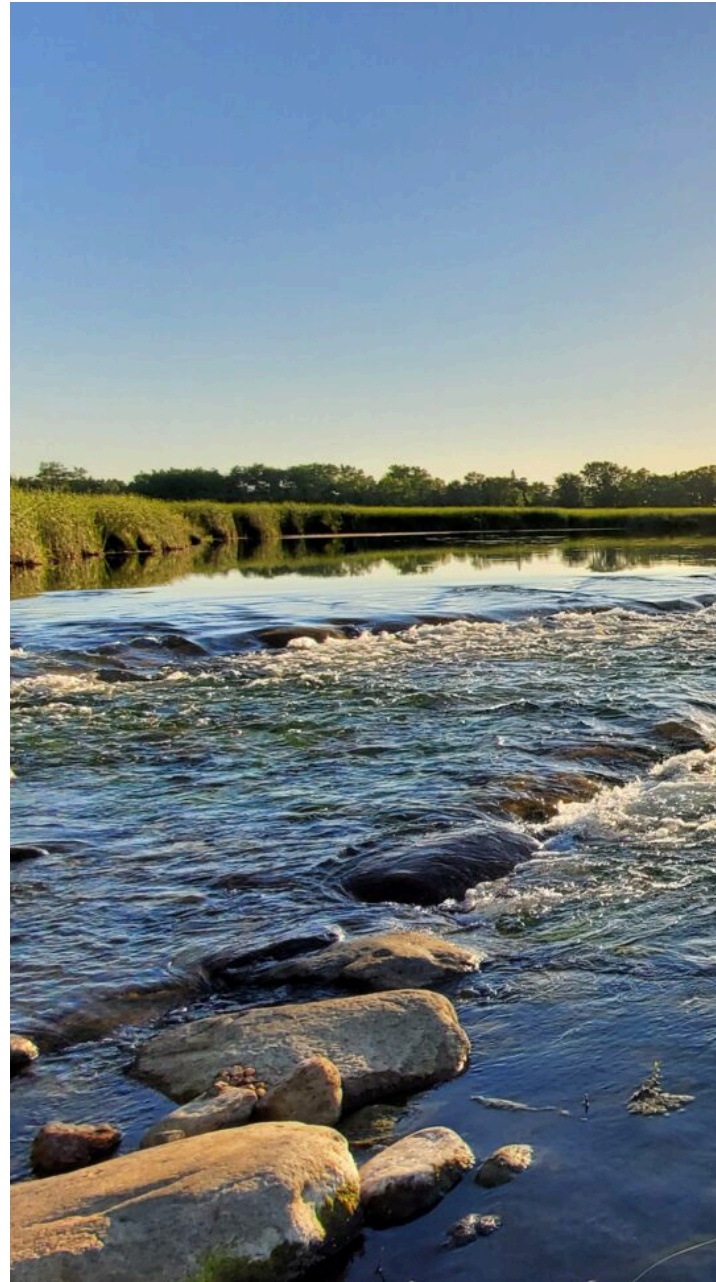


2024-2029



OUTREACH PLAN





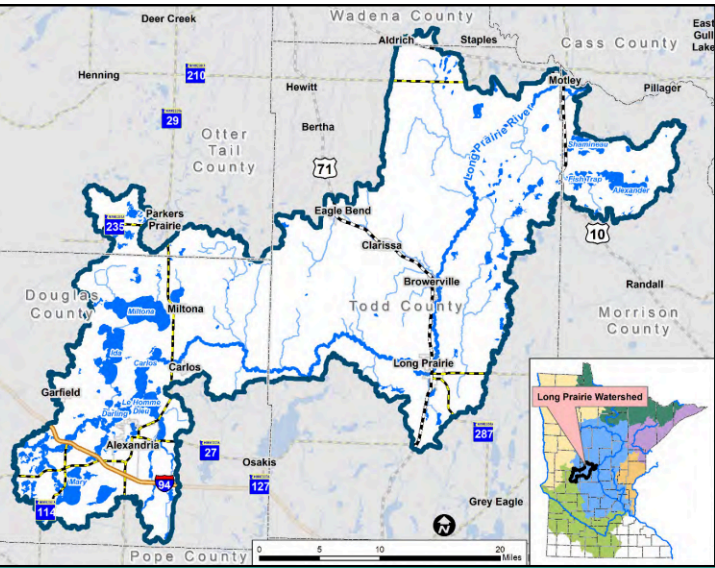
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The Images of maps used throughout this plan have been sourced from the Long Prairie River, Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. All other information taken from the plan has been cited within the text it corresponds to and is referenced as a resource in the Appendix & Resources of this document.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Long Prairie River Watershed plan area

AT THE FOUNDATION OF THE WATERSHED

OUR VISION IS TO UNITE THE PEOPLE OF THE LONG PRAIRIE WATERSHED IN BALANCING AGRICULTURE, RECREATION, TOURISM, AND TIMBER WITH THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE FUTURE.

The Purpose

A key insight of conservation outreach and education is that there isn't a "general public." Communicators of the Watershed can maximize our impact by segmenting audiences into homogenous subgroups and tailor outreach campaigns to such groups to encourage pro-conservation behavior change.

Consider an outreach program like a treasure hunt. Without a clear direction there will be a lot of aimless wandering around. The goals of the Watershed are like the X on the map and each resource concern should have its own map. Crucial markers guiding the Watershed to these goals can include building relationships, establishing new partnerships, and improving stakeholder engagement.

Ultimately, increased education and awareness of watershed issues, a greater sense of community-based support, and expanded technical resources will translate to more active resource stewardship.

In order to create our maps, resource concerns that demand priority need their areas of impact and targeted demographics identified, analyzed, and understood. By researching our audience, understanding their needs, and tailoring our messages and techniques to resonate with them, we will establish meaningful connections, and ultimately create a conscientious culture of environmental stewardship that will benefit the Watershed's environment, economy, and future generations.

IMPROVING
STAKEHOLDER
AWARENESS



LEADS TO
PUBLIC
ACTIVATION



LEADS TO
BEHAVIOR
CHANGE



Identified Objectives

The Watershed has identified several key objectives that must be achieved to meet our outreach goals.



Priority Resource Concerns

The identified priority resource concerns have been chosen based on their current and projected severity and impact throughout the Watershed.

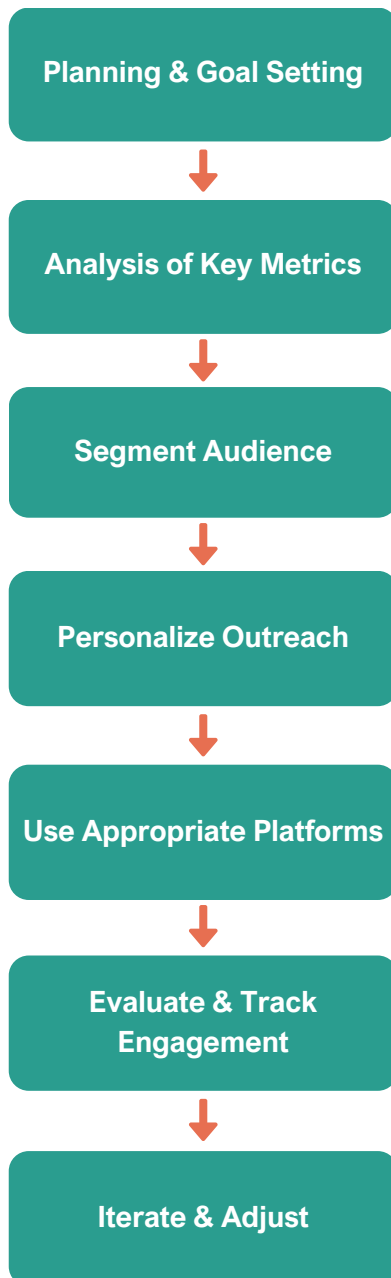
Priority Resource Concern	Primary Concerns Related to the Resource
DRINKING WATER/WELL WATER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Noncompliant septic systems.• Excessive nutrient application in coarse textured cropland soils.• Unused wells with direct conduit to groundwater.
FRAGMENTATION OF HABITAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of critical habitat corridors.• Conversion of land use to accelerate erosion (permanent habitat to urban development, permanent habitat to cropland).• Invasive species.
SEDIMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nutrients transported to surface water through erosion (gully, sheet and rill erosion).• Loss of critical topsoil.• Lack of residue - current tillage techniques.
STORMWATER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impervious surfaces.• Salt and chloride contamination.• Extreme weather events.
NUTRIENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Over application of improper manure management.• Limited/no long-term manure storage.• Stockpiling manure on inadequate soils.



Action Items

Outreach programs are intentional efforts to connect with individuals or organizations through education, information, engagement, data collection, and monitoring. Intention is everything. This should be considered during each phase of outreach development. The following items are steps the Watershed will take to meet their objectives and realize outreach success.

Phases of Outreach Development



Measurable Actions of Outreach Plan

- **Key metrics (primary resource concerns, areas of impact, and targeted demographics) are analyzed and outreach campaigns must be measured for their effectiveness in order to adjust ways of engagement as new understandings emerge.**
- **Priority programs that are urgent and important will be reconciled to meet the goals and needs of the Long Prairie River Watershed.**
- **The Watershed seeks to hire dedicated staff to fulfill the positions of Marketing and Outreach Coordinator and Conservation Planner.**
- **Outreach strategies will be divided into three distinct categories that are symbiotic - each one will help in the success of the others.**
- **A “Slow-Release” approach to outreach will significantly focus new efforts on an individual resource concern each year so not to inundate staff and maximize the Watershed’s impact.**
- **A yearly and monthly outreach calendar and social media calendar will be designed to correspond with the Slow-Release Approach and can be shared with Watershed communicators.**
- **Quarterly progress reports on outreach efforts will be established and tools will be put into place to track engagement.**

THE APPROACH

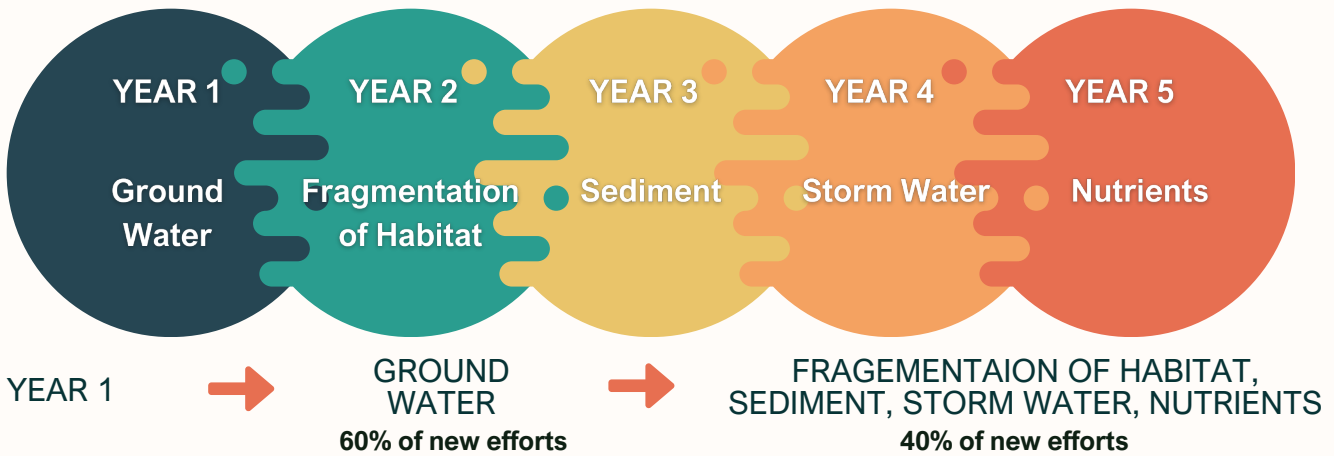
The “Slow-Release” Approach

The Watershed will significantly focus its NEW outreach efforts on an individual resource concern (60%/40%) each year so not to inundate staff and maximize the Watershed’s impact. The goal of this concept is to breakdown the immense agenda of each priority resource concern within the Long Prairie River Watershed into bite-size, realistic and actionable means of implementation.



Outreach strategies in targeted areas will be narrowed down to saturate the targeted demographics and measurable goals for the designated resource concern will be determined at the beginning of each year. The resource concern of focus for each year is determined by priority and the Watershed’s assessment of capabilities.

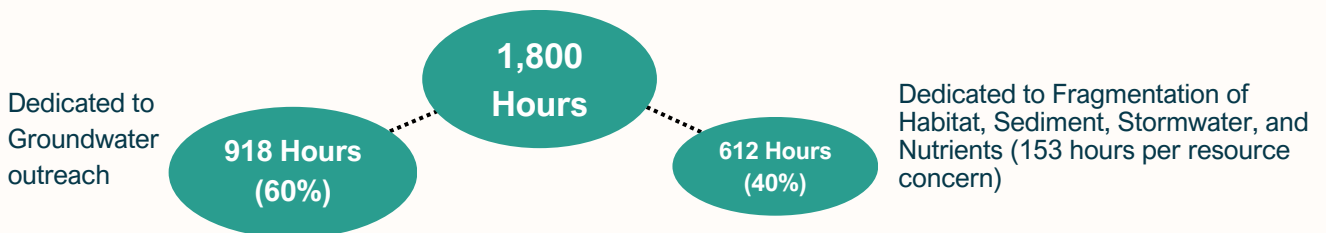
Year 1-5 of the “Slow Release “ Approach



***Year 6-10 will follow the same pattern as year 1-5.**

How to Plan Staff Members Hours Based on the Slow-Release Approach

For example, year 1 is dedicated to Ground Water. For tracking purposes and this example, an outreach staff member will work an average of 1,800 hours each year.



ANALYSIS OF KEY METRICS

Planning and Goal Setting for our Outreach

To drive our goals, resource concerns that demand priority need their areas of impact and targeted demographics identified, analyzed, and understood. This is how each map is created.

Once all variables have been examined, clear pathways will reveal themselves. This allows tailored outreach to our specific audiences to be delivered with confidence and fluidity. Going forward, the role of the Marketing and Outreach Coordinator will lead this research with the help of GIS analysis and support from Watershed and partnership staff.

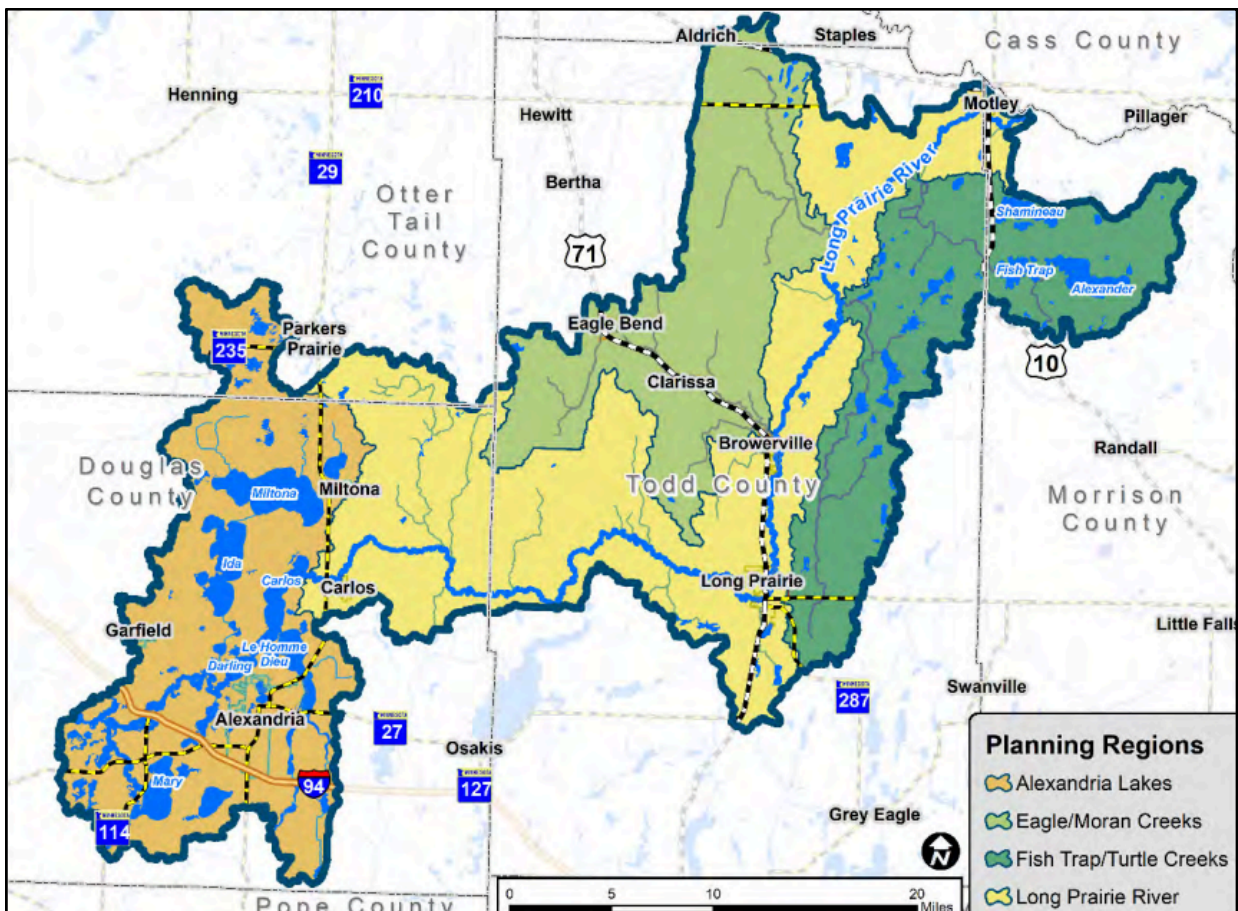
PRIORITY RESOURCE CONCERNS



AREA OF IMPACT

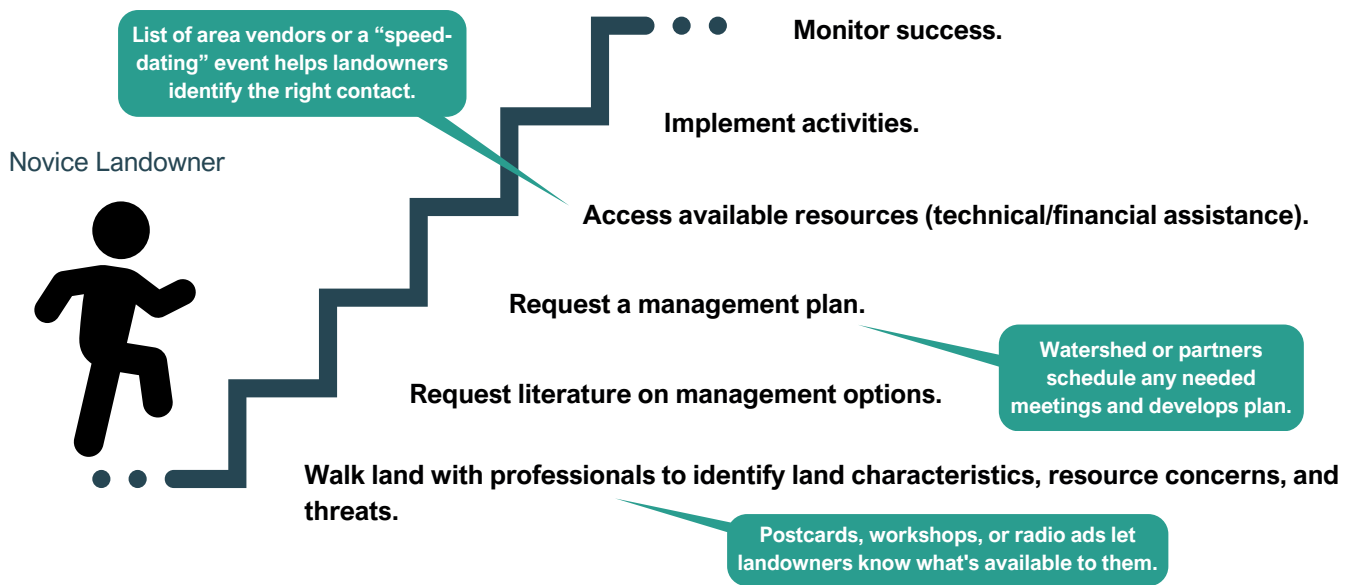


TARGETED DEMOGRAPHICS



Planning Regions for Long Prairie River Watershed

The Landowner Steps of Engagement



The landowner steps of engagement seen above is a pictorial depiction of the steps and actions we want landowners to take to accomplish our conservation and management goals. The sample ladder shows the steps a landowner might take to become a “model landowner.” It is unreasonable to expect landowners to jump from knowing nothing about conservation (novice) to being a model owner who implements, manages and adjusts as needed.

The purpose of outlining the steps of engagement is to help think through different engagement pathways and to be able to articulate a clear ask of landowners at different steps of the process.

Not all landowners will take the exact same path. For example, if most landowners in an identified priority area are already familiar with their own forest resources, then communicators of the Watershed might start engaging with them by offering a workshop on forest management options.

However, if most landowners are further down the steps, they may need to start with a simple woods walk to help them understand their woods better. Conversely, if many landowners have a active land management plan, it may be more efficient to invest outreach resources in motivating them to implement planned activities.

Outlining steps of engagement for landowners help the Watershed set milestones and metrics to track landowner interest and engagement at different steps of the ladder. It will also help ensure communicators are providing needed support and resources at each step along the way.

Breaking down the desired landowner behavior into specific actions reveals the complexity of what we are asking landowners to do and reminds us to offer needed information, services, or referrals to help translate landowners’ good intentions into meaningful actions.

Hgm. (2022, January 30).



Tips for Developing A Landowner Steps of Engagement Plan

- Break down the actions into smaller specific steps. For example: “Sign up for cost-share” involves checking eligibility, filling out the form, having the form signed by the required professionals, waiting for the application to return, doing the work, asking for reimbursement, etc.
- For each step, focus on what the landowner should do. Make the steps concrete - use action words. For example: Instead of “care about water quality,” say, “attend a workshop to learn about how the health of the watershed impacts them.”
- Identify steps that can be eliminated. For example: Do they need to understand your project or funding? (The answer is almost always “no.”) Can you assess their property instead of having them do it? Must they travel to two offices to get the necessary signatures?
- Determine what assistance you’ll need to provide landowners at each step and who will provide it.

Choosing SMART Objectives

Simple, clear, and specific calls to action are much more likely to result in action than broad, confusing, or multi-step requests. The landowner steps of engagement can be used to select one landowner action to be the focus of an outreach campaign.

Choosing this action involves identifying a clear, simple answer to the question: What should the landowner do in response to my outreach?

The characteristics of a good call to action are nicely captured in the acronym “SMART.”

SPECIFIC

The communication objective is expressed as a concrete and clear landowner action. One way to know whether you have a specific objective is to ensure that the action would be interpreted in the same way by any observer.

MEASURABLE

Good communication objectives can be logically tied to relevant indicators and measurable goals. This allows the Watershed to track progress, and know what’s working well and when to recalibrate efforts.

ATTAINABLE

Good objectives are ambitious but realistic. Consider: Can landowners reasonably be expected to take this action? Do they have access to information, vendors, money, or other resources needed to do what is asked of them?

RELEVANT

It’s important to consider: Is this communication objective worth accomplishing? Does it get me at least part of the way toward the outcomes I want to see on the ground? And do I have a plan for taking landowners the rest of the way, so I can actually see outcomes on the ground? For example, what would you like landowners to do after they leave an event they attended about forestry management? These considerations affirm there is a clear next step and can be built into the agenda of an outreach campaign.

TIME BOUND

Realistic milestones and when the Watershed hope to achieve them are set for programs and campaigns. At the end of that period, a progress report can help determine whether to continue the current outreach or perhaps change focus to sustaining relationships and moving people up the landowner steps of engagement.



Managing Partnerships

Managing partnerships with Watershed communicators takes time and effort and adds a layer of complexity to the project. The Watershed intends to continue nurturing their partnerships by setting goals and expectations at the start of an outreach effort, coordinating ongoing activities, and using evaluation data to promote accountability and shared learning.

A Shared Understanding of Goal Setting and Expectations

When building a coalition that expects to work together over a long period, take time at the start of an outreach effort to ensure that everyone is on the same page. Do your partners agree on the main problem and the most effective solutions? Do they agree on what success looks like? And does each organization understand its role and that of the other partners? It is better to establish clarity from the beginning to avoid confusion or tension later on. In addition, stakeholders who do not understand or agree with an objective may not put time or effort into actualizing its success.

Providing Effective Coordination

Coordination and consistent communication are key for any partnership to work. Someone has to be in charge of ensuring everyone is on the same page, everyone's voices have been heard, and the group is in agreement about how to move forward. Someone also needs to nudge groups or individuals to follow through on what they have agreed to do. The position of Marketing and Outreach Coordinator may be the one to fulfill these responsibilities.

Considerations to keep in mind:

- Your partners are busy - Ask your partners what works best for them in terms of scheduling, platforms for sharing resources, or areas where they need support.

- Establish a main point of contact for each partnership so not to involve the entire organization when it isn't necessary.
- Give people timely reminders of campaign launches, upcoming events, etc.
- If some of the partners don't know each other well, commit time to build relationships, perhaps by organizing a shared meal or field tour for partners or by incorporating icebreakers or social time into meetings.
- Thank your partners frequently and genuinely for their efforts.

Evaluating Shared Efforts

Discussing benchmarks and indicators bring clarity to vague objectives. For example, an outreach campaign goal may be to "increase good forestry management." Discussing how progress toward this objective will be measured (e.g., number of stewardship plans written, acres restore/protected, number of trees planted) helps clarify what practices and behaviors you're actually trying to promote. Getting clarity on evaluation indicators, practices, and protocols is also essential for accountability and collaborative efforts towards shared learning.



Areas of Impact

Understanding areas of impact helps the Watershed identify priority areas to target for outreach campaigns. Within a priority area, where and in what condition the target audience lives are both critical elements to consider when creating an outreach campaign.

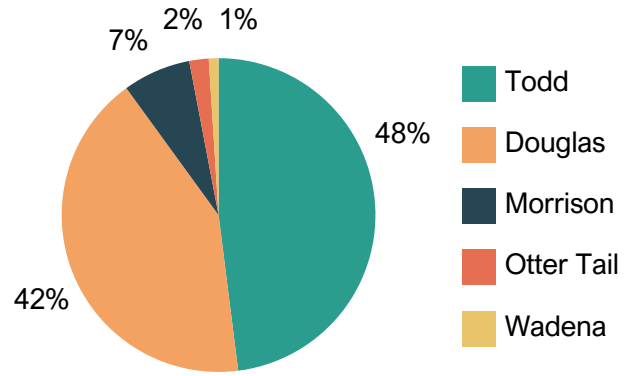
Overview of Watershed Plan Area:

The Long Prairie River Watershed plan area reaches across portions of five different counties: Todd, Douglas, Morrison, Otter Tail, and Wadena.

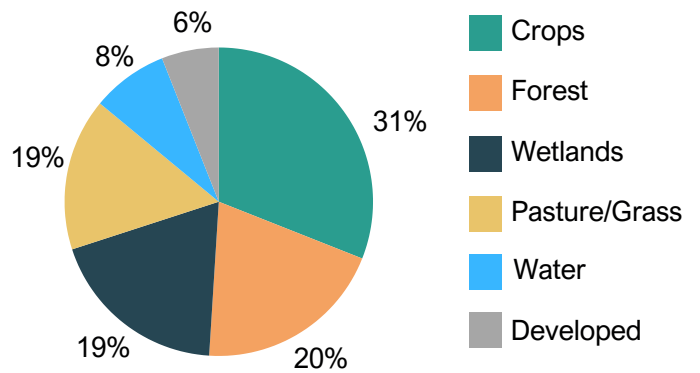
Major towns in the Watershed include: Alexandria, Browerville, Clarissa, Eagle Bend, Long Prairie, and Motley.

The majority land use in the Long Prairie Watershed is cropland, followed by forest, wetlands, pasture/grass, water, and developed lands.

Percentage of Counties in Plan Area



Land Use Percentage in Plan Area



Land Use in Watershed	Overall Message
Agricultural Lands	Sustain & Enhance Them
Forested Lands	Protect Them
Pastureland	Enhance Them
Wetlands	Restore & Maintain Them
Shorelines, Lakes, Rivers, & Streams	Appreciate & Respect Them
Developed/Developing Lands	Environmentally Build Them

Rufer, M. (2022)



Targeted Demographics

Different demographics have different conversation styles and preferences of how they receive their news and information . Using an incorrect approach for a specific demographic will affect their response or inclination to take action.

If you don't know whom you're talking to, how will you know what they need and what you should say? Targeted outreach to specific segment audiences improves the Watershed's effectiveness and efficiency in three ways:

Better programs - Tailored to the desired behavior and program support of audiences' knowledge and readiness levels. For example, knowing whether your landowners are likely to implement a management activity themselves or hire vendors is important for determining what kinds of advice and support they'll need through the process.

Better Messages - Messages speak more directly to the needs and preferences of the audience, thus making it more likely that your message will get their attention and persuade them.

Better Reach - Channels of communication are focused to reach the targeted audience whom you really want, so the overall return of the Watershed's outreach investment is higher. Moreover, targeted channels help people know that you are talking especially to them and understand that your message is relevant for them.

Targeting "Critically Undertreated Areas"

For example, the Watershed targets BMPs in areas that contribute the most to water quality impairment instead of relying on voluntary implementation that is randomly scattered throughout the watershed. The slow-release approach to outreach will help the Watershed transition from targeting during the early phase of implementation efforts when returns (pollutant-yield reductions per dollar invested in implementation) are still high, to random (first come, first served) implementation when returns are lower in later years.

Cost of Living in Minnesota. (2022), Rufer, M. (2022), SmartReach.io. (2024, April 18)

Within the Long Prairie River Watershed Plan Area



41,867

TOTAL POPULATION



13,059

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

MEDIAN AGE **44 yrs.**

UNDER 18 **23%**

OVER 65 **21%**

\$57,627

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$63,000-68,000

COST OF LIVING IN 2022 FOR A FAMILY WITH 2 FULL-TIME WORKING PARENTS AND 2 CHILDREN

→ This could imply that there is little expendable income for landowners to pay upfront for conservation practices.

10%

OF POPULATION IN POVERTY

What is an Audience Profile?

An audience profile is a snapshot of your target audience developed specifically with the intention to identify features and interests that the Watershed can tap into to create engaging messages.

Profiles tend to include information that answers the following questions:

- What values/ideas drive landowner decisions about their land?
- How do landowners spend their time on their land?
- What do landowners currently know and think about the desired action?
- What knowledge and capacity do landowners have to implement the desired action?
- What are the broad values and attitudes that underpin the culture of their community?
- What are their demographic attributes?
- What gets attention in the community? What do they talk about?
- Who do people listen to? What channels and sources of information are influential in this community?

Tools for developing Audience Profiles:

- Quantitative research
- Collective brainstorming
- Key informant interviews
- Conversations with landowners



Taking Action: Pain Vs. Gain

As a final step to understanding your target audience, go through the audience attributes to identify the main reasons why your audience would or would not take the desired action.

PAIN ▼
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time/distance to meeting• Not interested in topic• Don't want to listen to government "expert"• Management = more work• Change is complicated/scary

GAIN ▲
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn new things• Improve their property/land value• Pride• Feels good helping the environment• Contributing to community

An audience profile is created from multiple sources of information. It is a description, rather than a collection of data. Profiles include knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors relevant to the desired action, but go beyond that to understand what matters to audiences, how they are likely to make relevant decisions, and what will get their attention.

The following generalized characteristics of each demographic will enable the Watershed to begin tailoring outreach to the recipient's industry, interests, and needs.

REMINDER
 Because each landowner is different, an audience profile is undoubtedly an overgeneralized picture that emphasizes only their dominant and prevalent attributes.

WANT VS. THE NEED
 EACH DEMOGRAPHIC HAS A DIFFERENT RESPONSE, LEVEL OF CAPABILITY, AND REASON FOR TAKING ACTION.

Urban Landowner

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?	Where do they get their Information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Learning new things • Aesthetic value • Community • Making a difference • Pride • Tidiness • What the neighbors are doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unaware of their impact on resource issues, but more likely to take independent action when educated • Don't want to have a messy lawn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved in community • Working or retired professionals • Family events and school activities • Interested in trying something new • Technology • Planned vacations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee shops • Professional organizations • Real estate agents • Online forums • LinkedIn & social media • E-Newsletters & emails • Neighborhood meetings • Extension educators • Personal connections (such as family & friends) • Seminars

Thostenson, K., Witzling, L., Shaw, B., Knot, T. G., Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources...(n.d), Rufer, M. (2022)



Recreational Landowner

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?	Where do they get their Information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural beauty and wildlife protection Habitat for wildlife. Sharing nature with family and friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A sense of predated environmental stewardship Many have small parcels of land, making some land management activities less practical or more expensive Looking to protect their land Give them specific, easy, low-cost actions to achieve their objectives (e.g., attracting wildlife) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoying nature Hunting/fishing Tending to woods/property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension and government Social media Real estate agents Interactive maps and Virtual tours Billboards and signs Local sports and outdoor groups Online forums and chats Consultants and trusted contractors Personal connections Peer professional groups E-Newsletters & email How-to videos

Shoreline Landowner

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?	Where do they get their Information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pride Aesthetics and property value What the neighbors are doing Recreation The future of their lake - staying informed is a crucial responsibility for lake ownership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care about water quality Shoreline classifications should be considered when deciding on the approach to communicate (General development lakes, Recreational lakes, Natural environment lakes). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation Property management Disposable income Planned vacations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension and Government Garden clubs/greenhouses/landscape companies Real estate agents Lake Associations Lake-focused HOAs Local permitting/ Zoning authorities Fishing groups Local marine dealers Social media Personal connections Peer professional groups

Lake Associations/LIDS and Lake-focused HOAS

- Engage lake associations/LIDS to share information on their websites, newsletters, and social media channels to disseminate information to lake owners.
- Lake-focused HOAs tend to care about recreation, aesthetics, water quality, and the future of the lake.

All About Lakes. (2022, July 1). Hgm. (2022, January 30). Rufer, M. (2022)



Engaging Private Industry/Contractors & Urban Developers

Private Industry/Contractors

- Crop consulting firms are trusted sources of information for farmers.
- Engage ag dealers.
- Engaging private sector contracting such as agribusiness firms and private conservation companies can help landowners evaluate their options, expedite program enrollment processes, and offer direct in-person communication to them and local program actors.
- Engage and educate septic and well contractors of resource concerns and financial resources available to their clients.

Urban Developers

- Incentivize environmentally safe development and incorporation of natives into new development.
- Public opinion is important to them- Promote developers to the community who incorporate and practice conservation principles.

Amish Landowners

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?	Where do they get their Information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land stewardship • Doing things themselves • Personal connections and familiarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of precedented environmental stewardship • Educational programs need to be taken directly to them, at homes, farms, and businesses • Most Amish will not attend a meeting unless they first know something about the person conducting the program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working their land • Family and Amish community • Generally spends majority of their time on their property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word of mouth/door-to-door • Bulletin boards at local businesses and suppliers • Community events • Direct mailings • Private sectors

Amish Population by County

County	Settlement	Estimated Population
Douglas	-	-
Morrison	Pierz	35
Otter Tail	New York Mills	95
	Wadena	180
	Aldrich/Staples	230
Todd	Bertha	170
	Clarissa	515
	Eagle Bend	130
	Long Prairie	475
	Sebeka	205
Wadena		

Todd County has the largest Amish population of any county in Minnesota.

(Amish Population. (n.d.). Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement, Volume 7, Numbers 1&2, p. 157, (2001-02).



Women Landowners

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?	Where do they get their Information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling empowered • Doing good for nature • Seeing other women's successes • Family and community • In-person communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of precedence environmental stewardship and conservation ethics • Unsure of available resources - demystify information with special attention to not belittle their knowledge or capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoying nature • Family • Improving their property • Community engagement and social outings • Interested in trying new things 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations led by women for women • Extension and government • Social media • Real estate agents • Billboards and signs • Online forums and chats • Private consultants • Personal connections • E-Newsletters & emails

Absentee Landowners

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?	Where do they get their Information?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income • Desire to reduce taxes and land management hassles • Want to minimize problems on the land (e.g., vandalism, trespassing) • Desire to keep land intact for heirs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger landlords, both male and female, are more involved in on-farm management • Female landlords may feel inequitable power relations and exclusion management decisions between themselves and their male operators • Less likely to have personal contact with local extension and natural resource agency staff, leading to lower levels of resource management knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Away from property • Communicating with land tenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land operators • Professional organizations • Real estate agents • Online forums • LinkedIn & social media • E-Newsletters & emails • Neighborhood meetings • Extension educators • Personal connections • Seminars & webinars

Petrzelka, P., Sorensen, A., American Farmland Trust, & Utah State University. (n.d.).



New Farmers

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support • Overall encouragement • Owning their own land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insecure land tenure critically inhibits multi-year business planning • Offer farm business planning workshops with conservation incorporated from the beginning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little free time or disposable income • Running farm production

Established Farmers & Ag Producers

What's important to them?	Level of conservation stewardship?	How do they spend their time?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income and production profitability • In-person, on-site communication • Their time • Legacy of farm/keeping it in the family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to be aware of and believe there is a problem for them to take action • Farm size, structure, awareness and complexity of conservation programs, and farmers conservation attitudes all impact participation rates • Consistency/follow-ups lead to positive experiences which will be likely shared with their peers • Reward farmers or groups of farmers who refer others to participate in programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little free time or disposable income • Running farm production

Barriers for Farmers

- Misunderstandings due to a lack of expectation-setting around the yield impacts of conservation practices.
- Lack of cash or credit for producers share of cost and limited cash flow while waiting for government reimbursement.
- Socio-cultural factors that prize productivity over resilience.
- Cultural concerns about taking land out of production (for example, a generational farm that took years of hard work to develop).
- Organizational barriers may include conflicting messages from different source and confusion over the roles and responsibilities among the various agencies.
- Landlord-tenant relationships.
 - Short-term leases that may discourage installation and maintenance of practices/systems.
 - Program sign-ups that may require long-term commitments.
- Enrollment complexity, long timelines, and the requirement of upfront spending reduces participation in voluntary incentive programs

Petzelka, P., Sorensen, A., American Farmland Trust, & Utah State University. (n.d.). Houser, M., Campbell, B., Jacobs, A., Fanok, S., & Johnson, S. (2024).



Agricultural Statistics

Animal and crop agriculture play a large role in the Watershed, supplying food, creating jobs, and generating tax revenue. Common crops in the Watershed include corn, soybeans, cultivated perennials, potatoes, and small grains.

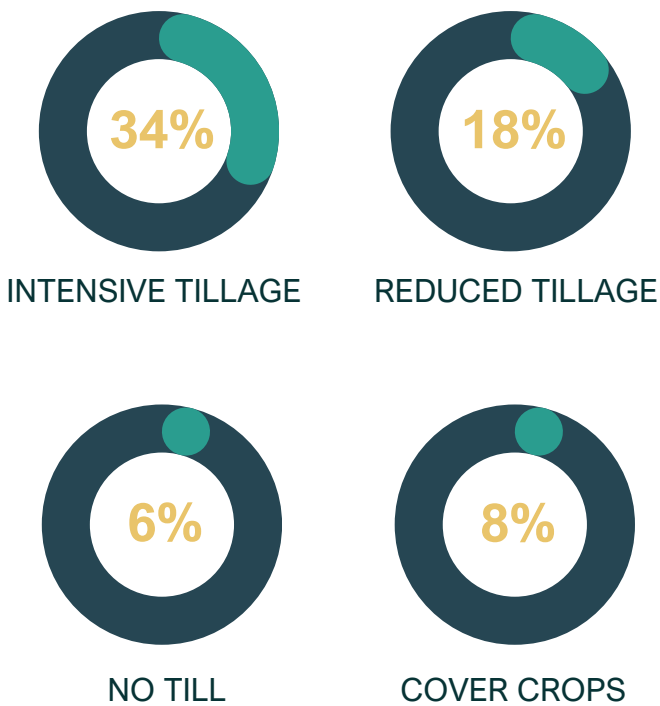
NUMBER OF FARMS  **15%** Since 2012

This could imply that smaller farms are getting absorbed by larger farms.

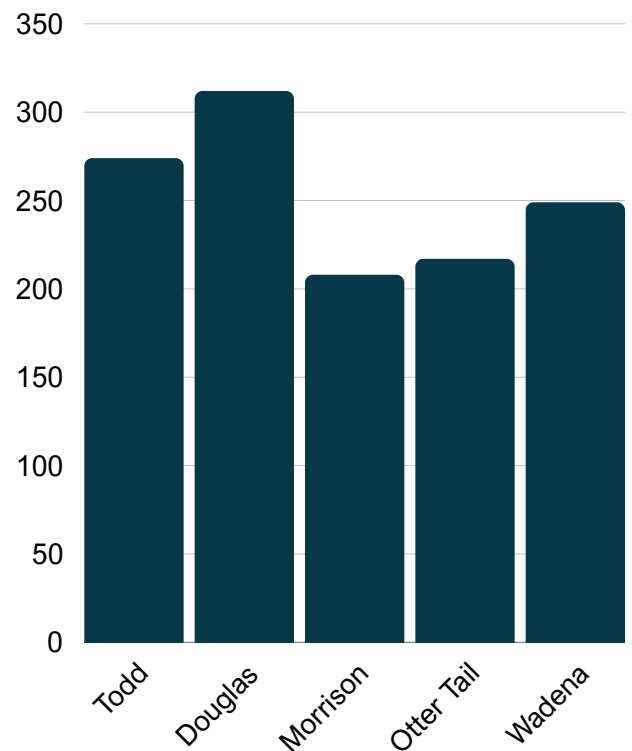
ACERAGE OF FARMLAND  **11%** Since 2012

This could imply that the loss of farmland is due to development pressures or division of land.

Current cropland practices across plan area



Average Farm acreage per County



Census of Agriculture - 2017 Census Publications - State and County Profiles - Minnesota. (n.d.). Rufer, M. (2022).

Process of Adoption for Farmers

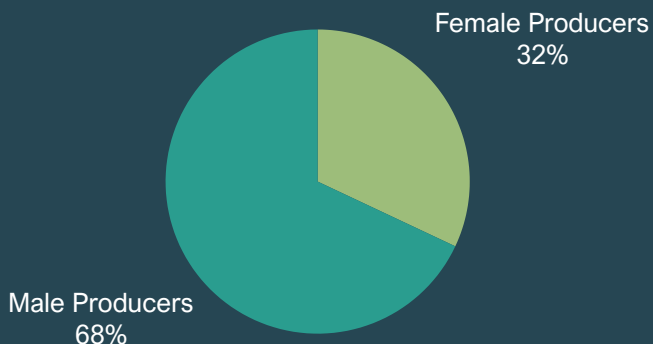
1. Awareness of the problem or relevant opportunity
2. Interest in more information-data collection of positive perceptions of a practice.
3. Evaluation—how the technology can be applied to the producer's operation,
4. Trial—testing the applicability at a specific site, their own cautious trial- without a small evaluation, chances are greatly diminished for adoption.
5. Adoption—full use of the technology or disadoption- when not sufficiently encouraging or goals are not advanced. This could lead to abandonment or a scaling down of the practice.
6. Adaptation—producer customizes the practice or technique to fit his or her needs with continuous process of review and modification.

Where Farmers get their Information

*As they progress through each stage listed above.

- In Stages 1 and 2 (Awareness and Interest), producers turn to mass media, government agencies, friends and neighbors, dealers and salespeople (in that order).
- In Stages 3 through 5 (Evaluation, Trial and Adoption), farmers rely on friends, neighbors and family, government agencies, mass media, dealers and salespeople.
- And in Stage 6 (Adaptation), farmers use their own personal experience. In addition, producers are increasingly turning to the Internet and certified crop consultants as sources of information.

Percentage of Male vs. Female Producers in Plan Area



Why Farmers Use Incentive Programs

Rather than directly motivating interest in a new practice, research has found farmers use them as an enabling condition that supports a practice a farmer was already interested in.



They come up with an idea for a new practice

They then seek a funding source to support it.

In terms of what originally leads farmers to become interested in a practice that is later supported by an incentive program factors include:

- Existing stewardship ethics.
- Emergent and existing, visual environmental challenges.
- Input from trusted advisors.

The USDA estimates that 70% of U.S. farmland will change hands in the next 20 years, as many family operations do not have a next generation skilled in or willing to continue farming.

FARMERS WITHIN CRITICALLY UNDERTREATED AREAS CAN HAVE AN OUTSIZED ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DUE TO THE AREA'S AGRICULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.

Census of Agriculture - 2017 Census Publications - State and County Profiles - Minnesota. (n.d.). Houser, M., Campbell, B., Jacobs, A., Fanok, S., & Johnson, S. 2024).

Analysis of New & Existing Outreach Strategies

Existing Strategies	New Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “All at once” • No direction • Mass and impersonal messaging • Inconsistent messaging across Watershed • Research & evaluation of outreach efforts is not being utilized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target specific audiences • Launch specific campaigns • Utilizes the 3 types of outreach • Implement outreach and social media calendar for local partners to follow • Consistent content that can be shared across the Watershed • Utilizes a “Slow-Release” timeline • Evaluates outreach efforts to modify approach

Types of Outreach

The three distinct types of outreach should not be expected to operate in silos. Instead, they will work together to maximize their collective reach. The purpose of distinguishing them is predominantly for staffing purposes and organizing outreach strategies to ensure each outreach campaign encompasses all three types.

The Three Types of Outreach

Outreach that Supports Raising Awareness & Behavior Change

Outreach that Supports Community Organizing & Community Buy-in

Outreach that Supports Technical Assistance & Project Development

Contracted & Shared Services

Contracting and sharing outreach services with other agencies helps the Watershed add capacity without hiring additional staff. This alleviates the workload on staff and extends their scope of direct communication with landowners and program enrollment services.

- Outreach that supports raising awareness and behavior change would be the most effective type of outreach to contract or share.
- Outreach that supports community organizing and community buy-in can also be shared or contracted but should be done so within the Watershed.
- Outreach that supports technical assistance and project development will mostly be done by LGU staff but can be contracted to provide additional technical assistance and in-person communication with stakeholders.



Outreach that Supports Raising Awareness & Behavior Change

- Not everyone in watershed may be aware of current issues.
- Improving stakeholder awareness leads to public activation which leads to behavior change.
- Needs consistency which all partners can use when targeting particular areas or strategies.

Staff who supports awareness and behavior change will:

- Develop creative, consistent, and engaging programming and materials that can be distributed to local staff, working with them to refine materials based on local needs and stakeholders input.
- Write and distribute communications sharing success stories, resources, and other information for both the general public and tailored to specific audiences.
- Promote and host workshops, seminars, and other activities for the public that are informational and encourage behavioral change.
- Research targeted demographics, areas of impact, and ways to communicate awareness of priority resource concerns.
- Compile annual reports to summarize progress and engagement framework with local staff in the Watershed.

Outreach that Supports Community Organizing & Community Buy-in

- Build community relationships and their sense of ownership or investments.
- Promotes and helps expand regional collaborators (RCPP and Camp Ripley Sentinel Landscape for example).

- Building this trust can aid in sustainable government to citizen relationships.

Staff who supports community organization and buy-in will:

- Work to build relationships with key stakeholders who are interested in partnering to design and implement strategies that can help with plan priorities.
- Work with those stakeholders to reach others in their networks and identify practices they are interested in to aid plan.
- Collaborate with planning partnerships to identify priorities for each year considering targeted outreach.
- Provide civic leadership, support, and development to key stakeholders who will help lead engagement in partnership with local staff.

Outreach that Supports Technical Assistance & Project Development

- For a stakeholder to take certain types of action, greater technical skill or knowledge may be required and can include on-site presentations, workshops and field days.
- Engaged by technical assistance and project development staff.

Staff who supports technical assistance and project development will:

- Typically be existing LGU staff.
- Consult stakeholders and provides information on available resources.
- Provides technical assistance to stakeholders once plans begin to be implemented.
- Monitors regulatory programs.



Crafting a Compelling Outreach Strategy

Once our purpose has been clarified and target audience has been identified, it's time to craft our message. There is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to outreach. Effective outreach is not sending out mass, impersonal messages to reach people. It's about building relationships, understanding our audience, and using the right tools and strategies that will pique their interest.

What Materials and Channels to Use

The dynamics of audience interaction have evolved, demanding a holistic approach to multichannel outreach increases the Watershed's chances for success.

Common media to deliver messages to landowners include brochures, postcards, letters, posters, websites, presentations, social media, and face-to-face. Consider the following when choosing a media outlet:

- How much information can the media carry?
- How targeted is the medium?

Who Should Deliver the Message

When people get the same advice from more than one person or organization, they are more likely to consider it seriously.

Messengers of the sources of information can be just as important as the message itself. The person, institution, or platform that delivers the message influences how the message is received.

The Best Time to Conduct Outreach

How well people engage with a message depends on when people see and hear the information and what is on their minds at the time. Things to consider that will help get a message across:

- Send information about specific practices just prior to the time of year when people should be doing them.
- Use postcards and letters mainly as hooks to encourage people to seek more information.
- Tie your information to local events or news items that are on people's minds

Common Pitfalls:

- **Data Paralysis:** Overanalyzing your audience can lead to inaction. Find a balance.
- **Ineffectively using the same mass messaging for everyone.**

SmartReach.io. (2024, April 18). Hgm. (2022, January 30).

THE GOAL ISN'T JUST TO REACH OUT. IT'S TO REACH OUT AND COMPEL A RESPONSE.

IMAGINE YOU'RE CREATING A PERSONALIZED INVITATION—YOU WANT IT TO BE BOTH APPEALING AND SPECIFIC. DIFFERENT TECHNIQUES FIT DIFFERENT SCENARIOS.

Key components of developing a clear message

- **Clarity** - Easy to understand, direct and not wordy.
- **Relevance** - Message should relate to audiences needs, concerns, interests.
- **Value proposition-** Communicate the value or inherent benefit audience will gain from engaging.
- **Emotional appeal-** Infuse emotional elements to evoke feelings of sympathy, inspiration, or responsibility.
- **Call to action-** The most important trigger while the audience is engaging with content.
- **Create a sense of urgency-** Incorporate elements of urgency to encourage immediate action.

Generational Communication

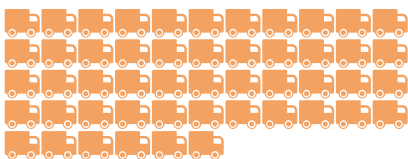
It is important to consider the different communication outlets and preferences for different generations. For example, older generations would prefer to receive information about caring for their trees through “talking to someone” more than any other mode of communication. However, receiving information about caring for trees through social media and online information would be relatively more popular among younger, urban landowners.



Use Imagery to Support the Message

Take time to collect quality project photos. Images are not simply for decoration. Along with graphics, they can greatly increase the impact of the Watershed’s materials.

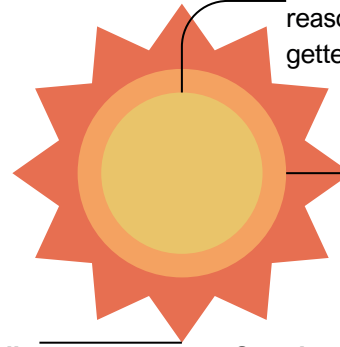
- Relevant and specific images to your audience and their environment work better than generic landscape pictures or clip art.
- Pictures that show people’s faces get the audience’s attention better than wide-angle shots of groups or scenery.
- Let them see the results - Use visual tools to describe resource concerns or statistics. For example: Instead of just saying “Your property loses tons of sediment a year.” Give them a visual and explain “your property loses 1,400 tons of sediment a year. That is equivalent to 50 truckloads being taken out each year.”



Thostenson, K., Witzling, L., Shaw, B., Knoot, T. G., Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources... n.d.). Hgm. (2022, January 30)

Core Content

Call to action, main reason to act, attention getter.



Personality

Elements of style and tone to evoke emotions and get attention.

Supplementary Content

Other benefits of the action, addressing barriers, proof points to enhance the credibility.

Components of an Effective Message

All communications must have a clear and specific call to action and one strong compelling reason for audiences to take that action. Other benefits or ideas that directly address or undermine barriers to action can be used as supporting elements. Effective messages also have something that attracts the target audience’s attention such as:

- A shocking statistic or unexpected endorsement.
- A visual or graphic.
- The style and tone of your message.

Whether it is in the form of a postcard or an entire presentation, communication should be organized around two or three strong, interrelated ideas to drive home a single, compelling reason to take the desired action.

Same Message, Different Personality

Messages with personality are more likely to get and keep people’s attention. Moreover, messages that evoke emotions (like anger, pride, fear or love) are more likely to move people to take action.

Less Emotional Option: “Learn to see the threats of trouble in your woods.”

More Emotional Option: “If your woods were crying out for help, would you hear them?”

Reaching Landowners via Direct Mail

Direct mail can be an excellent tool to reach specific members of a target audience. However, response rates to unsolicited mail from relatively unknown organizations are fairly low - to counteract this fact, the Watershed can plan to send multiple mailings with consistency of offer, message, and branding to build trust and recognition.

How to get good results:

- Typically has a few seconds (“between the mailbox and the trash can”) to get and hold audience’s attention. Therefore, they need to be well designed. In addition, the quality of the mail piece often influences the audience’s opinion of the quality of the program or service that is offered.
- People give mail pieces only a quick read - keep offer simple and singular and focus on the benefits rather than the details.
- Time mailing to match audience’s interest and receptivity. A good time to offer a forester walk-through might be in either spring or fall, when landowners are excited to be on their land.
- Avoid heavy mail periods (holidays or election times, except for mailings that relate to these items).
- Direct mailings also include personalized thank you cards, holiday cards, etc.

Achieving Multiple Touches

On average, it takes four to six interactions with your message to persuade someone to take an action. These “touches” can be a conversation or interaction, communication materials, or mentions in online or offline media.

SmartReach.io. (2024, April 18). Hgm. (2022, January 30).

Reaching Landowners via Local Media



Local media can include newspapers, radio channels, billboards, or TV programs associated with specific geographic communities. Local media works well to promote a one-time event, to kick-start a program or campaign, or for creating broad awareness of an issue.

Reaching Landowners via Phone



Phone calls include calling people who are already acquainted with an organization and have given permission to call them or calling people who don’t know your organization and whose contact information you may have been acquired from a partner organization.

Phone calls are a one-on-one personal interaction capable of deepening relationships and commitments to act. A personal phone call is best placed after at least one high-quality interaction, preferably a face-to-face.

Reaching Landowners via Email



Provided the audience is connected to the Internet and is comfortable with online media, emails are a great way to reach people quickly and offer the option to link to other electronic media, such as websites and event sign-ups. The audience for these communications could be one person or many.

Reaching Landowners via Social Media



Social media can foster peer connections, which can be an important factor in keeping people engaged. It is a useful way to invite people to events or to convey a quick, eye-catching factoid or video that keeps people connected.

Visually rich information is better. On social media, pictures and videos speak louder than words.

Direct Communication with Landowners

- Create building power to dismantle dominant false narratives - a willingness just to TRY something new.
- Encourage stakeholders to discuss their past experiences with voluntary incentive programs and how they feel programs can be improved going forward to enable greater and more meaningful participation.
- Ask questions that start with who, what, when, where, how, and why. They provide an opportunity to explore thoughts and feelings further on a particular subject.
- Dealing with pessimistic people – approach with genuine curiosity, seek to understand their perspective. Acknowledge and validate concerns, name the elephant in the room, reframe the concept.
- Consistency is key! Landowners want to know what to expect whether it's tone of communication or level of service provided, maintaining uniformity is key to building trust and loyalty.
- Ensure people impacted by an issue are included in decision-making process and decisions are made transparently.

Follow Through/Follow-up

You cannot just walk away after an outreach campaign has ended, a conservation plan is made, or a practice is installed.

Take the time to review those principles with landowners and do some follow-up to make sure they are integrating practices successfully. This action allows challenges to be talked through as they arise. Having a negative interaction or an unresolved conflict with a landowner is not just a single polar event. It is vital that every staff member and partner considers how they communicate with landowners and other stakeholders and how it can influence their actions or perceptions.

Landowner Follow-up Calendar

- Staff members create individual spreadsheets containing landowners worked with to track interactions, personal information, and timelines for follow-ups.
- This can lead to a positive experience for landowners and they are more likely to refer and encourage others to implement similar practices.

→ Solve their problems. The easiest way to get landowners to pay attention to your materials is to lead with their questions and concerns. Once you have their attention, you can give them new information and ideas.

→ Speak their language. Don't use technical terms that might be familiar to you but not to your audience. Instead, use language that landowners use themselves.

Outreach Tip:

Research your prospects thoroughly, craft concise and compelling messages, and follow up without being pushy – find a balance between persistence and patience.

ONE-ON-ONE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON-SITE HAS BEEN FOUND TO CONTRIBUTE THE MOST SUCCESS AS FOR GETTING CONSERVATION ON THE GROUND.

Doran, T. (2023, January 19).



STEPS OF SUCCESSFUL OUTREACH

Define goals/topic

Identify target audience

Develop a clear message/action

Utilize multiple channels of communication with options for a 'call to action'

Actively engage with responders immediately

Follow-up with relevant and timely content that the audience wants to learn more about

Outreach Example Topic

Every audience and purpose combination may call for a different technique. Tailoring our messages to address the specific needs and interests of the recipient will ensure our messages resonate on a personal level.

TOPIC:
CONTAMINATION OF DRINKING WATER

TARGET AUDEINCE → Private well owners

MESSAGE → Become aware of water contaminants of local concern and their causes.
Spark interest: Is your septic system affecting your drinking water?

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS → Social media posts, postcard mailings, newspaper ads, flyers

ACTION ENGAGEMENT → Give them resources to become septic system compliant, free water testing kits, what financial help is available?

TOPIC:
CONTAMINATION OF DRINKING WATER

TARGET AUDEINCE → Contractors

MESSAGE → Groundwater contamination affects your clients.
Spark Interest: Generate more business by informing your clients of the low interest loans available to them.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS → Email campaigns, postcard mailings

ACTION ENGAGEMENT → Offer an educational breakfast. What financial assistance is available to their clients?



Education

Principles of Education

- Understand the audience well enough to make content relatable to them.
- Gives learners flexibility.
- Adapted to the education level – taught at a level that applies.
- Utilizes relatable experiences and provides opportunities for application.
- Content is compelling and based on specific objectives.
- Provides further resources or opportunities for what the audience wants to learn more about.

The goal of conservation education is not only to impart knowledge but also to inspire and empower individuals to take action for the environment.

Levels of Knowledge

For example, the Watershed wants landowners to help curb a new invasive species in the area by reporting occurrences or taking early action. Consider the following taglines for an educational event on this topic:

Option 1:

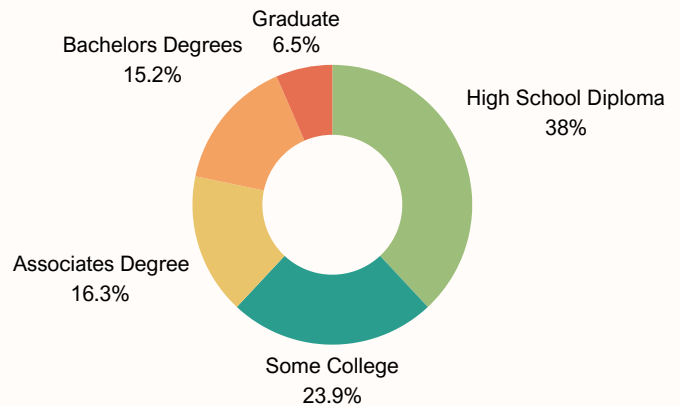
Your woods are under threat. Come learn how to protect them from invasive species.

Option 2:

You've already got a handle on common buckthorn, but are you on the look out for this new invader?

An active and knowledgeable landowner most likely would ignore the first flier, assuming the presentation would be general information that is already known. But the second option would seem more relevant to them. The landowner steps of engagement will help the Watershed determine what level of knowledge their targeted audience resonates with the most.

Education Levels of Plan Area



Engaging the Youth

- Engage youth through art and creativity, encouraging them to express their views on conservation through writing, drawing, natural materials, etc.
- Enlist youth to help create “you’re invited” event invites that will be sent to landowners.
- Involve youth in policy advocacy by educating them on how to engage local and national government bodies to promote conservation practices.

Engaging Schools

- Encourage and assist schools to develop sustainability clubs.
- Educate schools on the grants available to enhance their environmental programs.
- Provide curriculum ideas and materials for educators and options for field trips or guest speaker opportunities.
- Encourage schools to implement sustainable practices such as recycling programs, waste reduction strategies, and energy saving initiatives.

Rufer, M. (2022)

Educating Women Landowners

- Create safe, non-judgmental places for learning- Help them feel empowered. Familiarity will help with engagement - include time for introductions and personal connections in event agendas.
- Many women producers report they value women-only learning events
- Utilize collaborative “learning circles” designed to improve conservation practices through networking and information sharing.
- Outreach materials targeting women need to appeal to women (language, colors, presentation, images of women successfully practicing conservation).
- Highlight successful women landowners and farmers - “If she can do it, I can do it.”

Educating Farmers

- Seek out and work with early adopters and use them to demonstrate BMPs to the rest of the community
 - Use demonstrations, pilot projects and field tours to showcase BMPs.
- Opportunities for farmer-to-farmer networking, asking each other questions, what went wrong, what they would recommend doing in the future, etc.
 - Field days and workshops where you can bring farmers together to help foster those relationships can be very productive.
- Offer farm business planning with conservation principles and practices embedded into the curriculum.
- Tailor education to their needs - focus on the most meaningful issues for farmers, such as profit, flexibility, and convenience.
- Provide farmers with hands-on demonstrations of conservation practices. Seeing the benefits firsthand can be more persuasive than theoretical knowledge.
- Introduce farmers to precision agriculture technologies that can help them apply conservation practices more efficiently and effectively.

Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education [SARE]. (n.d.). Doran, T. (2023, January 19).

Engaging the Community

Local Stories & Practices: Share stories from the field that resonate with *local* experiences and practices.

Inclusive Education Strategy: Ensures diverse, accessible, and equitable participation (multiple dates for workshops, learning experiences catered to specific demographics, options for different learning levels etc.).

Knowledge Sharing Platforms: Create platforms for peer-to-peer knowledge exchange (utilize workshops and online forums - engage forums and regularly to share advice, resources, encouragement, etc.)

Participatory Activities: Organize activities that involve hands-on effort like public shoreline clean-ups, tree plantings, or wildlife monitoring.

Community Committees: Establish community committees or landowner coalitions with training on roles, responsibilities, and best practices in conservation management.

Educational Campaigns: Launch winter “quick courses” with each covering a sustainable practice (announce course schedule ahead of time, encourage drop-ins, incentivize those who attend all classes with a reward.)

Action Research: Encourage community (let them know you need their help in order to serve them better) to participate in action research projects that contribute to local conservation

Mentorship & Internships: Offer mentorships programs and internships to give young people practical experience and career exposure.

Conservation Education Training: Offer training and professional development opportunities for community members to become conservation educators themselves.

Incentives

However important the impact of conservation practices is on the environment, they will only manifest if farmers and landowners put these practices to use on their land. The fact remains that many farmers will prioritize practices with greater economic outcomes at the expense of the environment. If we are to meet our goals, incentive programs must more effectively encourage and enable adoption of conservation practices.

Problems with incentive programs reported by landowners

- Time-based frustrations including enrollment process, labor, and management.
- Loss of production during transition period.
- Some programs require upfront payments while cost-share repayments only come after projects completion.

Outreach Tip:

Fine-tune outreach as if you're crafting a key capable of opening as many doors as possible. Materials should be inclusive and provided in alternative languages and text.

Existing Strategies

- Financial assistance to adopt a practice
- Technical assistance to adopt a practice

New Strategies

- Subsidized conservation plans
- Programs that reward environmental achievements by farmers by paying more for ag products
- Low-interest loans
- Operations and maintenance
- Opportunities for higher education
- Capital improvements
- Simplifying enrollment process and offering direct outreach through engaging private sectors
- Farmers participation in programs promoted and more widely communicated to the public
- Paying land users in small watershed a proportionate incentive for working together to solve local conservation problems (i.e. the tillage clubs in the 1970s and pasture walks in the 1980s that involved groups of neighbors who came together to successfully promote BMP adoption)

AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST & Center for Agriculture in the Environment. (2013). Houser, M., Campbell, B., Jacobs, A., Fanok, S., & Johnson, S. (2024).

RESOURCE PRIORITIZATION PROFILES

Outreach Calendar

- Created each year to outline the Watershed's yearly outreach goals and agendas.
- Includes campaign timelines, frequency of use for outreach channels, Months of Awareness, project deadlines & sign-up dates, checkpoints for measurable goals, and outlier events.

Social Media Calendar

- Based off yearly approach and outreach calendar..
- Develop a quarterly/biannually timeline to post about upcoming events, deadlines, campaigns, resource concerns, etc.
- Use national holidays or environmental days of recognition to fill in slow spots.

These can be useful tools to be distributed across local partnerships who may not have a staff member dedicated to outreach.

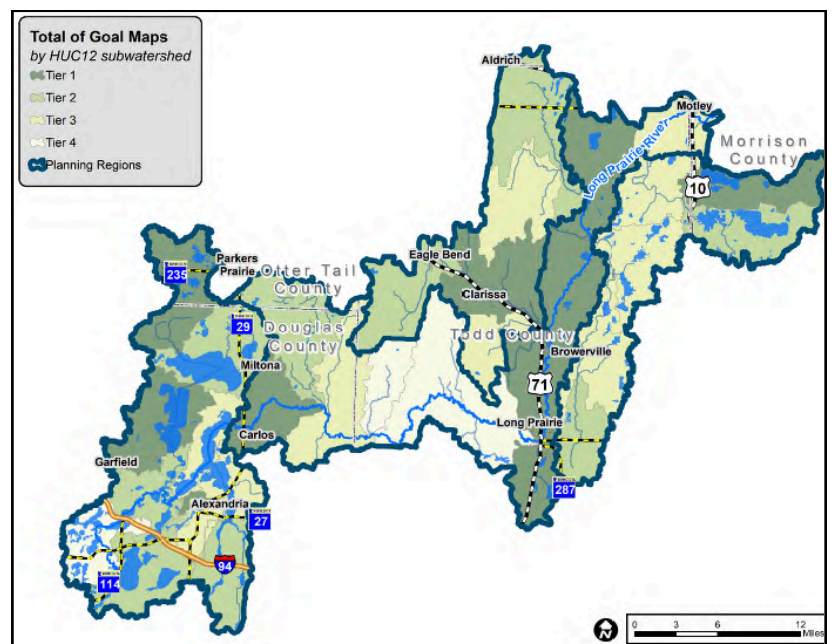
This is where everything ties together. These are the maps that will guide the Watershed and their communicators each year in their outreach efforts. The Resource Prioritization Profiles give the key variables needed to organize successful outreach campaigns.

At the beginning of each year, the Watershed will determine their:

- ✓ Priority resource of focus
- ✓ Measurable goals and associated priority practices
- ✓ Primary areas of impact and associated targeted audiences

In order to create:

- ✓ Campaign agendas and timelines
- ✓ An outreach calendar month by month overview (agendas for each month will be determined quarterly)
- ✓ A social media calendar for communicators (developed quarterly)



Goal Tiers of Planning Regions

Resource Profile: Drinking Water/Well Water

High Priority Goals
Seal 200 unused wells (20 per year)
Agricultural BMPs - 2 acres

High Priority Practices
Nutrient Management
Cover Crops
Irrigation Water Management
Conservation Easements

Primary Areas
Parkers Prairie Township
Ward Township
Hartford Township
Round Prairie Township

Primary Audience
Rural residential landowners with unused wells
Contractors
Farmers and Ag Producers

Primary Areas
Clarissa DWSMA & Buffer (1 mile)

Primary Audience
Ag producers & rural landowners
City residents

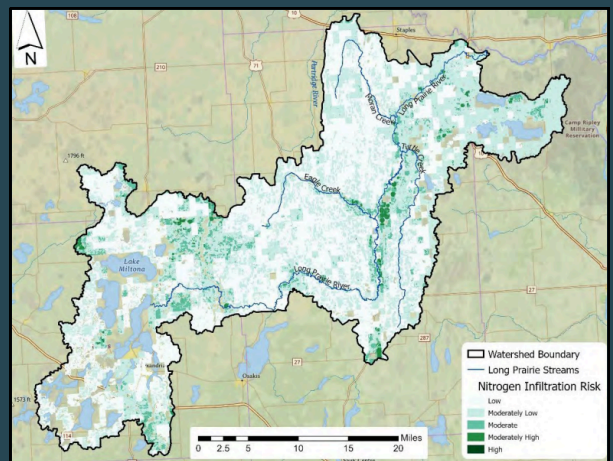
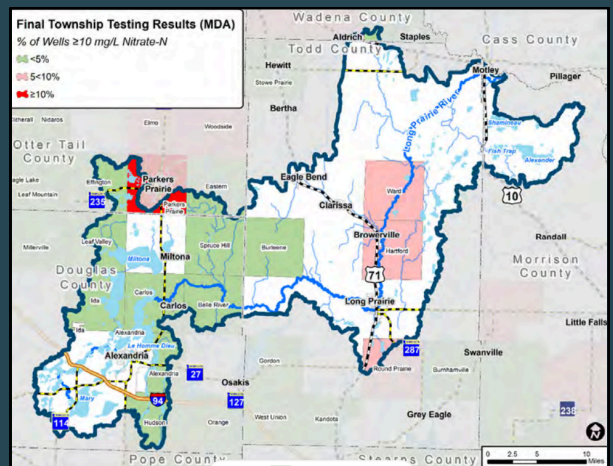
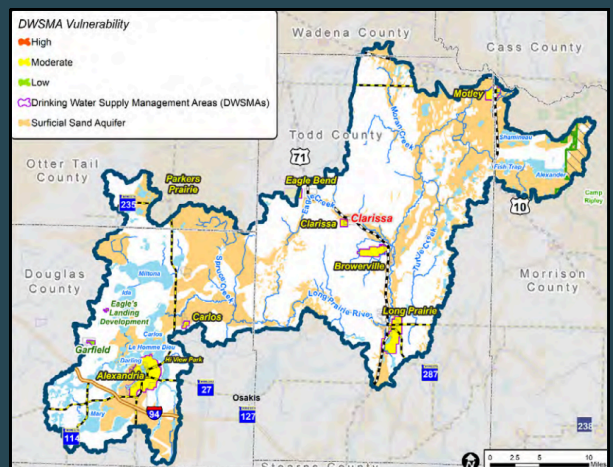
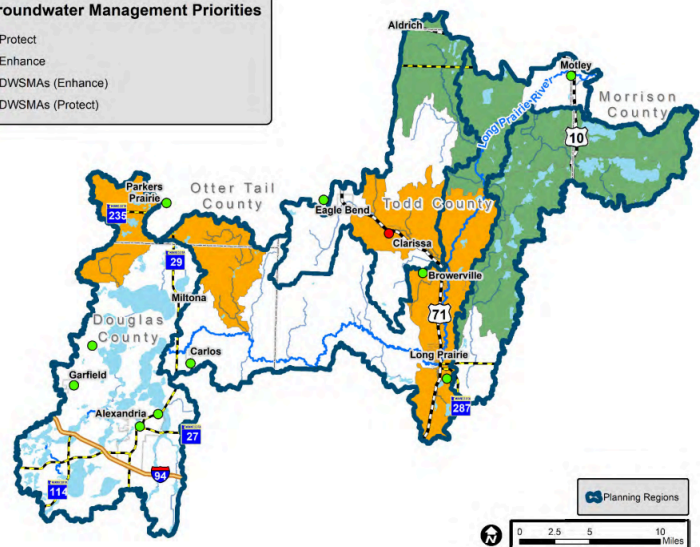
Outreach Tip:

Frequency will directly correlate with the effectiveness of cultivating awareness. The more we can repeat the same narratives across many channels and many formats, the more they will be remembered.

Overall Groundwater Management Priorities

Groundwater Management Priorities

- Protect
- Enhance
- DWSMAs (Enhance)
- DWSMAs (Protect)



Resource Profile: Fragmentation of Habitat

High Priority Goals
Impact 10,605 acres

High Priority Practices
Woodland Stewardship Plans (WSP)
Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA)
Conservation Easements
Land Acquisition
Shoreline Restorations
Tree & Shrub Planting

Primary Areas
Tier 1 Lakes
Alexander Lakes
East half of Long Prairie River

Primary Audience
Absentee landowners
Shoreline owners
Recreational landowners
Rural landowners
Outdoor recreation groups

Secondary Areas
Fish Trap/Turtle Creek
Eagle/Moran Creek

Primary Audience
Absentee landowners
Shoreline owners
Recreational landowners
Rural landowners
Outdoor recreation groups

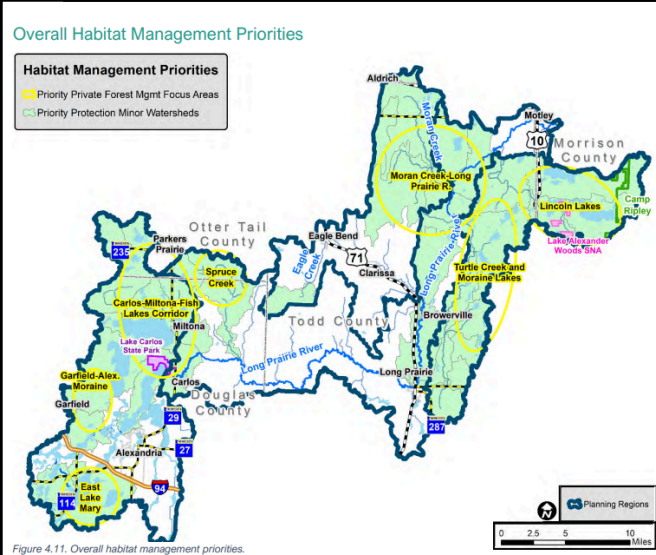


Figure 4.11. Overall habitat management priorities.

Planning Region	Milestone (acres)
Alexandria Lakes	1,700
Long Prairie River	2,582
Eagle/Moran Creeks	1,846
Turtle/Fish Trap Creeks	4,477
Total	10,605

Outreach Tip:
Timing is everything. Sending an email or posting on social media when your recipient is most likely to see it increases chances of a response.

Resource Profile: Sediment

High Priority Goals

Impact 11,090 acres

High Priority Practices

Cover Crops

Reduced Tillage or No Till

Water and Sediment Control Basins

Grassed Waterways

Conservation Crop Rotation

Contour Strips

Filter Strips

Field Borders Prairie Strips

Primary Areas

Tier 1 Lakes

From city of Long Prairie to city of Motley

Carlos to Miltona

South of Alexandria

Primary Audience

Farmers and Ag producers

Absentee landowners who rent cropland

Ag landlords

Secondary Areas

Tier 2 Lakes

Alexandria Lakes

Eagle/Moran Creek

Long Prairie River

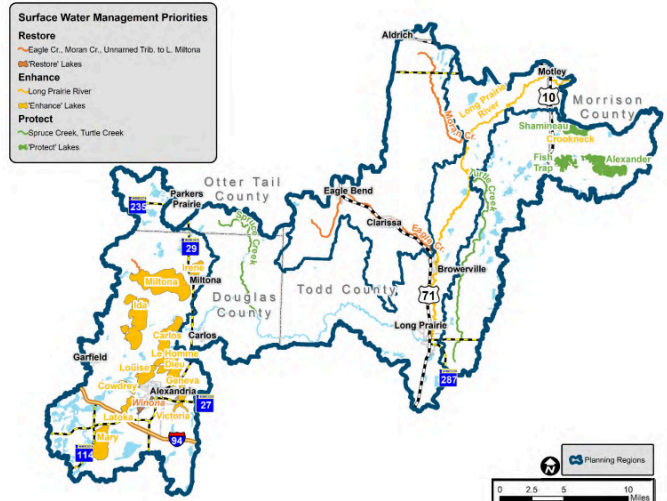
Primary Audience

Farmers and Ag producers

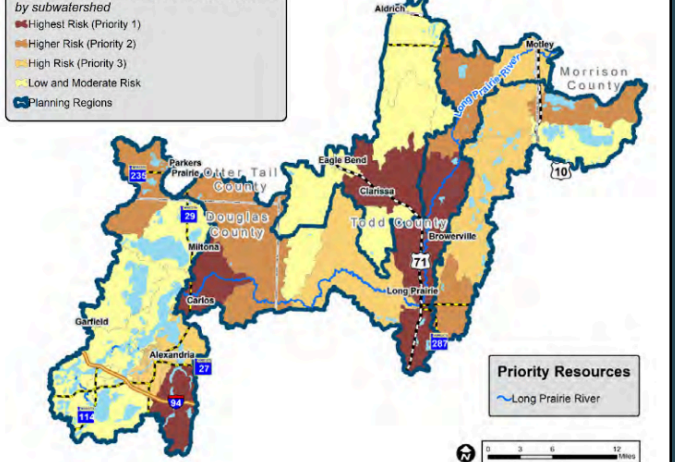
Absentee landowners who rent cropland

Ag landlords

Overall Surface Water Management Priorities



Agricultural Land Management Priorities



Outreach Tip:

Although digital tools are increasingly important for outreach and technical assistance, they are most effective when paired with on-the-ground assistance.

Resource Profile: Stormwater

High Priority Goals

To make 25% or 1,053 acre-feet of storage (1 football field covered in 1 foot of water)

Ag/ Rural High Priority Practices

- Water and Sediment Control Basins
- Grade Stabilization Structures
- Grassed Waterways
- Wetland Restorations
- Cover Crops
- Grassland Establishment - Change runoff curve number
- Roof Runoff Structures
- Tree Planting

Urban High Priority Practices

- Raingardens and Rain barrels
- Shoreline Restorations
- Roof Runoff Structures
- Permeable Pavement Systems
- Underground Water Storage (Recycle/Reuse)
- Turf-to-Native Conversion

Primary Areas

- Tier 1 Lakes
- Alexandria Lakes
- Long Prairie River and surrounding cities

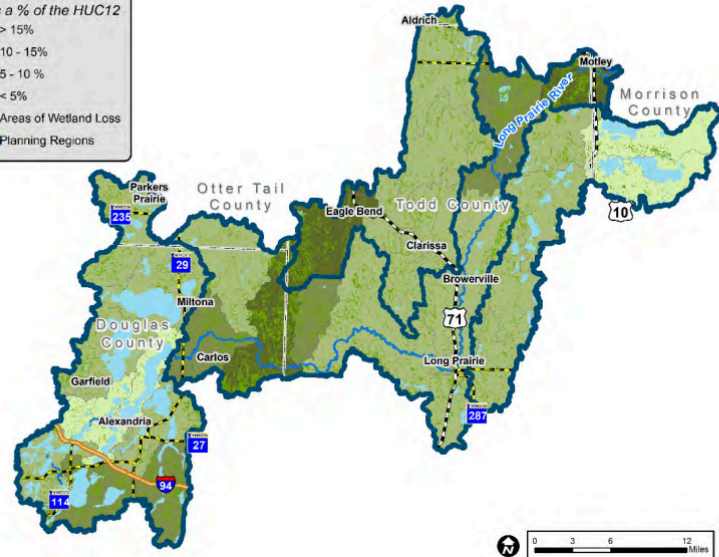
Primary Audience

- Farmers and Ag producers
- Rural Landowners
- Shoreline Owners
- City residents
- City administrators
- County Governments
- State Government

Wetland Loss

As a % of the HUC12

- > 15%
- 10 - 15%
- 5 - 10%
- < 5%
- Areas of Wetland Loss
- Planning Regions



Planning Region	Milestone (acre-feet)
Alexandria Lakes	260
Long Prairie River	584
Eagle/Moran Creeks	141
Turtle/Fish Trap Creeks	68
Total	1,053

Secondary Areas

Tier 2 Lakes

Primary Audience

- Farmers and Ag producers
- Rural Landowners
- Shoreline Owners
- City residents
- City administrators
- County Governments
- State Government

Resource Profile: Nutrients

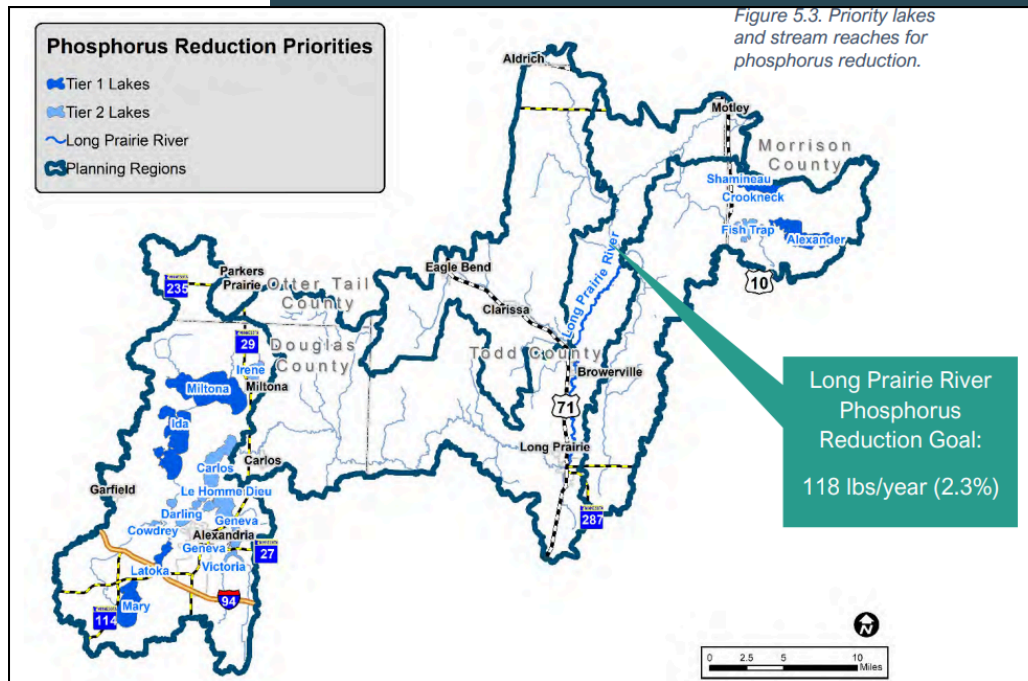


Figure 5.3. Priority lakes and stream reaches for phosphorus reduction.

High Priority Goals
28 Bacteria Reduction Projects along Impaired Waters (average roughly 3 per year)
90% Feedlot Compliance
Upgrade Noncompliant Septic Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watershed-Wide: 2,500 upgrades in 10 years
Phosphorus reduction of 1,180 pounds to Tier 1 Lakes and Long Prairie River

High Priority Practices
Nutrient Management
Waste Storage Facilities
Prescribed Grazing
Livestock Exclusion
Pit Closures
Riparian Buffers

Primary Areas
Eagle Creek
Moran Creek
Unnamed Creek (Tributary to Miltona)
Long Prairie River

Primary Audience
Ag producers
Crop Consultants

Outreach Tip:

Think about longevity. Your outreach should be more than just a one-time interaction in order to invoke action.

Thinking in Campaigns

A campaign is a series of coordinated outreach activities that involve more than one activity or event designed to accomplish a specific outcome. Campaigns are usually timebound with a beginning and ending date with checkpoints along the way.

Each year of the Slow-Release Approach could be considered a broad campaign with smaller-scope campaigns within each of their agendas. The process of accomplishing a goal, learning from the process, and then moving on to the next target is more motivating to staff than simply “doing landowner outreach” in an ongoing and repetitive way.

Creating a Campaign Timeline

- Can be developed using Excel, work management apps, etc. and can be visualized as a table, calendar or Gantt chart.
- Reference slow-release approach for outreach staff hours for each campaign.
- What are the outreach goals, both internally and externally? Which internal and external stakeholders are part of the project?
- Determine a timeline for the campaign.
- Create a to-do list and estimate how long each task will take (Select an event space: 2 weeks, Set agenda: 3 weeks, Create mailing advertisement and newspaper ad: 1 week, etc.).

- Map out dependencies - some tasks can be worked on simultaneously especially when they are assigned to different teammates. However, some tasks cannot be started before others are completed.

Outreach Frequency per year PER CAMPAIGN

- Local media (podcasts, newsletters, newspapers, local magazines, chamber of commerce, local news stations)– quarterly.
- Social media - weekly.
- Local group discussions - monthly.
- Mailings- 2-3 times a year.
- Workshops- twice a year.
- Events- once a year per event.
- Meetings- visit each group once a year.
- School outreach- once a year.

Phases of a Campaign Timeline



Planning is the time it takes to organize the campaign, plan the items of action, and create content.



Execution is the time spent promoting/advertising a topic, event, program, etc.



Launch could mean hosting the event, releasing a new program, offering a new service, etc.

Example Campaign Timeline

Planning	Status	Timeline	Dependent On	Planned Effort	Spent Effort	Budget	Completion Date
Task 1:							
Execution	Status	Timeline	Dependent On	Planned Effort	Spent Effort	Budget	Completion Date
Task 1:							
Launch	Status	Timeline	Dependent On	Planned Effort	Spent Effort	Budget	Completion Date
Task 1:							



Drinking Water Priority Outreach Calendar (Year 1)

(Campaign timelines only shown for this example).

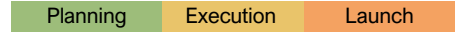
Shown on the next two pages is an example month by month overview and a one-month snapshot of what the Watershed’s outreach calendars can look like.

Example resource prioritization profile: Drinking water/well water (year 1 of Slow-Release Approach)

***Underlined campaigns target the priority resource.**

- Things to include in the 12-month calendar overview:
- Campaign timelines.
 - Months of Awareness.
 - Project deadlines & sign-up dates.
 - Outlier events.

Campaign Key



Quarter 1		
January	February	March
<p><u>Women Landowner Outreach</u></p>	<p><u>Vineyard Outreach</u></p>	<p><u>Manure Spreading Workshop</u></p> <p><u>Door to Door Campaign</u></p>
<p><u>Septic System Assessment & Awareness</u></p>		
<p><u>Billboard for Nitrates - Have Your Drinking Water Tested</u></p>		<p>Shoreline Restoration Promotion</p>
Quarter 2		
April	May	June
<p><u>Conservation Irrigation & Irrigators Education & Workshops</u></p>		
<p><u>Nitrate Testing Clinic</u></p>		<p><u>Golf Courses Outreach</u></p>
<p>Shoreline Restoration Promotion</p>		<p>Water Recreation Awareness & Education</p>
Quarter 3		
July	August	September
<p><u>Rain Garden Promotion</u></p>	<p>Forestry Management Education & Awareness</p>	
<p><u>Well Sealing Education & Awareness</u></p>		
<p><u>Cover Crop Education & Awareness</u></p>		
<p><u>“Get to know your Watershed” Campaign</u></p>		
Quarter 4		
October	November	December
<p>Forestry Management Education & Awareness</p>	<p><u>Beginning Farmer Education & Workshops</u></p>	
<p><u>No-Till/Conservation Tillage Education & Awareness</u></p>	<p>Road Salt Awareness</p>	
<p><u>School Outreach</u></p>		<p>Handwritten thank you cards</p>
<p>Tree Planting Order Promotion</p>	<p>Soil Health Education & Awareness</p>	

**Further suggestions for campaign options are located within the appendix of this document.*

January Example Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 <i>Holiday</i>	2	3 Finalize this year's campaign timelines Begin planning for Nitrate Awareness Billboard	4
5	6 Send communicators this quarter's outreach calendar	7 Begin planning event for Women Outreach	8 Finalize the key components of message for billboard	9 Check-in in with communicators for feedback on this quarters outreach calendar	10 Determine priority area for billboard placement	11
12	13 Research open billboard spaces	14 Finalize event space for Women's Outreach event Contact preferred billboard spaces	15 Finalize flyer for Women's Outreach event & send to communicators	16 Begin promoting Women's Outreach event & handout/email flyers to local businesses & Chamber of Commerce	17 Confirm visual components of billboard	18
19	20 Begin planning agenda for Septic System Awareness campaign & onsite travel dates Finalize billboard	21 Promote Women's Outreach event on social media	22 Determine date/location for contractor meeting	23	24 Finalize mailing list for Women's Outreach event Develop postcard mailing to contractors	25
	26 Send mailing out for Women's Outreach event Research contractor lists for mailing	27 Finalize postcard mailing to contractors	28 Promote Women's Outreach on social media Determine date/location for future landowner meeting	29 Develop email to send to contractors promoting event	30 Finalize newspaper ad for Women's Outreach event	31

Example of ongoing campaigns for the month of January

Campaign	Start Date	End Date
Billboard for Nitrates - Have Your Drinking Water Tested	January 3rd	March 10th
Women Landowner Outreach	January 7th	February 8th
Septic System Assessment & Awareness	January 20th	March 29th

Types of Measurable Outputs

These are just a few examples of outputs can be used to track and promote outreach success and to be used in progress reports.



of teachers and classrooms engaged.



of workshops and seminars given.



of participants/projects/partners identified.



of stakeholder group meetings.



of farmers using BMPs.



of feet of shoreline restored.



of water testing kits distributed.



of Woodland Stewardship plans.



of acres under nutrient management plans.



of unused wells closed.

FURTHER CAPABILITIES & CONCLUSION

Tracking our Progress

Monitoring progress and knowing the impact of our outreach efforts is crucial. We can document ongoing and preferred activities, identify strategies moving forward, track noteworthy news, and monitor success of campaigns to adjust and further advance our outreach efforts.

Different techniques call for different measurements. A webinar invitation requires tracking attendee numbers, participation engagement, and follow-up conversations, whereas an email campaign might look more at open and response rates and click-through rates.

Quarterly Progress Reports

A great way to evaluate and share our outreach progress with stakeholders. Quarterly progress reports can include:

- Breakdown of time management
- Measurable outputs which utilizes outreach, social media, and landowner calendars for reference
- An alignment of budget to actual
- Documentation and organization of outreach performance

Types of Evaluation Indicators

Process Measures - Indicates how well our outreach was conducted while monitoring landowners' activity and responses.

Outcome Measures - Geared towards our communication objectives and evaluates whether or not our target audience took the desired actions.

Impact Measures - These are the measures that impact the land and assess whether the communication assisted in accomplishing overall outreach/Watershed were effective.

Assessment of Capabilities

*To be analyzed at the beginning of each new year

Leadership

- Does leadership have everything they need to set direction, align resources, inspire team?

Skills and Systems

- Are skills, abilities, and systems in place to support initiative?

Structure

- Does our organizational structure help or hurt efforts?

Financial Capacity

- Can we support the level of financial investment required to realize success?

Creating and Supporting Outreach Staff

Mentorship Program

- Maintain a strong mentorship program to provide ongoing support and guidance.

Team Integration

- Facilitate team-building activities and encourage participation in team meetings and events to strengthen relationships.

Professional Development

- Provide opportunities for training, growth, and development.



Management of Plan

Align and Execute

- Identify critical gaps and constraints we need to overcome to ensure success.

Inspire Action

- Empower key leaders and project managers to drive action toward goals.

Commit to Implementation Framework

- Develop reasonable and achievable pace around implementation to institutionalize progress.

Elevating our Watershed

Creating a solid foundation that outlines the Long Prairie River Watershed's outreach strategy will increase our efficiency, affirm priority programs, lower stress and pressure on personnel, help achieve deliverables, and provide greater awareness and engagement from the community.

The Watershed's approach and ways of engagement can evolve over time as new understandings emerge. Our outreach strategy is not set in stone. Just as market trends change, we will adapt our methods to stay relevant and resilient in our efforts to foster an environment of resource stewardship throughout the Long Prairie River Watershed.

Additional Options for Outreach Campaigns

Education

- Educational “Quick-Courses” for certified users
- Educational quick courses winter series for landowners -each course focuses on a different conservation practice
- Beginning Farmer business classes & workshops - speakers include financial and conservation experts
- Youth Outdoor Activity Day
- Local Realtor Continuing Education - focused on recreational land, conservation easements, sharing resources with buyers
- Farm Transition Planning Workshop
- Sustainability club startups at schools

General

- Spring Photo Contest
- Fall photo contest
- Staff Bingo Outreach
- Conservation Geocache Contest
- Native plant spot light

Ground Water Focused

- Well Contractor Mailing, Workshop, Certification
- Spring planting giftbags - geared towards urban landowners: pollinator seeds, garden gloves, information on upcoming events, brochures/handouts on native planting/pollinators

Habitat Fragmentation Focused

- “Neature” Walk Series - family walks, youth nature walks, etc.
- Bird watching tour series
- Habitat Contractor Training & Certification
- “How to protect your trees during construction” for homeowners
- Timber stand workshop
- Habitat Cooperative Brats and Brew
- Long Prairie River Canoe Trip
- Food Plot and habitat workshop
- Signup for high tunnel installation assistance - or installation video series

Sediment Focused

- Local Ag & Commodity Group Mailing
- Champion Farmer Panel/Field Day
- Small-Scale Ag Outreach

Stormwater Focused

- Turf-to-Native Outreach
- “Have you seen this bee?” campaign
- Water Recreation Awareness & Education
- Shoreline Restoration Video Series
- Shoreline Restoration boat tour
- Urban Stormwater Management Promotion
- Landscape Contractor Mailing, Workshop, Certification
- Lake Association Presentations

Nutrients Focused

- Absentee Landowner Webinar Series
- Manure Applicator Mailing
- Manure Storage engineer hotline
- Annual tractor show



Drinking Water Priority Outreach Calendar Example

(Campaign timelines only).

Example resource prioritization profile: Drinking water/well water (Year 1 & 6 of Slow-Release Approach)

Campaign Key

Relating to all Resources	Groundwater	Fragmentation of Habitat	Stormwater	Sediment	Nutrients
---------------------------	-------------	--------------------------	------------	----------	-----------

Quarter 1		
January	February	March
Women Landowner Outreach	Staff Bingo Outreach	Feedlot Workshop
Ag Professional Mailing	Small-Scale Ag Outreach	Door to Door Campaign
Landowner Well-Sealing Mailing	Well Contractor Mailing, Workshop, Certification	Research Geo-Marketing
"Get to Know Your Watershed" Campaign	Irrigation & Irrigators Education & Workshops	
Quarter 2		
April	May	June
Site Visits for Priority Landowners		
Nitrate Testing Clinic	Spring Photo Contest	Turf-to-Native Outreach
Planting Gift Bags	Shoreline Restoration Video Series	Water Recreation Awareness & Education
Waterfests and School Education	Create Drinking Water Literature	Drive-In Theater Ads
Quarter 3		
July	August	September
Urban Stormwater Management Promotion	Shoreline Restoration Tour	Neature Walk Series
No-Till/Conservation Tillage/Nutrient Education & Awareness	Women Landowner Workshop	
Door to Door Follow Up	Cover Crop Education & Awareness	YouTube Watershed Channel
Conservation Billboard for Habitat	Youth Outdoor Activity Day-Alexandria	Conservation Billboard for Habitat
Quarter 4		
October	November	December
Build Educational "Quick-Courses" for Certified Users	Beginning Farmer Education & Workshops	
Absentee Landowner Webinar Series		Road Salt Awareness
Waterfests and School Education	Harvest Gift Bags	Habitat Postcard Mailing
Tree Planting Mailing	Implement Geo-Marketing	Hand-Written Thank You Cards

Fragmentation of Habitat Priority Outreach Calendar Example

(Campaign timelines only).

Example resource prioritization profile: Fragmentation of Habitat (Year 2 & 7 of Slow-Release Approach)

Campaign Key

Relating to all Resources	Groundwater	Fragmentation of Habitat	Stormwater	Sediment	Nutrients
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Quarter 1		
January	February	March
Conservation Easement & Habitat Mailing	Small-Scale Ag Outreach	Feedlot Workshop
Habitat Podcast	Attend and Sponsor Outdoor Banquets	Door to Door Campaign
Amish Outreach	Create Habitat Literature	Habitat Contractor Training & Certification
Establish LinkedIn Account	"Get to Know Your Watershed" Campaign	Staff Bingo Outreach
Quarter 2		
April	May	June
Site Visits for Priority Landowners		
Planting Gift Bags	Food Plot and Habitat Workshop	Drive-In Theater Ads
Waterfests and School Education	Shoreline Restoration Promotion	Water Recreation Awareness & Education
Local Realtor Continuing Education	Nitrate Testing Clinic	Pints and Pollinators
Quarter 3		
July	August	September
Rain Garden Promotion	Timber Stand Workshop	Habitat Cooperative Brats and Brew
Neature Walk Series	Well Sealing Education & Awareness	Habitat Tour
No-Till/Conservation Tillage Education & Awareness	Cover Crop Education & Awareness	Build High School Conservation Curriculum
Long Prairie River Canoe Trip	Youth Outdoor Activity Day-Alexandria	Women in Conservation Wine & Cheese
Quarter 4		
October	November	December
Create Sediment, Stormwater, and Nutrients Literature		
Local Ag & Commodity Group Mailing	Contact All Watershed FFA Chapters	Road Salt Awareness
Tree Planting Mailing	Harvest Gift Bags	Public Speaking in High School Classrooms
Waterfests and School Education	Farm Transition Planning Workshop	Hand-Written Thank You Cards

Sediment Priority Outreach Calendar Example

(Campaign timelines only).

Example resource prioritization profile: Sediment (Year 3 & 8 of Slow-Release Approach)

Campaign Key

Relating to all Resources	Groundwater	Fragmentation of Habitat	Stormwater	Sediment	Nutrients
---------------------------	-------------	--------------------------	------------	----------	-----------

Quarter 1		
January	February	March
Women Ag Landowner Mailing	Agronomist Workshop	Feedlot Workshop
Priority Landowner Mailing	Small-Scale Ag Outreach	Door to Door Campaign
Habitat Workshop	Create Virtual Tour of Erosion Control	Implement Dealer Workshop
Implement Dealer Mailing	“Get to Know Your Watershed” Campaign	Staff Bingo Outreach
Quarter 2		
April	May	June
Site Visits for Priority Landowners		
Gardening with Native Plants Workshop	Nitrate Testing Clinic	Drive-In Theater Ads
Spring Photo Contest	Planting Gift Bags	Water Recreation Awareness & Education
Waterfests and School Education	Establishing Native Prairie Video Series	Parade Float in Festivals
Quarter 3		
July	August	September
Test-Drive Conservation Equipment	Erosion Control Bus Tour	Burgers and Buffers
Door to Door Follow Up	Well Sealing Education & Awareness	“Neature” Walk Series
Organic Transition and Conservation Workshop	Cover Crop Education & Awareness	
Long Prairie Drone Photos	Youth Outdoor Activity Day-Alexandria	Develop Wetland Restoration Video Series
Quarter 4		
October	November	December
Waterfests and School Education	Public Speaking in High School Classrooms	Road Salt Awareness
Website Updates	Introduction to Beekeeping	Priority Landowner, City, and Township Mailing
Tree Planting Mailing	Harvest Gift Bags	Hand-Written Thank You Cards
Create and Revise Drinking Water, Habitat, Sediment, Stormwater, and Nutrients Literature		

Stormwater Priority Outreach Calendar Example

(Campaign timelines only).

Example resource prioritization profile: Stormwater (Year 4 & 9 of Slow-Release Approach)

Campaign Key

Relating to all Resources	Groundwater	Fragmentation of Habitat	Stormwater	Sediment	Nutrients
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Quarter 1		
January	February	March
Lender Outreach	Staff Bingo Outreach	Feedlot Workshop
Priority Landowner Mailing	Small-Scale Ag Outreach	Door to Door Campaign
Habitat Workshop	Landscape Contractor Mailing, Workshop, Certification	
"Get to Know Your Watershed" Campaign		City and Township Outreach
Quarter 2		
April	May	June
Site Visits for Priority Landowners		
Nitrate Testing Clinic	Planting Gift Bags	Lake Association Presentations
Turf-to-Native Workshop	DIY Shoreline Restoration/Raingarden Workshop	Drive-In Theater Ads
Waterfests and School Education	Woodland Stewardship Webinar	Parade Float in Festivals
Quarter 3		
July	August	September
Long Prairie River Canoe Trip	Water Storage Bus Tour	Introduction to Silvopasture
Long Prairie Watershed Virtual Fishing Contest	Youth Outdoor Activity Day-Alexandria	Conservation Cookbook
Pasture Walk	Cover Crop Education & Awareness	Fall Photo Contest
Champion Farmer Panel/Field Day	Stormwater Retrofit Video Series	Neature Walk Series
Quarter 4		
October	November	December
Create Sediment, Stormwater, and Nutrients Literature		
Manure Applicator Mailing	Public Speaking in High School Classrooms	Road Salt Awareness
Tree Planting Mailing	Call Local Chamber Groups	Hand-Written Thank You Cards
Waterfests and School Education	Harvest Gift Bags	Manure Storage Landowner Mailing

Nutrients Priority Outreach Calendar Example

(Campaign timelines only).

Example resource prioritization profile: Nutrients (Year 5 & 10 of Slow-Release Approach)

Campaign Key

Relating to all Resources	Groundwater	Fragmentation of Habitat	Stormwater	Sediment	Nutrients
---------------------------	-------------	--------------------------	------------	----------	-----------

Quarter 1		
January	February	March
Women Landowner Outreach	Staff Bingo Outreach	Feedlot Workshop
Manure Applicator Mailing	Small-Scale Ag Outreach	Door-to-Door Outreach
Habitat Workshop	Establish a Local Farmer Mentorship Program	Watershed Story Maps
"Get to Know Your Watershed" Campaign		Manure Applicator Workshop & Certification
Quarter 2		
April	May	June
Site Visits for Priority Landowners		
Low-Impact Development Workshop	Nitrate Testing Clinic	Drive-In Theater Ads
High Tunnel/Urban Ag Tour	Planting Gift Bags	Watershed Conservation Tour
Watershed Park Pick-Up	Controlling Invasive Species	Parade Float in Festivals
Quarter 3		
July	August	September
Manure Storage/Application Tour	Public Speaking at "Hook and Bullet" Clubs	
Pasture Walk	Connect Farmers and Mentors	Neature Walk Series
Door to Door Follow Up	Cover Crop Education & Awareness	Conservation Geocache Contest
Marketing-Farm to Table Series	Youth Outdoor Activity Day-Alexandria	Watershed Conservation Landowner Award
Quarter 4		
October	November	December
Ag Landowner Mailing	Public Speaking in High School Classrooms	Hand-Written Thank You Cards
Landowner Well-Sealing Mailing	Harvest Gift Bags	Watershed Story Maps
Tree Planting Mailing	Long Prairie Watershed Champion Landowner Video Series	
Create Sediment, Stormwater, and Nutrients Literature		

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