Getting In Step

A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns

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

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December 2003
EPA 841-B-03-002

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 publication is a product of the Information Transfer and Outreach Workgroup established by the State–EPA Nonpoint Source Management Partnership. It is based on the original guide *Getting In Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach In Your Watershed*, 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-B-03-001). The 30-minute video 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, contact
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Foreword

Nonpoint source pollution is our nation's largest remaining water quality problem. It is not caused by discharges from big factories or from sewage treatment plants. Rather, it is generated by all of us, a product of millions of actions that we take each day, including activities such as applying pesticides, fertilizing our lawns, or the manner in which we dispose of oil. While most of our individual actions have relatively small impacts on water quality, the cumulative impacts of how we choose to interact with our land and water is huge. However, by becoming more aware of the effect of our actions on our rivers, streams, lakes, and oceans, 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 expands upon a 1998 publication by the Council of State Governments, titled "Getting in Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach in Your Watershed." This update has benefited greatly from new information from the growing field of community-based social marketing, and contains significant additions in every section. It is intended as a reference that pulls together principles, techniques, and information for effective watershed outreach into a single, user-friendly source.

I am particularly pleased to note that this guide was produced by a unique partnership of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and our state colleagues and jointly sponsored by EPA and the Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Control Administrators (ASIWPCA). The guidebook was developed jointly by the State/EPA Nonpoint Source Information Transfer and Outreach Workgroup, which include active representation from EPA and 12 states.

A companion video, 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 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.

Diane C. Regas, Director /**s**/
Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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Introduction

Purpose of this guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide the tools needed 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 an update of the 1998 publication *Getting In Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach in Your Watershed*. This updated version includes more specific information on how to work with the mass media to conduct an outreach campaign. It also provides new information on how to incorporate social marketing techniques into your campaign to generate sustainable behavior changes that will protect water quality. 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 the 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 have jointly developed a how-to video called *Getting In Step: A Video Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns.* This 35-minute video 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 video icon in this guide highlights information from the video case studies.

In addition to the outreach guide and video, EPA recently published a new guide in the *Getting in Step* series on stakeholder involvement.

What's in the Introduction

- Purpose of this guide
- Why is outreach needed?
- What's being done?
- How can outreach help get the job done?
- How can outreach help change behavior?
- What's inside

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

Getting in Step: Engaging and Involving Stakeholders in Your Watershed was released in February 2003. The Stakeholder Guide features information on how to generate interest and participation in watershed assessment, planning, and management. Web-based versions of all these guides are available on EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents.

Why is outreach needed?

We've made a lot of progress cleaning up America's lakes, rivers, and streams since the passage of the 1972 Clean Water Act. We don't have fires on rivers anymore. Fish kills are down, and the quality of sewage treatment has improved dramatically. But even with all 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. In a survey for the *Ninth Annual National Report Card on Environmental Attitudes, Knowledge, and Behaviors* (May 2001), the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation found that 45 percent of respondents believe that the most common cause of water pollution is still factories.

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 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.

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 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
- High storm flows and increased stormwater temperatures

Runoff from farms, homes, or factories in rural areas can contain many of the same pollutants. Multiplied by hundreds or thousands of acres in a watershed, the cumulative effect of polluted runoff can be devastating to the receiving waters downstream.

Point versus nonpoint

Point source pollution is defined as pollution that comes from factories and sewage treatment plants. It is usually discharged to waterbodies through pipes.

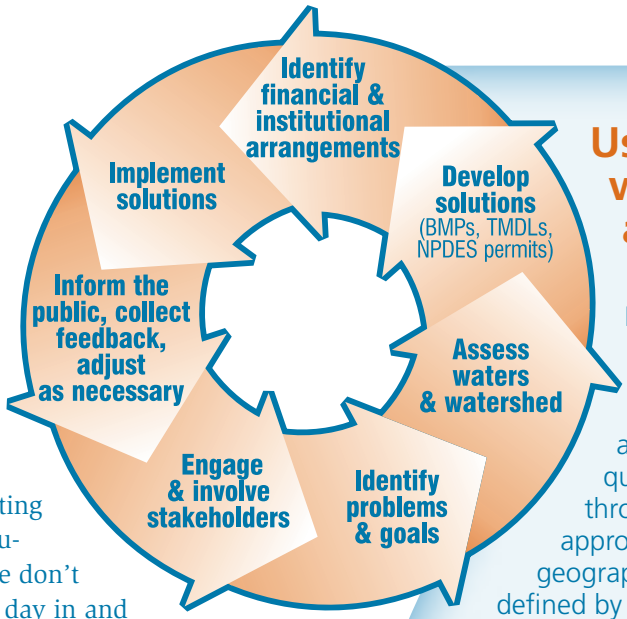
Nonpoint source pollution (also called polluted runoff) comes from many diffuse sources. It occurs when rainfall or snowmelt moves over and through the ground. As it moves, this runoff picks up pollutants like dirt, oil, and fertilizers and carries them to lakes, rivers, coastal waters, and even our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

What's being done?

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, septic tanks). They're implementing best management practices (BMPs) to reduce polluted runoff and launching new initiatives to educate people and motivate them to change their own 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 will require education, enlightenment, and new attitudes. When people know, understand, and change how they do things, polluted runoff problems can be solved.

How can outreach 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. For example, Phase II of EPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) stormwater regulations, which calls for small 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 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 watershed results 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.

How can outreach 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 the professionals have found, sometimes simply informing and educating people on the issues is not enough to initiate behavior change. The most effective way to get people to change their behavior is through social marketing.

Social marketing means looking at the target audience as consumers. Instead of selling products or services, social marketing 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 social marketing campaigns persuade the public that a problem exists that only they can solve. The campaigns benefit the public at large and the environment.

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. This approach will go a lot further toward getting people to test their soil than merely sending out a flyer in the mail. The key to effective social marketing is talking and listening to the people you're trying to reach.

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 presents the outreach process as discrete steps, with each step building on the previous ones. The steps are as follows:

- Define the driving forces, goals, and objectives
- Identify and analyze the target audience
- Create the message
- Package the message
- Distribute the message
- Evaluate the outreach campaign

Appendices 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, Web sites, phone numbers, 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...

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

Part 1: 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, 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 one. Each step is more or less defined by 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—identifying measurable objectives or defining target audiences, for example—are ignored. Such an unfocused approach is often ineffective and wasteful.

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

Once you've decided to take on an outreach campaign, you'll need to identify its driving forces. You'll also need to set goals and objectives to 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

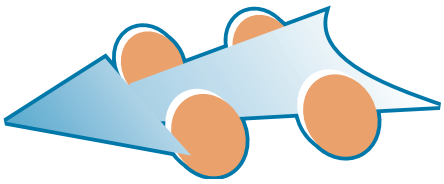
Identifying the forces that are driving the need for an outreach campaign will help determine the scope of the campaign and focus it on exactly what will get the job done. The driving force for a campaign often centers around a specific issue, such as a violation of state or federal water quality standards, the need to upgrade an NPDES permit to expand wastewater treatment capacity, or unmanaged development that has led to increased flooding and water quality problems.

What's in Part 1

- 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



For example, the City of San Diego faced two powerful driving forces when addressing stormwater pollution—one political and one regulatory. The city initiated "Think Blue" (www.thinkbluesd.org), a stormwater education and pollution prevention campaign, in response to a city council vote to reduce beach postings and closures by 50 percent based on public pressure. 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.

Building Blocks:
Driving Forces, Goals, and Objectives

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 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 1 year and encourage behaviors that will reduce nutrient pollution in local streams and lakes
- Through a 6-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

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 individually to help meet the objectives of the TMDL. 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 and Involving Stakeholders In Your Watershed*. The stakeholder guide is available on EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents.

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've decided that outreach is needed to increase public awareness about the importance of the trout fishery to the community and 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

TMDLs as a driving force

A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still meet water quality standards, and an allocation of that amount to the pollutant's sources.

For the past 10 years, TMDLs have increasingly become the driving force behind major water quality improvement projects across the country. In 1998 states reported more than 41,800 impairments affecting some 20,000 waterbodies. An estimated 36,000 TMDLs for these waters might need to be completed in the next 8 to 13 years. Many states are subject to even shorter, court-ordered schedules for their TMDLs.

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?"

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 very 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 enable you to 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. Listed below are some general watershed project goals, with examples of the types of outreach objectives that should be considered for each goal:

Goal: Create a grassroots watershed association.
Objective: Within 6 months, identify five organizations willing to become project partners by signing a Memorandum of Agreement.

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.

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.

Goal: Identify and prioritize stressors or problems preventing attainment of the vision.
Objective: Educate the target audience about how the identified stressors affect water quality, the types of management practices that might be needed, and how the prioritization process works through presentations and exhibits at three currently scheduled community events (county fair, Stream Cleanup Day, and Lions Club Antique Festival).

During a 2001 focus group study, EPA found that 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 importance of understanding what a watershed is in addressing the problem of nonpoint source pollution. Linking the problem to the causes is often the most important stage of education.

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 2 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. 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 region of the country might not work in another region, state, or even county. 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.

"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.thinkbluesd.org

Check out the Getting In Step video.

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

- ❑ 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 that 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?

What's in Step 2

- Segmenting the audience
- Determining what information is needed
- Gathering audience profile information
- Analyzing and understanding the audience

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.

Think of the audience as your customer. You're selling a message. You want the audience to "buy" behaviors and attitudes that will achieve your goal. For the audience to want to buy those behaviors and attitudes, you need to persuade them that the behaviors will satisfy their needs. 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 saving time, saving money, or gaining social prestige—more so than protecting the environment. Ask yourself, "What's in it for them?" Finding out what's important to the audience will help you craft the message that will resonate with them most effectively.

Be sure to read Step 2 fully before you begin to identify and segment the audience. The section "Analyzing and understanding the audience" (page 23) 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 a starting point only. You will have to define the audience further in Step 2.)

Geographic location

Audiences are segmented based on 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 based on 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

Audiences are segmented based on the primary occupations of the target audience in the watershed, such as owners of lawn care companies, developers, county commissioners, automobile service station managers, loggers, or livestock producers.

Behavior patterns

Audiences are segmented based on current practices, e.g., residents who don't recycle, homeowners who dispose of leaves and grass clippings on stream banks, 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 based on 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 the critical mass to spread on its own. Dr. Everett M. Rogers developed this theory after more than 30 years of research. In his book *Diffusion of Innovations*, Dr. Rogers discusses five categories of people within an audience that generally adopt new behaviors

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 protect a local stream from being turned into a shopping center parking lot.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

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*** *are often seen as venturesome. They frequently have high education levels, high social status, and upward social mobility. They are usually better able than others to cope with uncertainty and high risk.*

- ***Early adopters*** *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*** *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.*

Neighborly outreach

The Empowerment Institute (EI), a consulting company that specializes in designing behavior change programs, has developed a Livable Neighborhood Water Stewardship Program, a residential nonpoint source behavior change and outreach program. The program may be used in a generic format or can be customized to meet the specific needs of a municipality or non profit organization. It is delivered by municipal or non profit staff who receive program materials, comprehensive training and coaching from EI. Participants receive EI's Creating a Water Friendly Lifestyle handbook, which identifies over 30 specific actions they can select from, such as "No Phos-for-Us" (phosphorus-free car washing), "A No Rainer" (installing a rain barrel), and "Catch It While You Can" (creating a rain garden). Citizen participation is achieved by identifying the most motivated persons in a neighborhood to start the ball rolling.

This Team Leader then convenes and leads a Water Stewardship Team consisting of five or six neighborhood households. They meet five times over a 2-month period and support each other in carrying out the actions. The program piques citizens' interest in getting to know their neighbors better and, most important, finding out how they can become good water stewards. The Team members help each other to reduce water pollution and engage in other practical, water friendly behaviors. The program teaches participants how to reach out to their neighbors, host informational meetings in their homes, and start new teams. Behavior changes are documented through baseline and follow-up questionnaires. Visit **www.empowermentinstitute.net** to learn more.

- *The **late majority** is the largest of the five categories. These people are conservative, often set in their ways, and skeptical about trying new things and adopting new behaviors.*

- ***Laggards** 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.*

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 the members of these categories, they can become partners to start the diffusion process in their own circles. Because they are considered to be 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.

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 cannot 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.

Basic information needed about the target audience

- What are the demographics of the audience?
- What is the knowledge base of the audience regarding watershed issues?
- How does the audience receive information?
- How do members of the audience communicate among themselves?
- Does the audience think there is a problem?
- If so, who do they think is responsible?
- How does the audience perceive your organization?

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 television, 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.

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 neutral atmosphere that fostered cooperation among the attendees.

Knowledge of the issue

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 not, 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? If not favorably, you might want to have someone else deliver your message.

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 television? Do they even have televisions? 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 perceives to be unbiased.

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 changing behavior, 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 on 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 in certain ways, 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.

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). Any information you collect will make your campaign stronger, so don't worry if you don't have access to a Census Bureau database or can't make your survey results statistically significant. Research other campaigns targeted at the audience by other organizations or municipalities 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 Web site (http://factfinder.census.gov) or at RoperASW (www.roperasw.com), a commercial site focused on consumer attitudes, shopping styles, and media habits.

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

Demographic databases

All sorts of databases 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 2000. These data are available through the Internet from the U.S. Census Bureau at www.census.gov and from local libraries. 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/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 20.

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/Cons. Public agencies might have access to large populations and have information on the target audiences collected over a long period of time. The agencies might not, however, have this information in a readily available format. Agency personnel might not be forthcoming

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 characterization

with personal information on the composition, perceptions, or values of the target group.

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/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 be biased toward their constituency, however, and might not be available for outside use.

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 that information, and how the data will be tabulated. This planning can save a lot of anguish once 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 want to offer giveaways to survey respondents as incentives to participate.

Pros/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. 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) 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 can sometimes be 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 and move on to the next one. Hold practice sessions to be sure that all surveyors ask the questions the same way. Schedule calls at mixed times—some during weekends, some during the day, but most in the early evening.

Pros/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.

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 Web site, respondents visiting the site can respond to the survey through online forms.

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.cwp.org/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. 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."

Conduct the survey

You've identified the issues, selected your sample, and designed the questionnaire. 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 13.

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

Web Surveyor, **www.websurveyor.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 are

- **Nonrepresentative sample**

Ensuring a representative sample is the first step to preventing survey bias. For example, daytime-only phone surveys 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 are more likely to get responses.

- **Leading questions**

Do not 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." 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 **www.thinkbluesd.org/literature.htm**). The City is able to change the direction of its outreach program, if needed, based on the survey results.

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 listserver, 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 Web site and put plenty of advertising on the homepage. People visiting your site will have the opportunity to anonymously fill out the survey at their own pace.

Pros/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 if the user has problems downloading attachments. Web surveys assume that members of your target audience visit your Web site 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.

For more information on conducting surveys, see the boxes on pages 14 and 15.

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/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 for several months. Finally, the skills of the interviewer can make or break the interview.

Focus groups

Focus groups provide an opportunity to meet with several members of 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, many people have jobs during the day and are available to meet only after 5:00 p.m.

The focus group should be handled by an outside moderator to avoid introducing bias into the results. A series of questions are asked to the group, and the answers are recorded on flip charts or video/audio tape. 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.

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. (immediately after 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)

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.

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 the participant to feel more comfortable speaking in front of strangers and to see where he or she fits 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 new ideas.

Strongly consider recording your focus group on audio or videotape 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. Remember: Body language is 60 percent of communication. And if you plan to record the session, be sure to let the participants know 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.)

Pros/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 a few participants, the time demand on participants is considerable, and their success depends largely on the skills of the moderators. In addition, focus groups might not be suitable for certain cultures where peer pressure or deference to others could inhibit discussion.

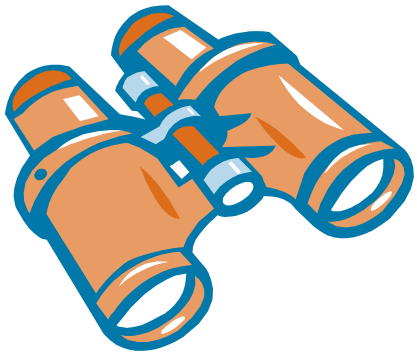
Community/neighborhood discussions

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 needs.

Schedule discussions on weekday evenings and weekends to attract working and nonworking residents. Try to get as much information as you can in as short a time period as possible because your attendees are likely to have busy schedules. Be sure to 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/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.



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 (facial expression, body language, etc.) accompanied the target behavior.

Pros/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 are doing and why. Often you might have to observe people for hours before you see them engage in the target behavior, if at all; thus the time commitment for this method is unpredictable.

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 ncepiwo@one.net. It's also available in PDF format on the Web at **www.epa.gov/ecocommunity/pdf/ccecomplete.pdf**.

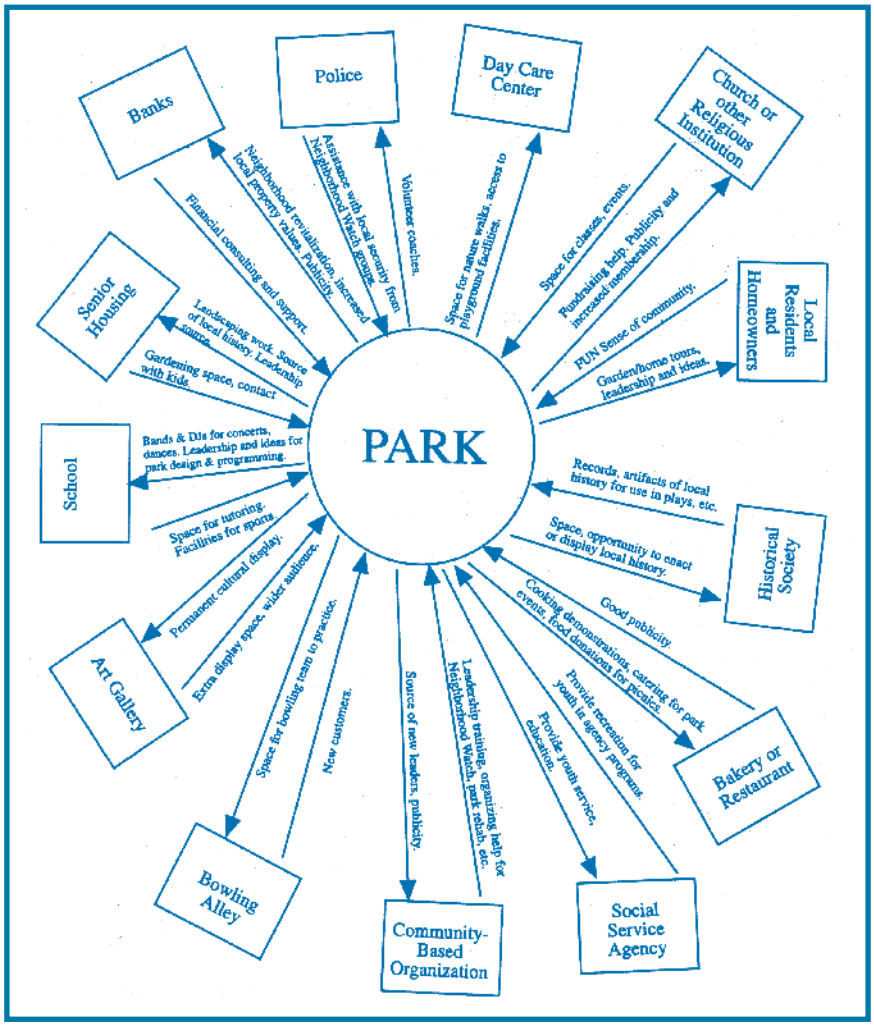
Community cultural assessment and characterization

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 failed. 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 of the methods already discussed in this section (e.g., focus groups, community meetings). 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.

Collecting information to characterize the community might help you understand why past outreach efforts might have failed and what can be changed to achieve your objectives. In addition, if your goal is very broad, such as raising general watershed awareness, characterizing your community members might help you to better focus your objectives based on who talks to whom in the community, how information flows through its members, and how individuals view their community and watershed issues. Characterizing the community will help you answer key questions about the community's values, attitudes, and beliefs and how they relate to your organization's goals and objectives.

Asset Map



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

Pros/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 carefully and only when appropriate.

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 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. Each type of map is explained further in the following sections.

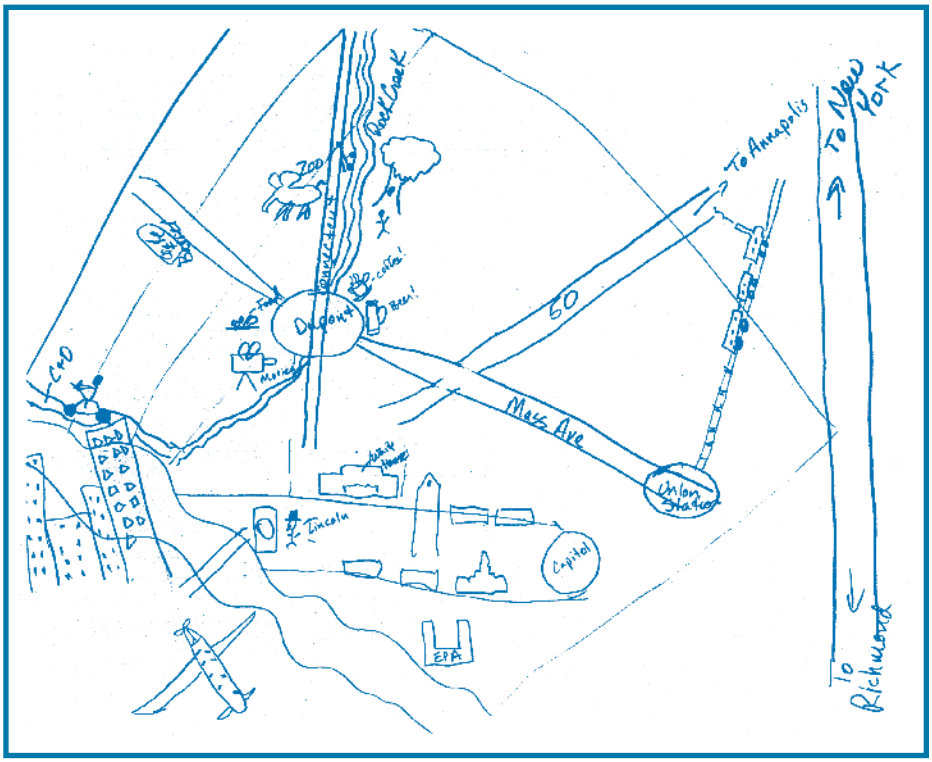
Asset maps

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.

Cognitive maps

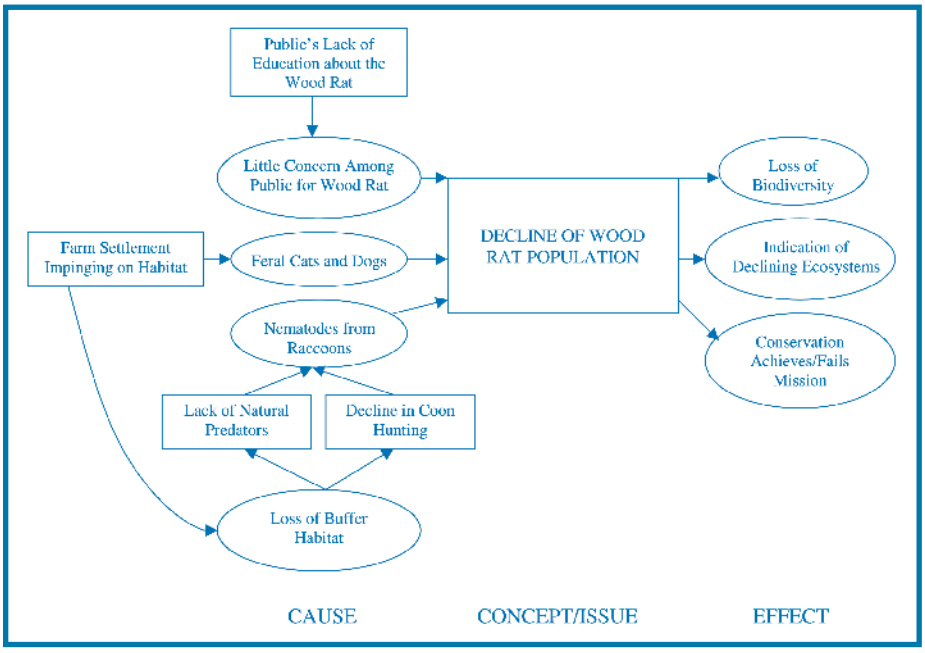
Cognitive maps help individuals and groups visualize how they perceive their community and surroundings through self-made drawings. Based on the maps, you can learn what different people see as the community's center, which elements of their community are most important to them (e.g., parks, churches, 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 aid in the distribution of your message.

Cognitive Map



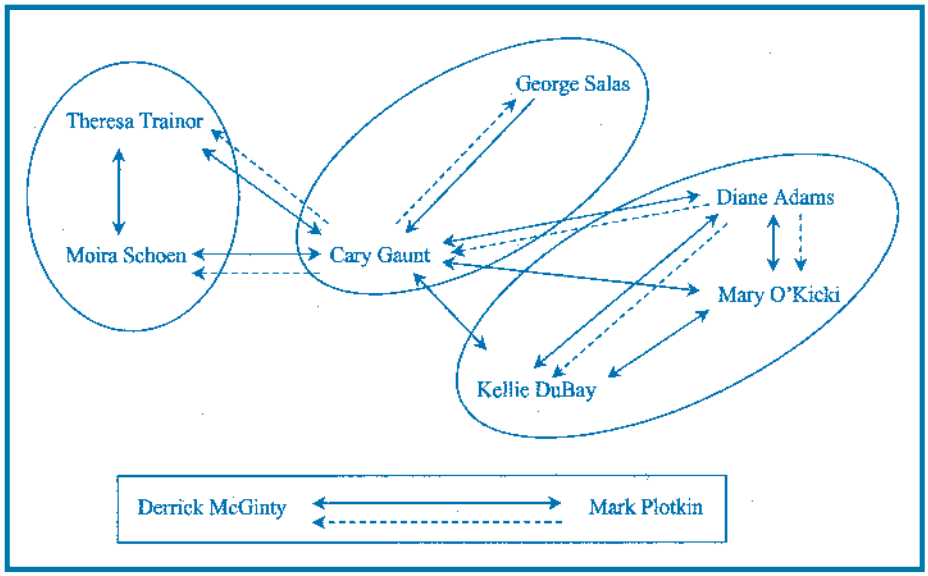
Source: *Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place*, U.S. EPA, 2003.

Concept Map



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

Social Network Map



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

Concept maps

A concept map identifies the relationships between 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. Using social network maps will show you to whom people go for advice in the community (opinion leaders), who is the most "connected" in the community (information disseminators), which individuals or groups bridge gaps between different social groups (gatekeepers), and which individuals or groups are isolated from the rest of the community and thus might require more education and awareness before they can be expected to take action. Some groups could be isolated by language barriers, customs, or beliefs. Social network mapping may be especially valuable for small communities or rural areas because those populations are often less segmented.

Pros/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. In addition, participants get the chance to analyze the data, which might provide unique insights that only members of the target audience could provide. One of the disadvantages of cognitive mapping is the tendency of people to spend too much time on the artistic quality of the map instead of its content. 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.

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. Barriers 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 what motivates people not to engage in environmentally friendly behavior. For example, many people do not pick up after their pets. Most think that pet waste is a part of nature and that it biodegrades quickly. Many 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

Mapping resources

Decision Explorer: Getting Started with Cognitive Mapping by Fran Ackermann, Colin Eden, and Steve Cropper
www.banxia.com/depaper.html

Mental Maps by Peter Gould and Rodney White
Available from Routledge Publishers
www.routledge.com

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 misunderstanding 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 cases studies like this one, visit **www.toolsofchange.com**, a Canadian community-based social marketing Web site that includes more than 70 case studies on community programs across North America.

of dog poop has more than 20 million *E. coli* bacteria colonies in it (not to mention the nitrogen and phosphorus it contains). Others believe they don't have time to stop and scoop or that it is just too unpleasant. Researching your audience 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 include 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. 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.

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 becomes 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 make it unacceptable to continue the 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.

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 television (60 percent).

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 what 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 before they're willing to do it at work.

Building Blocks: 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) homeowners' 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.

Financial incentives

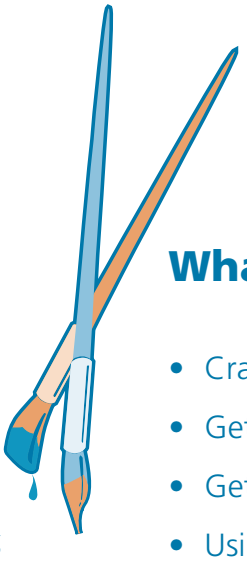
Financial incentives can also change the behaviors of people who believe that protecting the environment is too time-consuming or expensive. The new "Get Green" campaign, developed by the environmental advocacy group Environmental Defense and produced by the Ad Council, uses humor to offer viewers simple, 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.

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, information disseminators, and gatekeepers in the target audience?
- ❑ 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

- Crafting the message
- Getting their attention
- Getting a response
- Using incentives and rewards
- Focusing on behaviors
- Message delivery

After gathering information on members of the target audience, you're ready to craft a message that will engage the audience's members and help achieve your water quality objectives. To be effective, messages must be understood by the target audience and appeal to the people on their own terms. Your message 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, but the two are not the same. Objectives describe final results; messages prompt the knowledge, attitudes, and actions needed to obtain them.

Crafting the message

Messages are designed to raise general awareness, educate, or motivate action. 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 by 4 percent unless they know what the money will be used for, why the expense is necessary, and who will benefit. 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.

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

Messages already out there...

- After you flush, it just doesn't go away—*City of Portland, Oregon*
- Clean water, a bargain at any cost—*Water Environment Federation*
- Water Watch: What boaters can do to be environmentally friendly—*National Marine Manufacturers Association*
- Are you contaminating your drinking water?—*EPA*
- Pollution prevention: it's everyone's job—*U.S. Department of Energy*
- The Bay begins at your front door—*Santa Clara Valley Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program*
- Our environment... begins with your yard—*Virginia Department of Forestry and City of Virginia Beach*
- Go with the flow—understanding watersheds—*New York State Department of Environmental Conservation*
- Scoop the poop—*City of Austin, Texas, and Anchorage Waterways Council*
- Please don't feed the storm drain—*Texas Commission on Environmental Quality*

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 drain to the bay." According to *Fostering Sustainable Behavior* by Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith, campaigns should simultaneously inform and suggest acceptable behaviors. People tend to do the right thing when they observe others doing it first. An example in *Fostering Sustainable Behavior* describes a group of psychologists performing a study on norms and recycling in 1990. They placed flyers on every windshield in a library parking lot. When a person was seen throwing the flyer in a trash can, no one else littered. When the person threw the flyer on the ground, over one-third followed suit.

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. For example, a land manager might be more interested in the amount of time and money he can save by 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, pretesting the message with representatives of the audience to determine its appropriateness will help. Consider displaying the message graphically if the target audience is not fully literate. If the

In Pennsylvania Amish country, convincing dairymen to fence their cows out of the stream worked only 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.

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.

Getting their 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 also 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 following set of approaches 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 5 years.	We'll need to build 10,000 homes, 6 schools, and a hospital by 2008 to keep up with current growth trends.

Using the information you collected on the target audience in Step 2, determine what will get 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 in 2001, 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 messages should be bold, hard-hitting, irreverent, and provocative.

Striking a balance between engaging the audience with a compelling hook and putting them off with hype, overwrought threats, or scare tactics requires careful consideration of the objective, the message, and the audience. 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 3 years and pumped as necessary.*
- *Make your lakeshore a no-mow zone!*

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 others 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 convinc-

ing 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.

Make sure your message includes achievable personal goals, such as having your car inspected for leaks every 3 months. Reasonably achievable goals are more likely to be reached by small behavior changes that you might suggest. Provide incentives and rewards to encourage people to change their behaviors. Keep in mind that you're trying to get people to actually do something. Activities like distributing brochures, hosting workshops, placing ads on the radio, and holding field days are supporting tasks, not the objective itself!

Messages with incentives and rewards

Using financial incentives is one of the best ways to get people involved in your cause. 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 might encourage a few more residents to participate than would 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.

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, like the rising cost of water due to high wastewater treatment costs, can be mentioned in printed materials and on radio and TV.

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

Deciding which behaviors to focus on

To create messages and encourage actions that will help you achieve your overall water quality objectives, 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

Free mowers mean more natural lawns

Every April King County, Washington, cosponsors a program to offer discounts on mulching mowers. The program began in 2000 when the county asked one local neighborhood to forego lawn chemicals and embrace grass mulching. Each of the households in the neighborhood was given 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. **(http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/ResRecy/events/naturalyard.shtml)**

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 like the one presented on page 34 for the Building Blocks case study 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 along with a blank matrix.

Zeroing in on behavior through social marketing

As discussed in this guide, community-based social marketing is the most effective way to encourage behavior change. One of the leading experts on social marketing, Dr. Doug McKenzie-Mohr, an environmental psychologist specializing in designing programs to promote sustainable behavior, published *Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing* in 1999. Dr. McKenzie-Mohr's approach involves identifying barriers to a sustainable behavior, designing a strategy that uses behavior change tools to overcome barriers, piloting the strategy with a small segment of a community, and evaluating the impact of the program once it has been implemented across a community. The behavior selection matrix on page 34 follows a similar path in that it is designed to help organizations choose the behavior that will be the easiest or most important to change.

For more information on Dr. McKenzie-Mohr's work, visit the McKenzie-Mohr & Associates Web site at **www.cbsm.com**.

Message delivery

The next section (Step 3) 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 another person 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.

Building Blocks:

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 their outreach efforts on homeowners, homeowners' 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 you to 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; 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 have 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; 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.*

PROCESS CHECKLIST

Step 3: Create the message

- ❑ Is the message relevant and accessible to the target audience?
- ❑ Is the language of the message appropriate to 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 vivid and memorable?
- ❑ Have I included personal goals in the message?
- ❑ 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?

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").

What's in Step 4

- Linking the audience and formats
- Considering formats
- Repeating the message
- Using the mass media
- Making videos
- Using print materials
- Conducting presentations
- Holding events
- Giveaways
- Mascots
- Using the Internet

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 package or format for the message for eventual delivery to the target audience. The information you collected in Step 2 will help determine the most appropriate format. A farming community might respond more positively to field day events, door-to-door visits, or articles in farm publications than to an Internet and e-mail campaign. When selecting your message format, think about where the target audience gets its information.

Linking the needs of the audience to the format

Making sure that 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 (such as 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 new immigrants from non-English-speaking countries, newsletters or other written formats might not appeal to them; radio or TV public service announcements (PSAs) in their native language would 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 Web site 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?
- How much will it cost, and who will pay for it?
- Are there existing formats or templates that can be tapped into?
- Will it fit in a standard-sized envelope?

Keep in mind that the package and venue for any message are usually linked. For example, printed materials containing environmental messages are often criticized if they're not produced with high post-consumer-content recycled stock. Be mindful of the links between message, format, and distribution. In practice, this might mean announcing a river festival on brightly colored recycled paper or using a radio show on car maintenance to reach automotive do-it-yourselfers.

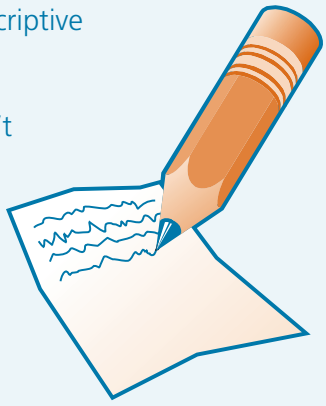
Repeating the message

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

Sharpen your writing skills

There are no hard-and-fast rules or magical formulas for "good writing," but there are some solid guidelines that could add sparkle and strength to almost anyone's words.

- Make sure that 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 and 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.



see their advertisement for a product, the more likely you'll remember the product and the more likely you'll 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.

Format options

The following is an overview of some popular formats; however, it is not meant to be comprehensive. Choose one format (or more) that helps achieve the desired result with the 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 of time, 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, generic radio and TV PSAs can lead into specific ads regarding pet waste, fertilizer use, and vehicle care.

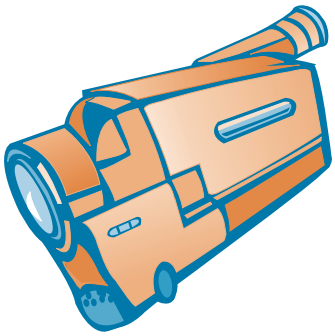
Each format has advantages and disadvantages, and you need to weigh these as you decide which format will resonate most and is most appropriate for the target audience. Other considerations when choosing a format include cost, staff time needed, setup time, production time, schedule, legal requirements, and audience type, level of education, and involvement in the issue. The table on pages 40 and 41 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.



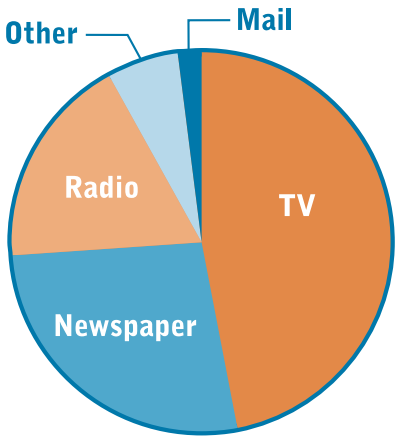
Opportunities to place your message in the media include informational news stories, people features, issue analyses, PSAs, interview programs, call-in shows, editorial columns, and feature items related to sports, recreation, or outdoor living. Each of these formats requires different techniques, which 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 Lake Research, Inc., for the Upper Mississippi River Basin found that 47 percent of watershed residents get their information on river issues from local television news, 27 percent from local newspapers, and 18 percent from radio news. Only 2 percent of those surveyed mentioned environmental mailings as their first or second news source, 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.



Sources of Environmental News

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.

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 • Training on giving interviews might be needed	• Events • Weekly reports • Hot topics • Controversial issues • Public education
Advertising with TV or Radio 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 Web site) • TV ads provide high impact and the ability to demonstrate a behavior	• Stiff competition for air time • Very passive • Difficult to evaluate effectiveness • Can be expensive to produce TV PSAs of suitable quality • Short format often does not allow for more than awareness • 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	• Events • Fundraisers • Building awareness
Videos	• Can discuss an issue in depth • Have control over the content • Can be visually appealing • Can air on cable television stations	• High costs • Hard to do well • Need a good distribution mechanism	• Workshops • Public education • Schools
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 • Require staff time • Passive, not participatory • Only as good as the mailing list used or kiosks and help desks where placed • Audience must have the interest to pick them up and read them • Small ads might not be noticed	• Articles and interviews • Events (announcing and summarizing) • Workshops • Scientific data • Requesting feedback from public • Public education

Choosing the Right Format (cont.)			
Format	**Pros**	**Cons**	**Uses**
Events	• Good for persuasion • Can model positive behavior • More personal • Offer two-way communication	• Might be difficult to reach entire audience • Require staff time • Could be expensive • Potential low attendance • 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 • More personal	• Reach small audiences • Require staff time • Can be too technical • Hard to get commitment to attend; need to offer incentives • Person delivering the presentation could make or break it	• Getting feedback from attendees • Awareness and recognition • Public education
Giveaways	• Increase awareness • Inexpensive • Easy to produce	• Very short message • Not very persuasive • Materials themselves might be considered "pollution" or "junk"	• Awareness building • Distribution at events and workshops • Incentives for participation • Behavior reminders (prompts)
Web sites	• Can reach a large audience • Inexpensive • Easily maintained • Offer up-to-date information	• A challenge to market • Difficult to evaluate effectiveness • A long-term project	• Public education • Returning visitors if material is updated frequently
Internet Listservers	• 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	• Require staff time • Must be durable • Can be specific to an event, which can date the materials	• Awareness and recognition
Billboards	• Can reach a large audience • Visually pleasing	• Very short message • Drivers might not read billboards that require high amounts of attention • Generally high costs	• Awareness and recognition • Behavior reminders (prompts)

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.

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* × *frequency* = *results.*

The number of people receiving your message (reach) multiplied by the number of times they receive it will determine the results of your effort. Hitting the target audience once with a great message just won't do the job. They 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 the product or vote for the 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.

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 local people or issues/documented statistics
- Focus on unique or unusual attributes
- Relate to significant issues or events
- Quote well-known or respected members of the community
- 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 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 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 (www.justwithinreach.com) 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 best be presented 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 you can build an article or broadcast feature around:

- 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.

Get the reporters in your corner

In Utah, the Kids Organized to Protect Our Environment (KOPE) developed a personal rapport with local TV news reporters to gain coverage of their efforts to protect 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, cleanup 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 just 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, ask them about their deadline and try to get the information 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 important.

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 by the planning and management team. 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. People think about only 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 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 on ad infinitum. 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 46). Note the mention of the local city, San Diego, in the first line of the release.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

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 important, their audiences—on water quality issues. The news business is typically slow in the summer, and reporters 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 designated uses, use-based water quality criteria, types of 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 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.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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"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.

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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 5 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.

How to write a news release

News releases are usually one page long, but they can be longer if the subject is sufficiently important. 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 prior to 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 local people or issues/documented statistics
- Focus on unique or unusual attributes
- Relate to significant issues or events
- Quote well-known or respected members of the community
- Affect many people throughout a region
- Involve controversial issues or strong emotions
- Include a celebrity figure
- Are timely

How to send 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 like 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 "###"

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 video news release 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 (pre-taped, edited, and narrated) news item for TV. It is typically 1 to 3 minutes long, often with an additional 3 to 6 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) that stays on the screen for about 5 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 pre-produced 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. VNRs are used by many stations because it saves 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). Read more about Minnesota's VNRs at www.dnr.state.mn.us/new/vnr/faq.html.

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 your letter before publishing it. Include your contact information in case the paper would like to speak with you further. Many newspapers have a page on their Web sites 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 Web site 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 for 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 announcement. 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, radio reaches 96 percent of people over age 12 each week and 77 percent each day! 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.

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 you want to broadcast your PSAs. Request a rate kit from all of 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.

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 the audience once, reach 10 percent of the audience 10 times. That's the best way to get quality results on a limited budget.

To pay or not to pay

Although technically you can 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.

San Diego's "Think Blue" program leveraged the airtime they purchased for their PSAs for more than $250,000 with 32 local broadcasters to receive additional coverage for free. Local broadcasters contributed 774 free airings of the PSAs, 40 news story features, and other promos for an in-kind value in excess of $160,000.

Watershed Radio

The Watershed Radio program, an environmental education project for the Chesapeake Bay watershed, produced a series of 1-minute radio PSAs that highlight different aspects of the watershed. Twelve radio stations spread out over the watershed broadcasted the Watershed Radio PSAs. One of the PSAs is used as an example in the box "How to write and format a PSA" on page 53. For more information, visit **www.serc.si.edu/watershed/index.htm**. Watershed Radio was created by the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and the Sierra Club.

Sea & Shore Radio

In 2001 the Maine Coastal Program, the Maine Sea Grant College Program, and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve reached a wide audience with basic information about the Maine coast's environmental resources through a 1-minute radio series called the Sea & Shore Educational Radio Program. The series featured a range of coastal and marine environmental topics, including beach health, marine debris, and salt marshes. For more information about the series, contact Paul Dest, Maine Coastal Program, at dest@wellsnerrcec.lib.me.us.

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.

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 television, 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 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. In the past radio stations accepted cassette or reel-to-reel tapes. Now 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

How to write and format a radio PSA

1. Use paper with the 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. The script should provide a brief description of the event/issue, including the who, what, when, where, why, and how.
9. The script should 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, 2002

Watershed Radio
Smithsonian Environmental Research Center
Janis Oppelt
Phone: (301) 474-5358
Fax: (301) 261-3415 E-mail: janiso@erols.com
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 Smithsonian 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.

Watershed Radio is produced by the Sierra Club and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. For more information, visit watershedradio.org.

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Going online?

With the increased household use of the Internet, many outreach campaigns are relying more 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. Although only 21 percent, or about 40 million American adults, were connected to the Internet in 1995 (National Science Foundation, **www.nsf.gov/sbe/srs/seind00/frames.htm**), today more than 167 million adults regularly log on at home or at work (Jim Nail, "Online Advertising Eclipsed," Forester Research, 2001). The Ad Council recently reported approximately $391 million in donated advertising space generated from online placements alone—an increase of 500 percent from the year before. The difficulty with online placement is finding out what sites your target audience visits. If your ads are aimed at children, it would be appropriate to post ads on Yahooligans (**www.yahooligans.com**), the Yahoo! page dedicated to kids.

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 scripts are written for the ear, and support your submissions with follow-up calls or letters, or even promotional items like 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 an 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 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 sound provides the picture. 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 Nielsen Media Research's *2000 Report on Television*, Americans watch an average of more than 4 hours of TV a day, or 2 months of TV a year. Television is picture-oriented and action-driven. TV news, according to an industry publication, is always about people. In addition, TV stations search for stories that have emotion, controversy, conflict, and great video and are engaging and compelling. According to a 1997 survey of public affairs directors by the National CASA Association, 47 percent of television PSAs were affiliated with nonprofit organizations. In addition, public affairs directors were more likely to consider children's issues than any other cause.

TV PSAs are a very effective method for educating 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), but they do air PSAs as a public service with free airtime. Look for PSAs currently on the air, and develop your PSA in a similar manner. TV PSAs last 30 seconds or less, similar to the length of a commercial. Short PSAs of 30 seconds are more likely to be aired.

TV production can be expensive and requires experienced technicians and costly camera equipment. For example, the organizers of RiverSmart, a new national campaign 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. 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.

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 6 weeks before the PSA would run. Most stations accept videos on 1-inch, ¾-inch, and Beta tape, though Beta is preferred. DVC-Pro, DV-Cam, and mini DV are digital tape formats that are growing in popularity.

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., and Aaron Neville, Chef Paul Prudhomme, and Kermit the Frog (**www.savelawetlands.org/site/psa.html**).

To gain public interest in stream protection and storm drain stenciling, the City of Honolulu developed PSAs featuring celebrities like Richard Chamberlain, the late John Denver, Jackie Chan, David Copperfield, Hawaiian star Jason Scott Lee, and local comedian Frank De Lima. All of the celebrities generously donated their time. Honolulu's prime time slots were made possible through an agreement with TV stations to air one free prime time message for every paid prime time message (**www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com**).

PSA Fast Facts		
In 2002 West Glen Communications, Inc., a broadcast services company, conducted a survey of public service directors at 157 TV stations and 127 radio stations in its 2002 Television and Radio Survey. The survey provides a snapshot of what TV and radio stations are looking for in PSAs. The complete survey results are available at **www.westglen.com/pr_news.**		
	TV	**Radio**
Percentage aired	**31 percent**	**35 percent**
Time of day aired	45 percent overnight 55 percent other	all day and night
Average length of rotation time	3 to 6 months	1 to 3 months
Preferred length	(1) 30 seconds (2) 60 seconds (3) 15 seconds	
Preferred formats	Beta SP or Beta	CD or live copy
Air community calendar information	78 percent	95 percent
Types of nonprofits qualifying for free air time (Stations were asked to check all that applied; therefore, responses will not tally to 100 percent.)	100 percent charitable 73 percent civic 64 percent social/recreation 44 percent labor 40 percent trade	100 percent charitable 89 percent civic 78 percent social/recreation 56 percent labor 54 percent trade
Top 4 Reasons PSAs Are Not Aired		
1. Content not relevant **2. Content too commercial**	**3. Dated materials received late** **4. Poor production quality**	

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 Web site for more information: www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/docwatershed/npscamp.htm.

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 facili-

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.

ties, and location. If you are 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. 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. *Check out the Getting In Step video.*

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

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 the year's observable water events: ice-out and freeze-up, waterfowl migrations and nestings, mammal sightings, insect hatchings, 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 printed format options

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

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, as you've probably discovered. 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 40 and 41 to review the pros and cons of various formats.

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 typefaces or 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. White space 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. Ragged-right 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.

Typefaces

Design your materials so the layout draws the eye into and around the entire work. Select typefaces for readability. Provide variety, but don't go overboard. A good typeface calls attention to the message, not to itself. Choose no more than two or three different typefaces for your piece. DO NOT USE ALL CAPS BECAUSE IT'S TOO HARD TO READ THE TEXT AND IT PUTS OFF READERS WHO FEEL LIKE 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 typeface for the headers and ITC Slimbach for the text, which 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 2-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 of 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.

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 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.

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 Web site 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
- Kids and animals are almost always good subjects for photos

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 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 Web sites. Clip art is produced specifically for the purpose of repeated use. It's easily accessible and most is 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. There are hundreds of free 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 the webmaster's rights of use. Some sites require citations or references to their sites in return for using their graphic. 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. These photos are available on CD-ROMs and can start as low as $25 for a set of 50 good-quality photographs. The Internet also stocks thousands of images that can be downloaded. 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 resolution might be okay for Web-based formats. If you use a digital camera, you have a perfect 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 the photo's shape and color and allow you to display the image in various sizes.

Clip art on the Web

Here are a few popular clip art Web sites on the Internet:

- **www.barrysclipart.com**
- **www.graphics.com**
- **www.clip-art.com**
- **www.clipartconnection.com**
- **www.free-clip-art.com**

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.

Tips for better brochures

- **Use colored or textured paper, graphics, and an audience-targeted layout**
- **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; call nonpoint source pollution "polluted runoff"**
- **Don't forget to include an address and contact number for more information**

Tips for better posters

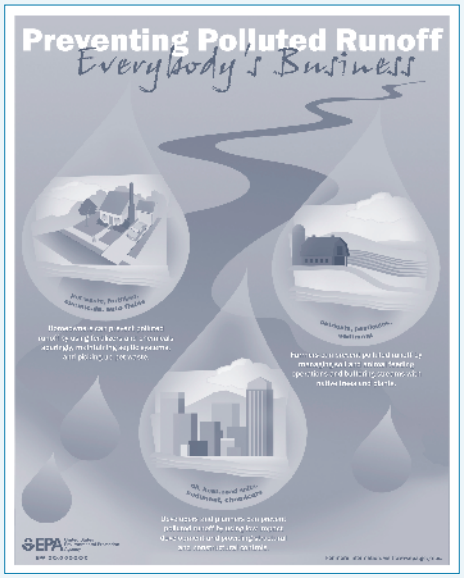
- Focus on the objective, target audience, and message
- Sponsor a photo or design contest to obtain original artwork
- Use a catchy slogan or theme
- Choose graphic elements that immediately convey the message
- Make sure the desired size is economical and tube-friendly
- Use large, bold graphics (photos, artwork, etc.) 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

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, typefaces, 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 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 ("Save the Bay") or deliver a simple message ("If you're not recycling, you're throwing it all away."). 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 can pay for themselves through sales, but the poster design must be exceptional.



NPS outreach materials available

As part of the Year of Clean Water activities, EPA celebrated Nonpoint Source Pollution Awareness Month in March 2003. Several outreach materials were developed, including a poster (shown here), a bookmark, a pop-up sponge, two fact sheets, and a brochure. Adobe Acrobat files of these documents are available for download at **www.epa.gov/nps/outreach.html**.

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 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 location 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 more effective at generating awareness or reminding people to do something than they are at educating, because people view them only briefly.

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 your exhibit as a literature dump or that's where it will end up
- Be creative with design and layout, and do things on a big scale
- Use fabric and materials to make the display 3-dimensional

Billboards in action

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ; formerly, the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission) launched a nonpoint source outreach campaign in 2001 that targeted watersheds with water quality problems where the causes were known. In watersheds where pet waste was identified as contributing to these problems, TCEQ developed a full-color billboard display of a dog with the message, "Please pick up my poop." The billboards served as a prompt to encourage behavior change. For more information, visit **www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/sbea/nps/nps.html**.

Tips for better billboards

- **The message should change 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**

Presentations

If you've spent any time at conferences and meetings, chances are you've seen a few slides or overheads. Firing up a 60-slide PowerPoint show or dropping slides into a projector and setting up a screen does not, however, guarantee a successful show. It takes planning and practice to present your story as a beautifully wrapped package 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 your presentation—its content and its style—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, 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 if you can so the audience has something to refer to and to make notes.

Use only visually pleasing, in-focus photos and graphics. Avoid slides that require introductory apologies (e.g., "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

PowerPoint pointers

Like it or not, 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. Do not 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.**
- ***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.**
- ***Keep it moving.*** **Introduce your text in groups, or the whole slide at once, instead of line by line.**
- ***Bells and whistles.*** **Keep the special effects to a minimum so your listeners will be more interested in the content of your presentation.**

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. 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.

When using overhead transparencies, remember to print your text in at least a 14-point font so it will be readable on the screen. In general, dark text against a light or clear background works best with transparencies. If using overheads, try to intersperse some nontext materials (such as a newspaper clipping or cartoon) to break up the presentation.

Events

A watershed event can be the most energizing format for distributing messages targeted at awareness, education, or direct action. A community event plays into audience members' desires for belonging to a group and having 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 instead of 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, fishers, 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, 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 in 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 organizing a stream cleanup.

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.

Festival resources

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

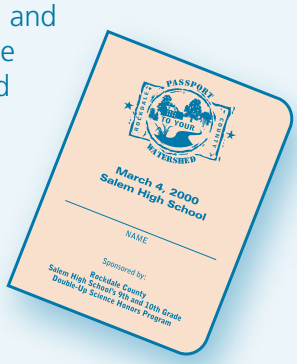
- *Making Waves: How to Put on a Water Festival*
- *Making Ripples: How to Organize a School Water Festival*
- *Making More Waves: Ideas for Organizing Your Festival*
- *Making A Bigger Splash: Best Ever Water Festival Ideas*

Order them online at **www.groundwater.org**.

- ***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 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

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 up with several local businesses to produce giveaways and staff the fair. A local developer paid for the production of watershed stickers, while 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 the success of the watershed fair.

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. By signing up, residential participants receive a personalized "To Do List" to hang on their refrigerators and a recycled glass suncatcher. 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. 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 workshop 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 workshop 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 kind 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 among 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 outgoing 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 in the TMDL program. People were provided an opportunity to talk in small groups with the help of facilitators.

Targeted 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.

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 2002 more than 300 people attended. A new activity is 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 that hadn't participated previously. Water Fest holds a pancake breakfast before the festival every year to attract a crowd.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

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

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 EcoSpun 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

Giveaways

Most everyone loves getting free stuff! Whether it's pens or coffee mugs, they 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 up their toothbrushes. Try 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 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, keep in mind the alternative message it might send—for example, "too much plastic is being used"—which could counteract the environmental benefit of 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
- Tablecloths
- Bottle openers
- Buttons and lapel pins
- Totebags/canvas grocery bags
- Salt & pepper shakers
- Pennants or flags
- T-shirts
- Frisbees
- Baseball caps
- Rulers
- License plate frames
- Toothbrushes
- Rubber jar openers
- Note pads
- Compasses

Tips for better giveaways

- Check with a 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 an advertising specialties company for ordering in quantity
- Conduct a program to market or distribute the products

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, 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 include everything from print shops to silk-screening in a garage. 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 on 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.

Mascots

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

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 find out if Ollie can visit your community, visit **www.csu.org/water/ollie/about.html.**

RiverSmart Web site

RiverSmart, a national public education campaign from River Network, shows people how simple changes in their everyday activities can help protect rivers. In addition to widespread TV, radio, and newspaper ads, the organization hosts an attractive and practical Web site. The site provides interactive games for kids and parents, a tip sheet for protecting water quality at home, and downloadable samples of numerous PSAs. Visitors can also send free electronic postcards to friends and family and sign up for the RiverSmart newsletter. For more information, visit **www.riversmart.org**.

The Internet

Increasingly, the Internet is becoming a powerful means of communication. According to a 2001 Nielsen/Netratings survey, 58 percent of Americans have Internet access in their homes. It 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. Web sites 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, average 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 will be able to reach your intended audience solely through the Web are not 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 Web site.

Tips for designing a Web site

- **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.**
- **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 Netscape and Internet Explorer.**
- **Be sure to use alternate text tags (image tags) for photos and graphics for better accessibility. Consider the accessibility of your Web site by testing it at bobbywatchfire.com. Bobby is an accessibility software 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 Web sites 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 like RealTime or Shockwave that have to be downloaded. If a free plug-in like 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 hotlinks, online quizzes, or other features that draw interest. Remember that surfers tend to scan a site for only 10 seconds before they move on.**
- **Update your site frequently! A stagnant Web site will lose the audience quickly. When developing your outreach plan, build in time (and resources) to maintain an up-to-date Web site with press releases, new monitoring data, and support.**

Registering a domain name

When you're ready to develop your organization's Web site, a few simple steps can help you get started. You may use free Web site hosts that allow you to use their domain to host your site (e.g., www.geocities.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.hostapalooza.com and www.registernames.com. Each site provides a chance for you to enter the Web site 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 Web site is removed.

Designing your Web site

Designing an attractive, interactive Web site 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 Web site without having to learn any complicated programming languages. Other options include hiring a Web site design firm if funding is available, or recruiting college students majoring in information technology.

Unique Web sites

Following are several Web sites that might provide inspiration when designing your organization's site:

- Water Saver Home, **http://h2ouse.org**
- Washington Department of Ecology Polluted Runoff Page, **www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/nonpoint**
- San Diego BayKeeper, **www.sdbaykeeper.org**
- Lake Champlain Basin Program, **www.lcbp.org**
- Water on the Web, **wow.nrri.umn.edu/wow**
- Colorado Water Protection Project, **www.ourwater.org**
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources, **www.dnr.state.md.us**
- Florida Community College Consortium for Pollution Prevention, **www.fc3p2e.com**

Building Blocks:

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. Since most members of the audience are homeowners who do not have much time to spare, the county needed to identify the time of day that most of the audience would have the greatest attention span—during their commute and at night while watching TV.

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 county 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 6 months. The transit poster artwork was also used for full-size educational posters and water bill inserts.

On the Web...

To design Web sites 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* (**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 monitor's flicker 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

Marketing your Web site

Once your Web site 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 Web site. Many organizations overlook this step, essentially wasting their Web sites' potential. Send information on your site to newsletters, organizations, listservers, or other Web sites that the target audience frequents. Include the URL on all your outreach materials—letterhead, giveaways, brochures, and so forth.

You can add the URL to many online search engines such as Yahoo, Google, and Infoseek. You can register with each one individually for free or use a service like Microsoft bCentral Submit It at www.submit-it.com to submit your listing to about 20 search engines for a 1-year fee of $49. All you'll need to do is select about 20 keywords for the search engine to use. Even if you don't register, within a few weeks many search engines will catalog your site automatically.

Keep in mind that each search engine searches in a different way. For example, the Excite search engine looks at the words on the main pages of the Web site, whereas AltaVista looks at only page titles and meta tags (keywords listed in the Web site's HTML code to help search engines locate your site).

Partnering with other Web site hosts

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

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 Web site's URL added to other organizations' links pages. This approach increases the number of visitors at your Web site without costing an arm and a leg. Visit various related Web sites 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.

Using listservers

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. Active watershed projects often find it useful to establish e-mail lists through the help of a listserver 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.

Establishing an e-mail list is not difficult. It can even be in the form of a "round robin" exchange, where list members are the designated recipients of the first message and simply press "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 server easily. Other independent organizations might choose to start lists through Web sites.

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. Visit www.linuxwebmasterfree.com/majordomo.html for more information. Other sites that offer free lists and online message boards include groups.yahoo.com, groups.msn.com, and www.topica.com.

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 76 provides estimated costs for some types of outreach materials. 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 2: Implementing the Campaign.

EPA discussion lists

EPA's nonpoint source pollution and septic system listservers host lively discussions on issues of interest to watershed groups. Visit **www.epa.gov/epahome/listserv.htm** to learn how to subscribe to both.

Costs for various outreach materials

Category	Item	Cost (per 1000)*
Giveaways	Magnets	$300 for 2-color business card size
	Posters (11" x 17", 4 colors, glossy paper)	$1,000
	Canvas Tote Bags	
	1 color, 2 sides	$3,100
	2 colors, 2 sides	$3,850
	Stickers (one color, 3" diameter)	$300
	Lapel pins	$1,150
	Key holders	$1,500
Printed materials	Printed fact sheets (2-sided)	
	1 color	$600
	2 colors	$840
	4 colors	$960
	Trifold panel brochure (11" x 25.5")	
	1 color	$1,600
	2 colors	$2,100
	4 colors	$2,400
Category	**Item**	**Cost (per item)**
Display booths	Tabletop	$500–$800
	10' x 10'	$1,500–$2,500
Bus advertisements	Panels on bus interior (bus boards)	$100–$150 for 1–12 months on 20–60 buses (production costs vary from region to region)
	Vinyl panels on entire bus exterior	$1,250/month per bus (fees may be higher in large metropolitan areas; production costs vary from region to region)
Billboards	Billboard	$700–$1000/month
Web sites	Register domain name	$8–$70 for first 2 years
Newspaper ads	4" x 6" ad	$300–$5,000
Movie theaters	30-second PSA	$1,400/week in 16 theaters
Other	Stock photos on a CD-ROM	$30–$400

**Notes: These costs are only estimates. Contact individual vendors for actual prices.*
2003 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 enough materials for the entire target audience?

What's in Step 5

- Who delivers the message?
- Size does matter
- Timing is everything
- Staffing the effort
- Piggybacking your message

The ripple effect

By building partnerships with diverse members of the community, you can educate them first on the issues, and 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 they are to believe information from another source.

Step 5 Distribute the message

Once the message has been packaged in the desired format, you can proceed with distribution. Fortunately, you've already considered distribution mechanisms somewhat while researching the target audience and selecting a format. Further activity during Step 5 includes taking a close look at the level of time, 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 by direct mail, door-to-door, by phone, through targeted businesses, during presentations, as handouts at events, through media outlets, and by posting your 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 local 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 determine who the most trusted members of the community are. 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 the 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.*

Peer pressure can be a good way to encourage positive lifestyle changes. As mentioned in Step 2 and in the box to the right, 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 4-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. Consider using the residents of the community as a good option for spreading your message.

Size does matter

The mail

The mail delivery system can be the best 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). 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.

Post cards

Post cards are an inexpensive way to expose the target audience to your message immediately. When cards arrive in the mail, there's no envelope to open.

You might think that your mail is a card because it's a single sheet of paper. But 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 inches thick. Stickers, magnets, and other items should not be attached to postcards. The USPS has strict rules about attachments.

Letters

Your organization can use letters to send surveys, newsletters, posters, and more. Keep in mind that the USPS is very specific about its requirements. To be eligible for mailing at the standard postage rate for First-Class letters, a piece must be rectangular, 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.

Benefits, benefits, benefits!

The Empowerment Institute (**www.globalactionplan.org**) has developed Sustainable Lifestyle Campaigns in Ohio, Missouri, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Washington, New York, Massachussetts, Oregon, and Virginia. Neighborhood EcoTeams are achieving the following average resource savings per year:

- 35 to 51 percent less garbage
- 25 to 34 percent less water used
- 9 to 17 percent less energy used
- 16 to 20 percent less fuel used for transportation
- $227 to $389 saved

"I've lived in the neighborhood for 21 years, but getting to know my neighbors started 3 years ago with an EcoTeam. We knew a lot of people by sight, but now we know them much better. There is a lot more friendliness on the streets now. It's given us the feeling of being embedded in the community and having roots. I highly recommend the Neighborhood EcoTeam process."

—Sarah Conn, EcoTeam member in West Newton, Massachusetts

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 2 years.
- Pay postage using pre-canceled stamps, a postage meter, or a permit imprint.
- Make sure that 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, 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 may be eligible for additional mailing privileges. The post office offers nonprofit groups discounted mailing rates. To apply for nonprofit mailing rates, visit the USPS Web site at **www.usps.com/businessmail101/misc/nonprofitApplication.htm**.

**2003 prices*

Another option for mailing larger items (e.g., posters, large newsletters) is to fold them into letter-size pieces. Folded pieces can save time and money because you're not paying for or stuffing envelopes. 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.

Large envelopes and newsletters

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. Is it possible to fold your flat-size piece to letter-size? If so, you can save lots of money because you'll pay the lower letter rate.

Now that you've set up your bulk mail account, to whom should you send your package or your community survey? Make your first stop your organization's mailing list, if you have one that is updated frequently. Direct mail software can help you target mailings to specific ZIP codes. Information on such software is available on the Internet. Search for "direct mail software."

E-mail

A cheaper and faster way to spread the message is through e-mail. Newsletters, flyers, calendars, and more can be sent with the click of a few buttons. A popular software program for creating e-mailable documents to help send your files is Adobe Acrobat (www.adobe.com). Able to convert just about any document into Portable Document Format (PDF), it ensures that your files are displayed and printed the way you intended and can be protected from unauthorized access and alteration. Be sure to keep your e-mail list up-to-date, and don't send more than a few messages a month, or you might risk becoming "spam."

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 are 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 are 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 very 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 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 would 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.

Building Blocks:
Distribution

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 they had been looking for ways to reduce drinking water treatment costs. They 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, homeowners' 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 6 months and also donated $1,000 for printing costs.

Meteorologists used to spread the word

Recognizing that television weather forecasters are very effective at explaining complex scientific issues (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, the American Meteorological Society, StormCenter Communications, and the Center for Watershed Protection in an innovative project to recruit and train broadcast meteorologists to educate their viewers about watersheds.

Chief Meteorologist Bob Ryan with NBC4 in Washington, DC, frequently discusses the Chesapeake Bay Watershed as part of NBC4's watershed project, "Where the Atmosphere Meets the Earth." The partnership's interactive Web site, **http://watershed.interactive-environment.com/main**, provides real-time water quality data, watershed news, quizzes, and related links. Piggybacking their message onto the weather forecast allowed the project partners to reach an already captive audience.

Recruit volunteers

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 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. Advertise in the newspaper, on the local college campus, or during community events. It's likely you'll run into several citizens who are already interested in the issue, those also known as early adopters. 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.

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. 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.

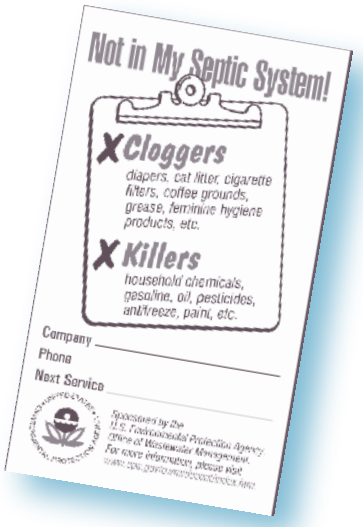
Go on the road

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 poop scoopers 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. Offering 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?
- ❑ Am I distributing my outreach materials effectively?

Step 6: Evaluate the outreach campaign

What's in Step 6

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

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 achievement of 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 it 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 worked.

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 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, not 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 Web site for your campaign, make sure you add a hit counter or are otherwise able to monitor Web traffic so that you can see how many people visit the Web site after PSAs are run on television or after a community event. Don't leave evaluation until the end of the project because you might be out of money by that point.

Types of evaluations

Outreach programs typically have interrelated sets of objectives and tasks linked to a specific goal, such as improving water quality. The goal of the program—improving water quality or, more specifically, reducing phosphorus loadings by half over the next 5 years (for example)—is typically supported by a number of objectives, which might or might not have specific outreach components. An outreach program evaluation reviews the following three sets of indicators:

- *Process indicators.* Indicators related to the execution of the outreach program itself (activity indicators). (e.g., What effect did the effort have on the process? Did people attend the meetings? Did the message get to the media?)
- *Impact indicators.* Indicators related to achievement of the goals/objectives of the program. (e.g., What effect did the effort have on behavior or water quality?)
- *Context indicators.* 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. (e.g., 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 in evaluation measures for each step when you first develop your outreach plan. Appendix D provides an evaluation worksheet that can be used when evaluating your campaign during and after the steps are implemented.

Mill Creek project combines process and impact evaluation to show results

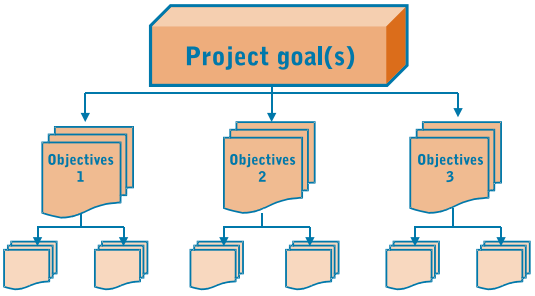
To evaluate whether stream bank fencing improved water quality, NRCS project staff used several different indicators. Some indicators measured changes in water quality, while other indicators measured how successful they were at reaching the audiences. All of these indicators strengthened their evaluation program so they 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.

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)



Tasks or activities required to achieve each objective

Process evaluations

Process evaluations focus on implementation of activities as they relate 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 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.

Hotlines help in evaluation

The Bear Creek Watershed Project in west Michigan set up a hotline for homeowners' 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 recently implemented 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

Measuring impact in Hawaii

In 1995 the City of Honolulu developed an environmental education program to increase citizens' understanding of nonpoint source pollution so that they would change their behaviors and business practices. Honolulu's campaign included a series of TV PSAs featuring local and national celebrities.

In 2001 the city conducted a telephone survey to measure awareness and the impact of the program. Of those contacted, 63 percent agree that major pollution of the ocean and streams is caused by rainfall moving over and through the ground and carrying away pesticides, fertilizers, and other pollutants (up from 53 percent in 1995). The survey also showed that people are learning about many of the new programs: 78 percent have seen a stenciled storm drain, and 45 percent have heard of the Adopt-A-Stream program. (**www.cleanwaterhonolulu.com**)

Assessment tools for impact evaluations consist of focus groups, surveys, 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 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 7 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 dropoff 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.

Targets should be ambitious but not unattainable. For example, the multistate Chesapeake Bay Agreement of 1987 set targets of 40 percent reductions in phosphorus and nitrogen inputs by 2000. Neither goal was obtained, but the work performed in pursuit of the goals did result in significant nutrient reductions: about 80 percent of the targeted reductions were achieved.

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

Measuring impact in San Diego

The City of San Diego conducts an annual phone survey that reaches about 450 households to determine changes in behavior and increased awareness of watershed issues. This impact evaluation provides the information the city needs to help shape its Think Blue stormwater media campaign for the next year, including deciding where to put their resources and what issues they need to focus on.

Check out the Getting In Step video.

Building Blocks:

Evaluation

After running the transit ads for 6 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.

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 conduct pre/post survey or evaluation techniques?
- ❑ Is the outreach campaign accountable to the public, government agencies, another organization, or other funding sources?

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 2: Implementing the Campaign" you'll learn how to put your plan into action.

Part 2: Implementing the Campaign

In Part 1 you learned about the six steps of outreach and how to develop an outreach campaign plan. In Part 2 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 92) 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 the table. 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 2

- Developing an operating plan
- Scheduling
- Determining resources and support
- Keeping up 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.

Activity/ Product	Evaluation Indicators	Time Frame/Due Date	Responsible Party	Resources Needed		Status/Comments
Objective: Post educational posters in Greater Herndon/Carlisle Metropolitan Transit Authority subway stations.						
Develop 5 posters for 7 subway stations and post them.	• Number of posters hung • Number of hits on county Web site 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 (prior to 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: $300 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 fee for 6 months.
Objective: Educate local businesses about proper nutrient management by developing and implementing a speakers bureau.						
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 information presented • Based on evaluations, whether attendees benefited from the presentations	• 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 (6 hours)	**Dollars** Meeting facility (donated by local businesses) Pizza and soft drinks for meeting: $50	At presentations, look for attendees that could be potential presenters for future presentations.

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.

How partnerships can help

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, public-private, and private sector partnerships can offer.

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, or financial resources. In addition, partnerships lend credibility to your effort when you're seeking funding and delivering your message.

Partnerships can be structured formally, informally (loosely organized), or somewhere in between. 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.

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.

Champlain 2000 promotes successful projects that protect and enhance the Lake Champlain Basin's water quality, natural resources, and cultural heritage through various television promotions. The LCBP's outreach staff provide story concepts, contacts, and further information about each story on the Web site (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 2000, the LCBP is increasing awareness and understanding of watershed issues at a minimal cost.

Informal partnerships can accomplish a lot even though they're more loosely organized than formal partnerships. Some partnerships might form as logical outgrowths of your objectives. 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.

Where to find partners

State or local environmental organizations should be the first place to start looking for partners. 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, 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 like 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 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, sometimes businesses are required to give away a percentage of their revenue every year to various 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.

Securing funding

Although partnerships can help spread the workload and provide some resources, eventually you might discover that you need to secure additional funding to launch various aspects of your watershed campaign. Develop a project expense budget sheet or use the "Resources Needed" column of the sample operating plan matrix shown on page 92 to list all of 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 70,000 grantmakers and more than 150,000 grants. If you don't have Internet access, you can get a copy of the database on CD-ROM by calling (212) 620-4230.

Nonprofit organizations

Nonprofit organizations, professional societies, and associations might also be willing to provide financial support for your campaign. The Chronicle Web site (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 Web site 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;

In 2001 environmental organizations received $6.41 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 2002 (American Association of Fundraising Counsel's Trust for Philanthropy)

Getting help

Many organizations are willing to provide in-kind services like

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

Innovative state funding sources

Section 319 Nonpoint Source Success Stories Volume III highlights the on-the-ground success of EPA's Clean Water Act section 319 Nonpoint Source Program. In addition to featuring success stories from each state, the report includes a special section on innovative state funding mechanisms such as bond initiatives, low-interest loan programs, grants, and land acquisition programs.

Programs highlighted include Georgia's Greenspace Program—a voluntary, noncompetitive, county-based program that provides grants to eligible counties if they develop and implement plans to permanently protect at least 20 percent of the county's geographic area as natural, undeveloped greenspace. Pennsylvania's Growing Greener grant program, which has funded 55 watershed assessment and protection plans, restored 3,603 acres of wetlands, and cleaned up 279 miles of streams affected by acid mine drainage is also described. The report is available on the Web at **www.epa.gov/owow/nps/Section319III**.

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 Web site gives users access to a database of approximately 100 programs offering 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.

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 best management practices to protect water quality. 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, the 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 American Association of Fundraising Counsel's Trust for Philanthropy, corporate contributions were 4.3 percent (more than $9 million) of all giving in 2001. Amazingly, however, most of the charitable money donated to nonprofit organizations by the private sector comes from individuals; 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.

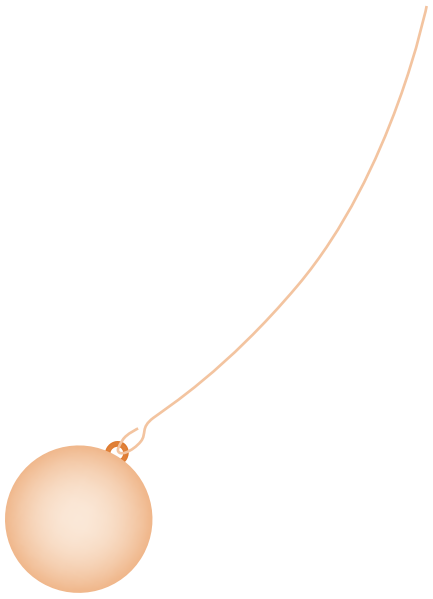
Leveraging Resources

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.

Keeping up 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.



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.

Tips to keep your project's wheels in motion

- **Develop a slide show or create a 1-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.**

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 of the key players in the beginning and define your goals, identify your 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 300 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 of the correct stakeholders involved from the beginning, you can't be sure that your campaign will address all of 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 Web site within an hour of the launching!") or large ("Within 3 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.

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 (buying a vehicle, selecting a college, etc.) 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. Remember Admiral David Farragut at the battle of Mobile Bay: despite facing the new torpedo technology, he went on to win the battle.

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 those goals in the original plan, you'll be prepared once these resources are obtained down the road. Also, along the way you might develop partnerships that provide funding for planned activities you thought you could not afford.

Working together

For tips on working with stakeholders, reaching consensus, and resolving conflict, read *Getting In Step: Engaging and Involving Stakeholders in Your Watershed*. It's available on the Internet at **www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents**.

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—and important—activities. 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 report "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 your volunteers 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 hard 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/outreach. Good luck!

Appendices

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?

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: Reduce nutrient runoff from residential and commercial areas.

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 homeowners' associations 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 subway transit posters Full-size educational posters Water bill inserts	Subway transit system Bulk mail	Post-project, random-digit-dialing survey of county residents

Summary Sheet

Driving Force:

Goal:

Objective:

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:						
				Staff time	**Dollars**	
				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 homeowners' 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

Does it take more physical effort to perform the recommended behavior than the opposing behavior?

Why?

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?

Barrier Breakers

- 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.
- _____
- _____
- _____

- Educate the audience on real and perceived risks.
- Remove risks by offering safety tips.
- Provide statistics to show real risk levels.
- Provide security.
- Provide preventive health services (e.g., hepatitis shots, etc.).
- _____
- _____
- _____

Physical or Economic Barriers

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

Why?

Are there other physical or economic barriers?

(Please list.)

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.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

If you're promoting soil testing to homeowners 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 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 hosting a community Household Hazardous Waste Pickup Day at the school. Provide stickers for parents to place on products that say "toxic," "recycle," or "save" 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 new social norms that include environmental behaviors.
- Use community gatherings and events to show that social pressure is perceived and not real.
- Clearly communicate the percentage or number of people that are 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

Does the target audience need to learn new skills to perform the behavior?

Why?

Barrier Breakers

- Provide training on the new behavior.
- Recruit early adopters to demonstrate the new behavior in daily activities, at events, or during training sessions.
- _____
- _____
- _____

Create train-the-trainer sessions for volunteer stream monitors so that they can train others and expand the volunteer pool.

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.

Knowledge 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 will 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 that 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 have 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 is 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 barriers to overcome?

There are many reasons why a person might not adopt sustainable behaviors. The behavior might be too costly to implement, the person could be unaware of the potential benefits of certain behaviors, 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; 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 have 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; 6 being the most likely).
2. Obtain 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 information on additional sources of outreach materials, watershed management planning, media relations, and other tools that might be useful to your program. Although this list is by no means inclusive, it represents some of the best materials available. Wherever possible, a contact, phone number, and Web site information are provided.

Developing an outreach program

Bridge Builder: A Guide for Watershed Partnerships (Facilitator's Handbook)
The purpose of this handbook is to make the facilitation of watershed planning and management as easy as possible. Many exercises, transparencies, forms, checklists, and other sources of information and examples are included throughout the text. To obtain a copy of this handbook, 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.

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 or e-mail ncepimal@one.net and ask for publication number EPA 942-B-01-003.

Conservation Partnerships Field Guide
This field guide to public-private partnering for natural resource conservation is designed to help both the novice and the experienced practitioner successfully use partnerships as equitable, effective, and efficient means of achieving results. It includes an overview of projects and partnerships. The field guide is available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Training and Education, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or call (703) 358-1711.

Designing an Effective Communication Program: A Blueprint for Success
This handbook will guide you through the crucial steps involved in designing an environmental communication program. From designing your program to increasing the effectiveness of communication materials, this guide has it all. It's available through the University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources and Environment, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, at (734) 764-1817.

Directory of Funding Sources for Grassroots River and Watershed Conservation Groups 2001–2002
The directory profiles foundations, corporations, state and federal agencies, and nonprofits that support small, nonprofit watershed groups, as well as a few sources that support tribes. It includes contact information, grant sizes, and a brief description of each source's particular interests. Contact River Network at (800) 423-6747 or www.rivernetwork.org.

Environmental Partnerships: A Field Guide for Nonprofit Organizations and Community Interests

This guide introduces partnerships and explains what makes them successful and how to make them grow. It's available from the Management Institute for Environment and Business at (202) 833-6556, or call The Dryden Press at (800) 782-4479.

Getting in Step: Engaging and Involving 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/owow/watershed/outreach/documents.

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.

How to Create a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Campaign

This manual is for neighborhoods, community groups, governments, and others that want to protect and improve water quality. It was produced by the Environmental Health Coalition, which has created many community-based programs that have served as models throughout the country. For more information, contact Environmental Health Coalition, 1717 Kettner, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92101, (619) 235-0281.

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.

Know Your Watershed: Watershed Management Starter Kit

Want to start a watershed management partnership for your local watershed? This complete kit includes five guides (*Getting to Know Your Watershed, Building Local Partnerships, Putting Together a Watershed Management Plan, Managing Conflict,* and *Leading and Communicating*), a 13-minute video (*Partnerships for Watersheds*), 10 companion brochures, and an application to the National Watershed Network. In other words, it includes everything you need to get started. It's available from Conservation Technology Information Center, (765) 494-9555 or www.ctic.purdue.edu/Catalog/WatershedManagement.html.

Leadership Identification Guidebook

Leadership is an important part of any successful conservation partnership. This guidebook provides methods for identifying community leaders and tells how to involve them in promoting the goals of the conservation partnership. It will also introduce you to the concept of group dynamics and teach you facilitation skills that will enable you to get the most out of your meetings. The guidebook is available through the NACD Service Center, PO Box 855, League City, TX, 77574-0855, (800) 825-5547.

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. (Cost: $12 each)

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. Developed in 1995, the handbook is available through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Harrisburg, PA. For more information, visit www.mccormicktaylor.com/training_proj_PIH.htm.

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.

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. (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.

Watershed Toolshed

The Ohio Watershed Network, a statewide information and education network in support of local watershed protection efforts, maintains an online Watershed Toolshed which 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/index.html.

Existing outreach programs

For the Sake of the Salmon (4SOS)

4SOS is a regional organization operating in Washington, Oregon, and California whose mission is "to restore salmon to levels which ensure healthy, sustainable natural populations and support productive fisheries." 4SOS supports multi-stakeholder efforts to raise awareness and build consensus. Resources for communication, working with the media, and outreach can be found at www.4sos.org/wssupport/group_support/message.asp.

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; Internet: www.state.me.us/dep/blwq/docwatershed/npscamp.htm.

Project NEMO

NEMO uses geographic information system (GIS) technology to educate landowners and municipal officials about nonpoint source pollution and watershed protection. Contact Chester Arnold, University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension, Haddam, CT. Phone: (860) 345-4511; Internet: nemo.uconn.edu.

RiverSmart

RiverSmart is a national public education campaign designed to show people how simple changes in their everyday activities can protect America's water resources. RiverSmart is a project of River Network, the nation's leader in supporting more than 4,000 local river and watershed groups nationwide that are working to save rivers. River Network Partner groups are placing RiverSmart television, radio, and newspaper ads in media outlets across the country. For more information, visit www.riversmart.com.

Think Blue San Diego

The City of San Diego believes the key to cleaner ocean waters is public education. That's why they 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.thinkbluesd.org.

Social marketing

Fostering Sustainable Behavior

Doug McKenzie-Mohr and William Smith developed this 175-page book on environmental marketing in 1999. The book 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.

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.

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. Contact Sage Publications by e-mail at order@sagepub.com or visit www.socialmarketing.com.

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. Its coverage encompasses the entire marketing process, providing valuable insights on strategic evaluations, positioning, market targeting, and more. For more information, visit http://vig.prenhall.com.

Listservers

NPSINFO

NPSINFO is a forum for open discussion of nonpoint source pollution issues. It is sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency'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/changes.html. To subscribe, send an e-mail to join-npsinfo@lists.epa.gov. Leave the subject line and message body blank.

Volunteer Monitor

The Volunteer Monitor listserver 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 join-volmonitor@lists.epa.gov. Leave the subject line and message body blank.

Outreach materials

Around the Home and On the Road

This 32-page publication is full of useful tips on pesticides, household chemicals, erosion, water conservation, and more. The guide is intended to educate people about their role in the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, but it's also useful beyond the coast. Copies are available from Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, 6600 York Road, Suite 100, Baltimore, MD 21212. Phone: (410) 377-6270; Internet: www.acb-online.org.

Chesapeake Bay Community Action Guide: A Step-by-Step Guide to Improving the Environment in Your Neighborhood

This guide includes information on storm drain stenciling, stream cleanups, reforestation and tree care, and more. Contact Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments at (202) 962-3256 or visit www.mwcog.org.

A Citizen's Handbook to Address Contaminated Coal Mine Drainage

EPA developed this guide to familiarize citizens and grassroots groups with the history and chemistry of coal mine drainage (CMD) from abandoned mines. It provides an overview of the step-by-step process of contaminated CMD cleanup and the role that citizens and grassroots groups can play in that process. Ask for publication number EPA 903-K-97-003. EPA documents are available from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications, P.O. Box 42419, Cincinnati, OH 45242-0419. Phone: (800) 490-9198; e-mail: ncepimal@one.net; Internet: www.epa.gov/ncepihom.

The Clean Water Act: An Owner's Manual

This small booklet explains crucial sections of the Clean Water Act, points out how to get involved in regulatory decisions, and tells the stories of others who have done so. Contact River Network at (800) 423-6747 or www.rivernetwork.org.

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; e-mail: learn@enviroscapes.com.

The National Watershed Library

The National Watershed Library lists many education and outreach tools for specific audiences like farmers, homeowners, and teachers. Visit www.ctic.purdue.edu for more information.

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 Web site at www.epa.gov/owow/info/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. Available at www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer/vm_index.html.

Water Environment Web

This Web site 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/WaterNews.

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.

A Watershed Approach to Urban Runoff: Handbook for Decisionmakers

This handbook outlines a process for understanding your watershed; explains the watershed management approach to assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating; gives an overview of assessment and management tools; and provides detailed insights into structural and nonstructural best management practices and sample site plans. The guide can be obtained through the Conservation Technology Information Center at www.ctic.purdue.edu.

Watershed Protection: Catalog of Federal Funding Programs

The *Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection* is now online as an easy-to-use, searchable Web site. The site provides information for watershed practitioners and others on 84 federal funding sources that may be available to help fund various watershed-related projects. The site updates EPA's original *Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection* (EPA 841-B-99-003), which was previously published in 1999. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/watershedfunding.

Watershed Stewards Project

This community-based watershed restoration program is committed to restoring salmon and other life-forms that depend on healthy watersheds for survival. 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's Web site at www.northcoast.com/~fishhelp.

Working with the media

Communications Tips for Positive Media Relations

The following Web site, 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.

Culvert Action: How to Interest Your Local Media in Polluted Runoff Issues

This manual is intended to provide assistance to anyone seeking to educate the public about polluted runoff through newspapers, radio, and television. It's available from the Lindsay Museum, 1931 First Avenue, Walnut Creek, CA 94596. Phone: (510) 935-1978.

The Green Room: Media Writing for Environmentalists

The *Green Room* will show you how to get media coverage, how to implement a media campaign, and the importance of the campaign. The site will take you through each step from drafting press releases and hosting media events to developing a long-term communications strategy. Visit www.green-room.org for more information.

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 or call 1-800-252-RADIO.

Media Relations Guidebook

This guidebook provides tips to help you make effective use of the media in your area to promote watershed protection. It outlines the process of writing news releases and announcements. The guidebook is available through the NACD Service Center, P.O. Box 855, League City, TX, 77574-0855. Phone: (800) 825-5547.

Press Release Writing

The Press Release Writing Web site provides several articles and tips for organizations beginning to write PSAs. Visit www.press-release-writing.com 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.

Radio Marketing Guide and Fact Book for Advertisers, 2002–2003 Edition

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 or call 1-800-252-RADIO.