



# LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

## Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting  
Wednesday, May 15, 2024

### **Agenda Item**

#### **Item 7. C. – Education and Outreach**

### **Prepared By**

Linda Loomis, Administrator

### **Summary**

At the April 17, 2024, Board of Managers meeting, the Board selected Young Environmental Consulting Group (YECG) to provide Education and Outreach (E & O) Services to the LMRWD. YECG would like to sit down with the Board of Managers to reassess the 2024 E & O workplan, within the confines of the 2024 budget and develop a workplan for 2025, which will be used to inform the 2025 LMRWD budget.

YECG has used information collected at the January 11, 2024, workshop and prepared a Technical Memorandum for the Board to review with recommendations for board consideration. Staff recommends that the Board consider a workshop preceding the June Board of Managers meeting.

### **Attachments**

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

### **Recommended Action**

Motion to set date for Board E & O Workshop



# Technical Memorandum

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

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

**Date:** May 7, 2024

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

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

## Next Steps

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

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

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

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

### **Suggestions for Consideration**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Background for the Draft Action Plan**

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

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


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



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



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




## Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Draft Action Plan

Education and outreach priority audiences and messaging needs.


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

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

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

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



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

## Roles and Responsibilities Chart

Internal tool to highlight chain of communication and responsibility



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER  
WATERSHED DISTRICT

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

# Roles and Responsibilities Chart

Internal tool to highlight chain of communication and responsibility



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

# Technical Memorandum

**To:** Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers

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

**CC:** Linda Loomis, Administrator  
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

**Date:** February 14, 2024

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

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

## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** LMRWD Education and Outreach—Social Media

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

## BACKGROUND

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

We present the suggested shifts in social media strategy below:

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

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

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

## **JUSTIFICATION AND COMPARISON ANALYSIS**

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

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

Topics presented in their recent posts included the following:

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

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

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

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

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