

BCWD ENHANCED ENGAGEMENT

Date	12/8/2023
To / Contact info	BCWD Board of Managers / Karen Kill, District Administrator
From / Contact info	Camilla Correll, Karli McCawley, Evan Murdoch, Will Martin
Regarding	Next Steps for the Enhance Engagement Effort

Background

At the last Board Meeting, EOR asked that the BCWD Board of Managers complete the exercise of identifying who on the stakeholder list they have a connection to in order to narrow down the list of who will be contacted for the informal interviews. This memorandum summarizes the work completed to date and maps out the work that remains to be completed for this initial portion of the Enhanced Engagement Effort.

Update

To date, the following tasks have been completed for this effort:

- Populated the list of potential stakeholders and/or entities who may be a gateway to stakeholders.
- Categorized potential stakeholders.
- Asked the CAC and the Board of Managers for feedback – identify gaps.
- Asked CAC and the Board of Managers to identify which entities they have a relationship with so *they can be assigned to conduct informal interviews with that entity.*
- Identify who is going to be interviewed by the Board and District Staff.
- Evaluate who is missing from the audience.
- Finalize the list of entities/people to be interviewed.
- Add columns to the stakeholder list (database) to log the following information:
 - Contact for the entity.
 - When did they contact the entity/interviewee (initial contact)?
 - When did they meet (second contact)?
 - Was the meeting successful/were they engaged?
 - Is the Google Form complete?

Next Steps for Conducting the Informal Interviews

1. Draft scripts/interview questions.
 - See *DRAFT Script and Interview Questions below.*
2. NEW – Consider developing a “leave behind” (*See Handout Scope of Work on the agenda*)
 - Handout to leave with the interviewee.
 - Signals that this is a serious effort/organization.
 - Provides contact information, link to the District’s website, etc.
3. Schedule for conducting interviews.
 - December 11 CAC Meeting – Share/Confirm Assignments
 - December 13 Board Meeting – Share/Confirm Assignments
 - December 15, 2023 - January 1, 2024
 - i. Board and CAC to identify contacts or let District Staff know if they need assistance.

- ii. EOR to complete handout, interviewee materials, script
 - January 1 – February 12/14, 2024
 - i. Conduct interviews
 - ii. Submit information collected during interviews.
 - iii. Evaluate interest in additional meetings (i.e., 1-hour meeting, Focus Group meeting, other).
- 4. Summarize information collected during interviews.
 - Google Form
 - Yes/no questions so interviewer can fill in a form using iPad *where possible*.
 - Open-ended questions can be filled in by taking notes.
 - Interviewer to populate Google Form after completing the interview.
- 5. Recommendations for next steps.

Draft Script and Interview Questions

When engaging with residents to discuss watershed management, it's essential to ask questions that encourage dialogue, gather valuable insights, and foster a sense of shared responsibility. By fostering a sense of **shared responsibility** and emphasizing the **tangible benefits of watershed management**, you can encourage active participation and collaboration among citizens.

Initial Conversation / Voicemail Message:

- Hello. This is [*your name here*] calling on behalf of the Brown's Creek Watershed District.
- BCWD is a local unit of government which is responsible for the management of surface water resources. We work with cities, developers, and citizens to protect and restore our water and natural resources.
- The BCWD covers parts of the cities of Oak Park Heights, Stillwater, Lake Elmo, Grant, , and Hugo and Stillwater, & May Townships..
- As part of our 10-year planning process, we are interested in expanding our network and looking for opportunities for mutual partnerships in order to provide more benefits to the community. To do this, we want to better understand who lives, works and/or recreates in the watershed so we better understand the needs of our community.
- We are reaching out to people like yourself to see if we can schedule a 30-minute conversation to learn more about your organization and explore synergies between your work and the watershed district's work. This meeting can take place in person, over a cup of coffee, or it can take place virtually.
- If you are interested in meeting, please call me at [*your number here*].

Informal *Introductory* Interview [30 minutes]:

[Note: This will be tailored to a couple of different audience types]

The goal of this interview is to expand our network and identify win-win's – how can the watershed district help your organization and/or the people you serve and how can you help us provide better/more equitable services.

Introduction to the Organization/Interviewee [10 minutes]:

- What is your organization's mission?
- How large is your membership?
- Who belongs to your group?
- How does your organization go about accomplishing its mission?

- Encourage interviewees to share how their organization or their constituents interact with the environment (i.e., walking to the grocery store, accessing trails/public open space or leaking roofs/basements subject to flooding).

Introduction to the BCWD [10 minutes]:

- What is a watershed district? *Share the handout.*
- Have you heard of the BCWD? *Have you seen our project signs along Brown's Creek State Trail or at the Oak Glen Golf Course?*
- Have you or your organization had an interaction with the BCWD (i.e., watershed conservation or clean-up efforts)?
- Have you or your organization used any of the BCWD's resources?
- BCWD has been an organization since 1997.
- BCWD's mission statement: "The Brown's Creek Watershed District works with the community to:
 - o Preserve and improve the quality of the District's water and natural resources.
 - o Educate residents about the value of this ecosystem and advise residents of their potential impacts on the functions and values of the District's water and natural resources.
 - o Implement acceptable solutions to water-related issues.
 - o Sustainably accommodate development.
 - o Assure that the integrity of the watershed is preserved for future generations.
- Here are some of the things the BCWD does...*See table below.*

Identify Synergies [5 minutes]:

Do you see places where your work overlaps with our work?

- Are there opportunities to:
 - o Partner on projects.
 - o Host education events together (i.e., hiking event and bring food for food drive)
 - What would make it easier for your organization or the people you serve to participate in an event (i.e., day care, accessibility, other)?
 - o Solicit volunteers.
 - What would make it easier for your organization to participate in volunteer activities?
 - o Participate on the co-design of projects.
 - o Sit on the CAC.
 - o Participate in the watershed management plan update.

Do you have any suggestions for involving more residents in watershed-related activities?

Who else do you think we would have synergies with? Who else should the BCWD be connecting with?

Are you interested in continuing the conversation?

1-to-10 question for the interviewer – What was the enthusiasm level of the interviewee?

Interview Support Package:

In addition to the handout/leave behind which will include a map of the BCWD, the following table may help the interviewer describe the BCWD’s activities and help to identify where there may be overlap or opportunities to partner in the work.

BCWD Programs/ Initiatives	Program Description	Who is involved now?	Who else could/should be involved?
Capital Improvement Program	BCWD implements capital improvement projects to address water quality, water quantity, and other issues identified in the 10-year watershed management plan. Examples include: Rock Crib at Brown’s Creek Park, and buffer along Oak Glen Golf Course.	Cities, Townships, state agencies, Washington County	Consider engaging the public in the co-design of projects, especially those being proposed to be constructed in their neighborhoods.
Education and Outreach	Provide education about the impacts of non-point source pollution on lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and groundwater resources and to engage individuals and communities in projects that will help protect and improve water quality in the region. - Website - Project signage - Ice Cream Social - CAC-led events like buckthorn removals	Cities, Townships, residents (i.e., lakeshore residents or those who attend community events), students (i.e., Stillwater HS students), trail users, developers, permit applicants and their engineering staff.	Non-profit organizations, Health Care system, members of the business community
Data Collection / Monitoring	Monitor water quantity (flow) and water quality of high priority waterbodies.	Metropolitan Council, MPCA, MNDNR, citizen volunteers, Stillwater HS – macroinvertebrate survey work	TBD – Is there other information that the BCWD could collect to achieve broader participation (i.e., local examples of climate change impacts, crowd sourcing plants and animals)?
Regulatory Program	BCWD has rules to ensure that development activity doesn’t have an adverse impact to surface water and groundwater resources.	Development community, member communities, Washington County, state agencies, Design and Engineering community, residents	TBD
Water Quality Grants Improvement Program	Makes small grants available to landowners wishing to make improvements on their properties. BCWD provides 50% match grants of up to \$2,500 for eligible projects.	Individual homeowners – <i>It would be helpful to map the location of past participants to get a sense of who is benefitting from this program.</i>	Homeowners who aren’t typically applying for this water quality improvement program.

Community Demonstration Projects Cost-Share Program	To encourage and assist cities, towns, businesses and non-profits to integrate water quality improvement (retrofit) projects into municipal projects. Example is raingarden at Community Thread.	Cities, Townships, businesses and non-profits	Businesses and non-profits
Flood Management Program	The BCWD's current approach to flood management relies on its regulatory program's floodplain management requirements to ensure no net loss of flood storage in the watershed as development and redevelopment occurs. Expansion of the District's flood management program should address increasing occurrences of flooding (flood prevention) as well as flood risk mitigation. Given that factors such as climate change and increasing groundwater elevations heighten the uncertainty in planning and decision-making, the Board should consider an adaptive management approach that builds in the capacity to iterate and respond to future changes in conditions, additional information, and experience.	Cities, Townships, Washington County, lakeshore residents (i.e., property owners along Long Lake).	TBD
Citizens Advisory Committee	Volunteer advisory board comprised of community members. Members are appointed annually by the District's Board of Managers. Members serve two-year terms. Activities include: Newsletter, Annual Report, scheduling monthly educational events, inventory and volunteer data collection at the 110 th street property, table-top education materials.	Residents.	Residents with other lived experiences than those who have historically participated on the CAC.
Technical Advisory Committee	Member communities and state agencies convened to participate in the 10-year Watershed Management Planning process. See description below.	Cities, Townships, Washington County, state agencies, adjacent watershed districts.	TBD
10-year Watershed Management Plans	In 1987, the Legislature directed watershed districts and water management organizations in the seven county metro area to develop watershed management plans to protect water resources. Metro cities are also required to develop and implement local water management plans. Watershed management plans identify the BCWD's activities for the next 10 years.	CAC, TAC, the public via the Public Open House	People with different life-experiences to round out the plan development process and make implementation more equitable.
Unique Species Inventory	Inventory of the plant and animal communities dependent upon the Brown's Creek system as well as upon the other natural resources in the BCWD (see Section 1.4 Biological Environment of the Land and Water Resource Inventory (Appendix A) in the 2017-2026 Watershed Management Plan).	District Staff, EOR, members of the CAC including Jyneen Thatcher and George Vanya	Residents, students, schools, hunting and fishing groups, people recreating in the watershed
Land Conservation Program	Management of 110 th Street Property	CAC	TBD