



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

Executive Summary for Action

Lower Minnesota River Watershed District Board of Managers Meeting
Wednesday, December 15, 2021

Agenda Item

Item 8. H. – Education & Outreach

Prepared By

Linda Loomis, Administrator

Summary

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met on December 7th and heard Rebecca Haug, Young Environmental Consulting Group speak about the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. Next month Mark Nemeth from DNR Fisheries will speak to the CAC about the importance of the Minnesota River to aquatic habitats and fisheries.

The *2022 Projects and Programs Workplan* presented under agenda Item 8.F. – Watershed Management Plan has a recap of the 2021 Education and Outreach activities and detail of what the LMRWD hopes to accomplish in 2022. I have separated the Education & Outreach 2022 workplan from the total document and attached it to this summary.

Managers should offer comments to the workplan and approve the workplan.

Attachments

Education and Outreach 2021 Year-End Activities Report

Education and Outreach 2022 workplan

Recommended Action

Motion to approve 2022 Education and Outreach workplan

Technical Memorandum

To: Linda Loomis, Administrator
Lower Minnesota River Watershed District

From: Jen Dullum, Education and Outreach Coordinator
Della Schall Young, CPESC, PMP

Date: December 10, 2021

Re: Lower Minnesota River Watershed—Education and Outreach 2021 Year-End
Activities Summary

Young Environmental Consulting Group, LLC (Young Environmental) was retained by the Lower Minnesota River Watershed District (LMRWD or District) to administer the 2020–2022 public education and outreach plan. A workplan was created and approved in August 2020. The following presents a summary of project activities undertaken and completed in 2021.

Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

In early January 2021, Young Environmental contacted seven residents who expressed interest in joining the CAC. Young Environmental developed an online application form that was shared with the interested residents and made available on the District's website. Five individuals completed the application, were vetted, and were recommended to the LMRWD board for appointment to the CAC. Below is a list of completed activities in chronological order.

- 1) February and March 2021
 - a. LMRWD board appointed five citizens to the CAC
- 2) March 2021
 - a. Developed an orientation packet for the CAC that was approved by the LMRWD board
 - b. Facilitated two orientation sessions with newly appointed CAC members
- 3) April 2021
 - a. Drafted bylaws for consideration by the CAC
 - b. CAC held its first official meeting, adopted its bylaws, and submitted them to the LMRWD board for consideration
 - c. LMRWD board approved the CAC's bylaws

4) May through December 2021

- a. CAC held monthly meetings virtually May through July and in person in August through October at various sites within the District. Meetings returned to the virtual space in November.
- b. Developed three handouts for tabling events and the LMRWD's website with input from the CAC: Introduction to the LMRWD, Rain and Native Plants, and Steep Slopes (undergoing review). Development of a rain barrel handout is underway.
- c. Reviewed and provided comments to the LMRWD administrator on enhancements to the website for public consumption.

Website

Young Environmental facilitated the review of the LMRWD by professionals from Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed, and Barr Engineering Company. They provided comments on the look, functionality, and presentation of information for public consumption. Young Environmental compiled their comments, and those of the CAC, and presented them to the LMRWD board at the February 2021 meeting.

Social Media

Social media was recommended by Young Environmental to replace written quarterly articles in February 2021. The LMRWD board approved the recommendation. Since the approval, Young Environmental has developed and presented quarterly content calendars to LMRWD's administrator. In addition, Young Environmental has managed the District's social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The social media analytics are presented in Attachment A.

District Signage

Young Environmental reviewed potential signage locations at river crossings along the Minnesota and Credit rivers. Based on the information discovered for river crossing signs, additional signs on major interstate corridors and other transportation systems along the Minnesota River were rendered complete. Young Environmental assessed crossings on minor trunk highways or county roads at Assumption, Bluff, East Chaska, Chaska, Kennaley's, Black Dog, Nine Mile, Riley, Purgatory, and Eagle creeks. One location, along Flying Cloud Drive/CSAH 61 at Riley Creek, remains a potential for additional signs.

In tandem with investigating river crossing locations, Young Environmental examined locations for interpretive signs near high value resource areas and at District project sites. Locations reviewed include Seminary Fen, Boiling Springs, East Chaska Creek, and Eagle Creek/Savage Fen. Of those, East Chaska Creek and Eagle Creek/Savage Fen were suitable for interpretive signage. Below is a list of completed activities related to interpretive signs in chronological order. See the enclosed signage location map.

- 1) July 2021—LMRWD board approved two locations for interpretive signage: Eagle Creek/Savage Fen and East Chaska Creek stabilization project.

- 2) October 2021—LMRWD board approved signage contractor.
- 3) November 2021—Contract approved.
- 4) November—Young Environmental began work with signage contractor and local partners to develop signage messaging and graphics. The project is set to be completed by the end of March 2022.

Schools and NGO Engagement

Schools

In early 2021, Young Environmental identified 18 public and private K–12 schools and their respective after-school programming and school-sponsored clubs that might benefit from District watershed education and outreach resources. See attached Public School's Map. Young Environmental reviewed current Minnesota Academic Standards to identify the most appropriate grade level and specific academic class for incorporating watershed education. Existing state, regional, and local partnerships and curriculum were explored. Below is a chronological outline of progress to date.

- 1) May 2021—Young Environmental contacted 18 schools within and adjacent to the District boundary to determine partnership opportunities.
 - a. In May, Burnsville High School responded with interest. Young Environmental met with four interested science teachers from the high school and started investigation into programming that would fit the needs of Burnsville High School while also aligning with the District watershed management plan.
 - b. Contacted Friends of the Minnesota Valley, Three Rivers Park District, Great River Greening, Wilderness Inquiry, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), and the City of Burnsville for potential programming partnership.
- 2) June 2021—The SWCD and the City of Burnsville began communication with Young Environmental about partnership to bring programming to Burnsville High School.
- 3) August 2021—The LMRWD board approved an outreach plan for Burnsville High School.
 - a. Young Environmental reached out to potential partners, including Friends of the Minnesota Valley, for possible collaboration.
- 4) September 2021—Young Environmental continued discussion with Burnsville High School teachers on potential programming.
- 5) October 2021—Young Environmental, SWCD, City of Burnsville, and Burnsville High School met to discuss partnerships and programming option for students. Programming discussions are ongoing.

- a. Young Environmental, LMWRD District Administrator, and Friends of the Minnesota Valley met to discuss programming roles and responsibilities related to River Watch. They agreed to the following:
 - i. Young Environmental will continue outreach to local schools offering partnership opportunities.
 - ii. If local schools are interested in the River Watch program, Young Environmental will connect interested parties. River Watch will then lead that effort.
 - iii. Friends of the Minnesota Valley will similarly connect the LMRWD and Young Environmental to potential partners if other educational opportunities are to be explored.

- 6) November 2021—Young Environmental received communication from the Bloomington Public Schools college/career readiness program coordinator regarding partnership opportunities. This conversation is ongoing.

NGOs, other partners, and activities

In June 2021, Young Environmental reached out to several District cities and partners, including Bloomington, Burnsville, Chaska, Eden Prairie, Savage, Shakopee, and the Carver County Water Management Organization, regarding in-person public outreach events (e.g., Earth Day and fall cleanup programs). A list of public events the District may participate in was submitted to the LMRWD board for approval in July.

Young Environmental created a nature bingo card and scavenger hunt game for at-home activities, both of which were shared through the District's social media channels.

District Tour

In June 2021, the LMRWD Board approved staff to develop a District tour for managers and CAC. The tour was planned to highlight District projects and high value resources. Young Environmental worked with the District administrator to determine locations and scope of the tour. Young Environmental and Barr Engineering developed a tour handout. Young Environmental planned the tour route, invited local partners, and presented at two of the tour stops.

Recommendations

Based on 2021 activities, Young Environmental's recommendations are reflected in the proposed 2022 workplan.

Twitter

2021 Q1 Post

	Impressions	Engagements	Likes	Link Clicks	Retweets
60th Anniversary Video	155	5	0	0	0
World Wildlife Day	179	8	1	0	0
Tree Trimming	182	3	1	0	1
Pick up poop	223	3	0	0	2
Join the CAC	864	21	1	0	1
Board meeting	137	0	0	0	0
Household leaks	149	1	1	0	0
Rain barrel	131	4	1	0	0
International Day of Forests	170	1	0	0	1

2021 Q2 Post

	Impressions	Engagements	Likes	Link Clicks	Retweets
Bass Pond project	90	0	0	0	0
Clean-up for clean water	171	5	1	0	1
Board meeting	86	0	0	0	0
Trout stream fishing opener	656	22	5	0	2
Lower Riley Creek project	90	3	1	0	0
Earth Day	347	12	4	0	1
Cost share	137	6	1	0	0
Arbor Day	76	0	0	0	0
Where your water comes from	77	0	0	0	0
American Wetlands Month	78	4	1	0	0
Goldfish	81	0	0	0	0
Board meeting	79	0	0	0	0
Fishing Opener	88	1	0	0	0
Rain barrel	417	12	3	0	2
Pet waste	222	2	1	0	1
Memorial Day	76	0	0	0	0
Downspout redirect	80	4	0	0	0
Storm drains	79	1	0	0	0
Board meeting	84	0	0	0	0
Composting	119	1	0	0	1
Amazon Fulfillment Center	354	11	1	0	0
Summer	311	3	1	0	1
Eagle Creek project	87	1	1	0	0

Twitter

2021 Q3 Post

	Impressions	Engagements	Likes	Link Clicks	Retweets
4th of July	142	6	2	0	1
Construction permits	63	0	0	0	0
Trail closures	92	0	0	0	0
Sprinkler spruce up	57	1	1	0	0
Adopt a Drain	55	1	1	0	0
Blue Green Algae	253	16	3	0	3
Cost share	47	4	2	0	0
Lawn mower	316	16	6	0	3
Nat'l Water Quality Month	42	0	0	0	0
Water smart landscaping	36	0	0	0	0
Native landscaping	42	3	1	0	0
Lawn clippings	43	0	0	0	0
Interns at Board meeting	40	3	0	0	0

2021 Q4 Post

	Impressions	Engagements	Likes	Link Clicks	Retweets
Leaf raking	44	1	1		0
Interns work experience	45	0	0		0
Pelicans	85	3	1		0
Fall yard care	153	3	1		1
Raindrop map	54	1	0		0
Metro Childrens Water Festival	65	5	0		1
Trout streams	26	1	1		0
Rain barrel	176	20	3		4
Adopt A Drain	88	9	2		1
Construction permits	13	0	0		0
Daylight saving	45	0	0		0
America Recycles Day	19	0	0		0
Take a Hike Day	23	0	0		0
Feeding deer in winter	24	0	0		0
Follow the LMRWD	26	1	0		0
Pick up pet poop	28	4	0		1

*as of Dec 1, 2021

Facebook

2021 Q1 Post	Reach	Likes	Comments
60th Anniversary Video	31	3	1
World Wildlife Day	21	3	0
Tree Trimming	19	2	0
Pick up poop	19	3	0
Join the CAC	15	2	0
Board meeting	13	2	0
Scott SWCD webinar	19	2	0
Household leaks	15	2	0
East Chaska Creek project	18	3	0
Rain barrel	14	0	0
International Day of Forests	15	2	0

* post shared by others

Facebook

2021 Q2 Post

Reach Likes Comments

Bass Pond project	18	5	0
Adopt a Drain video	13	1	0
Clean-up for clean water	15	2	0
Board meeting	13	0	0
Trout stream fishing opener	17	3	0
Lower Riley Creek project	15	3	0
Earth Day	15	2	0
Cost share*	33	4	0
Arbor Day	15	1	0
Where your water comes from	18	1	0
American Wetlands Month	15	1	0
Goldfish*	35	3	0
Scott SWCD stabilize your shore	16	0	0
Board meeting	13	0	0
Fishing Opener	13	1	0
Rain barrel	16	2	0
Interns	21	3	0
Prior Lake Outlet Channel project	21	2	3
Pet waste	12	1	0
Memorial Day	11	0	0
Free Parks Day	10	0	0
Downspout redirect	9	2	0
Storm drains*	21	2	0
Scott SWCD stabilize your shore	5	0	0
Invasive species ID	10	0	0
Board meeting	10	0	0
Take a kid fishing	13	2	0
Salt Symposium	7	0	0
Composting	11	3	0
Amazon Fulfillment Center	19	4	0
Trace a raindrop	4	0	0
Summer	17	4	0
Apply for the Board	13	2	0
Eagle Creek project	19	3	0
Join the CAC	18	4	0

Facebook

2021 Q3 Post

	Reach	Likes	Comments
Gully Inventory	13	2	0
4th of July	16	2	0
Jefferson HS rain garden	26	4	0
Construction permits	12	1	0
Jumping worms	9	0	0
Starry Trek	9	0	0
KSTP goldfish	7	0	0
Judy Berglund	15	0	0
Trail closures	12	1	0
Scott SWCD Plant native prairie*	10	2	0
Board meeting	10	1	0
Sprinkler spruce up	10	1	0
Adopt a Drain	8	0	0
Bingo card	12	2	0
Blue Green Algae	6	0	0
Drought	9	1	0
Cost share	8	1	0
Lawn mower	13	2	0
Nat'l Water Quality Month	8	2	0
Craig Diederichs	8	0	0
Native landscaping	11	2	0
Board meeting	9	0	0
Lawn clippings	11	1	0
Interns at Board meeting	13	1	0
Scavenger hunt	13	1	0
Join the CAC	11	1	0
Invasive species	11	2	0
Greg Genz	21	2	0
Plan review meeting	12	1	0
Fens assessment	28	4	1
Labor Day	15	2	0
Board meeting	9	0	0
Interns	24	4	0
Jenny Karkowski	20	2	0
9-11	13	1	0
Fall fertilizing	11	0	0
Frist day of fall	17	1	0
National Parks Day	16	2	0
World Rivers Day	13	2	0
Theresa Kuplic	16	0	0

Facebook

2021 Q4 Post

	Reach	Likes	Comments
Leaf raking	14	1	0
Interns work experience	12	1	0
Pelicans	11	1	0
Fall yard care	10	1	0
Board meeting	10	0	0
Raindrop map	14	0	0
Metro Childrens Water Festival	8	0	0
Trout streams	17	1	0
Rain barrel	13	1	0
Adopt A Drain	6	1	0
Construction permits	12	1	0
Daylight saving	19	2	0
Board meeting	9	0	0
America Recycles Day	13	2	0
Take a Hike Day	13	2	0
Feeding deer in winter	15	3	0
Follow the LMRWD	13	0	0
Pick up pet poop	12	2	0

*as of Dec 1, 2021

Instagram

2021 Q1 Post	Reach	Likes	Comments
60th Anniversary	30	10	3
Join the CAC	40	4	0
Board meeting	34	3	0
Household leaks	34	5	0
East Chaska Creek project	43	3	0
Rain barrel	41	4	0
International Day of Forests	36	1	0

2021 Q2 Post	Reach	Likes	Comments
Board meeting	36	3	0
Trout fishing opener	35	2	0
Lower Riley Creek project	37	2	0
Earth Day	32	3	0
Arbor Day	37	3	0
Nat'l Drinking Water Week	45	1	0
Goldfish	35	4	0
Rain barrel	53	5	0
Interns	44	4	0
Pet waste	46	2	1
Memorial Day	24	0	0
Downspout redirect	42	7	0
Storm drains	34	5	1
Composting	37	3	0
Amazon Fulfillment Center	47	2	0
Summer	44	4	0

*post shared by others

Instagram





2021 Q3 Post	Reach	Likes	Comments
Gully inventory	46	3	0
4th of July	32	0	0
Jefferson HS rain garden	55	10	0
Judy Berglund	41	3	0
Lawn mower	39	1	0
Craig Diederichs	39	2	0
Native plants	49	8	0
Grass clippings	45	4	0
Interns at Board meeting	43	2	0
Join the CAC	68	15	0
Greg Genz	43	2	0
Fens assessment	43	4	0
Labor Day	35	3	0
Interns	58	6	0
Jenny Karkowski	32	1	0
9-11	29	1	0
Fall fertilizer	34	3	0
First day of fall	24	2	0
National Parks Day	23	1	0
World Rivers Day	40	3	0
Theresa Kuplic	36	4	0

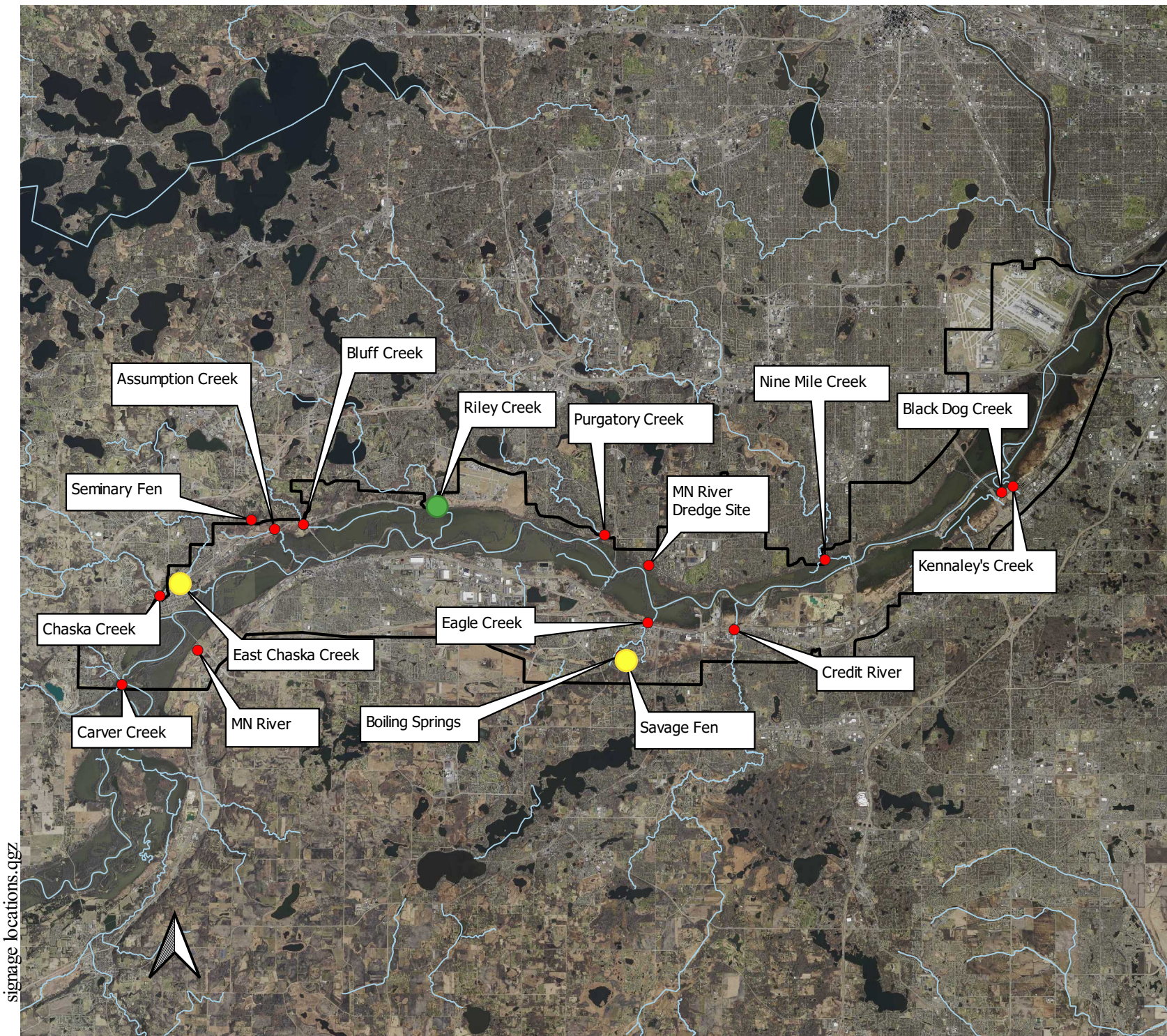
2021 Q4 Post	Reach	Likes	Comments
Leaf raking	37	4	0
Interns work experience	29	0	0
Pelicans*	33	4	2
Fall yard care	32	4	0
Raindrop map	27	2	1
Metro Childrens Water Festival	23	1	0
Trout streams	54	9	1
Rain barrel	38	3	0
Adopt A Drain	40	3	0
Construction permits	31	4	0
Daylight saving	34	3	0
America Recycles Day	42	1	0
Take a Hike Day	27	3	0
Feeding deer in winter	42	3	0
Follow the LMRWD	35	1	1
Pick up pet poop	30	3	0

*as of Dec 1, 2021

2021 Crossing and Interpretive Signage Project

LEGEND

-  LMRWD_Boundary
-  2021 Interpretive Signage Locations
-  Potential 2021 River Crossing Locations
-  Not Feasible



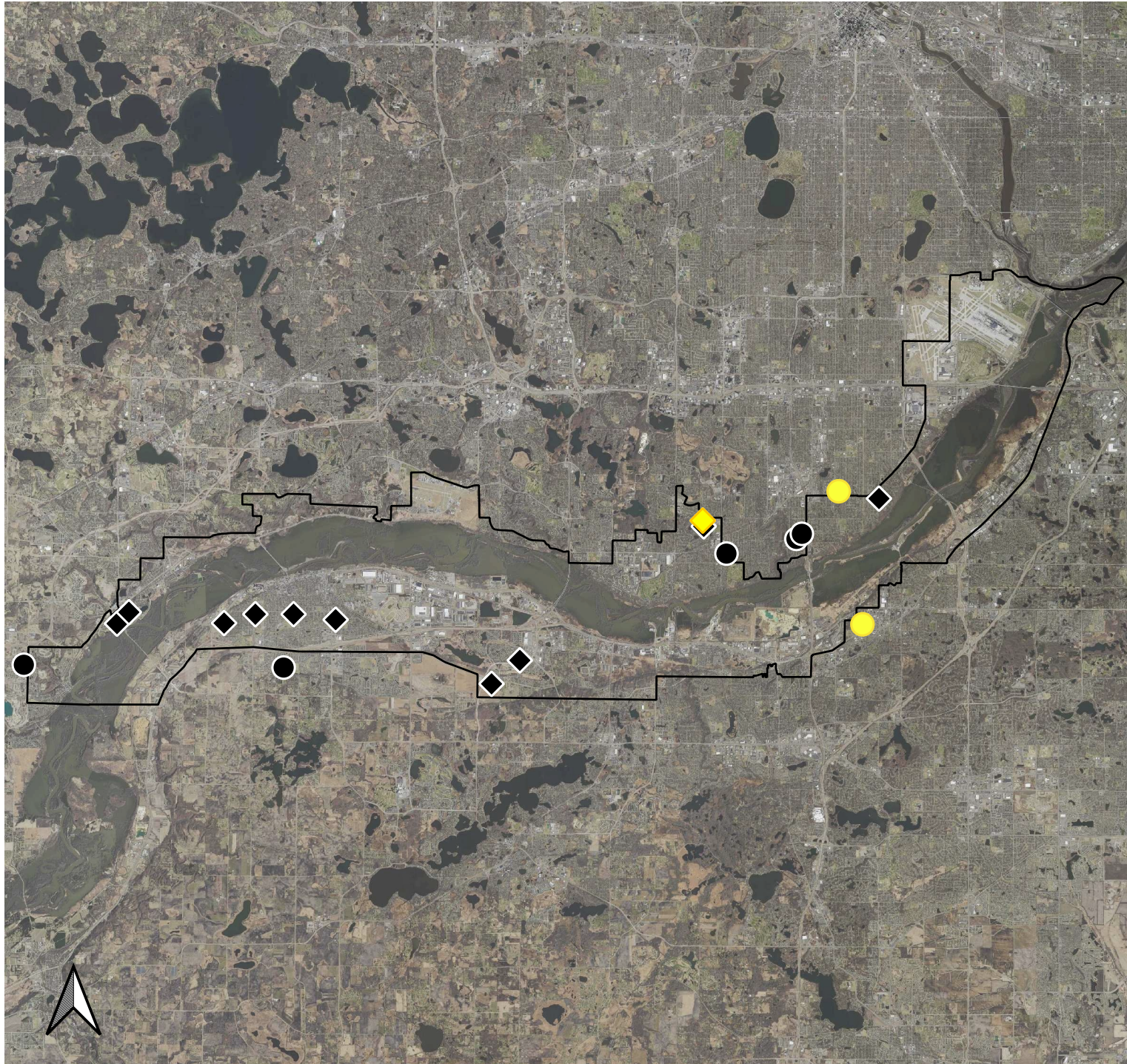
signage locations.qgz



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT








Young Environmental Consulting
Group, LLC



Schools in and adjacent to the LMRWD

LEGEND

For Legend Only

-  Out of LMRWD
Boundary - response
-  Out of LMRWD
Boundary - no response
-  Inside LMRWD
Boundary - response
-  Outside LMRWD
Boundary - no response
-  LMRWD_Boundary



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER WATERSHED DISTRICT

2022 Public Education and Outreach Plan

WORK PLAN—December 10, 2021

Summary

Outcome: 2022 Public Education and Outreach Plan

Project partners: City partners, residents, and businesses of the District; US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)

Timeline for completion of project: January–December 2022

Total project budget: 2022: \$65,688–\$75,000

Objective 1. Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

Task 1.1: Maintain a CAC of five members or more. In 2021, the District formed its newest CAC, and it currently consists of five members. Young Environmental will continue to search for CAC members using social media, municipal partners, and other groups within the District for assistance.

Task 1.2: Plan and facilitate CAC meetings. Young Environmental will develop monthly meeting agendas with input from the District and the CAC. As part of agenda development, Young Environmental may also organize speakers and visits to project and high-value resource sites at the request of the CAC.

Task 1.3: Monitor and assist the CAC. Young Environmental will draft a meeting summary or notes with the secretary, provide technical information, and support and host the virtual and in-person meetings.

Deliverables: CAC membership roster, meeting agendas and summaries

Estimated budget: \$11,040–\$13,248

Objective 2. Social Media

Task 2.1: Maintain social media sites. District Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts were established in 2021. Young Environmental will continue to build a following on the District's social media channels, create quarterly content calendars, and maintain posting frequency on the District's platforms. Instagram has been the best-performing social media platform for the District. To continue to build followers on this platform, Young Environmental will continue to gather and take photos of District resources for posting.

Deliverables: Quarterly content calendar, weekly posting to social media accounts, monitoring and maintenance of accounts, gathering images

Estimated budget: \$11,040

Objective 3. District Signage

Task 3.1: Signage. Young Environmental will continue to identify sites for LMRWD project and District resource signage; it will make recommendations to the administrator for proposed sign locations, such as Minnesota River crossings, calcareous fens, trout streams, and High Value Resource Areas, and District projects. Young Environmental will continue to work with local partners on locations and messaging and with the current signage contractor for design and fabrication and will provide estimates to the Board of Managers for the cost of signs for up to five sites.

Deliverables: Recommendations for District sign locations, design and fabrication cost memorandum

Estimated budget: \$8,280 (contracted services with Studio Lola not included)

Objective 4. Schools Engagement

Task 4-1: Partnerships. In 2021, Young Environmental investigated local educational programming for schools and compiled a list of potential partners and programs. Young Environmental reached out to 18 schools within and adjacent to the District boundary to offer education opportunities for students. To date, only one school has responded with interest. Young Environmental will continue to explore the opportunity to partner with this school and expand its reach to schools outside the District boundary in partner cities. Young Environmental will develop an education strategy plan for each interested school with a list of recommended partners and activities for the 2022–23 academic year and present this plan to the board for approval before implementation.

Task 4-2: K–12 resources. Because of the lack of perceived interest from local schools, Young Environmental will work to provide K–12 educational resources on the District website and promote these resources to local educators but make them available to all website users. Young Environmental will reach out to local government and NGO partners for ideas and shared resources to develop and promote.

Deliverables: Education strategy plan and presentation to the board

Estimated budget: \$11,040–\$13,248

Objective 5. Community Outreach and Engagement

Task 5-1: Partnership. In 2021, Young Environmental completed an assessment of government, nonprofit, and NGO programming and compiled a list of potential partners and programs. Young Environmental will continue to evaluate existing and established education and/or sustainability programs and partnerships with local cities, counties, nonprofits, and NGOs; continued outreach to these partners is planned in 2022.

Task 5-2: Local events. In 2021, Young Environmental completed an assessment of events for community outreach through local cities and counties. In 2022, criteria will be provided to help staff determine participation in events and programming. Young Environmental will develop a list of potential events and programs based on these criteria. The CAC will be invited to participate in these events.

Task 5-3: Tabling materials. In 2021, Young Environmental developed several handouts that may be brought to community tabling events. Based on information from the CAC, Young Environmental will develop additional handouts with thought given to the audience and local community issues (steep slopes, unique resource features, etc.). Young Environmental will explore cost-share tie-in to handouts

regarding rain barrels, rain gardens, native plants, etc. Young Environmental will also investigate the creation, purchase, and/or loan availability of interactive displays and present cost findings to the board.

Task 5-4: Cost share publicity. If Objective 6, below, is approved, Young Environmental will create publicity around the updated cost share program. Young Environmental will develop social media posts, press releases, and other materials to promote the District's cost share program and associated training.

Deliverables: 2022 events list, interactive display presentation to the board, publicity for cost share program

Estimated budget: \$11,040–\$15,456

Objective 6. Cost Share Program and Training

Task 6-1: Program enhancement. Young Environmental will review and enhance current cost share information and add an online application form to the district website with a schedule and time frame for applications to be submitted and reviewed.

Task 6-2: Program development. Young Environmental will work with local entities to integrate learning and technical support for applicants that are approved for the program (i.e., Landscaping for Clean Water through the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District). Where existing programs are unavailable, Young Environmental will develop a training program based on existing local programming to facilitate applicants' successful cost share projects.

Deliverables: Updated application and online version will be created, training program developed

Estimated budget: \$4,896

Objective 7. Website Assistance

Task 7.1: Website updates. In 2021, Young Environmental has been compiling water resource data for District water bodies. Over the course of 2022, Young Environmental will be responsible for populating these data on the District's website. Young Environmental will also assist the District with comprehensive content management of the site.

Deliverables: Developing individual water body website pages, updating, and maintaining website content

Estimated budget: \$8,832