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**Chesapeake Bay**

**Phase III WIP Strategic Communications Plan**

**Mission:** Create an informed, diverse community of citizens and local leaders with the knowledge and resources to achieve the goals of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan.

**Communications Subcommittee:** This group will meet quarterly to implement the Phase III WIP Communications Plan. Establishing and using a calendar of outreach opportunities, the subcommittee will internally share information and resources for conducting outreach and communications; publicly share messaging of various local, state, and federal programs that support the goals of the WIP; strengthen partnership involvement in development of communications strategies and work plans by the subcommittee; and encourage other organizations and agencies with similar goals to join the subcommittee.

**Communication Channels:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Websites  Social Media  Press  Handouts | Email  Events  Workshops  Presentations | Interviews  TV/Radio  Newsletter |

**Potential Partners:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Nanticoke Watershed Alliance * United States Department of Agriculture/ Natural Resources Conservation Service * Delaware Nature Society/ Abbotts Mill Nature Center * University of Delaware * Delaware Department of Transportation * Delaware Department of Agriculture * Chesapeake Bay Program * Nanticoke Watershed Conservancy * New Castle Conservation District –Mike Harris * Kent County Conservation District * Sussex county conservation District * The Nature Conservancy | * Delmarva Poultry Industry * Delaware Department of Agriculture * Trap Pond State Park * Elected officials * Town of Hartly * Town of Farmington * Town of Greenwood * Town of Bridgeville * City of Seaford * Town of Blades * Town of Bethel * Town of Laurel * Town of Delmar |

**Goal I: Citizen Stewardship** -Increase the number of trained and mobilized citizen volunteers who have the knowledge and skills needed to enhance the health of their local watersheds.

**Audience:** General Public/ stakeholders

**Messages:**

* Human’s actions on land directly affect the quality of water in rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, and bays
* Definition of nutrient and sediment pollution
* Nutrient and sediment pollution causes poor health of waterways, wildlife, and humans
* There are ways everyone can reduce nutrient and sediment pollution
* Opportunities for learning about voluntary activities that support the WIP
* Resources for information on voluntary activities that support the WIP
  + - Creating Rain Gardens
    - Planting buffers and trees
    - Installing pervious surfaces
    - Volunteering for stream cleanup or monitoring
    - Maintaining, upgrading or replacing septic systems
    - Reducing use of lawn chemicals and fertilizers
    - Using rain barrels
    - Reducing harmful chemicals down the drain
    - Cleaning up pet waste
    - Composting
    - Natives
    - Pollinators
* Value of voluntary activities –When quantitative, share #’s with local officials
* Funding available to support voluntary activities

**Strategy:**

* Websites
* Update websites with information providing support and guidance for citizens to learn how to achieve the goals of the WIP
* Update websites with information on programs that provide funding resources for projects that support the WIP
* Social Media
* Maintain a consistent social media presence
* Share partner’s messaging
* Hold social media campaigns to increase reach
* Outreach
* Participate/exhibit at public events
* Host workshops on practices that improve water quality
* Present information on the WIP to various groups and organizations
* Provide opportunities for citizens and leaders to connect with local waterways
* Press
* Issue media alerts and press releases
* Conduct interviews with local media
* Email
* Quarterly newsletter
* Deliver updates from CB Communications team to subcommittee and stakeholders
* Communications Materials
* Update existing materials
* Distribute to State Service Centers
* Distribute to Libraries
* Distribute at outreach events
* Contests
* Hold Delaware Watersheds Photo Contest
* Create New Face of Wet Waste Contest

**Goal II: Diversity** -Identify minority stakeholder groups not currently represented in the leadership, decision-making or implementation of current conservation and restoration activities. Create meaningful opportunities and programs to recruit and engage these groups.

**Audience:** Minorities and underserved communities

**Messages:**

* All information listed in Citizen Stewardship Messages
* Availability of meaningful opportunities and programs for underserved communities
* Spanish Fish Consumption Advisories
* Spanish Nonpoint Source pollution reduction materials

**Strategy:**

* Identify and work with underserved communities
* Develop Meaningful opportunities and Programs
* Submerged Aquatic Vegetation growings/plantings
* Tree plantings
* Use Diversity sign in sheets at workshops to track progress
* Distribute Spanish communications materials
* Post Spanish materials on websites
* Distribute Spanish materials to State Service Centers
* Distribute Spanish materials to Libraries
* All information listed in Citizen Stewardship Strategy

**Goal III: Local Leadership** -Continually increase the knowledge and capacity of local officials on issues related to water resources and in the implementation of economic and policy incentives that will support local conservation actions.

**Audience:** Local officials and leaders

**Messages:**

* Opportunities for learning about WIP
* Current data on status of water quality
* The reasons for improved management of activities that impact water quality
* The value of improved water quality for Delawareans
  + Healthy watersheds are good for the economy
  + Healthy watersheds provide quality of life
  + Healthy watersheds improve public health
* The WIP goals and the necessary activities, regulations and policies to accomplish those goals
* The opportunities for public involvement
* Local governments should be actively involved in Phase III WIPs so they can tie-in their own local priorities and constraints
* Local governments can take credit for practices and programs they are already doing
* The Bay Model has improved, reflecting more refined local land use data
* Tools are available to help implementation planning and decision-making processes for BMP funding, targeting, and implementation
* What funding is available to publics and entities for stakeholders affected by regulations and/or policies that are part of the WIP
* Resources for obtaining information related to the WIP
* Results of the WIP

**Strategy:**

* Local Government mailers on what Local Governments need to know about the WIP
* Work with Local Engagement Action Team & Local Government Advisory committee
* Meet one-on-one with Local Government officials
* Plan Local Government Engagement workshop
* Websites
  + Update websites with information providing support and guidance for local leaders to learn how to achieve the goals of the WIP
  + Update websites with information on programs that provide funding resources for projects that support the WIP

**Implementation Timeline**