



Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

Creating Conservation Solutions for Over 60 Years

Lawn Care Best Management Practices for Backyard Conservation

Background:

Harmful algal blooms and stormwater management program requirements have increased the interest in and need for outreach and education on management of nutrient loading from urban landscapes. While urban landscapes may not be the primary source of nutrient loading, we know that improperly implemented lawn and yard maintenance activities can result in nutrient runoff.

This need is recognized in Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District's (FSWCD) updated 2014-2016 Strategic Plan. This is also a recognized need in the City of Columbus Green Team Memo. Fifty attendees at FSWCD's first lawn care and soil-testing workshop for property owners indicates an interest from local homeowners in managing lawn care inputs.

Considerations used in developing this proposal are:

- Many of residents do not have the time, resources or inclination to seek out programming and messages regarding best management practices for their yards that will improve water quality. It is best to reach out to residents where they are. A good venue for this could be lawncare businesses and home and garden retailers. Similar approaches have been developed in the state of Delaware and elsewhere.
- There are many practices residents can adopt that will help reduce nutrients. The practices fall under two categories: managing the quality of runoff and managing the quantity of runoff. Possible practices range from cleaning gutters, properly managing fertilizer, properly managing yard waste, mowing high, aerating lawns, installing rain gardens and using rain barrels.
- Messaging can also be shared with the Columbus GreenSpot Backyard Conservation Program and can be shared with other partners with similar goals, including watershed groups, MetroParks, Grange Insurance Audubon Center, OSU Extension, NRCS, MORPC, Blueprint Columbus, City of Columbus Green Team, Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association and other Franklin County communities.

The Program

With the lawn care best management practice (BMP) program, FSWCD will continue the momentum gained in working with nurseries through the Gardening for Clean Water Program

and the Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative and extend this concept to the lawn care industry. The Gardening for Clean Water Program involved nurseries in educating homeowners about the benefits of rain gardens and native plants. Five Central Ohio nurseries were provided with displays, rain garden plant labels and staff training by FSWCD. This strategy can be replicated with the lawn care industry for educating customers on the benefits of nutrient management. It is likely that these two programs could combine in the future and be used in working with companies that manage both landscape design and yard maintenance. This program may also support separate work through City of Columbus to further develop a workforce for green infrastructure maintenance on residential properties.

Messaging on nutrient management will focus on activities that lawn care businesses can adopt and promote to their customers. Similar messaging will also be developed for when FSWCD staff and partners interact with residents who manage their own lawns. For those who want to learn more about a larger range of practices or the science behind nutrient management. FSWCD will have information on our website or in handouts available to them upon request. Available resources, especially those from OSU extension, will be considered for use, rather than recreating technical documents.

The goal is to develop a program similar to [Delaware Livable Lawns \(www.delawarelivablelawns.org\)](http://www.delawarelivablelawns.org). Lawn care businesses that participate in workshops and agree to certain practices are recognized as “green” businesses. Delaware Livable lawns has documents available for customers, provides a logo for businesses to use on their materials and on their vehicles and recognizes participating businesses on their website. One of the requirements is for lawn care companies to provide educational brochures to their residents. The feasibility of this final goal will be researched and discussed before a final approach and messaging is developed.

Program Development

Program development will involve five stages.

- 1) The first stage will be identifying and talking to partners about their interest in working with us on this project. These partners could include local governments, MORPC, MetroParks, Grange Insurance, Audubon Center, Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, OSU Extension, City of Columbus Green Team, Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative, Blue print and GreenSpot, and NRCS. This stage of development will involve informal conversations to gauge interest and receive a formative evaluation. Depending on their interest and ability to partner, FSWCD will continue to engage prospective partners throughout the project by inviting them to meetings, requesting their feedback, and sharing materials and information. This stage has been initiated and will continue throughout the project.

- 2) The second stage will involve understanding current science behind the messaging. Nutrient loading in streams is an important yet sensitive issue. How an awareness and behavior change campaign is conducted can engage or alienate the lawn care industry. Appropriate messaging based on current research will be important. The research may be most important to staff and partners engaging the public and businesses, so that they can answer questions confidently, or know when to forward questions to someone else. This component has been initiated and will continue over the winter and into the early messaging stage of the project.
- 3) The third stage of the project will involve messaging. FSWCD plans to retain the services of Bluestem Communications for on this component of the project. Their proposal is attached. This component will begin in early 2015 and continue through the summer.
- 4) The fourth stage will be developing a program implementation plan. This will involve the finer details of how FSWCD will interact with and recognize participating lawn care businesses. An implementation plan developed with partner input and City of Columbus support will be completed by the Fall of 2015.
- 5) The fifth stage will be implementation in 2016.

Qualifications

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District is the natural resource agency in Franklin County with the sole purpose of promoting conservation and responsible land use for better water quality and natural resource management. This is accomplished through establishing partnerships, providing technical guidance, and targeted environmental education. All of our programs are focused on protecting or improving water quality and natural resources for the benefits of Central Ohio residents. Technical guidance and assistance is aimed toward homeowners, watershed groups, and local governments for protecting and restoring streams, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. Projects include conservation easements, sediment and erosion control, illicit discharge detection and elimination, and alternative drainage concepts such as rain gardens. In addition, through our environmental education and outreach teams, we have developed natural resource fact sheets, workshops, presentations, loan kits, hands-on activities, and educational displays that are all available to educators, non-profit organizations, and local governments. With a staff of 15 experienced and highly qualified individuals, we have been recognized as one of the best urban Soil & Water Conservation Districts in the State of Ohio by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. We have been developing and implementing conservation solutions for over 60 years in Franklin County. For more information visit www.franklinswcd.org.

Jennifer Fish, Director, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District. She has a Master of Science in Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Jennifer is a Certified Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Specialist (CMS4S) through EnviroCert. Jennifer has conducted survey research and co-authored two published articles: “An Analysis of the Costs and Benefits of Residing Near a Rural and Recreational Greenway” and

“Perceptions of Landowners Toward Natural Resource Conservation in the Big Walnut Watershed”. Jennifer serves on the board of the Ohio Stormwater Association and has been the Director of Franklin Soil and Water for the past 10 years. She directs and supports a staff of 15 natural resource professionals with the mission of promoting responsible land use decisions for the conservation of soil and water resources.

Sara Ernst, Conservation Implementation Specialist, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District. Sara Ernst is conservation implementation specialist at Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, where she leads backyard conservation programs with a focus on rain gardens and other storm water management practices. Sara has worked as a field botanist in Florida and Pennsylvania, performed environmental education in various parts of Ohio and Central America, and led several Greater Cincinnati schools and communities in the installation of rain gardens. Sara earned her BA in botany from Miami University, studied environmental education at Antioch University, and received her Master of Community Planning from the University of Cincinnati. In addition, Sara has served as a volunteer with Americorps and Peace Corps.

Mary Ann Brouillette, Communications Specialist, Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District. She has a BS in Human Dimensions/Ecological Communication and Education from The Ohio State University’s School of Environment and Natural Resources. Before returning to Ohio, she worked as a reforestation technician for the USDA Forest Service and as an outdoor educator in Washington and Oregon. Her interests are in adult environmental education and communicating for behavior change. Since joining Franklin Soil and Water, she has worked to align outreach efforts more closely to district program areas and to segment and target audiences in order to foster better decision-making for the environment.

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District and the City of Columbus Lawn Care Campaign October 21, 2014

Bluestem Communications, a registered nonprofit organization, has 19 years of experience supporting organizations working to protect and improve our environment. Our successful and creative communication strategies have earned us a reputation in the environmental community as a valuable asset for organizations, coalitions and municipalities.

Since 2007, Bluestem has devised a set of specialized tools for strategic planning and communications that are uniquely geared to meet the needs and challenges of nonprofits, government organizations and coalitions. These tools help us develop audience-specific messages, materials and campaigns to inspire targeted audiences to change behaviors. All communications incorporate values and concerns so they reach an audience with a message they can get behind.

OUR SERVICES: COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES

A complete communications strategy provides a step-by-step process to meet specific goals. We develop strategies tailored to targeted audiences and issues by considering the **values-based communication theory** and following the **social marketing process**. Bluestem's communications staff leads clients through the rigorous process of determining a campaign's objectives, audiences, audience barriers, messages and pathways.

Inspiring lasting behavior changes—from caring for trees and reducing fertilizer use to volunteering and voting—requires strategic thinking and planning. We have used social marketing planning tools like those outlined in this document (See Addendum) to help organizations create compelling messages and effective materials.

Communications for environmental campaigns must be about so much more than hastily constructed websites, blog posts and brochures. In order to inspire people to make permanent changes in their behavior to support an organization or protect or restore environmental resources, we must call on their already deeply held personal values and beliefs. A thoughtful communications strategy using social marketing concepts increases the value and effectiveness of communications efforts.

PROJECT APPROACH

To truly change long-standing lawn care habits that have negative effects on surrounding waterways, we must reach out to them with both easy alternatives and values-based messages. Simply educating homeowners about stormwater issues is not enough to inspire lasting change.

Bluestem Communications utilizes a very specific, tried and true method for researching and developing education, outreach and behavior change campaigns. As we did on a similar project in Dublin, Ohio, in 2010, we combine research, values-based communications and social marketing strategies in a system that gets to the root of a campaign's goal and tailors efforts to particular audiences. Applying these tools while developing communication strategies can make or break efforts to change behaviors.

To ensure that a lawn care campaign for homeowners is successful, we must inspire homeowners to adopt new behaviors. But, just as important for long-term water quality improvement, we must start building relationships with existing lawn care companies to inspire them to also make changes in their lawn care services and strategies. To accomplish these two complementary goals, our approach would follow these steps:

Phase 1: Research and Planning

4-6 weeks

To develop campaigns to engage and inspire public audiences, we must understand their values, knowledge and current behaviors. We begin by conducting a **literature review** of any existing public opinion research that might be relevant to the project and behavior-change goal. Our review will cover research conducted in the targeted municipalities, about similar populations and around stormwater and lawn care issues broadly. During this initial stage we cast a wide net for any existing studies or research that might be helpful.

While conducting the literature review, it is also important to have a complete understanding of partner organizations' existing communication resources and any plans for creating new tools or updating old ones. To do this, we ask organizations to complete an electronic survey—called a **communications audit**—so that we can build a realistic plan based on the resources at hand.

In addition, we would take time during this phase to develop a plan for reaching out to strategically-selected lawn care companies. We will have at least one **in-person planning meeting** to review overall campaign goals, the project timeline and to begin the process of building the lawn care company plan.

Phase 1 Deliverables:

1. Literature review results
2. Communications audit results
3. One in-person planning meeting

Phase 2: Communications Strategy and Message

12 weeks

A communications strategy considers the results of the communications audit, literature review and any additional polling to determine the desired impact of the project, measureable objectives to track progress, potential audience barriers and benefits to adopting the desired change, ideal messengers and the best pathways for reaching the audience members. The communications

strategy will be developed during facilitated conversations with staff and other partners at an in-person meeting.

The measurable objectives identified in the communications strategy form the foundation of an evaluation plan. Each objective is SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, reachable and time-bound). By establishing these measures of success at the beginning of the strategy and by developing ways to measure the activities implemented, we build-in the beginnings of an evaluation plan. The result is a “to do” list of activities necessary to implement the strategy and reach the audiences, with built-in measures of success.

While developing this communications strategy for the homeowner lawn care campaign, we would simultaneously develop a communications strategy for reaching out to lawn care companies. Our ultimate goal is to reach out to these companies and build relationships with them. We want to know:

- What kinds of behaviors might you be willing to change within your company to improve water quality?
- What kinds of behaviors might you be willing to promote among your customers to improve water quality?
- How do you want to be engaged in this ongoing public campaign?
- How would you benefit from such a coordinated public campaign?

A communications strategy for these lawn care companies could include one-on-one meetings, focus groups, surveys, networking events, etc., in order to build relationships and get them involved on the ground-floor of this project. It will be essential that these companies feel included from the beginning in order to have their trust.

Once the communications strategies are complete, we will develop detailed message packets for each audience. Each message connects the audience to a desired action through compelling, values-based language. The message narrative tells the story of the problem we are addressing, a solution and the action they can take to be part of that solution. A message document becomes a tool that the organization can refer to whenever they create printed or electronic communications.

Phase 2 Deliverables:

1. Communications strategy for homeowner campaign
2. Communications strategy for lawn care company campaign
3. Message documents for each campaign
4. One in-person planning meeting for homeowner campaign
5. Two – three in-person meetings with lawn care company representatives

Phase 3: Tools, Training and Implementation

12 weeks

Once approved, the message document is the basis for developing the materials which were identified in the list of activities section of the communications strategy. From that list we will prioritize a few items and develop production timelines for each. These materials will be written, designed and created or printed by Bluestem or sometimes the organization may want to do the design and printing.

Homeowner campaign materials will be distributed to the campaign implementers at an in-person training. We can offer two different kinds of trainings, depending on the local interest. A full-day training session can guide participants through our values-based communications tools so they can replicate the process in their own work. A shorter, 2-3 hour training provides a brief overview of values-based communications and then focuses on ensuring that all participants have the tools and messages to implement the new lawn care campaign. This workshop reviews the purpose of messages, how to use them consistently, how to use these messages to create new materials and how to implement the recommended activities.

After training all interested parties on the specifics of the lawn care campaigns, we will assist staff in actually implementing the lawn care company campaign. Through on-going monthly consulting hours, Bluestem will provide support for all campaign implementers to answer questions, trouble shoot or review materials that the organization has created on their own using the message document. This monthly consulting could also include creating one simple communications tool per month, such as a press release, fund-raising letter or newsletter article.

Phase 3 Deliverables:

1. Writing, design and production of 2-3 campaign materials
2. One full-day values-based communications workshop and one 2-3 hour training session
3. On-going consulting, 2 hours per month for 6 months

OUR EXPERTISE

Bluestem was formed as a think-tank in Madison, Wisconsin, on the premise that environmental organizations could learn a lot from traditional marketing firms. Bluestem studied environmental education efforts and conducted public opinion research. We began to understand the best ways to talk about complicated environmental issues, like loss of biodiversity, and how to actually connect audiences to these issues. We identified audience values that we could tap into and effective pathways for reaching the audiences. We turned this research into reports, white papers and trainings.

Over time, Bluestem staff saw that just researching environmental values and audiences wasn't enough. We realized that we could provide a greater service by helping other nonprofits, coalitions and government agencies by creating strategic plans that put values-based education and social marketing methods into action. In short, we began to put our philosophy into action. While we still conduct public opinion research, we also design and implement full-scale campaigns, lead strategic planning for coalitions, design communications strategies, create web-based and print materials and train partner organizations on how to reach their audiences and measure results.

Bluestem now employs four full-time staff, three part-time staff and technical consultants from our Chicago office. Staff members are communications and coalition-building experts experienced in writing, organizational planning, researching and managing complex groups and programs. With advanced degrees in writing, rhetoric, education, environmental science and urban planning, we offer both content and communications specialists. To maintain our unique niche in the nonprofit world, we frequently work with technical consultants who add graphic design, web design and brand management talents to our portfolio.

The following is a more detailed description of our expert staff who would be working directly on this project.

Jennifer Browning, Executive Director

Jennifer joined Bluestem Communications in 2007. She brings to the position over 15 years of experience in the field of environmental communications, as well as a dedication and passion for protecting the environment. Jennifer manages the operations of Bluestem Communications and its associated programs. She assists with planning, research and audience analysis. In addition to the traditional executive director duties, she works directly on several communication campaigns and on projects supporting networks and coalitions, including, the Mississippi River Network, the Texas Land Trust Alliance and the Willamette River Initiative in Portland, Oregon. She has extensive experience assisting organizations and networks with strategic planning, writing grants and proposals and works collaboratively with several foundations. She is also a member of the Vital Lands Illinois Working Group (a network of Illinois land trusts) and sits on the Board of Directors of the Center for Neighborhood Technology. Prior to joining Bluestem, she worked for ten years as a consultant for organizations such as the Field Museum, National Wildlife Federation, Chicago Botanic Garden, USDA National Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy. Jennifer holds a B.S. in ecology from the University of Illinois and offers a combination of expertise in the natural sciences, leadership development and best communication practices.

Rebeca Bell, Communications Director

Rebeca assists in the development of key messages and creation of all of our communication strategies and materials, including brochures, websites and workshop materials. She guides groups through our unique communications strategy process, conducts audience research and incorporates values-based language into all final messages and documents. Rebeca plays a key role in shaping and implementing Bluestem's communications projects, programs and campaigns. With a background in rhetoric, writing and grassroots organizing in a wide variety of communities, she manages communications efforts so they are both inspirational and persuasive. Rebeca holds a degree in political science from Denison University and earned a Master's degree in writing and rhetoric from DePaul University.

OUR EXPERIENCE

Bluestem has developed specialized, adaptable tools to guide organizations through the strategic planning and communications planning processes. We utilize a very specific, tried and true method for researching and developing education, outreach and behavior change campaigns. We've combined **research, values-based communications, meeting facilitation and social marketing strategies** in a system that gets to the root of an organization's goals and tailors efforts to particular audiences. Applying these tools while developing strategic plans and communication strategies can make or break efforts to change behaviors and promote sustainable decision-making.

We've recently worked with the following organizations and coalitions to build communication strategies, messages and campaign materials:

- America's Great Waters Coalition

- Arlington, Virginia, Tree Stewards and Master Naturalists
- Chicago Regional Land Conservation Coalition
- Chicago Wilderness Alliance
- City of Dublin, Ohio
- Delavan Lake Watershed Initiative Network
- Forest Preserve District of Cook County
- Illinois Lake Michigan Implementation Planning Committee
- Mississippi River Network
- Rock River Stormwater Group

Highlights from our Mississippi River Network and Arlington, VA, Tree Stewards and Master Naturalists work follow below:

Mississippi River Network - *1 Mississippi* Campaign

www.1mississippi.org

The Mississippi River Network is a coalition 43 of local and national nonprofit organization that came together from the need for river-wide cooperation to achieve large-scale, high-impact successes. Managed by Bluestem since 2007, the coalition of organizations focuses on protecting and restoring the entire length of the River through a variety of communication and policy programs. Bluestem led a strategic planning process for the coalition, which resulted in a long term plan with measurable goals, objectives, and detailed outcomes and outputs. A detailed communications strategy was also developed in 2009. It is a ten-state campaign called *1 Mississippi* which includes a diverse grass-roots implementation plan and communication materials (see images to the right and below) with tested messages and active pathways for reaching audiences throughout the region.



Arlington, VA, Tree Stewards and Master Naturalists - *Choking Hazard* Campaign

The Tree Stewards and Master Naturalists of Arlington sought communications assistance to inspire local homeowners with trees that have ivy in them to remove the ivy from the tree. As an invasive species, the ivy can damage trees, or even kill them, leading to expensive landscaping costs or property damage. While the two groups have passionate and active volunteers, multiple pathways for reaching their neighbors and county officials who have expressed an interest in sharing information via their avenues, the groups needed assistance in developing targeted messages and producing compelling materials. After completing an audience and barrier analysis, we developed a full communications strategy and message. After gathering feedback from the Virginia team, we turned the message into several re-useable documents, including a full-color printed brochure (pictured to the right and included in this packet), text for press releases and emails and content for a door hanger.



ADDENDUM

Values-based communication and social marketing

Values-based communication and social marketing are strategies that create social change by building personal connections to an issue. Pioneered by Bluestem in the 1990s, values-based communications draws on the values or beliefs that a person already has to inspire both attitude and behavior change. Values are broad ideas and are deeply held: community pride, personal responsibility, each generation should have it better than the last, equality for all, etc. When developing values-based messages and strategies, communications professionals consider an audience's values and try to relate the problem to those values through specifically chosen pathways. Values-based appeals speak to a person's emotions, hopes and fundamental beliefs.

Social marketing is a strategy, popularized by Doug McKenzie-Mohr, that offers a step-by-step process to inspire behavior change through public communications¹. Together, values-based communication and social marketing rely on public, visible communications efforts. They connect people to often abstract environmental issues by relating community issues to personal actions.

Applying these tools while developing communication strategies can make or break efforts to change behaviors and promote sustainable decision-making. Using a specially modified version of McKenzie-Mohr's process, Bluestem works with coalitions and nonprofit organizations to integrate values-based communications into programs and education campaigns to achieve environmental goals.

Developing a communications strategy

The goal of a communications strategy is to motivate a target audience to take some action or change their behavior. Behavior change campaigns are not about simply educating an audience, although education is usually a component of the campaign. In reality, educating people about an environmental issue seldom leads to behavior changes. In order for people to make real, lasting behavior changes, we must appeal to their values and beliefs and remove the barriers that might prevent them from making a change or supporting an issue.

A communications strategy is a roadmap that outlines the specific goal of a campaign, what behaviors must be changed to reach that goal, who needs to make those changes (the audience), and how to inspire that change (what activities and tools to use to reach the audience). A complete communications strategy shows communicators how to reach goals. A communications strategy is developed by considering the values-based communication *theory* and following the social marketing *process*.

Bluestem's communications strategy template leads communicators through the rigorous process of determining a campaign's **impacts, objectives, audiences, audience barriers, messages and pathways**.

A communications strategy based on the social marketing process directs resources to the very heart of the problem, to the audiences who have the authority and potential to adopt the desired behavior changes or support issues.

¹ D. McKenzie-Mohr and W. Smith, *Fostering Sustainable Behavior*. Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 1999.



Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District

Creating Conservation Solutions for Over 60 Years

Intergovernmental Working Agreement with the City of Columbus for Lawn Care Practices Education and Outreach Program Development

This working agreement is entered into on _____ and becomes effective on the date of the last signature. The grant agreement expires on December 31, 2015. The agreement is subject to the limitations of authorities, resources and policies of the Soil and Water Conservation District (Soil and Water) and the City of Columbus (the City).

The purpose of this agreement is to work with Bluestem Communications (Bluestem) to develop a nutrient management outreach program that will focus on activities that lawn care businesses can adopt and promote to their customers. More background information is available in the program proposal.

Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District will work with Bluestem Communications to develop the lawn care outreach program. Program development will involve six stages.

- 1) The first stage will be identifying and talking to partners about their interest in working with the City and Soil and Water on this project. These partners could include local governments, MORPC, MetroParks, Grange Insurance, Audubon Center, Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, OSU Extension, City of Columbus Green Team, Central Ohio Rain Garden Initiative, Blue Print and GreenSpot, and NRCS. This stage of development will involve informal conversations to gauge interest and receive a formative evaluation. Depending on interest and ability to partner, Soil and Water will continue to engage prospective partners throughout the project by inviting them to meetings, requesting their feedback, and sharing materials and information. This stage has been initiated and will continue throughout the project. An update will be provided to the City once significant progress has been made in identifying interested partners.
- 2) The second stage will involve understanding current science behind the messaging. Nutrient loading in streams is an important yet sensitive issue. How an awareness and behavior change campaign is conducted can engage or alienate the lawn care industry. Appropriate messaging based on current research will be important. The research may be most important to staff and partners engaging the public and businesses so that they can

answer questions confidently, or know when to forward questions to someone else. This component has been initiated and will continue over the winter and into the early messaging stage of the project. An update will be provided to the City on the current research findings.

- 3) The third stage of the project will involve identifying what lawn services are used most frequently by City of Columbus residents. An update will be provided to the City on the research findings.
- 4) The fourth stage of the project will involve messaging. Soil and Water plans to retain the services of Bluestem for this component of the project. This stage will begin in early 2015 and continue through the summer. Messaging development will be divided into three phases.

Phase 1: Research and Planning 4-6 weeks

Bluestem will conduct a literature review of any existing public opinion research that might be relevant to the project and behavior-change goal. The review will cover research conducted in the targeted municipalities, about similar populations and around stormwater and lawn care issues broadly.

To gain a complete understanding of partner organizations' existing communication resources and any plans for creating new tools or updating old ones Bluestem will ask organizations to complete an electronic survey, called a communications audit, to build a realistic plan based on the resources at hand.

Bluestem will develop a plan for reaching out to strategically selected lawn care companies. At least one in-person planning meeting will be convened to review overall campaign goals, the project timeline and to begin the process of building the lawn care company plan.

Phase 1 Deliverables will include literature review results, communications audit results and a planning meeting.

Phase 2: Communications Strategy and Message 12 weeks

A communications strategy will consider the results of the communications audit, literature review and any additional polling to determine the desired impact of the project, measurable objectives to track progress, potential audience barriers and benefits to adopting the desired change, ideal messengers and the best pathways for reaching the audience members. The communications strategy will be developed during facilitated conversations with staff and other partners at an in-person meeting.

The measurable objectives identified in the communications strategy form the foundation of an evaluation plan. The result will be "to do" list of activities necessary to implement the strategy and reach the audiences, with built-in measures of success.

While developing this communications strategy for the homeowner lawn care campaign, a communications strategy for reaching out to lawn care companies will be developed. This strategy will address: what kinds of behaviors companies will be willing to engage in to improve water quality, what kinds of behaviors will be willing to promote among customers to improve water quality, and how companies want to be engaged in the public campaign, and how companies will benefit from a coordinated public campaign.

This communications strategy for lawn care companies would include one-on-one meetings, focus groups, surveys, networking events, etc., in order to build relationships and get them involved on the ground-floor of this project.

Once the communications strategies are complete, Bluestem will develop detailed message packets for each audience. The message document will become a tool that the organization can refer to whenever they create printed or electronic communications.

Phase 2 Deliverables will include a communications strategy for homeowner campaign, a communications strategy for lawn care company campaign, message documents for each campaign, one in-person planning meeting for homeowner campaign, and two – three in-person meetings with lawn care company representatives

Phase 3: Tools, Training and Implementation 12 weeks

Once approved, the message document is the basis for developing the materials which were identified in the list of activities section of the communications strategy. From that list Bluestem will prioritize a few items and develop production timelines for each. These materials will be written, designed and created or printed.

Homeowner campaign materials will be distributed to the campaign implementers at an in-person training. This training will include purpose of messages, how to use them consistently, how to use these messages to create new materials and how to implement the recommended activities.

After training all interested parties on the specifics of the lawn care campaigns, Bluestem will assist staff in actually implementing the lawn care company campaign through on-going monthly consulting hours. This monthly consulting could also include creating one simple communications tool per month, such as a press release, fund-raising letter or newsletter article.

Phase 3 Deliverables will include the writing, design and production of 2-3 campaign materials, one full-day values-based communications workshop and one 2-3 hour training session, and on-going consulting, and 2 hours per month for 6 months.

- 5) The fifth stage will be developing a program implementation plan. This will involve the finer details of how Soil and Water will interact with and recognize participating lawn care businesses..

The City of Columbus will provide:

- Compensation to Soil and Water in the form of an operational grant in the amount of \$30,175 (see attachment A).
- Review and feedback on all updates and deliverables.
- Participation in communication audit and all planning meetings.

It is Mutually Agreed:

That the working relationship will be defined to include lines of communications with appropriate departments.

That Soil and Water reserves the right to expend funds as needed to meet grant agreement and overhead costs.

That all parties will review quality of service and address concerns as they arise.

That credit will be given jointly to Soil and Water and the City in related publications prior to publication where applicable.

That this working agreement may be amended at any time by mutual written agreement of the parties. In addition, either party may terminate this agreement by providing the other party with thirty (30) days written notice.

SIGNATURES

The below signatures certify consent on the above agreement.

FRANKLIN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Signature	Title	Date
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CITY OF COLUMBUS

Signature	Title	Date
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Attachment A

Program Development Budget	
Funding Request = \$30,175	
FSWCD Contribution = \$17,190	Total Project Cost = \$46,300
Stage 1 Identifying and Engaging Partners:	
1. Engaging potential partners – \$ 1,500 (100% cost covered by FSWCD)	
2. Keeping partners engaged – included in 3.1 below	
Stage 2 Current Research	
1. Review current research and technical documents – \$1,500 (100% cost covered by FSWCD)	
Stage 3 Identify Lawn Care Companies	
1. Initial review regarding what lawn services are used most frequently by City of Columbus residents - \$800 (100% cost covered by FSWCD)	
Stage 4 Messaging	
1. Oversight, support and coordination of participants for 30 weeks - \$11,280 (29% costs or \$3271.20 covered by FSWCD and \$8,008.8 covered by Columbus)	
Phase 1 Deliverables:	
1. Literature review results \$1,000	
2. Communications audit results \$800	
3. One in-person planning meeting \$1,000	
<i>Services sub-total \$2,800</i>	
<i>Travel expenses (not to exceed) 1 person/1 trip/1day \$600</i>	
PHASE 1 TOTAL \$3,400 (29% costs or \$986 covered by FSWCD and \$2,414 covered by Columbus)	
Phase 2 Deliverables:	
1. Communications strategy for homeowner campaign and message documents \$5,000	
2. Communications strategy for lawn care company campaign and message documents \$5,000	
3. One in-person planning meeting for homeowner campaign \$1,000	
4. Two – three in-person meetings with lawn care company representatives \$1,500	
<i>Services sub-total \$12,500</i>	
<i>Travel expenses (not to exceed) 1 person/1day/ 2 trips \$1,200</i>	
PHASE 2 TOTAL \$13,700 (29% costs or \$3,973 covered by FSWCD and \$9,727 covered by Columbus)	

Columbus)
Phase 3 Deliverables:
1. Writing of 2-3 campaign materials 1,000
2. One full-day values-based communications workshop and one 2-3 hour training session \$1,500
3. On-going consulting, 2 hours per month for 6 months \$1,320
<i>Services sub-total \$3,820</i>
<i>Travel expenses (not to exceed) 1 person 1 trip 2 days \$800</i>
<i>Graphic designer (not to exceed) \$2,000</i>
<i>Website development (not to exceed) \$6,000</i>
PHASE 3 TOTAL \$12,620 (29% costs or \$3,659.80 covered by FSWCD and \$8960.20 covered by Columbus)
Stage 5 Program Implementation Plan
1. Develop a program implementation plan \$1,500 (29% costs or \$435 covered by FSWCD and \$1065 covered by Columbus)