

WRIA 54 Education Work Group Meeting

04/03/2008

Attendees: Sara Hunt (Ecology), Russ Connole (Spokane County Stormwater), Brook Beeler (Ecology), Mike Hermanson (Spokane County), Stan Miller (citizen).

Facilitated by: Bryony Stasney.

GOALS

Group reviewed the goals for water resources education in WRIA 54. The updated goals follow the meeting summary.

ISSUES

Group reviewed the issues related to water resources education in WRIA 54. The updated issues follow the meeting summary.

WRIA 54 EDUCATION MATRIX REVIEW

Using the handout as a guide (WRIA 54 Education Issues / Solutions Matrix), the group discussed potential strategies to address the issues. The results of the discussion are included in the WRIA 54 Education Issues / Solutions Matrix (updated 041408). This updated matrix follows the meeting summary.

Next meetings

The group agreed to schedule one additional meeting if needed in May 2008.

Education

Lower Spokane River Watershed (WRIA 54) Planning Issue Paper

What are the Goals for Water Resources Education in WRIA 54?

Goals are broad ideas about what should be done.

- Raise public awareness of water resources issues in the watershed.
- Support recommendations from other WRIA 54 planning modules.
- Raise public awareness of how the actions of individuals affect the watershed and encourage citizens to change their behavior related to watershed issues.
- Support environmental education programs that teach youth and adults about watershed health.
- Create a mechanism to educate elected officials about watershed issues and options and to support informed decisions.
- Collaborate with ongoing education and outreach efforts.

What are the Water Resources Education Issues in WRIA 54?

- The WRIA 54 Watershed Plan should include public education on:
 - Indoor and outdoor water conservation;
 - How septic systems work and the maintenance needed;
 - Haz-mat procedures and disposal of waste products;
 - How all issues (growth, water quality, instream flow, etc.) affect the watershed (i.e., the holistic approach);
 - Education from birth to grave;
 - Education of small landowners.
 - Importance of maintaining / protecting riparian zones and wetlands.
- Environmental education staffing is insufficient to carry out the education needs related to water resources.
- Most environmental education occurs at the initiative of individual teachers.
- There is a lack of funding for environmental programs.
- There is a need for a consistent message related to environmental education.

WRIA 54 EDUCATION ISSUES-SOLUTIONS MATRIX

Education Issue/Problem	Current Status	Additional Data Needed	Possible Solutions or Toolbox	Recommended Action(s)
<p>Watershed Plan should include public education on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Indoor and outdoor water conservation; ➤ How septic systems work and the maintenance needed; ➤ Haz-mat procedures and disposal of waste products; ➤ How all issues (growth, water quality, instream flow, etc.) affect the watershed (i.e., the holistic approach); ➤ Education from birth to grave; ➤ Education of small landowners. ➤ Importance of maintaining / protecting riparian zones and wetlands. 	<p>On-going water management education programs related to water resources in WRIA 54 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Conservation District programs (that include forestry, water quality and quantity, shoreline protection and water conservation). • Water purveyor programs as component of muni bill. • Spokane County Stormwater NPDES education and outreach. Spokane County is considering hiring a consultant to support this effort. Components include - illicit discharge, construction, post construction, operations and maintenance and public education (general non-point source education). Regional Cities and Spokane County stormwater atlas and management program. • SAJB conservation and wellhead protection. • Spokane County water resources aquifer model and enviro kids program. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct education and outreach on the risks / benefits of reclaimed water use for the public and technical community – through WDOH, Ecology and entities that have reclaimed water programs in WRIA 54. • Public education on water rights and permit exempt wells – primarily through Ecology. Could be included as a component of pre-adjudication or water management rule making. WDOH (with permit for septic), Conservation Districts, Farm Bureau could be involved in distribution of educational materials to landowners on permit exempt wells. Cities and counties also to distribute flyers. • City and County governments will develop and implement a regional education and awareness program to promote wise and efficient use of water (both indoor and outdoor) with 	

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Education Issue/Problem	Current Status	Additional Data Needed	Possible Solutions or Toolbox	Recommended Action(s)
<p>Watershed Plan should include public education (cont).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spokane Youth Environmental Conference (now extending to Wellpinit). • SINES • WSU coop extension water conservation (xeriscaping) • City of Spokane Water Stewardship. • SCC water resources program. • Regional Water Conservation Collaboration (RWCC) – collaboration between Cities, Counties, non-profits, states, water purveyors, Ecology, WDOH. <i>Lincoln County, Stevens County and Medical Lake do not participate currently.</i> • WRIA 55/57 outdoor irrigation education. 		<p>voluntary participation from water purveyors. Implement programs on the West Plains as a priority in WRIA 54.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend that water purveyors involve the WRIA 54 Planning Unit in development and implementation of water conservation plans in WRIA 54. • Promote “Watershed Week” concept in education (e.g., through Spokane River Forum). • Support programs that develop and implement local curriculum workshops for teachers on watershed health. 	

WRIA 54 EDUCATION ISSUES-SOLUTIONS MATRIX

Education Issue/Problem	Current Status	Additional Data Needed	Possible Solutions or Toolbox	Recommended Action(s)
<p>Watershed Plan should include public education (cont).</p>	<p>On-going land use education programs related to water resources in WRIA 54 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Conservation District programs. • DNR programs (e.g. education on tree thinning). 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend that Ecology and WDOH meet with City and County planning departments, councils and commissioners on an annual basis to educate on water rights and water system planning and why this type of planning is important. • Education for developers and real estate groups on water issues (e.g., water rights, permit exempt wells, land clearing, stormwater, erosion control, shorelines) – through NGOs and Ecology. • Support education for timber landowners on BMPs and stand management – through DNR and Conservation Districts. • Support public education program on the benefits and problems of beaver dams. • Conduct public outreach (presentations / workshops) on watershed health to the American Planners Association. 	

WRIA 54 EDUCATION ISSUES-SOLUTIONS MATRIX

Education Issue/Problem	Current Status	Additional Data Needed	Possible Solutions or Toolbox	Recommended Action(s)
<p>Watershed Plan should include public education (cont).</p>	<p>On-going water quality education programs related to water resources in WRIA 54 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Conservation District programs. • County water resources programs. • County and City stormwater programs. • Ecology (water education for teachers [Project Wet] and students, watershed pledge program, Washington’s Water Campaign, haz-mat). • Regional Health Departments (haz-mat and septic systems) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support volunteer monitoring programs and promote development of volunteer monitoring programs – could be adult or youth. Reach out to schools, citizen groups, Spokane Community Colleges, EWU, Gonzaga. • Recommend that Ecology provide education and training and QAQC for volunteer monitoring programs. • Support education regarding non-point source pollution – could be through Ecology, Conservation Districts, County and City stormwater programs or water resources programs. • Support education of small businesses and homeowners on the proper storage and disposal of hazardous and harmful materials. • Support Urban Waters Initiatives and extend the Enviro-Stars program into WRIA 54. 	

WRIA 54 EDUCATION ISSUES-SOLUTIONS MATRIX

Education Issue/Problem	Current Status	Additional Data Needed	Possible Solutions or Toolbox	Recommended Action(s)
<p>Environmental education staffing is insufficient to carry out the education needs related to water resources.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support E3. • Encourage local governments to hire or retain education and outreach staff. • Conduct a study to define the environmental education needs in WRIA 54. • Include funding for education and outreach (staff and materials) within grant applications where applicable. 	
<p>Most environmental education occurs at the initiative of individual teachers.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve marketing of educational programs and materials to local schools and colleges. • Advertise Environmental Education Assoc. of Washington report card that shows that students who participate in EE programs have higher test scores. 	

WRIA 54 EDUCATION ISSUES-SOLUTIONS MATRIX

Education Issue/Problem	Current Status	Additional Data Needed	Possible Solutions or Toolbox	Recommended Action(s)
<p>There is a lack of funding for environmental programs.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support E3. • Recommend that the legislature provide additional funding to Ecology for education and outreach staff. • Recommend that Ecology make education and outreach a priority. 	
<p>There is a need for a consistent message related to environmental education.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend that the Spokane River Forum act as the clearing house for environmental education networking. 	