



# Outreach, Education and Public Involvement Framework

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## 1.0 Introduction

The Outreach, Education and Public Involvement Framework (OEPIF) outlines Oak Lodge Water Services’ (OLWS) goals and commitments with regards to Education, Outreach and Public Involvement concerning their Federal Permits. The framework was drafted using information and goals stated in the OLWS previous plans, as well as directly from the NPDES MS4 Phase I permit. In addition, staff conducted research to collect outreach material and guidance available from various sources including, but not limited to, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Oregon DEQ (DEQ), and the special districts in the MS4 permit dated October 1, 2021. Once a final draft is generated, OLWS staff proposes seeking public input for the OEPIF during a 30-day comment period.

## 1.1 Goals

OLWS plays an important role in increasing the knowledge of public impacts on the local Storm Water Management (SWM) as well as the Wastewater Collection System (WCS). The goals for Outreach, Education, and Public Involvement stem from the overall goals of the SWM program, as listed here:

*The goals of the SWM program are to protect the public’s safety, health, and property through applied surface water management techniques, to prevent and/or reduce the discharge of pollutants in storm water runoff to the maximum extent practicable (MEP), and to protect, and maintain the natural functions and values of the area’s surface waters through the employment of accepted best*

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*management practices (BMPs). [OLWS] will endeavor to apply the following objectives with regard to public involvement, outreach, and education in the implementation of its surface water management program:*

- *Provide for public involvement, public information, and public education as tools for improving surface water management through heightened awareness and activity impact on watershed protection, aquatic habitat protection, and riparian habitat protection.<sup>1</sup>*

For Outreach, Education and Public Involvement the targeted goals include promoting:

- An awareness of why it is necessary to keep the storm water system clean;
- An awareness of why keeping the WCS free of overload is in the public's best interest;
- Materials and plans to the public for involvement and input.

Targeted goals will increase public support when seeking permits, encourage the public to protect the system's equipment through best actions, and keep costs down.

## **1.2 Objectives**

The two most important functions of OLWS Outreach, Education and Public Involvement Program are to protect public health and the environment. OLWS protects our customers by creating benefits which may include keeping system costs down by encouraging public actions that protect equipment, such as the pipes and the pumps. With the help of our ratepayers, we work together to keep our costs down when it comes to the service we provide.

Protection of the environment includes compliance with the State and Federal level requirements and OLWS's permits for cleaning the wastewater and maintaining the storm water systems for water quality, thereby encouraging the health and well-being of humans and the ecosystems on which we all rely. Both program objectives rely on frequent interaction with our customers, put simply – through OLWS's Outreach, Education and Public Involvement Programming.

## **1.3 Demographics**

OLWS is located in the north Clackamas County area between the cities of Gladstone and Milwaukie. The boundary encompasses approximately 6.2 square miles and is bounded on the west by the Willamette River, on the south by the City of Gladstone, on the north by the City of Milwaukie, and on the east by the geological formation known as Oatfield Ridge. OLWS serves an estimated population of 32,000 with wastewater and surface water management services. OLWS serves a mature community, which is approximately 80% developed. Most development occurring within boundary is in-fill, with a few small subdivisions and minor partitions. OLWS implements its Surface Water Management (SWM) program within its jurisdictional boundary but not within areas also encompassed within a city.

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<sup>1</sup> From the *Oak Lodge Sanitary District's 2014-15 Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP)*, by Karen Streeter and updated by Jason Rice in 2015.

Therefore, the area to which this program applies is approximately 5.5 square miles.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.0 Shared MS4 Permit, Cooperative Efficiencies

OLWS participates in a shared National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharge Permit with 12 other regional co-permittees (referred to as the “MS4”). All 13 partners work both independently and together to meet their commitments as part of the permit. Specific to Outreach and Education a group of providers called the Clackamas County Watershed Education Team (CCWET) works together to fulfill a number of mandated goals regarding water quality and stormwater runoff.

The mandated goals are outlined as part of the “NPDES MS4, SCHEDULE A, Number 4 – Stormwater Management Plan Requirements, Parts d. and e.” Part d. concerns Education and Outreach and Part e. concerns Public Involvement and Participation, and includes the following goals:

- Education and Outreach: Co-permittees must implement an education and outreach program designed to achieve measurable goals based on target audiences, specific stormwater quality issues in the community, or identified pollutants of concern. For detail refer to 8 specific goals (i. – viii.) as listed in the MS4 BMP Table, Appendix A.
- Public Involvement and Participation: Co-permittees must implement a public participation approach that provides opportunities for the public to effectively participate in the development, implementation, and modification of the co- permittee’s stormwater management program. The approach must include provisions for receiving and considering public comments on the monitoring plan..., annual reports, SWMP revisions, and the TMDL pollutant load reduction benchmark development.<sup>3</sup>

A complementary goal for OLWS with the MS4 co-permittees is to increase clarity of outreach endeavors for all stakeholders involved in the CCWET in order to maximize resources and coordinate efforts. “The EPA recommends a partnership-based regional education approach, identifying the multiple benefits of collaboration to achieve common goals: “Partnerships have many advantages, including providing access to resources; increasing effectiveness, efficiency, and public influence; allowing for creativity and innovation; and improving communication between typically adversarial parties” (EPA, 2003).”<sup>4</sup>

## 2.1 Program Level Targets

Issues and targets include raising the public’s awareness about the watershed impacts of WCS and SWM

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<sup>2</sup> From the Oak Lodge Sanitary District’s 2014-15 *Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP)*, by Karen Streeter.

<sup>3</sup> From the *National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Discharge Permit*, Expiration Date: March 1, 2017, Permit No: 101348, File No: 108016.

<sup>4</sup> From the *Public Education Outreach Plan, A component of the Virginia Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Management Program* in Loudoun County, VI, June 30, 2014 draft.

challenges and OLWS focuses messaging on source control. Its program efforts include a focus on the following:

#### Residential Audience Priorities

1. Home use of “flushables”
  - Proper disposal of all items marketed as “flushable” that belong in the landfill
2. Home landscaping nutrient management
  - Proper application of fertilizer, use of low or no-phosphorus fertilizers; proper use of herbicides; proper use of pesticides
  - Promoting the use of natives that require low water and low fertilizer providing educational materials on Zeroscaping
3. Home auto repair hazardous materials
  - Proper management and disposal of oil, grease, and other automotive fluids; use of low or no-phosphorus detergents and low water use car washes
4. Private stormwater detention system management
  - Proper maintenance, homeowner association responsibilities, and neighborhood awareness

#### Commercial Audience Priorities

1. Landscapers and management company nutrient management
  - Proper application of fertilizer, use of low or no-phosphorus fertilizers; proper use of herbicides; proper use of pesticides
  - Promoting the use of natives that require low water and low fertilizer providing educational materials on Zeroscaping
2. Restaurants and hospitality fats, oil, and grease (FOG) management
  - Proper disposal of fats, oil, and grease
3. Automotive business oil, grease, and hazardous fluids management
  - Proper management and disposal of petroleum and hazardous materials

## 2.2 Snapshot: Status of Public Education Effectiveness Programs

OLWS uses a series of ongoing methods to communicate information to the community about the various elements associated with surface water. Overall, OLWS has implemented a wide variety of methods to communicate with and educate the community about surface water issues. We are learning that some methods appear to be more effective in changing behavior than others and efforts are underway to begin a careful evaluation process for public outreach. For example, citizens indicate that they read the newsletter that they receive with their bimonthly bills; see the BMPs for Public Education listed in Appendix A for full detail on the OLWS’s progress toward public education and outreach efforts.

OLWS focused on carpet cleaners, painters, and power washing as all three have significant mobile

capabilities and can impact waterways across our watershed. OLSW designed brochures and an education campaign which was highlighted in our newsletter, on our website, and face-to-face with business owners offering these types of services. Since then, identification of detrimental dumping practices has increased, indicated by the more specific language used during service calls and many businesses have been educated on the negative effects their actions could have.<sup>5</sup>

## 2.3 Existing Program Resources

This framework outlines the targets for providing effective outreach that maximizes program partnerships and streamlines resources to achieve defined goals and objectives in the regional effort to inform, educate, and involve the public in protecting and preserving local waters. Over a decade, careful annual budgeting and its partnership approach has allowed OLWS to maximize its investments in OEPI while streamlining expenses. For details about the OEPI budgets please refer to Appendix B.

## 3.0 Evaluation and Planning

OLWS works with the co-permittees to evaluate the effectiveness of its outreach and education efforts, as well as conducting regular surveys of our ratepayers to find out what reaches our audiences. As part of the newly issued MS4 Permit, OLWS will be re-evaluating the effectiveness of its outreach and education. During the 2013 permit year, OLWS participated in a regional study about the effectiveness of various stormwater-related public outreach efforts within Oregon. Commissioned through the Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies, the study shows that shared efforts achieve measurable changes in increasing the public's understanding of watershed health. Survey findings show that the two most effective ways OLWS reaches its customers is through the bill inserts and newsletters.

As part of the newly issued MS4 Permit, OLWS will be re-evaluating the effectiveness of its outreach and education.

Future opportunities for Outreach, Education and Public Involvement efforts include:

- 1) Prioritize three residential and three commercial issues identified as most significant to the region over the next five permit years (2021-2026);
- 2) Analyze issues and develop effective messages and methods to reach target audiences;
- 3) Develop timelines and evaluation methods to guide and measure effectiveness.

Over time, through ongoing efforts and public input in developing the next iteration of the framework for Outreach, Education, and Public Involvement, OLWS invests in the creation of One Water stewards for the future.

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<sup>5</sup> Karen Streeeter, 2015 OLSW SWM Annual Report including Section B.5.b, the *Status of Public Education and Effectiveness Programs*.



APPENDIX A – OLWS Education and Outreach BMP’s from the 2022 MS4:

<p><b>Public Education and Outreach</b></p> <p><b>Topic: Reduce Discharges of Pesticides, Herbicides and Fertilizers</b></p>	<p>BMP Description: OLWS administers a public education program which provides information that attempts to motivate workers and residents to reduce stormwater pollution that is caused by the application of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in OLWS. Educational information is shared with the public using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles in newsletters</li> <li>• OLWS website.</li> <li>• Through local public involvement campaigns. A recent example of a recent relevant public involvement campaign is the Oregon Environmental Literacy Plan (OELP), which is enacted as part of House Bill 2544 and lays out age-appropriate environmental literacy education.</li> <li>• Brochures</li> </ul> <p>Common topics that are addressed by this program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less harmful alternatives to the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers are provided. For example, use of ladybugs to eat insect pests is encouraged as an</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Track programs messages delivered, type of communication piece, and where appropriate, the number of people affected.</li> </ol> <p>Measurable Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to maintain relevant public education materials on the district’s website.</li> <li>• Prepare a minimum of one relevant article per year for inclusion with customer billing statements.</li> </ul>	<p>The following outreach efforts occurred last year:</p> <p>Customer outreach: Six newsletters to all customers included surface water education topics.</p> <p>IDDE Brochure created.</p> <p>School Outreach: Provided the Watershed Health Education Program (WHEP) with our education partner, Ecology in Classrooms and the Outdoors. ECO’s goal is to inspire students to connect with nature through hands-on ecology programs. During the 2021-22 school year, ECO continued to adapt their lessons to serve students learning at home, which included interactive presentations, virtual watershed interaction, videos, and hands-on activities to teach elementary school students about healthy watersheds. Lessons reinforce STEM, Common Core, and Next Generation Science concepts. School partners in the WHEP included: Rex Putnam High School and New Urban High School. In addition, ECO supports</p>
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	<p>alternative to pesticide application.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about the potential hazards to water quality, public health, and aquatic life associated with the misuse of pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers in OLWS.</li> <li>• Users are reminded that pesticide and herbicide products need to be used in a manner consistent with the product’s label.</li> </ul>		<p>elementary school partners: View Acres Elementary School, Oak Grove Elementary School, Riverside Elementary School, and Candy Lane Elementary School.</p> <p>Adult outreach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OLWS partners with the Backyard Habitat Certification Program to support urban gardeners in their efforts to create natural backyard habitats. This includes working with homeowners to find stormwater solutions in their yards to mimic nature by allowing runoff to soak into the ground, helping to filter out pollutants and decrease or eliminate runoff on their property.</li> <li>• OLWS partners with the North Clackamas Watersheds Council to offer the <a href="#">Streamside Stewards Program</a> (SSP), which works to enhance and maintain habitat through partnerships with owners along OLWS streams. Along with annual</li> </ul>
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			<p>maintenance, the SSP moved the outreach and education aspects of the program online due to COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OLWS partners with EcoBiz to provide targeted outreach and education to automotive businesses with the goal of reducing the potential loading of pollutants into the storm/sewer systems.</li> </ul> <p>Events: OLWS participated in several virtual events which contained water quality education for students and adults. These included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Virtual Children’s Clean Water Festival in spring. These lessons were provided to over 600 fourth grade teachers, including those in the North Clackamas County School District and the Oregon City School District. The lesson plans explore a variety of water-related topics including water science, ecology,</li> </ul>
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			<p>native fish, water quality, and ways students can protect and conserve natural resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The North Clackamas Watersheds Council (NCWC) partnership continues to provide public outreach benefits to people living in our service area. To adapt to COVID, OLWS partnered with NCWC to host three virtual workshops about the importance of human actions and their impact on watershed health.</li><li>• OLWS partnered with the Clackamas Community College Environmental Learning Center to offer a free online learning series April – June. This wetland online learning series was designed for grades K-3 and included 10 episodes.</li><li>• OLWS partnered with the Clackamas County Sheriff’s Office in April to host a drug take back event, which helps keeps drugs and</li></ul>
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			<p>prescription medications out of our waterways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional in-person events were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> </ul> <p>Outreach groups: Participated in local outreach groups and public involvement campaigns, including: the Clean Rivers Coalition’s <i>Follow the Water</i> statewide campaign, Clackamas County Water Education Team (CCWET), and the Regional Coalition for Clean Rivers and Streams <i>River Starts Here</i> regional campaign.</p> <p>The What’s Your Lawn Style project was also developed by the Clean Rivers Coalition. This project focused on delivering integrated pest management techniques for lawn care to reduce nonpoint source runoff of pesticides and quick release fertilizers by single family residents. The education and materials from this campaign were sent to OLWS customers through our bi-monthly newsletter, website, and social media.</p> <p>Virtual outreach: Presented and contributed to creating virtual content and social media outreach relevant to</p>
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			<p>water quality education information for OLWS customers, property owners, tenants, educators and students. This included creation of paid media with KPTV (FOX 12). Messages highlighted car washing tips to help keep soap and other pollutants out of our streams, and stormwater smart yard and garden maintenance.</p>
<p><b>Education and Outreach Privately Owned SWM Facility Education</b></p>	<p><b>BMP Description:</b> Privately owned SWM facilities require periodic inspection and maintenance to keep them working correctly. This effort focuses on outreach and education to those private landowners who own these types of facilities</p>	<p>Number and Type of Education and Outreach efforts specific to privately owned facility inspection and maintenance.</p>	<p>Outreach materials and letters sent to owners engaging them in awareness, cleaning, maintenance, and functionality of their catchment systems. Sent additional information to owners as folks reached out for more information.</p> <p>Participation in the Stormdrain Cleaning Assistance Program (SCAP) with postcards sent to 272 property owners with private storm drains on their property/business. Creation of electronic signup for SCAP through our website.</p> <p>Continued to build emails to reach all previous participants as well as new accounts with privately owned facilities in order to increase participation.</p>

<p><b>Education and Outreach Erosion Control Contractor Training Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>BMP Description:</b> Provide notice to construction site operators concerning where education and training to meet erosion prevention and sediment control requirements can be obtained.</p>	<p>Describe efforts to provide this notice</p>	<p>Oak Lodge has four CESCL certified erosion control staff members and provides construction site operators with notice and training opportunities on an ad hoc basis.</p>
<p><b>Public Education and Outreach Facilitate Public Reporting of Illicit Discharges</b></p>	<p><b>BMP Description:</b> The District implements a program to promote, publicize, and facilitate public reporting of the presence of illicit discharges and other types of improper disposal of materials into the MS4. After District staff have received a report which relates to one of these discharges, they investigate and, if appropriate, apply control measures. See BMP #3.</p>	<p>1 Number illicit discharges reported.</p> <p>2 Number of illicit discharges requiring action.</p> <p>3 Number of educational events educating public about illicit discharges and procedures to report.</p> <p>4 Number of publications educating public about illicit discharges and procedures to report.</p> <p>Measurable Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a page for public complaints on the District’s website and track number of complaints for reporting.</li> </ul>	<p>Potential illicit discharges reported: 3</p> <p>Actions taken: 2 (see IDDE above for details)</p> <p>Educational Events: 1 – IDDE outreach/education at public event</p> <p>Educational Publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dump Smart Campaign – Painting, Carpet Cleaning and Pressure Washing (Fliers posted)</li> <li>• Where to Properly Dispose of unwanted or expired medications (List posted on website)</li> <li>• EPA/NOAA – Keep Salmon off Drugs (Poster)</li> <li>• Clackamas River Water Providers – Keep Pesticides and Herbicides Out of the River (Pictorial Poster)</li> <li>• Regional Coalition for Clean Rivers and Streams – River Starts</li> </ul>

			<p>Here Campaign (Web and paid media outreach)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean Rivers Coalition – statewide social media campaign to raise awareness about pesticide reduction</li> </ul> <p>Public submits complaints through the information email on the OLWS website or calls staff directly. Complaints are coded in Lucity, the district’s Computerized Maintenance Management System.</p>
<p><b>Public Involvement and Participation</b></p>	<p><b>BMP Description:</b> Schedule A.4.e of the District’s MS4 NPDES permit requires OLWS to provide opportunity for public participation in the development, implementation, and modification of the Storm Water Management Plan (SWMP). Prior to submittal of various milestone reports, OLWS will provide the public with an opportunity to comment for a period of 2 weeks prior to submittal dates. Comments on the documents will be collected and considered.</p> <p>Additionally, OLWS has many opportunities for members of the community to participate in various sub committees that provide oversight and guidance to OLWS management related to MS4 implementation.</p>	<p>Provide for public participation with the SWMP and pollutant load reduction benchmarks prior to the permit renewal application deadline.</p>	<p>SWM Annual Report Public Notice: posted to website on September 29, shared with North Clackamas Watersheds Council board meeting on November 16, and to OLWS Board Members. In addition, the website contains MS4 Permit and supporting material, including the new MS4 Permit, with ongoing opportunities for public to comment</p>

## APPENDIX B – Outreach and Communication Budget Details

Description	Total Amount
Annual Water Quality Report - Gemini Group	\$ 15,000
Informational Materials/Brochures/Letters	\$ 6,000
Emergency Preparedness Outreach	\$ 2,800
Everbridge - Emergency Communication - ClackCo IGA	\$ 200
Volunteer Recognition	\$ 2,000
Tours/Events/Program Expenses	\$ 1,465
Non-Specified Meeting/Event Expense (Banners/Signage)	\$ 2,250
Clackamas County Sheriff - Drug Take Back	\$ 1,500
Social Media	\$ 600
Community Sponsorships	\$ 6,000
	\$ 38,100

## MS4 Community Partnerships

Description	Total Amount
Watershed Health Education Program (WHEP)	\$ 5,500
WHEP: Teacher Stipend	\$ 1,000
WHEP: New Urban	\$ 5,500
Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors (Oak Grove Elem.)	\$ 2,500
Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors (View Acres Elem.)	\$ 5,500
NCPRD - Spanish with Birds (Candylane and Riverside Elem.)	\$ 5,000
Clean Rivers Partnership/Coalition	\$ 6,000
NCPRD - Waste Bags and Events	\$ 7,500
ECO Biz	\$ 5,500
Clackamas Community College ELC - 3 Elem schools	\$ 6,000
Audubon/Columbia Land Trust	\$ 8,000
	\$ 58,000

## Highlight: New Partnerships

- Clackamas River Basin Council (Spring 2023: in-person and online training) - \$1,000
- Clackamas Community College’s Environmental Learning Center (ELC) – Staff time support of the Wildlife and Water Friendly Garden Series. OLWS proudly supports the ELC’s FREE online learning series for those interested in home gardening with a focus on adapting to our changing climate. Learn how to garden with less water, choose temperature resilient trees and more.
- Willamette Laja Twinning Partnership - \$5,000
  - Elementary school programs fulfill the MS4 Permit outreach and education requirements and support DEI with a commitment to watershed education in high need schools through dual language programming.

## Budget Narrative:

### Administration Public Information/Public Relations

Purpose: The purpose of the Public Information/Public Relations line item is to fund public information, education, and involvement activities which promote greater understanding of OLWS services, improve environmental awareness, disseminate information about District operations, support volunteer activities, and encourage involvement.

Goal: Inform, educate, encourage involvement, and strengthen the connection between OLWS and the community it serves through the use of a variety of means. The goals contained in this year's budget include: 1) Publish newspaper notices and advertisements; 2) Publish and distribute newsletters; 3) Publish informational brochures; 4) Develop and maintain a web page accessible through the Internet; 5) Provide student environmental education outreach involving approximately 1,891 students at 6 elementary schools and 1,504 students at 2 high schools; and 6) Publicly recognize all of OLWS's volunteers for their contributions during the year.

### SSS Public Information/Public Relations

Purpose: The purpose of the Public Information/Public Relations line item is to fund public information, education, and involvement activities which promote greater understanding of OLWS services, improve environmental awareness, disseminate information about operations, support volunteer activities, and encourage involvement.

Goal: Inform, educate, encourage involvement, and strengthen the connection between OLWS and the community it serves through the use of a variety of means. The goals associated with this year's budget allocation include: 1) Purchase newspaper notices and advertisements; 2) Host committee volunteer meetings and 2) Fund a drug take-back program administered by the Clackamas County Sheriff.

### SWM Public Information/Public Relations

Purpose: The purpose of the Public Information/Public Relations Line item is to fund public information, education, and involvement activities which promote greater understanding of OLWS services, improve environmental awareness, disseminate information about District operations, support volunteer activities, and encourage involvement.

Goal: Inform, educate, encourage involvement, and strengthen the connection between OLWS and the community it serves through the use of a variety of means. The goals contained in this year's budget include: 1) Purchasing newspaper notices and advertisements, 2) Hosting committee volunteer meetings, 3) participating with other agencies in a regional ad campaign 4) Funding Experiential Education Activities, and 5)



Funding the Rex Putnam Watershed Health Program.