

2023 Education and Outreach: Raw Numbers

Wilkinson Deep-Water Wetland Restoration (Wilkinson BMP)

- Articles submitted:
 - North Oaks News publications: March, April, August, October
- Webpage result: <https://www.vlawmo.org/projects/maps/project-map/wilkinson-bmp-and-restoration/>
- Public presentation: March 22nd
- Social media posts: October 6th

Watershed Admin and BMPs

- North Oaks Entrance Raingarden social media: July 26. Website: <https://www.vlawmo.org/projects/maps/project-map/north-oaks-entrance-raingarden1/>
- Vadnais-Sucker Park Restoration: Interpretive signage series, public walking tour, webpage: <https://www.vlawmo.org/projects/maps/project-map/vadnais-sucker-park-habitat-restoration/>
- West Vadnais boundary change N/A.
- VLAWMO website renovation initiated, expected completion in 2024.

Ditch Maintenance Communication and Floodplain Education

- Drone ditch flyover video promoted winter 2023.
- Ditch maintenance mailing update to adjacent residents: 40 mailings. November, 2023.

Goals:

1) MS4 Programming

- Partnership needs assessment: Continued from 2022
- Minimum Control Measure #1:
 - Infographic distribution:
 - Help out in a Drought, Water conservation and irrigation, construction stormwater BMPs flyer, grass clippings mailing slip, pet waste flyer, pool drainage guide, smart salting flyer
 - MS4 email distribution: Feb, March, July.
 - Water conservation and irrigation watershed-wide campaign: Press release, website, social media. July 19th.
 - Good Neighbor Guide: All cities, comprehensive residential watershed education booklet. 150 copies distributed.
 - Junior Watershed Explorer: All cities distributed, 6 completed explorer booklets.
 - Informational booths facilitated:
 - White Bear Lake (July 26th, MarketFest) North Oaks (April 22nd, Earth Day, June 3rd Summer Fest) White Bear Township (Sept 16th White Bear Township Day) Vadnais Heights (August 5th, Heritage Days)
- Minimum Control Measure #2:
 - Vadnais Heights Green Team stormdrain cleaning and adopt-a-drain promotion (VLAWMO partnership): October 14th. 10 participants

- Adopt-a-Raingarden promo: City of Vadnais Heights, June September 3rd. 3 new Adopt-a-Raingarden volunteers. 15 participants.
- Street renovation and raingarden promotion partnerships:
 - City of White Bear Lake (June)
 - City of Vadnais Heights (December)
- Adopt-a-Raingarden volunteer training: August 11th
- “Lake Care Weekend” Adopt-a-Drain blitz promo: October 21. White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Township, and Gem Lake participation. 7 reported participants.
- Macroinvertebrate monitoring for water quality: City of North Oaks. 1 volunteer.
- Native Plant walking tour: August 9th: 3 participants
- Planting/Landscaping webinar: August 11th: 20 participants
- Winter seed sowing workshop: February 23rd 24 participants
- BlueThumb workshops:
 - Turf alternatives: March 30th. 8 participants.
- Minimum Control Measure #3:
 - Illicit Discharge pre-written newsletter text: Distribution March 2023.
- Minimum Control Measure #6:
 - Smart Salting for Community Leaders workshop: Dec 7th 10 RSVPs.
 - Smart Salting for Property Managers workshop: Dec 14th 8 RSVPs.
 - Raingarden maintenance training: City of Vadnais Heights, June 8th. 10 staff participants.
 - White Bear Township MS4 utility mailer: Grass clippings info: March 10th
 - White Bear Township MS4 permit consultation: March 22nd
 - White Bear Township yard waste communications: May 17
 - Lino Lakes yard waste/MS4 outreach in City newsletter: August 9th
- MS4 Maps: Transitioned to City contractors due to VLAWMO staff turnover
- Report completion: December 13th, 2023 TEC and Board.

2) Community members utilize watershed knowledge to act on watershed issues with help from VLAWMO’s tools and resources.

- Workshops completed:
 - Raingardens 101: April 20th 6 participants
 - Native Plant walking tour: August 9th: 3 participants
 - Planting/Landscaping webinar: August 11th: 18 participants
 - Winter seed sowing workshop: February 23rd 24 participants
 - BlueThumb workshops:
 - Turf alternatives: March 30th. 8 participants.
- Cost-share promotional:
 - Grant program open house: March 23rd 10 participants
 - Raingarden cost-share tour series: June 29th, August 17th . 16th participants.
- Monthly watershed stewardship activities on website calendar, social media, and newsletters: March-November.

3) Community members are educated on VLAWMO issues and projects

- Events attended:
 - White Bear Lake (July 26th, MarketFest)
 - North Oaks (April 22nd, Earth Day, June 3rd Summer Fest)
 - White Bear Township (Sept 16th White Bear Township Day)
 - Vadnais Heights (August 5th, Heritage Days)
 - All cities: Landscape Revival native plant sale: June 10th
- Project and campaign promotion:
 - Vadnais Heights bioswale kick-off event: August 3rd , 20 participants.
 - White Bear Lake spent lime study results presentation: Feb 1st, 20 participants
 - White Bear Lake water levels discussion participation: Feb 8th, 12 participants
 - City of North Oaks Wilkinson Lake Deep-water Wetland project community presentation: March 22nd, 15 participants
 - City of North Oaks Common Carp management presentation: April 11th, 15 participants
 - Groundwater and smart irrigation campaign: June-August
 - VLAWMO 40th anniversary campaign and celebration event: August 24th, 50 participants
 - White Bear Lake and Ramsey County partnership: Otter Lake Road vegetated swale custom mailing. July, 30 properties.
 - Pleasant Lake vegetation campaign: North Oaks news publications and website posting: September, November
 - Annual Watershed Awards announcement of annual winners: December 13th, 2023

4) Coordinate an active volunteer base that learns and leads

- Watershed Action Volunteer meetings held:
 - March 7th, October 10th
- Volunteer recruitment:
 - Eagle Scout Jordan Erwin
 - Minnesota Water Steward Megan Sigmon-Olsen
 - Macroinvertebrates volunteer Erika Turkington
 - Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring: Tom Breviu
- Volunteer projects:
 - Earth day clean-up: April 15th
 - Macroinvertebrate monitoring:
 - North Oaks Charley Channel – Erika Turkington, July
 - Lambert Creek – Ceci and Ed (sample lost due to weather), June
 - Cost-share neighborhood tour leadership: 2 volunteers led
 - June 29th, August 9th
 - Vadnais Heights Heritage Days: 2 volunteers
 - Westfield Park bioswale kick-off event: 2 volunteers

- Winter Seed Sowing workshop: 1 MN Water Steward
- Birch Lake Elementary school presentation support
 - White Bear Lake Rotary Club partnership: 10 volunteers
- Adopt-a-Raingarden:
 - White Bear Historic Town Hall native planting: Gloria Tessier
 - Bridgewood Raingarden Vadnais Heights
 - Westfield Park Bioswale Vadnais Heights
 - Vadnais Heights Elementary raingarden
 - Vadnais Heights Fire Department raingarden
- Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring: Susan Miller, Darren McGann
- Education support: “Soil your undies” soil health awareness campaign
- University of Minnesota Community-Engaged Learners partnership: 4 students, 100 hours

5) Watershed communications are accountable and active in the community

- Monthly TEC meetings and bi-monthly Board meeting agendas, packets, and minutes posted at vlawmo.org.
- Each municipality successfully reached through VLAWMO newsletter and partnership with City/Township newsletter entries.
- Lino Lakes hardcopy mailing unsuccessful in 2023.
- 10 newspaper articles published
 - Vadnais/Sucker Park habitat restoration: WB Press, March
 - VT/WBT Smart Irrigation spotlight: WB Press, July
 - Westfield Bioswale kick-off event: WB Press, July
 - White Bear Lake Historical Society Neighborhood Spotlight: September
 - Wilkinson Deep-Water Wetland: North Oaks News, March, April, August, October
 - Pleasant Lake vegetation: North Oaks News, September, November
- Outreach and participation completed with VHDEC Partners for Good, WBL Many Faces, White Bear Lake Historical Society, and White Bear Center for the Arts.
- Memberships continued with Metro Watershed Partners and BlueThumb including steering committees, new engagement with Friends of the Mississippi summer youth mentorship.

6) Schools have established and maintained stormwater BMPs integrated with watershed education efforts.

- AFSA High School service day for raingarden maintenance, Vadnais Heights Fire Dept raingarden: May 26th
- Junior Watershed Explorer booklet dispersed in White Bear Lake School District 624 “Digital Backpack” to all schools in district: April
- 4 day-long school visits to Birch Lake Elementary in conjunction with VLAWMO cost-share habitat restoration at Birch Lake Rotary Wetland preserve. All students (300) in school reached and participated. VLAWMO macroinvertebrates curriculum utilized in addition to “A Tale of 3 Tails” story time activity. May 16, 17, 23, 24

7) An appreciation of natural resources is established in the community, fostering ecological awareness, participation, and a sense of place.

- Remote camera photo distribution on social media: August 4, October 10th. Remote camera photos utilized in Birch Lake Elementary school visits May, 2023.
- Sunrise/sunset scenic photos from volunteer received November 28th, 2023.
- Wildlife photo bundle from volunteers utilized in annual reports, social media, and e-newsletters.
- Watershed behaviors demonstration photo received September 7th, demonstration of sweeping sediment off of a sidewalk to prevent sedimentation in stormwater runoff.
- Existing wetland wildlife, frog and toad story maps continued in 2023, publically available.
- Neighborhood spotlight articles published:
 - White Bear Lake Area Historical Society (Native planting): September
 - Karen Suzukamo (Fescue lawn, raingarden): August
 - Smith Family (Bee lawn): October
 - Green Family (Fescue lawn, raingarden): July
- LeafPack macroinvertebrate monitoring continues in 2023. Picture Post phenology website has been discontinued.

8) Key personnel have continued to advance their knowledge of water and related natural resources.

- Local leadership and participation: VLAWMO Board member Dan Jones helped initiate a cost-share program at White Bear Lake Historical Society Town Hall in White Bear Township. Native Planting completed in 2022 and maintained for its first season in 2023. VLAWMO TEC chair Gloria Tessier volunteers to maintain the planting.
- Climate change in Minnesota presentations to VLAWMO TEC: April, September
- VLAWMO 40th Anniversary Celebration was accompanied by a summary history timeline of VLAWMO's milestones, including context on the purpose and challenges of major projects from 1983 today. 90% of TEC and Board attendance at August 26th celebration event, including a summary video with participation from VLAWMO Board chair Jim Lindner. August celebration event included partnership with Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division (RCSWCD) adding further depth and exposure to the history of local water and natural resource management.

Community Blue Grants

- 1 grant completed in 2023
 - Rice Lake loosestrife beetle rearing and release: MN Water Steward Capstone

Measurable Outcomes:

1. Adopt-a-Drain: Observe a minimum of 50 new drain adoptions, exceed 20 reported volunteer hours, maintain 20 active annual volunteers and achieve 50 lbs of debris collected and reported by adopt-a-drain volunteers.

50 drain adoptions in 2023, 30 estimated volunteer hours, 250+ reported lbs of debris cleaned

2. Grow email subscriptions by 75 people annually.

53 email subscriptions

3. Achieve 10,000 website visits annually.

5.7K web visits in 2023

4. 50 new social media followers annually.

28 new social media followers. Current: 727

5. Minimum of four publications annually.

Exceeded – 10+ newspaper publications.

6. Reach 4 classrooms (90-100 students) annually through school programs or use of VLAWMO web resources.

300 students, 12 classrooms reached at Birch Lake Elementary.

7. A reported increase in Tblisi education categories: Knowledge, awareness, attitude, skills, and behavior. Increases in each category as a result of VLAWMO workshop or tour survey, or annual end-of-year survey.

N/A

8. Monthly phenology posts made at each picture post

Picture post website discontinued

9. A minimum of 50 watershed residents attending VLAWMO workshops, open houses, and tours annually.

Exceeded – 92 attendees at all VLAWMO education and outreach events in 2023.

10. A minimum of 5 VLAWMO event participants from the past two years will participate in a VLAWMO cost-share or soil health grant.

8 event participants also became cost-share grant participants.

11. A minimum of 3 VLAWMO cost-share participants from the past two years will also participate in education and outreach through a spotlight article, watershed tour event, or volunteering with VLAWMO.

7 cost-share participants also participated in education and outreach initiatives and activities.

12. A minimum of 2 Lawns to Legumes applications in the watershed annually.

4 documented Lawns to Legumes participants in the watershed in 2023.

13. At least 5 public raingardens are adopted and annually maintained by volunteers under Adopt-a-Raingarden.

6 raingardens adopted and annually maintained under Adopt-a-Raingarden.

1. Vadnais Heights Elementary
2. Vadnais Heights Fire Dept
3. Bridgewood Raingarden
4. Westfield Park Bioswale
5. White Bear Town Hall Pollinator Garden
6. Gem Lake City Hall

14. Achieve over 500 reported volunteer hours through volunteer opportunities.

350 volunteer hours reported.

15. A minimum of 5 volunteers will act as educators to their local citizen peers annually.

4 volunteers fulfilled this role.

16. A minimum of 3 volunteer efforts completed annually, at least 25 participants across all activities.

5 volunteer efforts completed, 30 participants across all activities.

17. One or more trained AIS volunteers will report and monitor at least once on each lake in VLAWMO annually.

No reports received from AIS volunteers in 2023.

18. At least 2 schools each year will schedule and complete raingarden maintenance with or without VLAWMO assistance.

2 - Vadnais Heights Elementary, Lakeaires Elementary

19. A minimum of one engagement annually with a resident in Lino Lakes portion of the watershed.

Incomplete.

20. TEC and BOD quorum met at each meeting.

Complete.

21. If cost-share best management practices are successfully installed as a result of education and outreach efforts, VLAWMO will report these as supplementary measurable outcomes.

No known practices reported from annual survey results.