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**FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY MEMO AND PRESENTATION**

8/24/2010



## Memorandum

To: Zachary Henderson, Woodard & Curran

From: Eric Eckl, Water Words That Work, LLC

Re: Summary of Focus Group Results

Date: August 24, 2010

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On Thursday, July 22, I led two focus groups with 18 Portland residents who live in the Capisic Brook watershed. The purpose was to explore their reaction to the basic concepts contained in the draft Social Marketing Campaign we are preparing for the city.

### Top Findings

**Most participants were receptive to the notion of a pollution-prevention campaign in their neighborhoods.** They endorse including a mix of encouraging messages, educational opportunities, and incentives for the purchase of environmentally preferable products and services. A solid majority see this effort as legitimate city business to address a real problem.

At the end of the evening's discussion, we presented our 17 participants with the following summary statement:

"The city and its partners will work together to encourage residents to adopt environmentally responsible lawn, car, and pet care habits. In cooperation with local merchants, the partners will offer coupons to encourage residents to purchase environmentally friendly products and services, and provide tips and training to help residents do even more."

Three quarters of our participants voiced very or somewhat positive views of that statement. The votes were broken out as follows:

Sentiment	Focus Group #1	Focus Group #2	Total
Very Positive	2	6	8
Somewhat Positive	4	1	5
Neutral	3	0	3
Somewhat Negative	0	0	
Very Negative	1	0	1

**The effort should identify Casco Bay as the body of water that benefits from the environmentally responsible behavior.** Residents are more motivated to address problems in “Casco Bay” and “water pollution” generally than Capiasic Brook specifically. No participants voiced any emotions about Capiasic Brook at all, positive or negative. Trying to put the brook on their radar -- and *then* motivate them to save it -- is an unnecessarily roundabout approach.

**“Responsibility,” “doing your part,” and “working together” are crucial messages to deliver.** Residents are quick to imagine they have being singled out for their own behavior, while others get off the hook. Portraying the campaign in the context of a larger effort to rework city sewers has the dual benefit of demonstrating how others have gone first and convincing residents that the campaign may pay off.

**Participants felt that postcards and newspaper inserts were among the most effective way to reach them.** Working through neighborhood associations got mixed reviews as a technique. Residents who belong to such associations have positive feelings about it, but most residents do not belong to or hear from such associations.

**Participants are wary of “greenwashing” and want the City of Portland involved.** Although participants recognize the role that coupons can play in encouraging environmentally responsible behavior, they expressed wariness that a merchant-led program would amount to little more than a greenwashing effort.

Residents will look for the seal of the City of Portland on mailings, posters, websites, and other materials associated with the effort. If it is not there, they will question the legitimacy of the effort. It is probably sufficient if the city is identified as one of several sponsoring organizations.

## **Social Marketing Techniques**

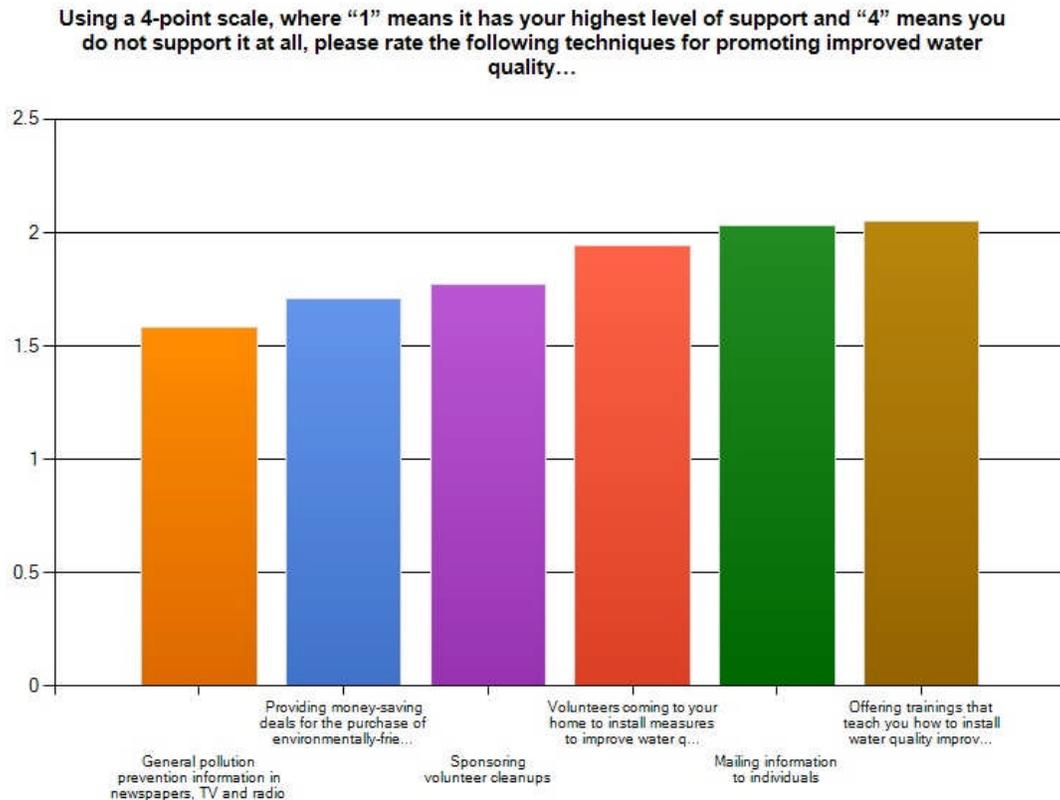
After a series of warmup questions, we got to the heart of the matter: Inviting participants to weigh in on three options for adding some “oomph” to general messages about pro-environmental behavior:

- Educational workshops
- Volunteers visiting homes to provide direct assistance
- Coupons to incent pro-environmental behavior (and track response to promotional efforts)

**In the focus group, there was no clear favorite among these three.** Each approach had proponents and detractors. Participants clearly recognized the benefits of each approach. Here are some quotes that capture the essence of the objections that some raised:

- Workshops: “Who has two hours for something like this?”
- Volunteer Visits: “I don’t want to be scolded or made to feel guilty”
- Coupons: “What are you selling me?”

However, coupons *were* the clear winner among these three approaches in the survey that Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District conducted in late 2009. In that survey, respondents rated “money-saving deals” as their 2nd most popular approach -- well ahead of volunteers or workshops.



Despite the generally positive view of the technique, participants spontaneously offered a concern about the coupon approach that we had not anticipated: The prospect of merchants using a coupon program as a vehicle for greenwashing.

Two things appeared to trigger this concern among the participants:

- Pushing the “save money” message too far out in front of other, more altruistic reasons to do the right thing.
- Giving too much prominence to the participation of commercial bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce or the Maine Merchants Association.

Based on the focus group discussions, it appears that the most important thing that partners can do to reassure residents about the legitimacy of the pollution prevention effort is to emphasize that the City of Portland is involved.

Our focus group participants would be very skeptical about a program led by

commercial interests. Participation by nonprofit conservation organizations would also be helpful to legitimize the effort, but not nearly to the same degree as the City.

## Focus Groups vs. Surveys

Focus groups and surveys are complimentary tools. Surveys answer this question: "How many people feel a certain way?" Focus groups answer this question: "Why do they feel that way?"

Focus groups allow participants to spontaneously offer opinions and react to ideas in their own words. Surveys do not. The explanations that residents offered for why they made their choices are the real value in the exercise.

In our 7/22 focus groups, we used a voting mechanism to stimulate and prioritize the discussion. **Where vote tallies in the focus group conflict with similar findings from the survey, we should expect the survey to more accurately reflect community sentiment.** That's simply a function of the small sample size and the group dynamics.

## Recruitment Method and Sample Considerations

Using postcards to recruit focus group participants is an unconventional approach. It was dictated in this case by our tight budget and narrow geographic specifications. We purchased a list of 610 individuals who reside in the Capisic Brook watershed. In addition, the mail house tagged the records with one or more of the following three criteria:

- Charitable donor
- Follows current events
- Non-fiction book reader

These criteria influence our sample. In a nutshell, our focus group participants were more civic-minded than watershed residents generally. Corroborating evidence for this includes:

- ~3% response rate to our mailing, vs. industry standard of ~1%.
- No-show rate of ~5%, compared to industry-standard rate of ~25%

## Part I: Message Discussions

In the first part of the discussion, we presented the participants with variations on some similar messages to react to and asked to rate them against the following statement:

*Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?*

### Message Split #1.

- A. A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common body of water. Our neighborhood is in the Capisic Brook watershed. Polluted runoff from our yards, driveways, streets, and parking lots is major source of water pollution in the stream and in Casco Bay.
- B. It's everybody's responsibility to help prevent water pollution. We all live downstream or upstream from somebody. If we work together and do our part, we can reduce the amount of chemical fertilizer, dog doo, motor oil, and other germs and chemicals that reach our local streams.

Split #1	Message A	Abstain	Message B
Focus Group #1	1		9
Focus Group #2	2		5
Total:	3		14

Participants reacted very positively to the phrase “downstream or upstream,” reporting that it helped them visualize the situation. They reacted warmly to the word “responsibility” in statement B, and appreciated the stronger “call to action.”

It is striking that after being exposed to the two statements, none of the participants touched the term “watershed.” Although none of the participants fessed up to being unfamiliar with the term, environmental literacy research generally suggests that most of them probably would not have been able to define the term if we had not supplied one.

#### Positive for Message A

- Is it everyone's responsibility? (Message A)
- Skeptical about City

#### Positives for B

- All live downstream/upstream +
- Engages you to think about +
- Like the upstream and downstream part +
- Message helps us visualize the problem +
- Encompasses all pollution – more specific +
- Individual can take responsibility more than A +
- It is everyone's responsibility – dog waste issue, fertilizer issue

- It is everyone responsibility – you are directly and indirectly affected - Little things can make a difference – respect for property -It is all our community
- It is a common stream – everyone is a part – every right comes with inherit and binding duty
- Personal pronouns in B is a plus – “I” can create a public expectation – “we” are all in it together
- Call to action is good – Statement B asks you to do something, while A does not

Negatives for B

- Doggie doo – not professional language -
- Showed cause but no effect -

**Message Split #2**

- A. You can save money and do your part for a healthy environment at the same time! Pollution is waste. If the streams are dirty, that means that somebody is wasting fertilizer, pesticide, auto fluids, or something else they paid good money for.
- B. The city is doing its part to clean up the streams that flow into Casco Bay by upgrading the sewer system. Residents can do their part by adopting responsible lawn, garden, and pet care habits. If we work together, it will add up to make a big difference.

Split #2	Message A	Abstain	Message B
Focus Group #1	0		10
Focus Group #2	0	2	5
Total:	0		15

It is striking that not one single participant chose message A in this split. Even given the small sample sizes, this is meaningful. The phrase that seemed to cinch the vote for statement B was “do your part.” Participants accepted the implicit sharing of responsibility contained in the phrase, and appreciated that the city has made the first move. Participants were skeptical about “save money” as the lead message. It seems they would be more comfortable with it as a secondary argument.

Positive for Statement B

- City doing its part – we should do our part + Message B
- Responsible behavior protects the environment & saves money + Message B
- B is individually focused – Message A not so much

### Negatives for Statement A

- Money should not be first consideration – Message A
- Message is not so meaningful to people that do not use these products – Message A
- You vs. They – Message A
- No real thought unless it directly affects you

### People that Abstain

- Statements seem too similar no partial to one or the other – Statements could be merged

### Message Split #3

Split #3	Message A	Abstain	Message B
Focus Group #1	3	2	5
Focus Group #2	2	2	3
Total:	5		8

Given the small sample sizes here, this is a pretty even split. Participants understood the value of a map to illustrate the issue, but several expressed that this one was difficult to read -- it was hard to distinguish between all the different lines (highways, jurisdictional boundaries, watershed boundaries). Some participants also got hung up on the term “green thumb,” and none volunteered this as a label that fit them personally.

### Positive on Message A

- Lots of pesticides out there
- People know that it is important to fertilize but want to know how to do it right
- Why do we care about zip codes?

### Positive for Message B

- I feel like I am responsible – They have seen sewer stencil
- Most people are conscientious simply want to know what to do.
- Not good map – shows vastness – negative on B
- Surprised that we are part of Capisic but map does not show relationship between us and stream
- One attendee felt that this was a false statement because it is no longer a

- brook, only a drainage course
- The term stormwater pollution is confusing
- Map not clear on its own, but use of a map is helpful
- Confusion about the nature of a “watershed”
- I do not know if fertilizer is important – zip codes means the area is large and significant

People that Abstained

- No connection between image + message on Message B
- The term “Green thumbs” implies environmentalist – I would tune it out. Green thumb does not include one on A, others said Green Thumb does describe them
- Some felt like fertilizer is okay for environment and did not believe that it would affect stream

New Awareness from Respondent

- Never knew stormwater did not go to WWTP or that it was an issue

**Message Split #4**

<b>Split #4</b>	<b>Message A</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Message B</b>
Focus Group #1	2	6	2
Focus Group #2	2	3	2
<b>Total:</b>	4	9	4

It was generally news to our participants that dog waste can cause disease, and that it is a form of water pollution. Some of our participants expressed that they were conscientious about picking up after their dogs when out and about, but had believed it was OK to leave it on the ground so long as it was their property.

Several participants failed to recognize the image of a stormwater outfall dumping dirty water into a stream. They had not noticed such things in their own neighborhood and had not given any thought before to where rainwater runoff goes.

Positive on Message A

- Too many people do not take care of dog waste
- More focus on the human side – image is good, shows positive behavior
- B is too scientific not as focused on actions
- B is too general

### Positive for Message B

- Remind us and enforce dog waste pickup law
- Ordinance says no dogdoo in trash? – Mixed messages from City
- Would be better if it integrated cause to effect

### People that Abstain

- Never seen dogdoo in drain – animal waste is not a problem - Skeptical about germs – nature takes care of it – Don't believe its bad
- Term Dog Doo is immature
- Both pertains to dog owners – leaves non-dog owners out – consider expanding to pet owners
- Combination of both messages would be better – Talk about water pollution  
+Tell us what to do

### Photo comments

- Could not understand what storm drain outfall was
- Both messages help make people think about their actions – illness/germs is good point

### **Split #5**

- A. Here are some money saving coupons that you can use to get discounts on environmentally friendly versions of products and services you already buy. You'll feel great about saving money and doing your part for the environment at the same time.
- B. Join us for a fun -- and free -- evening workshop. In just two hours, you will learn many new tips and tricks to reduce water pollution from your yard, your car, and your pets.

<b>Split #5</b>	<b>Message A</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Message B</b>
Focus Group #1	2	4	4
Focus Group #2	4	2	1
Total:	6	6	5

In the survey, respondents ranked workshops last among six options. Our focus group participants, a civic minded bunch, were basically split between coupons and workshops. Some thought that the workshops would be interesting and an opportunity to meet and network with their neighbors. Others were candid that they wouldn't make the time for it.

All participants acknowledged that discounts on products or services have a basic appeal, but some volunteered the view that the hassle of keeping track of coupons outweighed the savings they would expect to get.

Positive for Message A

- Don't have 2 hours - meetings are not fun
- Monetary incentive - "You'll Feel Great" language does not appeal- others don't mind "You'll Feel Great" statement
- Others reiterated that we don't have 2 hours for trainings
- Money is a big motivation so coupons are good
- Money is a motivator
- Money issue will help drive more people to action

Positive for Message B

- likes the networking opportunities and activities with other citizens
- likes to find new ways of doing things
- Coupon angle may be difficult - Message B tells us to change ways - A only continues our ways
- I always forget my coupons

Negative on B

- Most people do not have the time for workgroups

Abstain

- Love coupons but also want to associate with others and be aware of what is around me, so workshops are good - awareness is good

**Split #6**

- A. It's never been easier to do your part for the environment! Just call this number to set up a free appointment. Our volunteers will visit your home and show you some simple changes that will reduce the amount of pollution from your yard, car, or pet.
- B. Here are some money saving coupons that you can use to get discounts on environmentally friendly versions of products and services you already buy. You'll feel great about saving money and doing your part for the environment at the same time.

Split #6	Message A	Abstain	Message B
Focus Group #1	6		4
Focus Group	3	1	3

#2			
Total:	9	1	7

The prospect of a volunteer visiting their home evoked strong positive and negative reactions from participants. The convenience is an obvious appeal, and several participants found the prospect of learning from an expert to be appealing. These individuals frequently called the “volunteer” an “expert.”

Others intensely disliked the idea. They referred to our volunteers as “strangers in their home.” They found the idea of being “judged” or “scolded” to be profoundly off-putting.

#### Positives for Message A

- No burden on me to do anything- people would be coming to me
- I like the Question + Answer interaction - coupon a maybe
- I want to know for myself - the option to call for appointment is a plus
- Wants information on how our stormwater gets to Capisic
- Flexibility of whether to call or not is great
- Volunteers are an attractive option
- Science experts are important to help us understand what to do
- I will not research but want to do right thing so someone helping me is good
- Money not as compelling
- So many coupons are a little overwhelming and must be able to use them. They must be relevant & useful to me.
- Money incentive is important
- I can always learn something - Doesn't mean I *have* to do something, but I can choose to

#### Positives for Message B

- I like the consultant but not the “inspector”; I don't want to be scolded or made to feel guilty - A positive would be to integrate a suite of coupons with the site visits
- I don't want some stranger visiting- must be a credible source
- What are you selling me?
- Being a good homeowner is important
- Being a good citizen is important

#### Negatives on Message A

- Scary to have someone to come to home
- No interest in having stranger at house to tell me how to do it right
- Another agrees - he can read/use computer to research
- Offenders should be the ones offered incentives and education

## Part 2: Communications Channels

### Focus Group #1

Communications Channel	Votes
Post Card	12
Newspaper Insert	7
Email	5
Neighborhood Association Newsletter	5
Door hanger	1
Web Ad	0
Coupon Packs in Mail (e.g. Valpak)	0

### Focus Group #2

Communications Channel	Votes
Post Card	7
Newspaper Insert	4
Door Hanger	3
Neighborhood Association Newsletter	2
Email	2
Coupon Packs in Mail (e.g. Valpak)	2
Web Ad	1

We recruited our participants via post card, so it's no surprise that this communication technique was the winner with both our groups. Even among this civic minded bunch, the neighborhood association lacked the punch we might wish. Most participants reported they did not belong to an association or receive a newsletter.

The average age of our participant was quite a bit higher than the watershed population at large, so it is noteworthy that email faired pretty well!

#### Postcard comments

- Hardcopy addressed to you, speaks to you
- Sent to me is an ego boost
- I have to look at mail
- Doesn't take to long to get the message
- Must be flashy and speak directly to me, not an advertisement (Do not

address to “resident”)

- If it comes as “current resident” address then I toss it
- It reaches us & we like to get things by mail
- Will track paper better than computer outreach

#### Door Hanger

- At least I glance at it
- I often don’t use my front door
- Okay for first introduction but not personal enough
- I won’t read it
- I use my side door and might not see it

#### Neighborhood Association Newsletter

- Makes it local
- Pertains to us
- Unity in community – peer pressure
- Riverton smaller stores have copies
- The publication “Neighbors” is delivered
- If we get it – we like it but only periodically and not everyone gets it
- Prefer to have it delivered in the mail

#### Coupons

- Typically are not good enough savings to make them worthwhile
- Don’t even look at them

#### Newspaper Insert

- Read it all – look at inserts
- Sunrise guide okay, Portland Press Herald not so good it must be specific
- Don’t like the newspaper, too long
- Local newspapers are best

#### Web Ads

- Too much noise – it is hard to focus on one ad
- It does not use paper, everyone using computers these days

#### Email

- Look at it everyday
- Like to be informed on recent events
- Email reminds me about like it
- I don’t have a computer
- Quick to “delete” spam and not personal
- Computers are everywhere
- More economical than other message vehicles

### General comments

- Why not TV? – We need big message to help us understand and to be engaged
- The big message should be synced with focused message

## Part 3: Potential Partners or Sponsors

### Focus Group #1:

Potential Partner or Sponsor	Votes
City of Portland	10
Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District	6
Maine Department of Environmental Protection	6
Friends of Casco Bay	4
Portland Chamber of Commerce	3
Casco Bay Estuary Partnership	1
Maine Merchant Association	1

### Focus Group #2:

Potential Partner or Sponsor	Votes
City of Portland	10
Maine Department of Environmental Protection	6
Portland Chamber of Commerce	4
Friends of Casco Bay	1
Casco Bay Estuary Partnership	0
Maine Merchant Association	0
Cumberland County Soil and Water Conservation District	0

The bottom line here is that participants want a prominent role for government agencies to ensure that a coupon effort is legitimate and not just greenwashing. Conservation nonprofits like the Friends of Casco Bay or the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership simply do not carry the same weight as the City or the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

Two considerations worth noting:

- **We used the City logo when recruiting participants.** Watershed residents with

strong negative feelings towards the city would likely have not attended.

- **None of the participants voiced concerns about the honesty of city officials.** This is a striking departure from other focus groups I have participated in.

Comments on the City:

- The city understands the issues
- No one opposed to City doing it (coupons, volunteers, etc)
- City logo on post card made me pay attention, because I pay taxes and want to know what they are doing with my tax dollars, it carries a lot of weight
- City has most power to change things - and may be the reason for pollution due to poor sewer design
- For-profit not as good as non-profit
- City is mandated by State and Federal law
- Subjective agencies is a plus
- Quality staff + website of City
- City can provide us with the facts & must, ultimately, make the decisions
- Maine Merchants Association
- No one knows who they are, so why trust them?
- Doesn't work - The word "merchant" makes it sound like they will try to sell me something I don't want
- Might provide a good link between the community and municipal officials and environmental organizations

Chamber of Commerce

- Might be more inclusive and everyone liked it
- Businesses have a vested interest in products that can help or harm environment

## **Part 4: Summary Statement**

Finally, to gauge participants' overall views of the activities discussed this evening; we presented participants with the following summary statement:

"The city and its partners will work together to encourage residents to adopt environmentally responsible lawn, car, and pet care habits. In cooperation with local merchants, the partners will offer coupons to encourage residents to purchase environmentally friendly products and services, and provide tips and training to help residents do even more."

About 3/4 of those who participated in the focus groups voiced favorable impressions of the basic concept of the program, while only one voiced negative views. Although this finding does not carry as much weight as a survey result, it is a promising outcome.

Sentiment	Focus Group #1	Focus Group #2	Total
Very Positive	2	6	8
Somewhat Positive	4	1	5
Neutral	3	0	3
Somewhat Negative	0	0	
Very Negative	1	0	1

In addition to their vote, we invited residents to summarize their views on the effort. Nine of the participants took us up on the offer, here are their thoughts:

- Eventually will we be forced to pay to recycle? I do not want to be forced, to be environmentally friendly if I choose not to be.
- Identify partners sounds negative and tried to merchants as opposed to caring for the problem.
- It was not promising you anything it was encouraging you to want to do something.
- We are over Regulated!!!
- We as people need to be more informed, cooperative and engage to and about our future. This affects everyone at some point directly or indirectly.
- I like this statement .It states clearly the objectives and it address a couple reliable motivators to persuade people that this is an important and an appropriate project.
- Good civic sense is cooperation between residents and business. Businesses selling responsible products make responsible residents, so business are very important for this message but should work with city.
- It is all about the ultimate purpose and how to go about it. People need to be more informed, of course but authorities have to enforce change.
- I would be happy to do all that is necessary to help the environment and like to know more on how to control protection. I would not need to receive coupons to enforce me to do this.



**It's your neighborhood,  
your opinion counts!**



Join us for one of two discussions about neighborhood issues and we'll pay you \$30. Space is limited, so RSVP now!



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In recent years, the City of Portland has made extensive efforts to upgrade the combined sewer systems and clean up local streams and Casco Bay.

On 7/22, please join us for one of two focus groups to discuss options to reduce *other* sources of water pollution in your neighborhood.

- **When:** Thursday, 7/22 at 5:45 and 7:30 p.m.
- **Where:** Riverton School and Community Center, Community Room, 1600 Forest Avenue, Portland, ME 04103
- **RSVP:** Call 800-426-4262 or <http://capisic-brook.eventbrite.com>

**Participants will receive \$30 for their time. Space is limited to 10 in each group.**

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# Portland/Westbrook Water Pollution Focus Group

7/16/2010

# Tonight Is About



# Things To Know

- We have not made any final decisions
- We have not signed any contracts
- We have not committed to any budget figures

# Water Pollution



# Water Pollution

- Local streams do not meet federal and state pollution standards
- Casco Bay does not meet federal and state pollution standards
- Some local water is not safe for swimming or drinking
- Fish and wildlife are slowly disappearing

# Part of the Solution



# Another Part of the Solution



# Pollution Prevention Messages:

Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you yourself to take action to reduce water pollution:



# Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?

**A**

A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common body of water. Our neighborhood is in the Capisic Brook watershed. Polluted runoff from our yards, driveways, streets, and parking lots is major source of water pollution in the stream and in Casco Bay.

**B**

It's everybody's responsibility to help prevent water pollution. We all live downstream or upstream from somebody. If we work together and do our part, we can reduce the amount of chemical fertilizer, dog doo, motor oil, and other germs and chemicals that reach our local streams.



Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?

**A**

You can save money and do your part for a healthy environment at the same time! Pollution is waste. If the streams are dirty, that means that somebody is wasting fertilizer, pesticide, auto fluids, or something else they paid good money for.

**B**

The city is doing its part to clean up the streams that flow into Casco Bay by upgrading the sewer system. Residents can do their part by adopting responsible lawn, garden, and pet care habits. If we work together, it will add up to make a big difference.

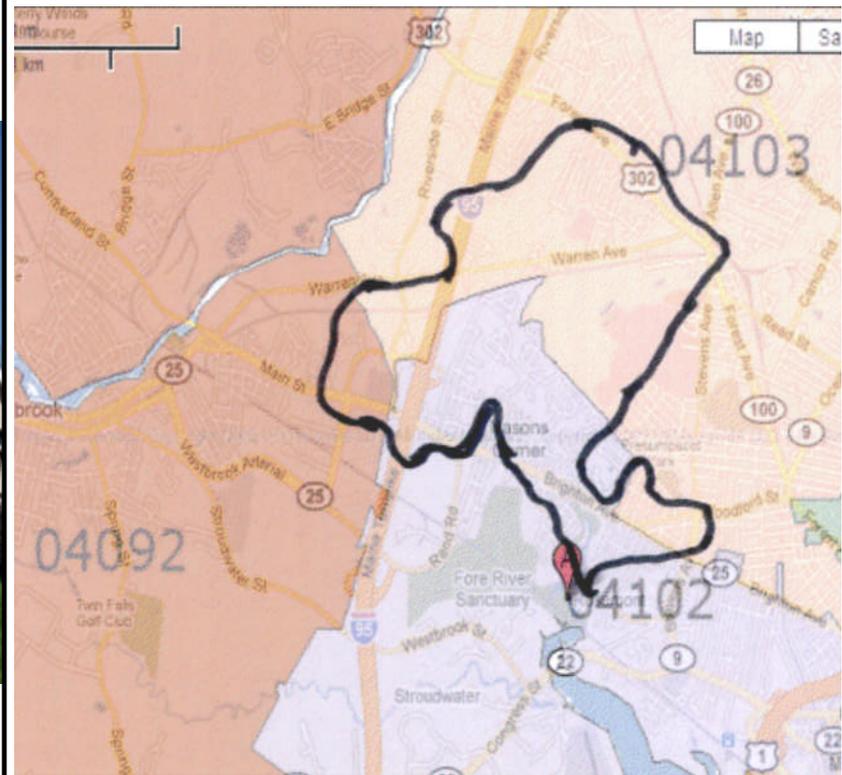
Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?

A



If you spread grass seed in the spring -- instead of fertilizer -- you'll probably have a greener lawn and we'll all have cleaner water!

B



The Capisic Brook watershed spans three zip codes in Portland and Westbrook

Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?

A



Be a responsible pet owner! Do your part for clean water by putting dog doo in the trash.

B



When it rains, water runoff carries dog doo left on the ground into storm drains. Storm drains dump into the local creek. The germs in dog doo can make people and animals sick.



Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?

**A**

Here are some money saving coupons that you can use to get discounts on environmentally friendly versions of products and services you already buy. You'll feel great about saving money and doing your part for the environment at the same time.

**B**

Join us for a fun -- and free -- evening workshop. In just two hours, you will learn many new tips and tricks to reduce water pollution from your yard, your car, and your pets.



Which of the following offers a more compelling reason for you to take action to reduce water pollution?

**A**

**B**

It's never been easier to do your part for the environment! Just call this number to set up a free appointment. Our volunteers will visit your home and and show you some simple changes that will reduce the amount of pollution form your yard, car, or pet.

Here are some money saving coupons that you can use to get discounts on environmentally friendly versions of products and services you already buy. You'll feel great about saving money and doing your part for the environment at the same time.

# Part 2: How You Get the Message

# Part 3: Who sponsors the coupon program?

# Part 4: Parting Thoughts



# How Do You Feel About This Statement?

“The city and its partners will work together to encourage residents to adopt environmentally responsible lawn care, car care, and pet care habits. In cooperation with local merchants, the partners will offer coupons to encourage residents to purchase environmentally friendly products and services, and provide tips and training to help residents do even more.”

---

**SOCIAL MARKETING FINAL PLAN**

**11/20/2010**



# Clean Yards, Clean Streets, Clean Streams Campaign

A Pollution Prevention Campaign  
for the Capisic Brook Watershed

Final

11.20.2010





# Mission Statement

“To reduce pollution in Capisic Brook and Casco Bay, the city and its partners will work together to encourage residents to adopt environmentally responsible lawn care, car, and pet care habits. In cooperation with local merchants, the partners will offer rebates on city trash bags to encourage residents to purchase environmentally friendly products and services, and provide tips and training to help residents do even more.”

# Contents

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- Overview of Key Components
  - Kickoff Event, p. 7
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  - Monthly Promotions, p. 14
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# Fundamental Considerations

- Single topic messages generally outperform multi-topic messages.
- All promotional techniques are prone to fail -- we must actively seek to measure which techniques perform for us.
- **There are no methods readily available to precisely measure the actual extent to which we influence behavior.**
- To evaluate our overall success, we must rely on a blend of self-reporting (e.g. survey responses) and measurable proxy behaviors to the actual environmentally preferable behaviors we seek (e.g. purchasing environmental preferable fertilizer, vs. actually applying it to the yard).

# Target Audiences and Behaviors



Rank	Audience and Behavior	Desired Behavior	Rationale
#1	Lawn Owners	Responsible Lawn Care: Pesticide, Fertilizer, Clippings	Improper use of lawn care chemicals has potential impact on Capisic Brook and Casco Bay downstream
#2	Car Owners	Wash car on grass or at car wash	Behavior is widespread and relatively easy to change -- good choice to involve community
#3	Dog Owners	Dispose of waste properly	Improper behavior may impact stream, but those who do it are tough to persuade
#4	Home Owners	Disconnect downspout, rain garden, pervious pavement, tree planting	Limited prospects for success with extensive program development: Poorly absorbent soil, physical modification of property required
#5	Brookside Homeowners	Maintain riparian habitat	Important for stream health



# Sequencing Audiences

- Although the group has identified 5 priority audiences it wishes to influence, it recognizes that concentrating resources on discrete objectives produces better results.
- This plan envisions that the campaign will address target audiences in sequence -- from highest to lowest -- over a period of years.
- This version of the plan provides detail on the first year of execution, focusing on lawn care behaviors that will reduce pollutant concentrations in storm water runoff from residential properties.
- The plan calls for use of the principles of “adaptive management” -- concluding each year’s effort with an evaluation, and decision about which behaviors, audiences, and techniques to focus on in the subsequent year.



# Year One

# Implementation: Lawn Care



2011												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Preparation	Preparation starts in 2010 and continues											
Public Relations				Major storm drain stenciling effort								
Mailings			Mailing #1: Workshop	Mailing #2: Rebate	Mailing #3: Expert	Mailing #4: Rebate			Mailing #5: Workshop	Mailing #6: Rebate		
Website/Rebates				Website w/Rebate Programs and background info. Targeted web ads, and subscription.								
Neighborhood Meetings/Workshops			Spring Workshop							Fall Workshop		
Experts Available				Expert Helpline is Available								
Evaluation				Monthly Evaluation	Monthly Evaluation	Monthly Evaluation			Monthly Evaluation	Monthly Evaluation	Monthly Evaluation	
Decision												Determine 2012 target audience

# Prepare Pledge and Evaluations

- Begin with the end in mind! The partners will develop a “clean yards, clean streets, clean streams” pledge and a complimentary, comprehensive set of evaluations *before* beginning promotional activities.
- The research expert will develop a “Clean yards, clean streets, clean streams” pledge for workshop and homeowner consultation participants to take.
- This expert will develop and conduct an end-of-year telephone survey, questionnaire for homeowners and workshop participants, and monthly reporting forms to evaluate reach of promotional activities and rate of follow through on the pledge.



# Prepare Pledge and Evaluations: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Develop pledge			x				
Develop End of Year Evaluation Survey instrument			x				
Develop Workshop Participant Questionnaire			x				
Develop homeowner expert visitor questionnaire and ten point checklist			x				
Develop monthly reporting protocol (yard signs, web visits, receipt returns, workshop attendance, expert 800 calls)			x				



# Prepare Pledge and Evaluations: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Develop pledge	2	\$100
Develop End of Year Evaluation Survey instrument	6	\$300
Develop Workshop Participant Questionnaire	3	\$150
Develop homeowner expert visitor questionnaire and ten point checklist	3	\$150
Develop monthly reporting protocol (yard signs, web visits, receipt returns, workshop attendance, expert 800 calls)	8	\$400
Review w/Partners and Revise	8	\$400
Total	30	\$1,500

# Creative Development



- Creative development should be led by a single partner
- This partner will secure input from other partners, but their role is to ensure consistency across the full suite
- Logo, colors, and fonts will be developed first
- Remaining materials will be developed using these fundamentals

# Creative Development: Pieces

Piece	Cost
Logo	\$400
Market Test Logo	\$200
Letterhead	\$100
Website Theme	\$400
Email Template	\$100
Yard Sign	\$100
Post Card Template	\$100
Sticker for Merchant Display	\$100
PDF Receipt Form	\$200
Web Ads	\$300
Total:	\$2000

# Creative Development: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Creative Brief & revise w/partners						x	
Test and Revise logo,color, font palette w/partners						x	
Revise rest of materials w/partners						x	
Manage Design						x	



# Creative Development: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Creative Brief & revise w/partners	3	\$375
Revise logo,color, font palette w/partners	3	\$375
Revise rest of materials w/partners	2	\$250
Manage Design	4	\$500
Design Costs		\$2000
Total	12	\$3,500

# Kickoff Event

- The City will organize a major storm drain stenciling effort in the Capisic Brook watershed, preferably using volunteers or school children from the neighborhood to maximize word-of-mouth buzz.
- Local elected officials will be invited to participate and address community, to increase their buy-in in the effort.
- Press activity and announcements will highlight the “bags in the storm drain” problem -- as a particularly graphic and visible manifestation of the connection between storm drains, Capisic Brook, and Casco Bay.
- Ideally, the event immediately precedes the first mailing and appearance of posters in merchant windows.

# Kickoff: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Coordinate storm drain marking activity w/partners and students			x				
Schedule and organize media event	x						
Recruit and orient city officials	x						
Event	x		x	x			
Track coverage							x



# Kickoff: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Coordinate storm drain marking activity w/partners and students	20	\$1872
Schedule and organize media event	6	
Recruit and orient city officials	6	
Event	2	\$416
Track coverage	34	
Total		\$2288

# Yard Signs

- To help establish environmentally responsible lawn care practices as the accepted -- and expected -- social norm, the partners will create attractive yard signs.
- Watershed residents who sign the “clean yards, clean streets, clean streams pledge” at a workshop or homeowner consulting session will receive the signs.
- Each month, one partner will drive through the neighborhood and count the signs.

# Yard Signs

Another neighbor  
supporting the ...

*Clean Yards*

*Clean Streets*

*Clean Streams*

Campaign

# Signs: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Select Vendor			x				
Order Signs			x				
Distribute signs to participating experts and workshop leaders			x				

# Signs: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Select Vendor	4	\$208
150 Signs (@ \$5 per)	2	\$750
Distribute signs to participating merchants, volunteers, and partners	16	\$832
Total	22	\$1790



# Monthly Promotion

- Partners will conduct 6 post-card mailings over the course of the year. Mailings feature pollution prevention messages, rebate notices, promote workshops, and alert residents to “expert volunteer” program.
- Simple website expands on pollution prevention messages, backup submission method for receipts, workshops, and expert volunteer program.
- Website has its own URL and is separate from the main City of Portland site. Website does feature City of Portland logo along with other partners.
- Visitors can “subscribe” on site to receive email in addition to postcards.
- Partners will run a modest web advertising campaign targeting the neighborhoods in question



# Monthly Promotion: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Prepare and send mail promotions				Mailer of record, to secure nonprofit mail rate		x	
Tweak monthly online advertising effort						x	
Prepare and send email blasts, update to Facebook, Twitter						x	



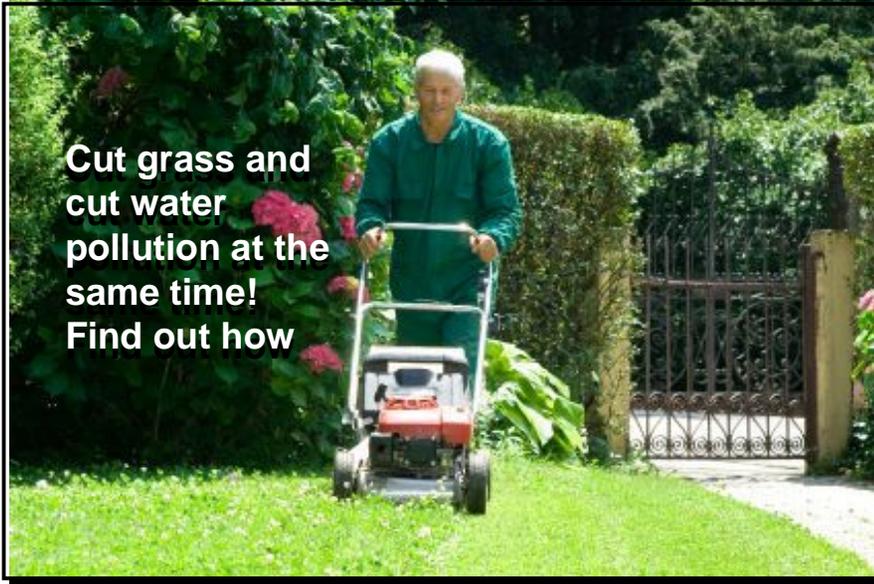
# Monthly Promotion: Resources

Task	Hours/Month	Dollars/Month
Prepare and send mail postcards 1663 single family homes in Capisic watershed	3	\$375
Printing and Postage (\$350 per month printing, \$232 postage at nonprofit rate)		\$600
Tweak monthly online advertising effort	3	\$375
Monthly Ad Budget		\$150
Prepare and send email blasts/update twitter/facebook	2	\$250
Monthly Total	8	\$1,750
Purchase 1663 mailing addresses for single family homes in the watershed		\$250
Annual (6 months) Total	64	\$10,500

# “Workshops”

- The project partners will work together to offer 2 educational programs and trainings to interested homeowners in the watershed.
- Partners will schedule free workshops at convenient hours and locations.
- At workshops, instructors will collect answers to the questionnaire, and distribute receipt forms, educational materials.
- Instructors will invite participants to sign the “Clean yards, clean streets, clean streams” pledge. Those who do will receive yard signs that display a homeowner’s public commitment to the effort.
- Partners will track how many attend each workshop, and use this information to determine whether to continue the effort in subsequent years.

# Monthly Mailing: Workshop



## What Do April Showers Bring?

**What:** Workshop on Environmentally Friendly Lawncare Tips

**When:** Saturday, March... 10:00 a.m. to noon

**Where:** XXXXX

**Cost:** Free

Why: April showers bring May flowers -- but also send polluted runoff into Casco Bay. Join us this coming Saturday for a fun and free workshop. You'll get tips to maintain a greener lawn AND how to do your part to keep pesticide, fertilizer, and other yard pollution out of local streams

Sponsored By:



John Doe  
123 Somewhere St.  
Portland, ME 04103

# Workshop: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Create workshop curriculum			x				
Create workshop materials			x				
Carry out workshops			x				
ID workshop locations			x				
Schedule workshops			x				
Coordinate promotion w/other partners			x				



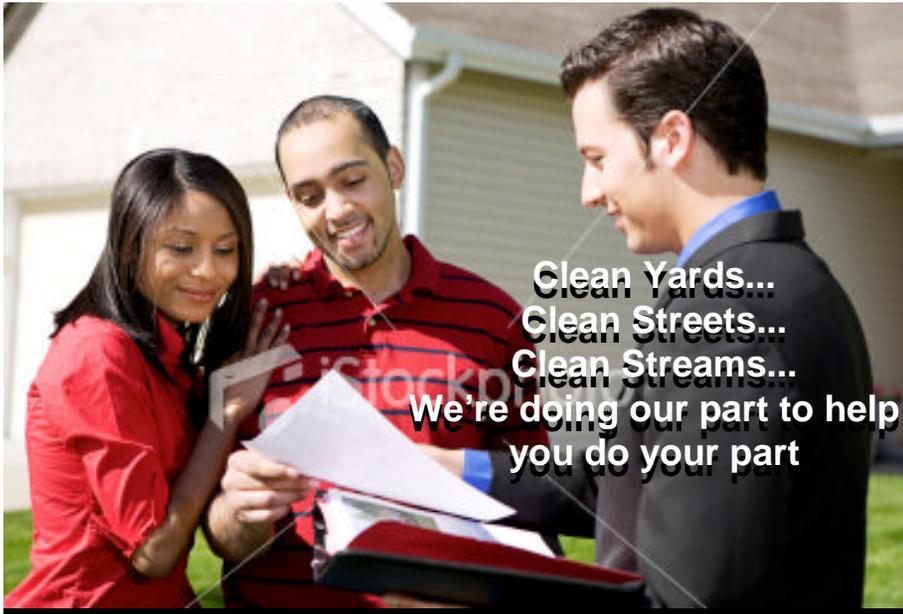
# Workshop: Resources

Task	Hours/Workshop	Dollars/Workshop
Create workshop curriculum	2.5	\$138
Create workshop materials	0	\$0
Carry out workshops	2.5	\$138
ID workshop locations	1.5	\$83
Schedule workshops	1	\$55
Coordinate promotion w/other partners	1	\$55
Total Per Workshop	8.5	\$468
Total for 2 Workshops	25.5	\$935

# “Expert Visits”

- The project partners will work together to establish a cadre of trained experts ready to visit homes in the Capisic Brook watershed.
- Experts will conduct a free audit of homes against a 10 point checklist, provide recommendations, materials and receipt forms to homeowners.
- Experts will ask homeowners to sign on to pledge and to place a sign in the yard signaling the homeowner’s support for the effort.
- Partners will track how many requests come in each month, and use this information to determine whether to continue the effort in subsequent years.

# Monthly Mailing: Expert



Do you support the goals of the clean yards, clean streets, clean streams campaign? Would you like a helping hand when you try to do your part? Call (800) xxx-xxxx to schedule a free, confidential, no obligation visit.

Our expert volunteers will review your home and yard, and provide tips, educational materials, and help you claim rebates on products and services that reduce water pollution



John Doe  
123 Somewhere St.  
Portland, ME 04103

Sponsored By:



# Expert: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Identify Experts to participate			x				
Develop protocol for referring calls			x				
Develop informational materials			x				
Set up Google Voice #			x				
Refer Calls			x				
Conduct Site Visits						x (Identified by CSWSD)	

# Expert: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Identify Experts to participate	8	\$416
Develop protocol for referrals	4	\$208
Develop informational materials	24	\$1,248
Set up Google Voice #	2	\$104
Refer Calls to experts to set up appointments (10 hours per month April/May/June, 5 Hours per month July/Aug/Sept/Oct)	45	\$2,340
Conduct Site Visits		
Total		\$4,316

# Rebate Program

- The project partners will develop a list of environmentally-friendly product and service categories to promote to Capisic Brook watershed residents – Proposed list includes lawn grass seed mix for overseeding, basic lawn aeration equipment and spring lawn mower tuneup/mulching blade addition/blade deck heightening
- Residents who purchase one of these products or services can send a copy of the receipt to the city -- and receive a coupon they can redeem for city-approved “blue” trashbags
- The project partners will alert the merchant community to the rebate program, and invite those merchants to highlight whichever merchandise they carry that is eligible for the rebate
- Partners will track how many receipts residents return, and use this information to determine whether to continue the effort in subsequent years.

# Monthly Mailing: Rebates



Are you doing your part for clean water and a healthy environment?

Do you purchase environmentally friendly lawn products and tools to help prevent polluted runoff from your yard?

If yes, then the city of Portland wants to say “Thank You!” Just send us your receipt and we’ll give you a coupon for free blue trash bags.

Visit [www.cleanstreams.org](http://www.cleanstreams.org) for a list of eligible products and to learn more about how the program works.

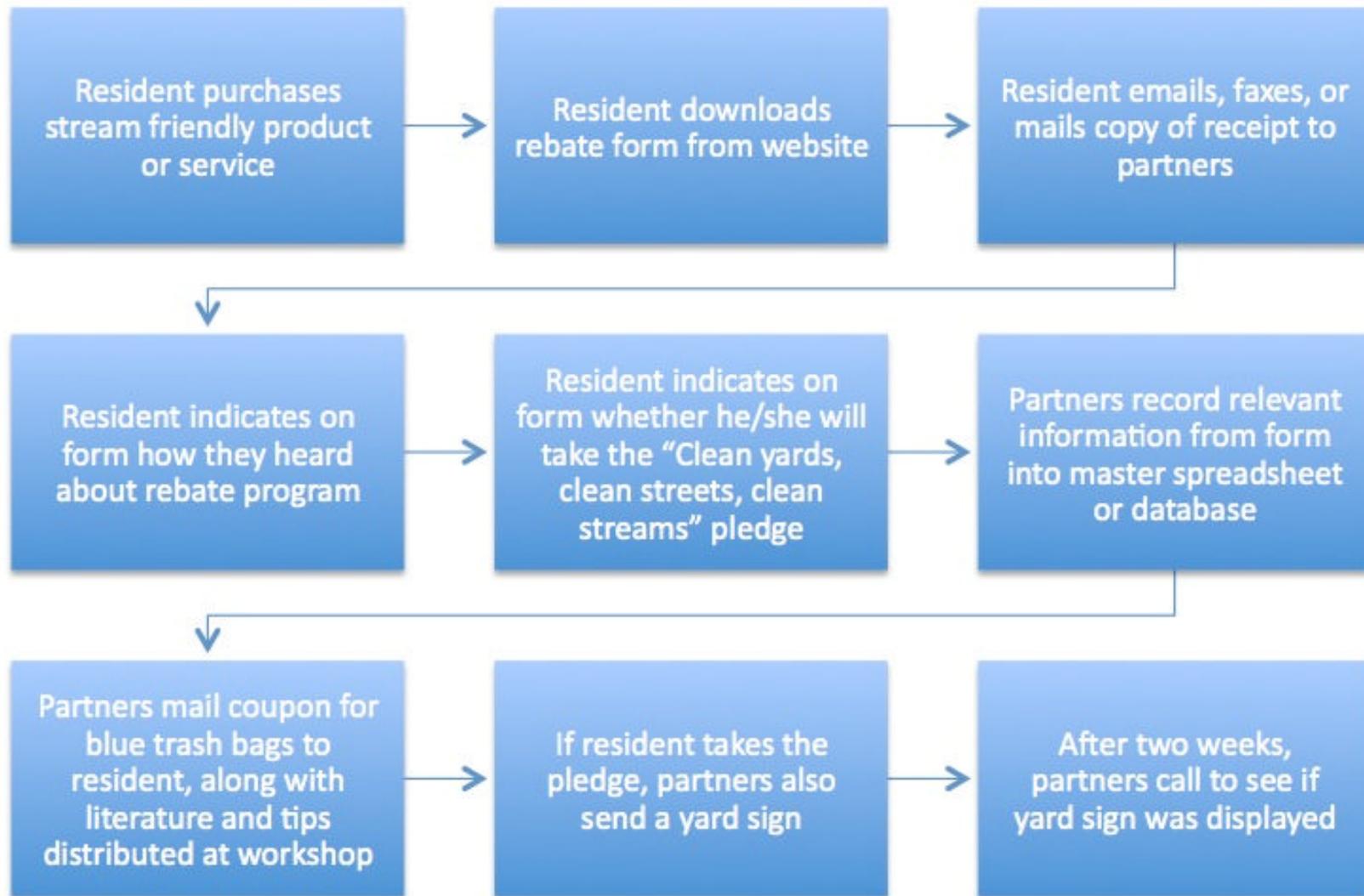


John Doe  
123 Somewhere St.  
Portland, ME 04103

Sponsored By:



# Rebates: Flowchart





# Rebate: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Develop list of environmentally friendly products and services eligible for rebate			x				
Document approved list in a manner that makes sense to residents			x				
Develop rebate form			x				
Set up collection email, mail, and fax #			x				
Post form and list to website						x	
Negotiate rebate arrangement w/relevant city departments	x						
Alert area merchants to program							
Process incoming requests			x				



# Rebate: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Develop list of environmentally friendly products and services eligible for rebate	5	\$250
Document approved list in a manner that makes sense to residents	5	\$250
Develop rebate form	3	\$150
Set up collection email, mail, and fax #	10	\$500
Post form and list to website	2	\$100
Negotiate rebate arrangement w/relevant city departments	3	\$150
Alert area merchants to program	12	\$600
Process incoming requests (6 hours per month, 8 months)	48	\$2,400
Actual Rebate Expenses, assume = 270 rebates @ \$10 apiece		\$2,700
Total	88	\$7,100

# Campaign Website

- Simple website features list of approved products and details of rebate program, including form to send with receipt
- Displays running tally of resident participation -- to create sense of momentum.
- Tips for various eco-friendly behavior.
- Background information on sewer separation/brook restoration.
- Site is registered at Google local, Yahoo! local, Bing Local.
- Web ads: Facebook, MySpace, Google, Yahoo!
- Website URL featured on monthly mailer, merchant posters.
- Analyze web traffic patterns on a monthly basis, at same time as receipts are counted.

# Website Mockup

## Clean Yards, Clean Streets, Clean Streams!

*Do Your Part for Clean Water and Save Money, Too*

### Grow Greener! Rebates for Grass Seed

March 30, 2011

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-- Click for More --

### Storm Drain Stenciling Event a Success!

March 18, 2011

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### Clean Yards, Clean Streets, Clean Streams Campaign Launches!

March 5, 2011

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-- Click for More --

#### Subscribe for Updates

Enter your email address:

Subscribe

Or via:



#### Search

Search for:

Search



# Website: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Develop site blueprint, review w/partners						x	
Develop content (Words & pictures), review w/partners						x	
Prepare contact forms and other programming						x	
Launch, Test, Debug						x	
Launch Site						x	



# Website: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Develop site blueprint, review w/partners	3	\$375
Develop content (Words & pictures), review w/partners	8	\$1,000
Prepare contact forms and other programming	3	\$375
Launch, Test, Debug	3	\$375
Launch Site	2	\$250
Domain name, 3 years hosting		\$200
Total	19	\$2,575



# Monthly Project Management and Evaluation

- A project manager will coordinate the activities of the partners.
- In January/February, the project manager will coordinate the activities of the University of Maine and marketing vendors.
- In March through October, the PM will coordinate promotional activities and reporting, and chair a monthly conference call among partners.
- The PM will prepare monthly report and meeting agenda including:
  - Response to mailings, as indicated by number of receipts returned.
  - Web traffic -- overall hits, % that download receipt form, etc.
  - Workshop participation.
  - Expert Appointments



# Monthly Project Management and Evaluation: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Collect receipts and compile data			x				
Review web traffic			x				
Review workshop participation			x				
Prepare report			x				
Chair Meeting			x				
Attend Meeting			x				
Ensure Follow Through			x				



# Monthly Project Management and Evaluation: Resources

Task	Hours/ Month	Dollars
Monthly Report (Collect receipts and compile data)	4	\$220
Review web traffic	1	\$55
Review workshop participation	1	\$55
Prepare report	2	\$110
Chair Meeting	2	\$110
Attend Meeting		
Ensure Follow Through	4	\$220
Monthly Total	14	\$770
12 Months Total	168	\$9,240

# Year End Survey

- At the end of each year, the project partners will conduct a followup survey, measuring:
  - Awareness of the campaign
  - Recognition of stenciled storm drains
  - Recognition/recall of various promotional efforts
  - Target behaviors before and after
  - Awareness of Capisic Brook



# Year End Survey: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Review contact information from participants							x
Develop evaluation materials							x
Conduct Interviews							x
Prepare Summary and Distribute							x



# Year End Survey: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Review contact information from participants		
Develop evaluation materials		
Conduct Interviews		
Prepare Summary and Distribute		
Total: (Note: U.Maine will cover much of the evaluation costs under its existing grant programs)	0	\$3,580



# Annual Report, Next Steps

- At the end of each year's effort, campaign partners will prepare a final report of accomplishments and lessons learned
- Partners will determine the following about the next year:
  - Target audience/behavior focus
  - Appropriate vendors to involve in rebate effort
  - Appropriate marketing techniques



# Annual Report, Next Steps: Roles

Task	City of Portland	Consultant/Vendor	Cumberland Soil and Water Conservation District	Friends of Casco Bay	Other Nonprofit Partner	Other Commercial Vendor	University of Maine
Compile monthly evaluation and final survey report			x				
Develop recommendations for audiences & behaviors for following year			x				
Convene partner meeting to review results and recommendations			x				
Participate in Meeting	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Produce updated campaign plan for following year			x				



# Annual Report, Next Steps: Resources

Task	Hours	Dollars
Compile monthly evaluation and final survey report	4	\$220
Develop recommendations for audiences & behaviors for following year	2	\$110
Convene partner meeting to review results and recommendations	3	\$165
Participate in Meeting		
Produce updated campaign plan for following year	8	\$440
Total	17	\$935

# Budget Summary

Phase	Cost
Prepare Pledge & Evaluations	\$1500
Creative Development	\$3500
Kickoff	\$2,288
Yard Signs	\$1790
Monthly Promotion, 6 months	\$10500
2 Workshops	\$935
Expert Visits	\$4316
Rebate Program	\$7100
Website	\$2575
Monthly Project Management and Evaluation	\$9240
Year End Survey	\$3480
Annual Report and Next Steps	\$935
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$48,159</b>