

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT NO.

PWR-2025-03



EDUCATION, OUTREACH, AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE PROGRAM PLAN

The Plan focuses on reducing stormwater pollution and enhancing water quality through community engagement. It includes programs to raise awareness, promote behavior change, and offer stewardship opportunities, all supported by adaptive management to ensure continuous improvement.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared by the Snohomish Conservation District

Lead Author:

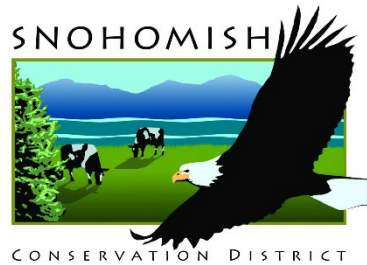
Brianna Bjolstad, Outreach and Communications Specialist

In partnership with the

City of Lake Stevens, Environmental Programs Division of Public Works

Shannon Farrant, Program Manager

Lake Stevens, Washington, May 2025



Education, Outreach, and Behavior Change Program Plan



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Executive Summary

The City of Lake Stevens has developed a comprehensive **Education, Outreach, and Behavior Change Program Plan** to address stormwater pollution and improve water quality through community engagement. This plan, prepared by the Snohomish Conservation District (SCD) in partnership with the City of Lake Stevens (City), focuses on community-based outreach to educate and engage residents in stormwater management practices.

Key Components of the Plan:

1. **General Awareness Program:** This program aims to increase residents' knowledge about stormwater impacts and promote low-impact development (LID) best management practices (BMPs). It includes classroom lessons, outreach tabling at local events, social media campaigns, and annual mailers/newsletters.
2. **Behavior Change Program:** This program encourages residents to adopt BMPs through a social marketing campaign. It involves community pledges, recognition of participants, and pilot studies to evaluate the effectiveness of behavior change strategies.
3. **Stewardship Opportunities:** The plan offers various opportunities for residents to participate in activities such as native planting events, water quality testing, litter pick-ups, and nature walks. These activities aim to foster a sense of community stewardship and involvement in protecting Lake Stevens and other waters of the City.

Survey and Community Feedback: A comprehensive community survey conducted in early 2025 provided valuable insights into residents' awareness, concerns, and interests related to water quality and stormwater management. The survey results informed the development of the education and outreach programs, ensuring they are tailored to the community's needs.

Adaptive Management: The plan includes an adaptive management approach to continuously evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the education and outreach programs. Annual reviews and mid-cycle evaluations will ensure the program remains responsive to community feedback and environmental changes.

Next Steps: The implementation of the plan will begin in June 2025, with ongoing evaluations and adjustments made throughout the permit cycle. The City and the SCD will work collaboratively to achieve the program's goals and improve water quality in Lake Stevens.

1. Introduction

Lake Stevens is increasingly threatened by stormwater pollution and adverse water quality effects due to the growth rate throughout the city. Stormwater runoff can carry many pollutants from developed landscapes, such as litter, fertilizer and pesticides, oil leaks, tire particles, pet waste, and sediment. Targeting any of these sources has the potential to reduce pollution runoff into Lake Stevens and other surface water bodies. This plan focuses on a collective source of stormwater pollutants by taking a community-based approach to develop education and outreach programs targeted towards city residents based on the community's feedback. This plan is organized into three program groups: general awareness, behavior change, and stewardship opportunities. The target audience for these programs are city residents. Lake Stevens is the focal point of the city and the greatest asset to the appeal of living in the city. Community residents are invested in the lake's health, which incentivizes community interaction around stormwater management and water quality.

The development of the plan emphasizes education and actions by the community to protect the lake. The Lake Stevens watershed encompasses approximately 75 percent of the city, and therefore, most stormwater runoff contributes to Lake Stevens. Lake Stevens is also the iconic feature in the city that most residents resonate with. While the messaging focuses on the protection of Lake Stevens, the education principles and community actions will have a positive impact on all receiving water bodies.

1.1 Background on Education and Outreach Efforts

Starting in 2008, the City of Lake Stevens (City) and Snohomish Conservation District (SCD) launched the I Love Lake campaign focused on community education and engagement for natural yard care practices and implementation of low- impact development (LID) stormwater management. In 2024, an evaluation of the campaign concluded that the methods and targets for outreach and engagement should be reevaluated through a community survey and adjusted based on community feedback (City of Lake Stevens, 2024). This plan analyzes the feedback from a new 2025 community survey and develops an education and outreach plan based on that feedback. This plan will be used to implement the education and outreach programs throughout the 2024 - 2029 NPDES permit term.

The 2025 survey focuses on four goals to evaluate the current I Love Lake campaign and develop the 2024 - 2029 programs.

- 1) Determine community knowledge of stormwater and water quality, and concerns impacting water quality. The survey questions will be evaluated to understand residents' current level of water quality knowledge, their willingness to adopt best management practices (BMPs), barriers to adoption of those practices, and actions or support from the City to overcome these barriers.
- 2) Identify the demographics throughout the city and create a demographic matrix outlining communication preferences and key motivations and barriers for demographic groups. This will inform our outreach strategies to ensure that we reach overburdened populations.

- 3) Design and implement program plans, based on community feedback, for general awareness, behavior change, and stewardship opportunities to educate Lake Stevens residents and empower them to take action on water quality.
- 4) Create an adaptive management strategy for the general awareness, behavior change, and stewardship opportunity program plans. This strategy will evaluate program success and create a mechanism for program modifications.

1.2 NPDES Permit Requirements

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permit for stormwater management sets the expectations for education and outreach program development and implementation requirements. The three program components focus on general awareness of water quality issues, a behavior change program to promote positive water quality-related habits, and stewardship opportunities to get members of the community involved in stewarding Lake Stevens.

This outreach plan addresses the goals of the NPDES permit by describing the development of the plan based on community feedback and outlining the three programs and how each complies with the NPDES permit requirements while serving the community's needs and interests. This plan outlines activities to address all sections of Permit requirement S5.C.2 over the 2024-2029 permit term. Specifically, this plan addresses S5.C.2.a.ii.b, a social marketing campaign required to be developed by July 1, 2025, and an implementation plan per S5.C.2.a.ii.c. required to be in effect by September 1, 2025.

2. Survey

A comprehensive community survey to gather input on local perspectives related to water quality, stormwater management, and environmental outreach programs was launched in early 2025. The survey aimed to establish a baseline understanding of residents' awareness, concerns, and interests, which would inform the development of the education and outreach programs. Distributed through a variety of outreach methods—including social media, in-person tabling, mailers, and fliers—the survey was available from January through April and received approximately 500 responses. Appendix A has a complete list of distribution locations. The following sections summarize the survey methodology, key findings, and implications for the existing I Love Lake Campaign.

2.1 Results summary

The following metrics summarize the survey results. A list of all the survey questions is included in Appendix B.

- Most respondents consider water quality extremely important (49.06%) or very important (45.04%) (Figure 1).

How important is the water quality in the lake to you?

389 responses

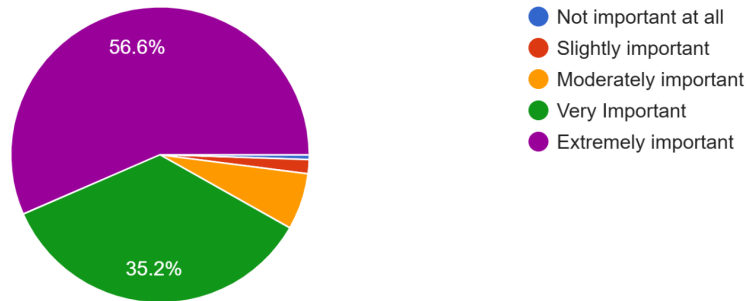


Figure 1. Distribution of survey responses to the importance of water quality in Lake Stevens.

- Most respondents are aware of the definition of stormwater runoff and its effects on water quality (94.25%).
- The pollution sources that respondents were most concerned about were new developments (52.18%), vehicles (46.82%), boats (44.84%), and trash (27.18%) (Figure 2).

How would you rate these sources of pollution to the lake and streams in our city?

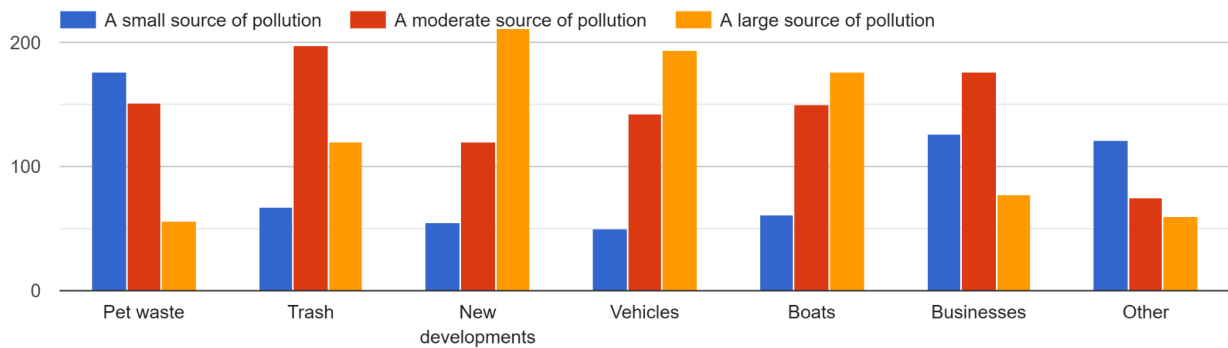


Figure 2. Distribution of responses for the types of pollutants that are of the most concern.

- The stormwater concerns mentioned most frequently in the fill-in section of the survey were lawn care (70 mentions), litter (34 mentions), and development (28 mentions).

- Respondents prefer to find information about water quality on the City website (45.87%), and many also do not currently seek out any information about water quality (26.28%).
- Most respondents find out about events through social media (80.6%) or word of mouth (43.16%).
- Many respondents are interested in learning about how they can protect the lake through information delivered through social media (59.93%), online sources (47.64%), mailers (47.14%), and events (29.57%).
- The topics that respondents were most interested in learning about include: native plants (62.53%), natural yard care (59.53%), wildlife habitat (54.68%), and general water quality science (54.28%).
- The relevant themes from the comment section of the survey include:
 - A desire for natural yard care education
 - Concerns about pollution and litter
 - Concerns about the effects of new developments

2.2 I Love Lake Campaign

The I Love Lake Campaign was created as a collaborative effort between the City and SCD in 2008. The purpose of this campaign has been to promote water quality BMPs to residents, including natural yard care and cleaning up pet waste. This campaign includes the annual Cascade Award to a citizen with a lake-friendly garden or landscape. Community interaction and participation with the I Love Lake campaign and the Cascade Award have decreased in recent years. The survey included questions about the community's interest in continuing, modifying, or retiring the campaign. Based on the survey results, the City will retire the Cascade Award but keep the campaign title of I Love Lake and maintain the I Love Lake website for information. The campaign will broaden BMP awareness to include natural yard care and other BMPs referenced in this document. I Love Lake website (ilovelake.org) is hosted by the SCD and remains a location of information for the public to access.

- 73.6% of respondents were not familiar with the I Love Lake Campaign.
- 88.9% of respondents were not familiar with the Cascade Award (Figure 3).

How familiar are you with the Cascade Award?

389 responses

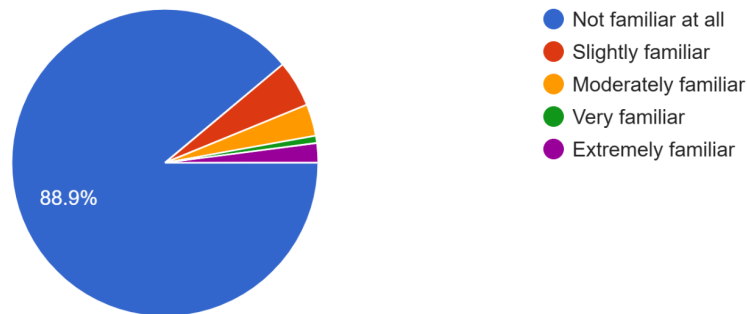


Figure 3. Distribution of survey responses to the community’s familiarity with the Cascade Award.

3. Program Communication

Communication is a key component to all three program plans. This section will describe the communication methods used to distribute the 2025 survey, review of the 2025 survey responses pertaining to preferred methods of communication and an overview of the demographics in the city, including a definition of overburdened communities.

3.1 Demographics

Understanding the demographics of a community is crucial for implementing an effective education and outreach plan. By analyzing the demographics of the city, targeted outreach strategies that resonate with the specific needs and interests of different demographic groups can be developed. This helps identify overburdened communities and address their unique challenges. It also ensures that communication materials are accessible and understandable to all community members. Demographic data provides a basis for informed decision-making, community engagement, and tailored outreach approaches. Several sources were reviewed to analyze the demographic distribution in the city.

According to the EPA, overburdened communities are minority, low-income, tribal, or indigenous populations or geographic locations in the United States that potentially experience disproportionate environmental harms and risks due to exposures or cumulative impacts. In the context of education and outreach, overburdened communities are those most in need of equitable access to environmental information, engagement opportunities, and decision-making power. These communities may also face language, literacy, technological, or cultural barriers that require tailored communication strategies to ensure meaningful involvement and effective support.

According to the United States Census (2024), the racial composition of the city predominantly White (75.5%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (11.2%), Mixed Race (11%), and Asian (7.8%). Only 5% of the population lives in poverty. Fourteen percent of households speak a language other than English at home. Among these, Spanish is the most common non-English language, spoken by 1.3% of the population.

As of 2023–2024 estimates, the city has a relatively young population, with approximately 29% of residents under the age of 18 and a median age of 34.5 years, which is lower than the national median. The population is heavily concentrated in the 30–44 age range, with notable representation in the 0–14 age group, indicating a high proportion of families with children. Only about 8.7% of the population is aged 65 and over, suggesting a smaller senior demographic. This youth-leaning age distribution is important for planning community services, including education and family-oriented outreach initiatives (United States Census, 2024).

3.2 2025 Survey

The 2025 survey results show the following demographic information about respondents:

- 23.8% of respondents are 65+, 23.6% are 35–44, 21.8% are 45–54, 20.8% are 55–64, and 10% are 18–34.
- The majority of respondents own a home (87.9%), some rent a home (6.4%), and some rent an apartment (1.5%).
- Less than half of respondents have a dependent under the age of 18 (39.5%).
- The majority of respondents are White (76.4%), the next largest group were those who preferred not to identify their race/ethnicity (16.1%), followed by Asian (5.5%), Hispanic or Latino (2.3%), Native American or Alaska Native (2.3%), and Black or African American (1.3%).
- The primary language for the majority of respondents is English (95.9%), followed by Spanish (1.3%).

With only 0% of respondents aged 0-17, the age demographics in our survey are higher than shown in census data. This can be attributed to our outreach locations, which included many areas more targeted at adults, such as grocery store tabling and mailers. The race and ethnicity responses in our survey are similar to those of the census data, with White, Asian, and Hispanic or Latino being the highest categories. Our findings in language match that of the census data, with Spanish being the most common non-English language.

3.3 Communication Plan

The communication plan is summarized in Table 1. This plan incorporates the demographic information and 2025 survey results and identifies the mechanisms that will be used to reach as many residents as possible. Based on the demographic information and survey results, the primary residents in Lake Stevens are between the ages of 30 and 44, which suggests a population that is more comfortable with technology and social media. The age demographics also indicate a high proportion of families. While the data suggests the majority of the population

is English speaking, the second highest language spoken in homes in the city is Spanish. This information has helped guide the communication strategies.

Table 1. A communication plan that outlines the methods of communication and the demographics targeted with each method.

Outreach Method	Target Demographics	Strengths	Considerations	Programs
In-Person family-friendly Events	Older adults, non-tech users, families, culturally diverse groups, and local organizations	Personal connection, builds trust, allows dialogue	Requires physical presence; may have scheduling/accessibility barriers	general awareness, behavior change, stewardship
Tabling (at local events)	General public, passersby, and underserved populations	Casual, approachable, great for visibility and brief engagement	Limited time per interaction; depends on foot traffic	general awareness, behavior change
Mailer (Postcard/Flyer) (English and Spanish)	Seniors, lower-income households, non-digital users, Spanish-speaking audience	Tangible, accessible to those without internet, multilingual option	Can be discarded as junk mail; limited interactivity	general awareness
E-Newsletter	Middle-aged adults, working professionals, and civic groups	Regular updates, opt-in audience, track engagement	Requires email access and interest; risk of low open rates	general awareness, behavior change
Website (language options)	All demographics (as a reference)	Centralized info hub, accessible 24/7, includes all materials, translates content into other languages	Must be mobile-friendly, updated regularly	general awareness, behavior change
Social Media (FB, Instagram, Twitter/X)	Youth, young adults, tech-savvy individuals, multilingual communities	Wide reach, shareable, fast feedback	Requires active management, algorithm-driven reach	general awareness, behavior change

4. Program Development

As a first step in the program development, the survey results were reviewed and analyzed. There were three major themes reviewed when analyzing the survey:

- General knowledge of stormwater and water quality
- Community perception for the largest water quality polluters
- Community interest topics

The following sections review each of these themes and the analysis methodology for choosing the topics to focus on for general awareness, behavior change, and stewardship opportunity program plans. Each of the topics chosen meets the public education and outreach key requirements outlined in the NPDES permit (Department of Ecology, 2024).

4.1 General knowledge of stormwater and water quality

Ninety-four percent of the respondents answered correctly the definition of stormwater and potential issues associated with stormwater runoff. This information suggests the community is well informed about the principles and topics that will be included in each of the program plans. Another theme identified in the survey is that residents are interested in learning other ways they can implement BMPs to improve water quality and spread awareness about stormwater management.

4.2 Largest Water Quality Polluters

The survey identified pollution sources that respondents were most concerned about were new developments (52.18%), vehicles (46.82%), boats (44.84%), and trash (27.18%) (Figure 2). Each of these topics were analyzed for feasibility to integrate into each of the program plans.

The majority of the respondents were most concerned with new developments. This question was reviewed with the themes from the relevant overall comments left from survey participants and the majority of the concern stems from the removal of trees and native soil, ground disturbance and an increase in impervious surfaces. From a public education and outreach approach, this topic is not feasible to focus on. The majority of these concerns are controlled by the Lake Stevens Municipal Code and other environmental regulations for development. In order to address these concerns, the City would need to review our development requirements and make changes to regulations and land use planning, which is outside the scope of a public education and outreach program.

The other top three topics for concern can be addressed through public education and will be incorporated into each of the program plans. The program plans will also incorporate other BMPs for stormwater management that were identified as an interest to the respondents.

4.3 Community Interests

The topics that respondents were most interested in learning about include: native plants (62.53%), natural yard care (59.53%), wildlife habitat (54.68%), and general water quality science (54.28%). Low-impact development BMPs are one of the main topics for integration into the program plans because they can address each of these topics of interest and be applied to residential properties. This includes, but is not limited to, rain gardens, vegetated roofs, and rainwater harvesting. Each of these topics is integrated into the program plans.

5. General Awareness Program Plan

The following section outlines the specific outreach methods to build awareness around water quality and stormwater. The topics are broad to enable flexibility of scheduling, material coordination, and adapting to needs and interests. The General Awareness Program Plan focuses on school-aged children and Lake Stevens residents as the audience. The focused

subject areas are the general impacts of stormwater on surface waters, LID principles, and LID BMPs. This information is also outlined as a table in Appendix C.

5.1 Classroom Lessons

- Audience: School-aged children.
- Goal: Educating the next generation about water quality and encouraging students to share classroom lessons with family members.
- BMP Target: General impacts of stormwater on surface waters
- Location: Elementary Schools in the Lake Stevens School District (School District)
- Description: Watershed Week: 4-day series covering a range of topics related to stormwater runoff and water quality
- Example materials: [Watershed Week curriculum](#) or individual lessons
- Timing: Visit 2 to 3 schools per academic year, OR encourage the School District to implement the curriculum in exchange for Surface Water Utility credit. The curriculum is available to schools for free online.
- Evaluation: Students and adults reached; lesson feedback survey after Watershed Week implementation
- Budget: 2025: Roughly \$200 per lesson, 5% increase every year
- Responsible Party: SCD

5.2 Outreach Tabling

- Audience: Lake Stevens Residents
- BMP Target: General impacts of stormwater on surface waters, LID principles, and LID BMPs
- Location: Lake Stevens Farmers Market, Lundeen Park, North Cove Park, and Davies Beach
- Description: Educational materials about human impacts on stormwater, LID principles, and LID BMPs. Staff will answer questions and direct residents to stormwater resources, services, and programs. Stormwater education activities for youth and families.
- Example Materials: [Gardening With a Purpose](#), [Beaver Fact Sheet](#), [Wetland Planting](#), [Erosion Fact Sheet](#), Trivia Wheel: Stormwater trivia, [Enviroscape](#), [Permeable Paving](#), [Native Plant Rain Gardens](#), [Rain Barrel Info Sheet](#), [Building Backyard Wildlife](#), [Tips for Sustainable Yard](#)
- Timing: Table at the Farmers Market once a month from June to August. Table once a month at Lundeen, North Cove, and Davies Beach from June to August. Tables will be facilitated on weekdays and during normal working hours (when possible) to ensure staff availability.
- Evaluation: People reached; 2025 baseline survey (Appendix B) to gauge stormwater general awareness year to year. Behavior change specific program survey (see Section 6; Appendix D) to measure knowledge on behavior change over the course of the NPDES permit term.
- Budget: 2025 rate: \$1,800 per tabling event, 5% increase every year
- Responsible Party: On-site implementation: City of Lake Stevens, Participation in content creation: SCD

5.3 Social Media

- Audience: Lake Stevens Residents
- BMP Target: General impacts of stormwater on surface waters, LID principles, and LID BMPs
- Location: SCD and City of Lake Stevens Social Media Profiles.
- Description: Social media posts will be distributed to the community through City run social media accounts. The topics of the posts will follow seasonal related posts, common topics of discussion, and other information of importance that is identified through community surveys.
- Material Examples: Social Media Toolkit (Appendix E).
- Timing: Quarterly posts across all SCD and City of Lake Stevens channels. SCD will coordinate with Lake Stevens staff to ensure topical and efficient posting.
- Evaluation: Number of likes and shares.
- Budget: \$75 per social media post.
- Responsible Party: City of Lake Stevens, SCD

5.4 Annual Mailer/Email Newsletter

- Audience: Lake Stevens Residents.
- BMP Target: General impacts of stormwater on surface waters, LID principles, and LID BMPs
- Location: Households in the incorporated City of Lake Stevens.
- Description: Postcard with information about lake-friendly practices, educational resources, teasers for upcoming events, and baseline stormwater survey. This will also include a newsletter emailed to everyone who has signed up for updates about the program. The annual mailer/E-newsletter will provide a link to the ZenCity website where important information about the program is translated into Spanish. The postcard will include information in Spanish.
- Timing: Spring annually through permit cycle.
- Evaluation: Number of households reached.
- Budget: 2025 rates: \$3,179 (postage) + \$1,664.82 (printing) + \$291.86 (mailing prep) plus SCD staff time to design and review mailers.
- Responsible Party: City of Lake Stevens, SCD

6. Behavior Change Plan

The following sections outline the specific methods to implement behavior change. The terminology used and the program approach is consistent with the NPDES permit requirements. The Behavior Change Plan focuses on Lake Stevens residents as the target audience. The focused BMP for this plan is Locally Important, Municipal Stormwater-related Subject Area (LIMSSA). The City of Lake Stevens defines LIMSSA as inspiring community action on stormwater and water quality issues and raising awareness of BMPs and stormwater pollution runoff. This program will be implemented along with general awareness and stewardship programs. The BMP topic information shared in the General Awareness Plan and Stewardship Plan will serve as the education material for this program.

The goal is to inspire action through behavior change and influencing others to also take action. Through education and engagement, the City aims to empower residents to connect land use, human behavior, stormwater management, and water quality to the health of Lake Stevens. Through engagement, individuals choose a BMP they will commit to taking action on. The targeted behavior for change is increasing residents' awareness of stormwater issues and gaining their commitment to take actionable steps, or promote those steps, to protect water quality. The City will lead this program with the support of SCD identified in the specific topics of the General Awareness and Stewardship Plans.

6.1 Social Marketing Campaign

The first step of the social marketing campaign development was to review the 2024 evaluation of the education and outreach program (City of Lake Stevens, 2024). Key points of that assessment included the following recommendations:

- Adoption of behavior may be stronger if a greater understanding of stormwater is made, including its connection to the Lake.
- Highly organized events are very effective at reaching information to individuals who attend, but not necessarily highly effective at reaching the community, and require a lot of effort.
- Online training is popular and easier to implement, but in-person training appears to be more effective at connecting with the community.
- The identity of the [I Love Lake] campaign is somewhat vague, and consideration may be given to understanding if the name and approach is valued, or if it needs to be redirected and rebranded.
- Though small, the Spanish-speaking population is significant and should not be omitted from providing communication in Spanish.

6.2 Social Marketing Campaign 2025-2029 Development

Development of the Behavior Change Plan considered 2024 education and outreach program evaluation and the 2025 survey results. The Behavior Change Plan uses the five-step approach to behavior change in Community-Based Social Marketing (McKenzie-Mohr, 2011; Lynes et al. 2024).

Step 1. Selecting Behaviors

- **Target Audience:** City of Lake Stevens Residents.
- **Definition of Success (End State Behavior):** Residents are engaged as advocates or stewards of improving stormwater and surface water in the city.
- **Message (Potential Behaviors for Impact):** Encourage residents to adopt behaviors that protect Lake Stevens' water quality by fostering an understanding of the watershed and its role in the lake's health.
- **Why (Probability of Adoption):** The survey revealed strong community interest in improving water quality, reducing pollutants, and addressing stormwater issues.

Residents identified key concerns, such as stormwater runoff and the impact of housing developments, as well as a desire for hands-on education and engagement opportunities.

- **How (Targeting Behaviors):** Target interested community members to take action by pledging to implement and promote BMPs to protect water quality, in an approach that is shaped by the 2025 survey to reflect community concerns and interests. The approach will encourage those community members to be advocates of the lake and encourage others to participate. This behavior change will be measured through the number of pledges by the community to take action. The pledges will be available online to complete or in-person at community engagement events. When making a pledge, residents will identify a specific BMP(s) to implement. The pledge form is included in Appendix F.

Step 2. Barrier and Benefit Research

Approximately 26 percent of respondents currently do not receive or seek out information about water quality. This is the largest barrier to program engagement. This barrier can be addressed by seeking new avenues of communication for water quality information for those who are not already seeking it out, such as mailers or social media posts. The approach for communication and outreach is described in Section 3.

The benefit for participating in the program will be recognition through the City's ZenCity webpage, annual recognition shared at a City Council meeting, and recognition at in-person events to showcase those individuals who are taking action. Aside from public recognition, implementing BMPs to improve water quality will benefit the health of the lake, which can be enjoyed by all members of the community.

Step 3. Developing Strategies

- **Messaging Strategy:** The City will utilize the community engagement approach outlined in Section 3, 5 and 7 to share information about the behavior change program. Education material and pledge opportunities.
- **Commitment:** Participants will be asked to make a pledge to implement a BMP(s) and encourage others to participate.
- **Key Individuals:** Starting with motivated and engaging individuals, we will try to foster leadership and respectful outreach in dedicated residents who are engaged in the program. The list of individuals who provided contact information and asked to be on a list serve are identified as key individuals
- **Communication:** Communication will follow the strategies outlined in Section 3.
- **Ease and Convenience:** By providing forums and arranging opportunities for participants, the program will try to make it as easy as possible for the participant to succeed.

Step 4. Piloting

- The purpose of a pilot study is to implement the behavior change program starting September 1, 2025 through March 2026 and then evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Through evaluation, changes to the program may be implemented.

Step 5. Implementation and Measurement

- **Implementation Summary:** Key individuals (those that provided contact information during the 2025 survey), passer-byers at tabling events, and participants in stewardship opportunities will be asked to pledge to implement BMP(s) to improve water quality and advocate others to do the same. Whether or not individuals take the pledge, they will be asked to take a short survey (Appendix D) describing the barriers to implementation and the reasons for being influenced.
- **Study Groups:**
 - Control Group: Key individuals who provided email addresses
 - Study Group: Passer-byers at tabling events and stewardship participants
- **Methodology:**
 - Pilot: Information about the program and the opportunity to pledge to make a difference will be sent to the control group, along with the survey. The same opportunity to pledge and survey will be given to passer-byers at tabling events and those who attend stewardship events after they have been provided with education and hand-outs about stormwater management and the protection of water quality.
 - On-going implementation: The opportunity to pledge and survey will be given to passer-byers at tabling events and those who attend stewardship events after they have been provided with education and hand-outs about stormwater management and the protection of water quality. The baseline survey will be distributed annually and available at outreach events. This survey will be analyzed to measure the overall effectiveness of the program on the community's knowledge of stormwater management. The behavior change survey will be separate from the annual survey and focus on individual's barriers and decisions to pledge their actions.
- **Analysis:** The number of pledges received from the control group and study group will be compared to the total number of participants. This will be an indication if the tabling events and stewardship events inspired residents to pledge to taking action.
- **Results:** Results of the behavior change survey and number of pledges will be reviewed and changes to the program approach will be updated as necessary.
- **Measurement of water quality improvement:** The total pledges will be used to measure the impact to water quality improvement. Results from the annual baseline survey will also be used to measure the overall knowledge of the community.

6.3 Implementation Schedule

- The Pilot Behavior Change Program will launch by September 1, 2025 and run through March 31, 2026.
- Campaign review and adaptations will occur after the pilot period (April 2026).
- Annual evaluations and adjustments will be made until the end of the permit period

6.5 Plan Evaluation

Before March 2029, the City will evaluate the effectiveness of the behavior change plan. The evaluation will review the number of pledges received by residents and evaluate their long-term commitment to encouraging others to participate in improving water quality. This will be assessed through the annual baseline survey responses. The evaluation will include recommendations for plan changes.

7. Stewardship Opportunities

The following sections outline the specific opportunities to promote stewardship opportunities for Lake Stevens residents. These opportunities were identified as community interests through the 2025 baseline survey. This information is a sample of opportunities that can be chosen yearly. Not all opportunities will be available yearly. Opportunities will be selected based on adaptive management approaches, City and SCD resources, and community interest.

7.1 Native Planting/Harvesting Events

- Location: City of Lake Stevens-owned property.
- Audience: Lake Stevens Residents, Rotary Club, boy/girl scouts, schools, or other local community organizations
- Description: Hold a native planting event where participants will learn about native plants and participate in restoring city-owned parcels with native species or harvesting native plants before development. The City will organize an event to help restore natural landscapes on parcels owned by the City or organize a harvesting event where participants can participate in harvesting native plants from private development parcels before land clearing.
- Materials: Information about native plants, especially riparian species, places to source native plants for landscaping at home, tips and tricks for planting, caring for, and maintaining native plants. The City or SCD will supply the materials needed to complete the work.
- Timing: As scheduled. Events will occur in the fall.
- Evaluation: Number of participants.
- Responsible Party: City of Lake Stevens (this work may be contracted with SCD)

7.3 Nature Walk and Litter Pick Up

- Location: City of Lake Stevens property/right-of-way.

- Audience: Lake Stevens Residents of all ages, Rotary Club, boy/scouts, schools, or other local community organizations
- Description: Learn about native plants and animals on a nature walk while removing litter.
- Materials: Guided walks by City of Lake Stevens employees, trash bags, PPE, trash pickers, trash haul-out.
- Timing: as scheduled
- Evaluation: Number of participants.
- Responsible Party: City of Lake Stevens (this work may be contracted with SCD)

7.4 iNaturalist Events

- Location: Various City of Lake Stevens parks, natural areas, private properties, trails, riparian zones, and shoreline areas.,
- Audience: Lake Stevens residents of all ages, Rotary Club, boy/scouts, schools, or other local community organizations
- Description: To contribute to a community biodiversity database, engage residents in documenting local flora and fauna and track aquatic plants in the lake.
- Materials: iNaturalist mobile application; educational materials on local biodiversity, including identification guides for native and common invasive plant species in Lake Stevens, such as Eurasian milfoil and curly leaf pondweed.
- Timing: Throughout the permit cycle, focused community events are conducted semi-annually.
- Evaluation: Number of participants, observations submitted, and species diversity recorded.
- Responsible Party: City of Lake Stevens.

8. Adaptive Management Plan

The City, in partnership with SCD, will utilize an adaptive management approach to evaluate the effectiveness of our stormwater education and outreach programs. This strategy ensures that our program remains responsive, data-informed, and aligned with community needs.

Review of the General Awareness Program and Stewardship Program will occur annually in late summer/early fall, prior to the City's budget planning cycle. These reviews will assess the effectiveness of the program efforts and identify any necessary adjustments for the following year. Evaluations will be based on measurable progress toward program goals, resident engagement, and community feedback.

Evaluation of the social marketing campaign following the pilot period will be conducted to determine the effectiveness in shifting public behavior and attitudes. These assessments and

discussions will occur during scheduled check-in meetings between the City of Lake Stevens and the SCD.

The adaptive management framework also includes flexibility for mid-cycle reviews. If a trend of recurring concerns, negative feedback, or confusion emerges from residents, staff, or stakeholders regarding any component of the education and outreach efforts, it will serve as a trigger for an earlier adaptive management review. This will allow the City and its partners to address challenges promptly, adjust messaging, update outreach strategies, or reallocate resources as needed.

Through this cyclical review process and our commitment to responsiveness, we aim to build a transparent, effective, and community-centered stormwater education program that supports long-term water quality improvements.

9. References

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10. Appendices

Appendix A - Survey Distribution List

Outreach location (in-person and online)	Outreach Method
Sherwood Community Services	Flyer
Lake Stevens Community Resource Center/Food bank	Flyer
Lake Stevens Senior Center	Flyer
Lake Stevens Library	Flyer
Safeway	In-person booth
Grocery Outlet	Flyer
Haggen	Flyer in Feb, in-person booth potentially in March
Ace Hardware	In-person booth
Facebook group: Lake Stevens Community	Social media
Facebook group: We Live In Lake Stevens WA	Social media
Facebook group: Being Neighborly: Lake Stevens	Social media
Facebook Group: I Love Lake	Social media
Facebook group: Lake Stevens Mom Group	Social media
Facebook group: Lakefront residents	Social media
Facebook group: Ladies of Lake Stevens	Social media
Facebook group: Concerned Lake Stevens Residents	Social media
Facebook group: Lake Stevens Moms	Social media
Lake Stevens Historical Society	Flyer
Chamber of Commerce	Flyer
School District- PeachJar	Online flyer
Nextdoor	Social media
The Journal 425 online paper	Website
I Love Lake webpage	Website
SCD social media channels	Social media
SCD e-newsletter The Nexus	Newsletter
City Splash Notice	Newsletter
Lundeen Park + North Cove + Davis Beach	In-person flyers
LS Row Club	Flyer
North Cascades Crew Rowing Club	Flyer
MOD Pizza	Flyer

Starbucks	Flyer
Planet Fitness	Flyer
First Financial Northwest Bank	Flyer
Sherwin-Williams	Flyer
Lake Stevens Animal Hospital	Flyer
Autozone	Flyer
Jiffy lube	Flyer
7-11	Flyer
Gesa Credit Union	Flyer
Qdoba	Flyer
Michaels	Flyer
Ulta	Flyer
Ross	Flyer
Benjamin Moore	Flyer
PetPros	Flyer
LS mini mart	Flyer
Jays Market	Flyer
Biscuit and bean	Flyer
Preferred Real estate	Flyer
Boys and Girls club	Flyer
Tom Thumb	Flyer
Espresso stand at Tom Thumb	Flyer
Cavelaro 76 station	Flyer
Union Coffee at Cav	Flyer
Wet Rabbit	Flyer
204 76 station	Flyer
Union Coffee at 204	Flyer
Starbucks at Soper Hill	Flyer
Senior Center	Flyer
20th st Espresso	Flyer
Stupid Geeks	Flyer
Anytime Fitness	Flyer
Calvary Chapel	Flyer
Real Life Ministries	Flyer
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Flyer
Indian Spices Store	Flyer

Glenwood apartments	Flyer
Lake Village East apartments	Flyer
Cedarwood Area Community Center	Flyer
Cedarwood Apartments	Flyer
Lake Stevens Preschool and Daycare	Flyer
Redd's Men's Cuts	Flyer
Pursuit Fitness	Flyer
Lake Stevens Vision Clinic	Flyer
Smiles by Steedman	Flyer
Johnstone Chiropractic	Flyer
Food Bank Market	Flyer
Lake Stevens Community Support Center	Flyer
Frontier Heights Park	Flyer
Frontier Heights HOA Community Center	Flyer
Ebenezer Luthern Church	Flyer
Elim Lutheran Church	Flyer
Lake Country Baptist Church	Flyer
The Loop Fitness	Flyer
Team United MMA	Flyer
Subway (1807 Main St, Lake Stevens, WA 98258)	Flyer
Ashley Pointe Senior Living	Flyer
Lake Stevens Community Fields (1601 N Machias Rd, Lake Stevens, WA 98258)	Flyer
Lake Stevens Disc Golf Course	Flyer
Shadowwood Stables	Flyer
Messenger of Truth Church	Flyer
Lake Stevens Assembly of God	Flyer
Lakeshore Town Homes	Flyer
Lake Stevens First Baptist Church	Flyer

Appendix B - Community Survey

1. What is your age?

- 17 or younger
- 18-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

2. What is your living arrangement?

- I own a home.
- I rent a home.
- I rent an apartment.
- I am unhoused.
- I am a minor.
- I prefer not to say.

3. Do you have dependents under the age of 18?

- Yes
- No

4. To help us get to know our community, please indicate your race/ ethnicity. Your response is voluntary, and this information will remain confidential. Check all that apply.

- White
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino/ a
- Asian
- Native American or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify): _____

5. What is your primary language?

- English
- Spanish
- Chinese (Mandarin)

- French
- Arabic
- Hindi
- Other (please specify): _____

6. How important is the water quality in the lake to you?

- Not important at all
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very Important
- Extremely important

7. What is stormwater runoff?

- Water from rain or snowmelt that flows over surfaces like roads and parking lots
- Water that is stored in lakes and rivers
- Water treated at a water treatment plant
- I don't know

8. How can stormwater runoff affect water quality in lakes and rivers?

- It can carry pollution such as trash, oil, and chemicals into waterways
- It helps clean and purify the water
- It has no impact on water quality
- I don't know.

9. How would you rate these sources of pollution to the lake and streams in our city?

	A small source of pollution	A moderate source of pollution	A large source of pollution
Pet Waste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trash	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New developments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vehicles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Boats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Businesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other: _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. What actions do you take to protect the water quality in the lake and streams?
Check all that apply.

- Use organic fertilizers
- Have a rain garden and/ or rain barrel on my property
- Pick up trash
- Plant native plants
- Pick up my pet's waste
- Teach my family and friends about lake and stream health
- I don't take any actions.
- Other: _____

11. Where do you find information about the health of the city's lake and streams?

- City of Lake Stevens website and staff
- Snohomish Conservation District website and staff
- Snohomish County
- Other government agency website and staff: _____
- Social media
- Lake Stevens School District
- Friends and family
- Online search
- I don't look for any information or receive it
- Other: _____

12. How do you hear about events in the City of Lake Stevens? Check all that apply.

- Social media
- City of Lake Stevens website
- Newsletter
- Flyer or community board
- Word of mouth
- Email
- Newspaper
- Other: _____
- I don't get any information about events

13. What are your preferred ways to learn how you can protect the lake and streams? Check all that apply.

- Workshop / Class
- Webinar
- Events

- Brochures mailed to my residence
- Videos
- Online
- Social Media
- Radio / podcast
- I don't know
- Other: _____

14. What kinds of educational topics interest you? Check all that apply.

- Water quality testing
- Nature walk
- Litter pickup
- Rain catchment methods (rain gardens, cisterns, detention ponds, etc)
- Natural yard care (chemical-free ways to maintain your yard)
- Wildlife habitat
- Native plants
- General water quality and environmental science in our area
- Other: _____

15. How familiar are you with the Cascade Award?

- Not familiar at all
- Slightly familiar
- Moderately familiar
- Very familiar
- Extremely familiar

16. Do you want to see the Cascade Award continue?

- Yes, but improved. Please briefly explain improvements here:

- Yes, and stay the same
- No
- I don't know

17. Do you regularly interact with any of the following parts of the I Love Lake campaign? Check all that apply.

- I Love Lake webpage
- I Love Lake Facebook group
- Cascade Award nominations

- I've heard of the I Love Lake campaign but don't regularly interact with any part of it
- I've never heard of the I Love Lake campaign before

18. Anything else you want us to know?

19. If you'd like to be informed of upcoming education events in Lake Stevens, please share your email below.

Appendix C - General Awareness Program Plan Table

Method	Location	Materials	Timing	Evaluation	Budget (2025-2029)	Responsible party
Classroom lessons	Elementary schools in LS SD: Glenwood, Hillcrest, Mt. Pilchuck, Skyline, Stevens Creek, & Sunnycrest	Watershed Week: 4-day series covering a range of topics related to stormwater runoff and water quality Example materials: Watershed Week curriculum or individual lessons	Visit 2 to 3 schools per academic year <u>OR</u> encourage LS School District to implement curriculum in exchange for rebate. Curriculum available to schools for free online.	Students and adults reached; lesson evaluation survey after Watershed Week implementation	2025: Roughly \$200 per lesson 5% increase every year	SCD
Outreach Tabling	Lake Stevens Farmers Market, Lundeen Park, North Cove Park, and Davies Beach	Educational materials about human impacts to stormwater, LIDs, and LID BMPs. Staff available to answer questions and direct residents to free services and programs. Stormwater activities for youth and families.	Table at the Farmers Market once a month from June to August. Table once a month at Lundeen, North Cove, and Davies Beach in June to August. Tables will be facilitated on weekdays and during normal working hours (when possible) to ensure staff availability.	People reached; 2025 baseline survey, Behavior change specific program survey	2025 rate: \$1,800 per tabling event 5% increase every year	City of Lake Stevens, SCD

Social media	SCD social media, I Love Lake channels, City of LS social media	Social media toolkit	Quarterly posts across all SCD and City of Lake Stevens channels. SCD will coordinate with Lake Stevens staff to ensure topical and efficient posting.	People reached; click rates	\$75 per social media post.	City of Lake Stevens, SCD
Annual Mailer/ Email Newsletter	Households in the incorporated City of Lake Stevens	Pamphlet with information about: Lake-friendly practices, Educational resources, Teasers for upcoming events, Baseline stormwater survey. This will also include a newsletter emailed to everyone who has signed up for updates about the program	Spring annually through permit cycle	Number of households reached	2025 rates: \$3,179 (postage) + \$1,664.82 (printing) + \$291.86 (mailing prep) Plus SCD staff time to design and review mailer	City of Lake Stevens, SCD

Appendix D - Behavior Change Survey

Content coming soon!

Appendix E - Social Media Toolkit

Month	Topic	Sample post
January		
February		
March	Car washing	
April	Natural yard care	
May	No mow May	
June	Car maintenance	
July	Boat maintenance	
August	Stormwater facility maintenance	
September	Trash pick up	
October	Clear drains	
November	Maintenance of downspouts	
December	Flooding	

Appendix F - Behavior Change Pledge

Content coming soon!