

# MCM #1

## REGIONAL STORMWATER EDUCATION PROGRAM

### COMMUNICATIONS PLAN 2016/2017

PREPARED BY



Tally Ho Design is charged with working with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission's MS4 Subcommittee to develop and implement a coordinated marketing campaign to enable the twelve designated MS4s in the County to meet their Minimum Measure #1 requirements of their EPA NPDES permit, namely "to educate the public about the impacts of stormwater discharges on water bodies and the steps that the public can take to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff." Additionally, Tally Ho Design is charged with developing one brand identity to unify the Minimum Measure #1 effort known as the Regional Stormwater Education Program (RSEP) and its website, "smartwaterways.org" with that of the other regional MS4 effort for Minimum Measure #2 (Public Participation & Involvement) known as the "Chittenden County Stream Team or CCST.

The annual Communication Plan will serve to guide these efforts. It builds upon previous communications plans prepared since RSEP's inception in 2003 by Marketing Partners of Burlington, VT and more recent plans prepared by Andrews Marketing of Westford, VT It also continues to incorporate findings from several surveys conducted by UVM's Center for Rural Studies in 2003, 2007, 2008 and 2013. Most importantly, it also builds upon an analysis of the results of previous "smartwaterways" advertising efforts as well as an analysis of the operations of the CCST's operations.

The designated MS4s in Chittenden County include the following towns and communities:

Burlington  
South Burlington  
Winooski  
Essex Junction  
Essex

Williston  
Colchester  
Shelburne  
Milton

and three so-called "Non-traditional" members:  
MSF Burlington Int'l Airport  
University of Vermont  
Vermont Agency of Transportation

## GOALS

- Rebrand Smartwaterways, and incorporate the Chittenden County Stream Team into a single entity.
- Redesign the current site, at [www.rethinkrunoff.org](http://www.rethinkrunoff.org), incorporating a revised brand hierarchy, responsive design, eliminating all Flash functionality.
- Reskin print and web ads, retaining the existing messaging. Edit TV and radio spots to include revised URLs, as best as possible.
- Create a new survey for implementation.



## STRATEGIC FOCUS AND CONCEPTS

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Overall, messaging will remain consistent through year one, especially pertaining to advertising. We will begin simplifying messaging to increase accessibility.

### KEY CONCEPTS:

**Fertilizers:** Reduced use; correct time to fertilize; no phosphorus fertilizers.

**Pet Waste:** Pick-up pet waste at all times; in the yard, trails, woods. Organic/biodegradable doesn't mean you should leave it.

**Slow the Flow:** small DIY projects—rain gardens, rain barrel workshops, proper gutter runoff.

## REBRANDING

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Tally Ho Design has rebranded the campaign Smart Waterways as Rethink Runoff. The name change kicks off a major rebranding effort, including a new visual identity, revised website, and updated advertisements.

Our goal in the rebrand is to bring Smartwaterways and the Chittenden County Stream Team under a unified brand umbrella.

In terms of the website content, we envision the site as a resource for solutions to stormwater runoff problems, in addition to providing education. We would retain all municipal information, but our goal will be to provide solutions, encouraging multiple visits from people. Information and education will be our primary focus: stormwater infographics and DIY-projects that the average person can implement to reduce or eliminate run-off. This is currently on the website, but the information is not readily accessible. We would advise implementing a drop-down menu, so all pages are consistently accessible.

We will design with responsive behaviors in mind: larger imagery, directing visitors to certain parts of the site with a navigational structure that is much more clear.

We would recommend redesigning, restructuring the Stormville interactive feature currently on the website, and building upon this, using either HTML 5/animated videos, with a much larger footprint on the webpage. Again, the illustration style would reflect any new branding implemented. Our graphics in this could be further used down the in videos as needed.

In addition, we would create a kids-specific section in the website, focusing on education and awareness, combined with age-appropriate (elementary school) activities: checklists for kids to review with parents, smaller science projects that highlight issues surrounding stormwater runoff, and potential projects.

We also plan to incorporate all relevant content from the Chittenden County Stream Team into their own section on rethinkrunoff.org. The Stream Team would update the blog with news, events, and recaps. There would be multiple links on the homepage, and throughout, encouraging people to connect with the Stream Team.

Prior to launch, we would optimize the entire site for search engines (SEO), reviewing keywords based on search topics, and adjust our content across all pages accordingly. While some of our content is specific to Chittenden County, projects and other pages may have a larger potential reach, which would in turn raise the visibility of the website in search engines.

Overall, the website should serve a continual resource for stormwater-runoff prevention.



**REVISED NAMING AND BRANDING**



**RETHINK RUNOFF**

- overall brand
- infographic-style

**THE STREAM TEAM**

- “boots on the ground”
- outreach
- hand-drawn aesthetic

**MS. DROP**

- runoff tips and techniques

**WEBSITE LAYOUT**



Responsive behavior

Monthly rotating tips

Multiple entry points to Stream Team information

Instagram Feed



## ADVERTISING

Advertising during the year one implementation will not include new messaging. Tally Ho Design will take existing ads and update them, whenever possible to reflect the new brand.

Print and web digital ads will be skinned to reflect the new brand. Our goal is to edit and update the TV and radio spots to include the new name and URL at the end. We've collected the previous print and web advertisements and parsed them out into the following 4 categories. With each category, we're targeting a "best practice" in terms of targeting. This means we're trying to target the largest majority demographic associated with each group that will provide the best reach per dollar. All ads will be updated visually.

### 1. Slow the Flow, Create a rain garden



#### Demographic

Men and women, 30-65  
Homeowner/Condo-owners  
Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski,  
Williston, Colchester, Essex, Essex  
Junction, Shelburne

#### Initial Keywords

- Horticulture
- Gardening
- Perennials
- Annuals
- Mulch
- Compost
- Planting
- Seeds
- Vegetable Garden
- Gardening Equipment

### 2. Slow the Flow, Create a rain barrel | Neighborhood (Downspouts)



#### Demographic

Men and women, 30-65, Homeowner/  
Condo-owners  
Burlington, South Burlington,  
Winooski, Williston, Colchester, Essex,  
Essex Junction, Shelburne

#### Initial Keywords

- Hardware
- Home Improvement
- DIY
- Home Projects
- Yard

### 3. Fertilizer, In the fall or not at all



#### Demographic

Men, 30-65, Homeowner  
Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski,  
Williston, Colchester, Essex, Essex  
Junction, Shelburne

#### Initial Keywords

- Fertilizer
- Lawn Care
- Mowing
- Seed
- Yard Care
- Weeds
- Lawn Mower

### 4. Slow the Flow, General Ad (general awareness)



#### Demographic

Men, 30-65. Homeowner, Condo-owner,  
renters  
Burlington, South Burlington, Winooski,  
Williston, Colchester, Essex, Essex  
Junction, Shelburne

#### Initial Keywords

- Lake Champlain Beaches
- North Beach
- Oakledge Park
- Community Sailing Center
- Algae Blooms
- Blue-green algae
- Mallets Bay
- Boat launch
- Lake Champlain Water Quality



## TELEVISION & RADIO

Television and radio advertising will be updated with a revised URL. We are currently awaiting estimates on both.

In addition to reviewing the current WCAX and Xfinity advertising buys, we are also considering Youtube advertising. Similar to other digital advertising via Google. Youtube video advertising will allow us to target people by location, age and affinity. We'll be able to lock relative keywords, like fertilizer, gardening, gutters while combined with geographic targeting. We will address this more in-depth in the media plan.

## SURVEY

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Based on earlier survey findings, we will be creating and implementing a new survey. Our goal is to review questions and answers from the last two surveys, in an effort to edit/adjust questions and avoid repetitive answers.

The mean age of the last survey was 67 years.

## PAST SURVEY RESULTS

Part of the RSEP Stormwater initiative includes monitoring the effectiveness and awareness through surveys every 5 years. The past survey (2013) detailed the reported behaviors of 400+ residents in 9 towns.

## KEY RESULTS

Initial survey conducted 2003 and replicated in 2007:

- In 2003, 27 percent had no idea where storm water goes.
- In 2007, only 12 percent surveyed had no idea,
- In 2003 only 62 percent said they throw their pet waste in the trash when walking their dogs;
- In 2007, this had increased to 73 percent.

Revised survey conducted in 2008 and replicated in 2013:

- Increase to 81.1% in 2013 reported throwing pet waste in trash when walking dogs
- Drop in use of fertilizers from 50 percent in 2008 to 29 percent in 2013

We will be proposing updated and new questions based on answers from the last two surveys (2008 and 2013).

In addition, we want to reduce the average age of the survey respondent from 65 to about 45. To that end, we're reviewing opportunities to administer the survey online, as well as by phone. We are discussing incentivizing the survey, but do want to ensure this will not taint the results.



## PAST PERFORMANCE,

### CLICK-THROUGHS

SOURCE	IMPRESSIONS	CLICKS	COST	COST PER CLICK
<b>WCAX</b>	80,000 impressions RSS feed 250,000 PC impressions	796	\$800.00	\$1.01
<b>XFINITY</b>	50,000	256	\$1,985.00	\$7.75
<b>VPR</b>	20,000	26	\$300.00	\$11.54
<b>FRONT PORCH FORUM</b>	140,000	377	\$1,050.00	\$2.79
<b>GOOGLE AD NETWORK</b>	pay-per-click	376	\$699.60	\$1.86

### VISITS

TOTAL	TIME PERIOD
6,004	2016
4,659	2015
7,728	2014
3,541	2013
2,787	2012

### LOCATION

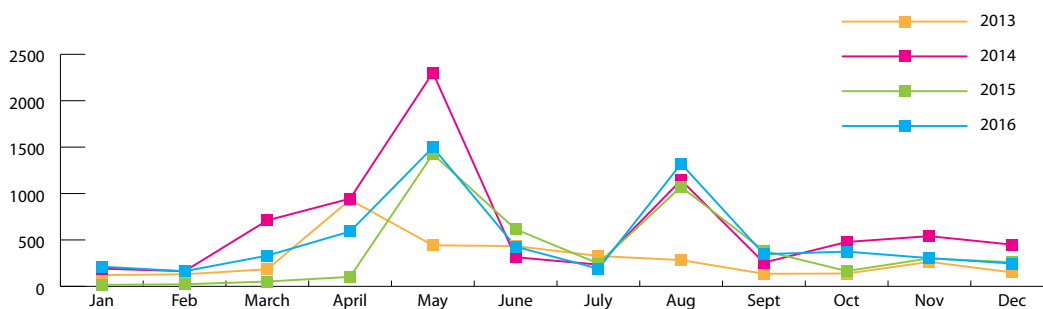
TOWN	VISITS/PERCENTAGE
Burlington	529 (21.74%)
South Burlington	301 (12.37%)
Essex	240 (9.86%)
Colchester	228 (9.37%)
Williston	152 (6.25%)
Montpelier	114 (4.69%)
Shelburne	107 (4.40%)
(not set)	84 (3.45%)
Richmond	74 (3.04%)
Stowe	49 (2.01%)

### DEVICE

TYPE	VISITS/PERCENTAGE
desktop	3,886 (64.72%)
mobile	1,513 (25.20%)
tablet	605 (10.08%)

41% of total visitors were from Chittenden County

### YEAR BY YEAR COMPARISON



## POTENTIAL MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS

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- Site visits
- Stream Team Sign-ups
- Digital ad click-throughs
- Specific landing pages for print
- Survey respondents
- (targeting a younger age demographic)
- Overall public awareness

## LIST OF TOOLBOX MATERIALS

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### Year One

- Website
- Digital ads: parsed into 4 categories
- Print ads: parsed into 4 categories
- Updated 30 second TV spot
- Updated 30 second radio spot
- Rethink Runoff stickers\*
- Pet waste bag holder stickers\*
- Stream Team banner\*

*\*TBD, based on budget*

### Year Two

- Revised digital ads with new messaging
- Revised print ads with new messaging
- Revised TV spot (15 second) with new messaging
- Revised TV spot (15 second) with new messaging
- Stream Team Canopy
- Rethink Runoff T-shirts
- TBD

