Sharing innovative, measurable outreach successes

Jess Brown, DNR
Successful outreach approaches

- Go beyond informing
- Move your audience to action
- Fit into a larger watershed plan
- Help you meet your project goals
- Often have measurable results
- Impact your project’s participation, funding or perception
Signs foster ownership

Dan Bratrud, Burr Oak and Turtle Creeks:

- Seems to have given some folks a sense of ownership, which makes landowners more likely to install conservation practices that will protect “their creek.”

- Two landowners that commented about the signs to Dan have expressed interest in practices.
Scoring a major article

Leah Sweely, Elk River:
- Look for special editions or sections
- Help reporters understand issues, explain how they affect the community
- Try tying in the watershed project to other timely news items
- Make follow-up calls to newspapers, radio stations and individual reporters you know enjoy covering outdoors, environmental or agricultural issues.
A real take-home message

Eric Palas, Ensign Hollow:
- Water bottles with a banner containing project contact information
- An item people would keep
- Distributed during informational meetings and on-farm visits; encourages one-on-one conversations
- Resulted in follow-up calls from interested farmers
Jackson County stream identification
Message delivery

- Speaking engagements
- Farm and Home Show
- Local newspaper
- Placemats to local eateries
Why did it work so well?

- **It fits into a larger plan.**
  - Tied to presentations, displays, media outreach, sign projects, one-on-one meetings

- **It reaches the intended audiences.**
  - Many landowners are third- or fourth-generation Jackson County residents with personal ties to, histories with creeks
  - Media
  - Service clubs and other local groups
  - Legislators
Why did it work so well?

<table>
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<th>It moves those audiences to action.</th>
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<td>• Landowners expressing interest in practices</td>
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<td>• Neighborhood group offers to install stream signs at bridge crossings</td>
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<td>• Newspaper article on backyard conservation</td>
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<th>It helps meet project goals.</th>
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<td>• Fosters a sense of ownership in creeks</td>
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<td>• Creating interest in installing practices</td>
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Why did it work so well?

- It impacted project participation and perception.
  - Interest in practices
  - Requests for additional speaking engagements
  - Asked to help with local history book
  - Led “table talk” at Farm and Home Show
  - Feedback on histories from residents
  - Help with creek signage
Why did it work so well?

• **It has measurable results.**
  – Placemats distributed (350+)
  – Speaking engagements requested (7)
  – Landowner contacts
  – Stream signs added (5, more to come)
  – Practices installed by someone spurred by history effort (at least one planned)
  – Comments received (200+)
  – Media coverage (4 paper, several radio)
How do you know it’s successful?

• Evaluate each of your efforts as you go to know what works and what needs to be adjusted

• Save time, energy and money by focusing efforts on effective strategies
Three types of evaluations

- **Process**
  - Execution of the outreach effort itself
    (30 landowners attend field day)

- **Impact**
  - Achievement of project goals
    (5 landowners at field day sign up for practices that result in sediment delivery reduction of 25 percent)

- **Context**
  - Public perception, economic and political impacts of project
    (Local officials attending field day leads to $25,000 grant for project)
Some ways to evaluate

- Surveys (pre-, mid- and post-project, as needed)
- Incentives, coupons
- **Contact logs**
- Sign-in sheets, event attendance
- Media coverage
- Trends in website hits
- Behaviors (number of pet waste violations, amount of chemical fertilizer sold, etc.)

[www.epa.gov/nps/toolbox/ - Getting In Step]
Sharing your successes

- Listserv
- *Clean Water Starts With Us* e-newsletter
- Quarterly roundups?
- Let me know!
I can help!

- Outreach plans
- Product, event development and planning
- Product review
- Graphic design, layout, logo creation
- Evaluation ideas
- Web updates
- And more!
Jessie Brown
DNR Information Specialist
(515) 281-5131
Jessie.Brown@dnr.iowa.gov

Tuesday – Friday, 8:00 – 5:30