



North Central Texas Council of Governments

SUMMARY

Public Education Task Force

Wednesday, July 21, 2021

9:30 a.m., Microsoft Teams

1. Welcome and Introductions.

PRESENTATION ITEMS

2. 2021 Doo the Right Thing Campaign.

An update on the Doo The Right Thing campaign will be given.

The submission period the Doo The Right Thing Photo Contest recently closed on June 30th. The contest received 105 submissions from residents in 17 cities across the region. The public voting period is set to open on Monday, July 26th and close on August 20th. The featured winners will then be posted to the Doo the Right Thing social media accounts from October 2021 through September 2022. Members are encouraged to share the contest voting information and continue to engage with the Doo the Right Thing accounts online.

3. SmartScape Program Update.

NCTCOG staff will provide the results of the slogan survey for the 2022 March is Texas SmartScape Month campaign and an update on the SmartScape website performance for the spring of 2021.

The result of the member survey to select a slogan for the 2022 March is Texas SmartScape Month campaign was announced. The campaign slogan for the coming year will be "Plant Smarter, Plant Natives!". NCTCOG's Communications team has already begun working on concepts for the corresponding graphics and collecting plant and landscape pictures from around the region.

Staff provided an update on the Texas SmartScape website which has continued to see high and sustained volumes of traffic and year-over-year growth. In 2020, the website users peaked at 2,127 users on April 26th. This spring, the website peaked with 2,343 users on March 28th with website usage continuing to stay high. Likely drivers of the website traffic were a successful March is Texas SmartScape Month campaign and residents seeking to replace landscaping damaged by the winter storm Uri.

4. North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge Project Update.

NCTCOG staff will provide an update to the group on the North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge.

A brief update and reminder that the North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge (NTCCC) is around the corner was given. To date, two communities have created an account on the website while five others have expressed interest and an intent to join the challenge. An informational webinar on the NTCCC will be given on August 5th. The webinar will cover how to sign-on to the challenge, creating an account, posting events to the website, reporting data, and more. Time will also be provided for participants to ask any questions they may have related to the NTCCC. Members are encouraged to create an account on the NTCCC website and to join the informational webinar.

5. FY21 Work Project Update.

An update on the Work Program will be given.

NCTCOG staff are working on a webinar on the topic of Green Infrastructure and Rain Gardens to take place during the month of September. Once all speakers and a date have been confirmed, a webinar save-the-date announcement will be sent out.

6. **Legislative Updates.** NCTCOG staff will give a brief update on State bills of interest in the current legislative sessions.

The only Texas state legislative bill of interest to pass both sides of the house, [SB 1772](#), was ultimately vetoed by the Governor. This bill would have directed AgriLife Extension to establish and implement a Texas Pollinator-Smart program to encourage the voluntary establishment and conservation of habitats for pollinators in/near solar energy sites.

7. **Trash Free Waters Update and Update on Engaging Recreational Groups in Litter Cleanup Activities.** NCTCOG will provide an overview of the *Engage and Educate* initiative associated with the EPA Trash Free Waters grant.

NCTCOG staff gave a brief update on the status of the Trash Free Waters project. Task 3 of the project, Engage and Educate, includes work focused on encouraging a cleanup culture in Texas such as increasing interest in activities like plogging. To accomplish this task, NCTCOG is partnering with the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) to create a short-term Advisory Group to help inform this work. The Advisory Group will meet as a brown bag lunch roundtable on September 9th, October 21st, and November 18th. The goal of their work will be to discuss and work on the development of resources that local governments can use when connecting with recreational groups on new and engaging cleanup activities such as plogging or integrating litter cleanup into paddling and cycling activities. To join the Advisory Group, please contact Crysta Guzman at cguzman@nctcog.org.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

8. **FY22 Program Discussion.** NCTCOG staff will facilitate a discussion on member submitted work project ideas for the Fiscal Year 2022 Work Program. Members will be asked to discuss and finalize a selection.

Results of a recent survey sent to members soliciting input on ideas for the FY 2022 Work Program special project was presented to the group for feedback and discussion. The survey asked members to rank ideas that had been suggested at the April 21st meeting and to provide any additional suggestions for consideration. Two ideas that had been suggested during the April meeting, *Social Media Toolkits* and *Additional BMPs/Trainings*, tied in voting and will be included in a follow-up survey with the additional ideas that were suggested. Additional suggestions from the response include:

- Something for schools to watch instead of in-person education
- Examples and ways other cities are controlling floatables
- Methods cities use to measure educational outreach success results (e.g. conducting surveys, review quantity of trash removed during cleanups, E.coli in their streams, etc.)
- Focusing on PPE

Staff asked the group to discuss and consider what each of these ideas might look like and to provide initial feedback on a direction they would like to go. There was strong group interest in the idea *videos for schools to watch versus holding in-person education* and discussion on this idea centered around providing an overview of the water cycle, or a 'one water' style video, with stormwater elements added in. Members suggested including in the video how pollution gets into lakes and water bodies and how students and their families can help keep streams clean by reinforcing the only rain down the drain educational messaging. Members also wanted to make sure the video touched on how stormwater pollutants can affect aquatic wildlife. It was suggested to consider utilizing the TRWD Stream Trailer in the proposed video idea to help illustrate the watershed approach to pollutant loading. TRWD released the [Exploring Watersheds with the TRWD Stream Trailer](#) video during the fall of 2020 which is a great resource for members seeking to hold watershed education virtually.

A follow-up question was asked on the survey to solicit input on specific topics or themes members might like to see for the previously suggested ideas of *Social Media Toolkits* and *Additional BMPs/Trainings* if one of those ideas were selected. Those responses included the following ideas:



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- Social media toolkits targeting plastic
- More on plastic pollution
- Proper lawn care, leaf blowing, over-watering
- Monthly social media toolkit on topics of: lawn care, pesticides, native plants, adopt-a-spots, household hazardous waste, pet waste, stormwater, Earth Day, etc.
- Full suite of general education training for the public on stormwater. Why its important, what to watch out for (around town) and how to report issues, what to do in event of leak at home, proper paint cleanup at home, used (motor?) oil, HHW, yard waste, adopt-a-spot programs, etc. Provide editable placeholder for city logos/hotline numbers.

For the idea of *Proper lawn care, leaf blowing, over-watering*, members suggested taking the BMP route to help residents fix issues they may be having such as a installing rain barrels or rain gardens to take care of swampy areas or drainage problems.

Feedback from the members indicated that they would like to see webinars or roundtables as the method for executing several of the ideas. A subsequent survey will be sent out asking members for a final vote on the special project ahead of the August 18th meeting of the Regional Stormwater Management Coordinating Council.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

9. **Other Stormwater and NCTCOG Program Updates.** NCTCOG staff will share recent and upcoming activities of the IDDE, Stormwater Monitoring, TMDL, and Wastewater and Treatment Education Roundtable programs. Staff will also provide an overview of upcoming conferences, events, news and resources of relevance to the group.

The Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) group is holding an Advanced Dry Weather Field Screening training on July 27th and space is still available to [register](#). Their next [meeting](#) is not until December 9, 2021.

The Regional Wet Weather Characterization Program is still working on the implementation of the Best Management Practices Analysis and Evaluation Plan (BANEP). They are currently working on collecting BMP data.

The TMDL program will be holding a Virtual Feral Hog Forum in late August and has the following upcoming meetings:

- [Upper Trinity River Basin Coordinating Committee](#): August 17, 2021 at 9:30 AM via Microsoft Teams
- [TMDL Stormwater Technical Subcommittee Meeting](#): September 14, 2021 at 9:30 AM via Microsoft Teams
- [TMDL Wastewater Technical Subcommittee Meeting](#): September 21, 2021 at 9:30 AM via Microsoft Teams
- [TMDL Monitoring Coordination Forum Subcommittee Meeting](#): September 28, 2021 at 9:30 AM via Microsoft Teams

The Wastewater and Treatment Education Roundtable (WATER) is finalizing an educational explainer video on "Proper Usage of Home Cleaning Products". Their "[Always Trash Your Personal Care Items](#)" video is now available online and ready to be shared. WATER will be holding a free Grease Interceptor Inspector Training and Roundtable on August 5th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Space is still available to [register](#) for this training. WATER will hold their next meeting on October 7th in the Regional Forum Room at the NCTCOG offices.

Upcoming Stormwater related Conferences and Events:

- EPA [Phytotechnology: a Nature-Based Approach to Containing Contamination](#), July 28th, 12:00 pm CST
- NCTCOG [North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge Informational Webinar](#), August 5th, 1:30 pm
- EPA Region 6 [Stormwater Conference](#), August 8th – 12th (New Orleans and Virtual)
- [World Water Week](#), August 23rd – 27th, click [here](#) for more information
- [StormCon](#) and [Water Pro Conference](#), September 13th – 16th, Milwaukee, WI
- [National Cleanup Day](#), September 18, 2021
- [Texas Association for Environmental Education Conference](#), September 24th – 25th
- [North American Association for Environmental Education Conference](#), October 7th – 8th
- [Texas Native Plant Week](#), October 17th – 23rd
- [International Erosion Control Association Texas Regional Conference](#), October 19th-20th (San Antonio)

Stormwater related News and Resources to be aware of:

- NCTCOG's [Blue-Green-Gray Funding Opportunity](#), application period open **July 19th - August 13th**
- TCEQ's [2022 Texas Environmental Excellence Awards](#) – application period open through **September 24th**
- Commission for Environmental Cooperation - [Reducing Marine Litter Through Local Action: A Toolkit for Community Engagement](#) (available in English, Spanish, and French)
- Last Stop The Ocean – [Last Stop: The Ocean](#) campaign and toolkit (available in English, Spanish, and French)
- Keep America Beautiful – [2020 National Litter Study](#)
- EPA's - [Trash Stormwater Permit Compendium](#)
- CNN Article – [A 'Bubble Barrier' is trapping plastic waste before it can get into the sea](#)
- [Local Water Protection Act](#) – passed the U.S. House on June 15th and has been passed to U.S. Senate

10. **Roundtable.** Members will share what is happening in their communities.

Carrollton: Working on setting up a cleanup event in September. Will be uploading Adopt-A-Spot sites to the Trash Free Texas website soon. Also still waiting on their SWMP approval.

Cleburne: Working on joining the NTCCC and getting the Mayor to join the Mayors Challenge by encouraging neighboring city, Burleson, to participate too. Trying to resume in-person meetings. HHW event is set for August and the Keep Cleburne Beautiful (KCP) affiliate works with the City on that. KCB has added to the Trash Free Texas website their city park sites that have creeks. Working on a Buffalo Creek Cleanup event for October and on how might be able to hold an in-person cleanup event. Recently held a creek walk which was a great opportunity to educate about litter and algae blooms. Each creek walk provides new sets of questions from participants based on what they see and is always a great educational event.

Dallas: Not much to report at this time.

Grand Prairie: Currently waiting on TCEQ's instruction for public notification process to renew the MS4 permit.

Irving: Waiting on their SWMP approval. Have been using Only Rain Down the Drain for educational messaging.

Lewisville: Waiting on their SWMP approval.

NTMWD: Have a lot of watershed work going on with Bois d'Arc Lake. Holding a watershed stakeholder meeting this week and holding a stewardship meeting in Fannin County. By September, hoping to have Lake Operations Center opened up. The Lake Operations Center will have great educational content, Caddo Nation artifacts found during construction, and a SmartScape demonstration garden. NTMWD will



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be hosting a Train the Trainer event in Wylie for the stream trailers. A date for the training is still in the works.

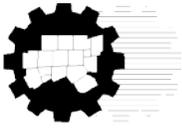
Tarrant County: Also waiting on permit approval.

Richardson: Currently waiting on permit approval. Asked question of the group about floatables and how other members, who are also still waiting on permit approvals, about how they are operating.

11. **Next Meeting Dates.** The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 20, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. Venue and format details are pending.

12. **Adjournment.**

If you have any questions regarding the meeting or agenda items, please contact Crysta Guzman at (817) 695-9107 or cguzman@nctcog.org. Thank you!



Stormwater Public Education Task Force

**Wednesday, July 21, 2021
9:30 a.m., Microsoft Teams**



MEMBER SIGN IN SHEET

NAME	SIGNATURE	ORGANIZATION
Robert Berndt	x	Tarrant County
Paula Breysacher	x	City of Garland
Cody Cash	x	City of Irving
Radwan Dalu	x	City of Dallas
Helen Dulac	x	NTMWD
Moss Fennell	x	VRX - NTTA
Devan Jones	x	City of Carrollton
Cassey Llamas	x	City of Southlake
Jodie Ledat	x	City of University Park
Jason Longbine	x	City of Lewisville
Teri McBride	x	City of Richardson
Tuan Ngo	x	City of North Richland Hills
Chandani Rana	x	City of Grand Prairie
Jennifer Rovezzi	x	City of Dallas
Nicholas Salas	x	Tarrant County
Liz Savage	x	GEI Consultants
Janice Tower	x	City of Richardson
Melissa Walker	x	City of Arlington
Julie Winchell	x	City of Cleburne