



## MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

**Date:** January 14, 2025  
**To:** CLFLWD Board of Managers  
**From:** Mike Kinney, District Administrator  
**Subject:** Education and Outreach 2024 Summary



**District Wide**

### Background/Discussion

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide a rough draft of the 2024 Education and Outreach Summary. This is for informational purposes only, as there will be a full presentation of this material at the February 13<sup>th</sup> Regular Board Meeting.

### Attached

- 2024 Education and Outreach Summary

**Comfort Lake -Forest Lake Watershed District  
2024 Education and Outreach Summary (DRAFT)**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Background

Workshops and Classes

Technology Platforms; Website and Social Media

Social Marketing; Constant Contact

Events and Tours

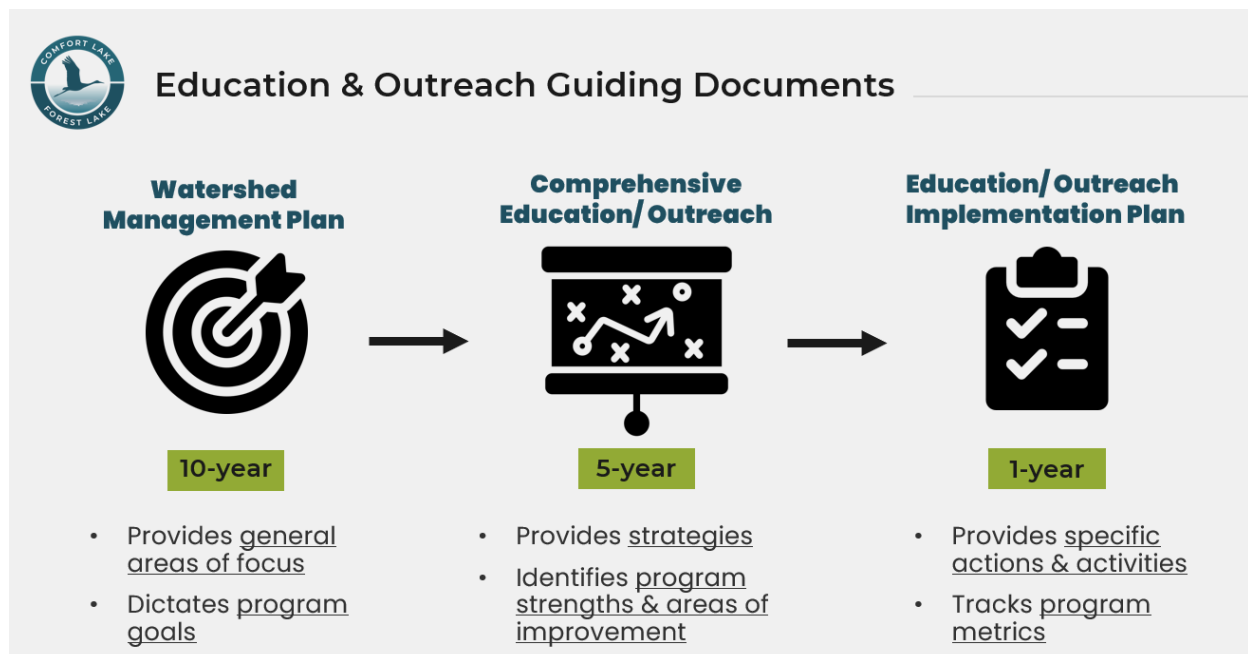
## Overview of Program Background, Planning, and Implementation

Background: The Comfort Lake- Forest Lake Watershed District 2022-2031 Watershed Management Plan identifies the need and opportunity for the District to build the knowledge and understanding of local water resources for District residents, local governments, and District staff through the development and application of a robust education and outreach program. This includes, but is not limited to, the awareness of water quality connections to land use, upland land resources, and water resource connections.

The Watershed Management Plan also identifies the initial steps and processes for developing a focused and relevant education and outreach program. The three key areas identified in the program description include: Ongoing Initiatives, Standard Project Signage, and Local Student Engagement. Through these three key areas, two main program goals were characterized.

*Goal 1: Increase public knowledge of and appreciation for human impacts to surface water, groundwater and natural resources to increase target audiences' behaviors that positively impact water resources.*

*Goal 2: Communicate District programs, projects and other initiatives to the public in a clear, consistent and equitable manner.*



The District's education and outreach plans also emphasize working with all other areas/departments by providing strategy, consistency, branding, support, and implementation in promotion of the District projects, programs, and priority activities. Through the Comprehensive Education/Outreach Plan these efforts were further focused into three themes:

- Increasing knowledge on specific water-related topics (including District activities) to create behavior change and adoption of environmental practices by target audiences (this can include collaborative efforts with partners and resources provided to other organizations for their use).
- Promoting the *general* activities of the District to increase understanding of and support for the District.
- Promote *specific* activities of the District to increase understanding of and support for the District

The District's outreach methods were categorized using standard approaches to deliver communication, outreach, and education and drive engagement. These methods also balance and utilize as necessary Adaptive Management to make purposeful and informed improvements to processes and actions.

These methods identified and utilized include:

- Workshops and classes
- Technology platforms; website and social media
- Social Marketing (Constant Contact)
- Events and Tours

### **Workshops and Classes**

2024 marked a year of significant focus on workshops and events for the District. 228 people participated in 18 workshops and classes hosted by CLFLWD. These events and engagements would not have been possible without the support and great partnerships from Hardwood Creek Library, Chisago Lakes Community Education, and Forest Lake Community Education.

Date	Topic(s)	Attendance #	Location
3/25	Greening Up Hot Spots	8	Virtual – Hardwood Creek Library
3/28	Traditional Lawn Alternatives	8	Hardwood Creek Library
4/4	Landscaping Septics	13	Hardwood Creek Library
5/9	Build Your Own Lures, Family Class	16	Hardwood Creek Library
5/9	Native for Wet Spots	9	Hardwood Creek Library
5/23	Pollinator Lawns	8	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
6/6	Native for Wet Soils	12	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
6/17	Living Fencelines	12	Hardwood Creek Library
7/29	Bee Houses, Family Class	20	Hardwood Creek Library
8/5	Bee Houses, Family Class	20	Hardwood Creek Library
8/19	MN Native Groundcovers	19	Hardwood Creek Library
9/19	Fall Lawn Care	10	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
9/30	Fall Native Planting	14	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
10/3	Landscaping Septics	15	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
11/18	Dormant Seeding	10	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
11/19	Fall Septic Care	20	Wildcat CC, Lindstrom
11/20	Shoreline Alternatives	8	Virtual- North Metro Master Naturalists
11/25	Dormant Seeding	6	Forest Lake CE, Forest Lake

**Technology Platforms; Website and Social Media**

The District went through a branding process and adopted a new logo in 2022. Along with that process, the website was overhauled in 2022. In August of 2024 the website was again overhauled to make it more user-friendly and more functional for the District.

The District is now able to track analytics and general site data. This allowed us to gain insight into the amount of traffic and users visiting the website this fall and will be more insightful with a more robust data set in 2025.

Most of the views on the website are for board meeting materials, events, and staff and board contact information. The website is accessed 85% of the time from desktop computers on average and 15% of the time through the mobile version of the site.

Month	Total Users	Views	Engagement Rate
September	584	2,741	59.30%
October	474	2,273	58.80%
November	575	2,360	54.60%
December	379	1,946	58.20%

## Social Media

The District focused a substantial amount of staff time on engaging and reengaging social media audiences in 2024. Beginning in March, a set social media calendar of events and posts was adopted and implemented throughout the remainder year for Facebook. The District generated a large selection of posts and materials internally but also put a large emphasis on sharing relevant partner posts. The District generated and posted the following categories and numbers:

- Landowner Water Quality Tips – 24
- Native Plant Profiles – 43
- Local Wildlife Profiles – 42
- Did You Know (about the CLFLWD) – 24
- CLFLWD Events – 24
- Total CLFLWD Generated Posts – 157
- Shared Partner Posts – 181

The District utilized Meta Analytics for tracking Facebook.

Month	March	April	May	June	July	August
Views	1,100	1,800	1,100	2,400	2,100	4,100
Reach	828	910	746	564	418	1818
Content Interactions	143	128	94	80	46	104
Follower Change	7+	10+	7+	2+	3+	22+
Link Clicks	39	14	22	18	9	68

Month	September	October	November	December
Views	2,100	2,300	2,200	1,900
Reach	564	263	276	241
Content Interactions	29	6	14	11
Follower Change	3+	1+	2+	2+ (503 total)
Link Clicks	20	4	3	1

## Social Marketing

The District utilized Constant Contact for digital and email marketing in 2024. The largest use of this tool was distributing the board meeting materials. In 2024, 128 unique email events were sent with a total of 4,772 sends. Out of the 4,772 sends, 2,149 of those emails were opened, and 462 clicks were made on the content. Over 90% of the opens and clicks were from a desktop versus 10% from a mobile device.

Board Meeting Materials	
Open Rate	50%
Clicks	12%

Events and News	
Open Rate	55%
Clicks	21%

The District’s Constant Contact email marketing lists contain 261 total unique subscribed contacts. This includes eight separate email lists. The two most subscribed to are General News and Events and Board Meeting Materials. In 2024, there was a 6% growth of organically subscribed contacts.

### Events and Tours

The District also marked a year of significant focus on large events and tours. The District was invited to present at the three major lake association’s annual meetings. The District participated in the Forest Lake Art in the Park with a booth each Tuesday through the summer. The District hosted two natural shoreline tours this year: Washington Master Gardener’s Restoration Tour and the District’s CAC Pontoon tour of Forest Lake’s middle basin. The District celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of establishment in 2024. The District also marked a milestone delisting event for Bone Lake in 2024.

Date	Lake Association Annual Meetings	Attendance #
2/6	Bone Lake Association Annual Meeting	10
3/12	Comfort Lakes Association Annual Meeting	50
4/17	Forest Lake Lake Association Annual Meeting	200
Date	Natural Shoreline Informational Meetings	Attendance #
4/3	Bone Lake Area	8
4/23	Comfort Lakes Area	8
4/29	Forest Lake Area	40
Date	Special Events and Tours	Attendance #
3/4	Shoreline Contractor Workshops w/EMWREP	
6/11	Bone Lake Delisting Celebration	80
8/21	Washington Master Gardener Tour	20
9/18	District State of the Watershed Event	85

The District participated in the Chisago Waterfest. This annual event educates more than 650 youth and 100 adults. The District’s station had over 120 youth and 12 adults participating in a native plant demonstration and activity.