

Chittenden County Regional Stormwater Educational Program Annual Review: 2011- 2012 Program Year Summary

The 2011-2012 program year (March 1, 2011 through February 29, 2012) of the Regional Stormwater Educational Program (RSEP) maintained a consistent stream of public education and outreach. This year's program focused on using paid media and a drive to website to educate the public about the effects of stormwater runoff on water bodies and the simple steps that the public can take to reduce these effects. Given the record flooding of Lake Champlain in the spring and the widespread effects of Tropical Storm Irene in many parts of the state in late summer and fall, stormwater runoff and its impact on Vermont's water bodies has never been more apparent.

As in previous years, key messages of the campaign have remained the same, and include stormwater runoff and stormwater systems education, and tips on prevention methods related to fertilizer/chemicals. The focus of this program year was to reduce fertilizer use and runoff through the use of soil testing to determine if fertilizer was needed.

Marketing Partners, Inc. continues to work on a contract basis with RSEP to implement the public outreach campaign. RSEP Communications Plan goals achieved in 2011-2012 have included:

- Updated television media from analog to digital and closed-captioning, update print ads for new year of campaign.
- Extension of the "Soil Test" campaign in partnership with the University of Vermont (UVM) Agricultural Testing Lab to provide residents within the MS4 a free soil test. The ad campaigns drove people to the RSEP website where 163 eligible residents downloaded a printable coupon during this program year. UVM continues to track the number of coupons redeemed during paid media campaigns running in the spring and fall. Thirty-six tests were submitted (an increase of 11 from 2010).
- The 2011 spring media campaign included four weeks of radio spots on VPR, WCPV, and WEZF; four weeks of cable TV spots in the Chittenden County area; four weeks of spots during local news on broadcast TV; print ads in member community newspapers; and three weeks of advertising on Front Porch Forum (an opt-in community e-newsletter). The spring 2011 media budget totaled \$19,353, an increase from 2010.
- Another paid media campaign was completed throughout Chittenden County in fall of 2011 that consisted of two weeks of print ads in member community newspapers; two weeks of radio spots on VPR, WCPV, and WEZF; two weeks of cable TV spots in the Chittenden County area; two weeks of spots during local news on broadcast TV; and two weeks of placement on Front Porch Forum. The fall 2011 ad campaign budget totaled \$10,000. This also represents an increase in media budget compared to fall 2010.
- Continued to compile website visibility tracking data and coupon download and redemptions in order to monitor outreach effectiveness.
- Continued to collaborate with partners in furthering stormwater education outreach.

Gross Impressions/Audience Reach, 2011-2012 Program Year Summary Chittenden County Regional Stormwater Educational Program

1. Unpaid Media (Public Relations)

At the request of RSEP, program year 2011-2012 did not include any public relations efforts. However, two news reports about using rain barrels to reduce run-off featured RSEP in June 2011. The Champlain Water District *Water Quality Report 2011* also included RSEP.

2. Total Paid Media Impressions, 2011 (Spring and Fall campaigns)

The 2011-2012 paid media budget was increased to \$31,000 from the prior year budget of \$12,250. The same media strategies of increased online sponsorship in addition to commercial advertising were used with increased frequency and additional weeks during the spring flights. This year's paid media schedule resulted in an increase of 149.5% in gross impressions, as delineated below:

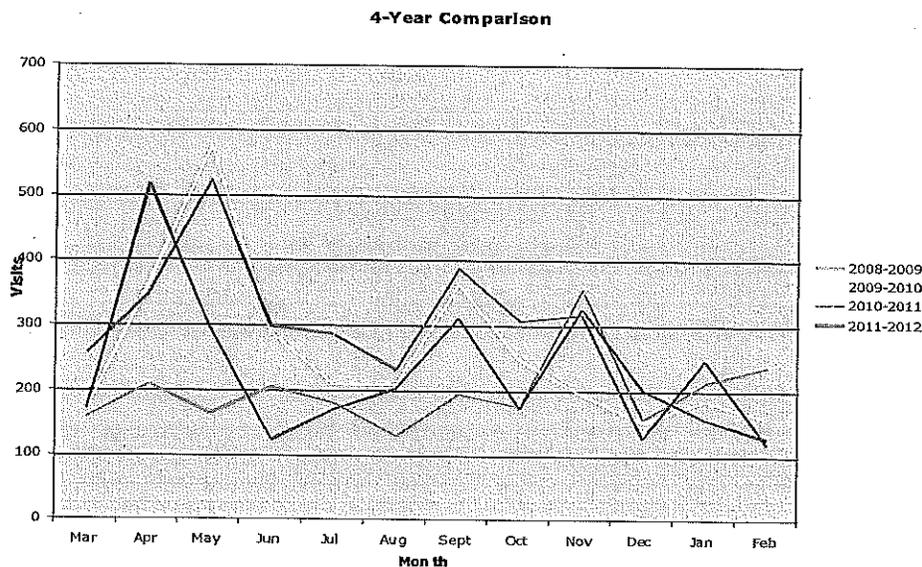
Print:	1,149,876*
Broadcast TV:	136,260 (Nielsen households using television, Chittenden County, program ratings)
Cable TV:	77,220 (Nielsen program ratings by cable market penetration)
Radio:	383,912 (based on Arbitron ratings of adult listeners in Chittenden County, M-F 6a – 7p)
Online:	56,500 (based on circulation reported by media outlet)
Total gross impressions:	1,803,768

*Impressions are based on circulation as reported by outlet and an average readership of 2.34 per issue for community newspapers.

3. Website

Below is the website visitor information for 2011, as compared to the three most recent preceding years. The program year had 2,774 visits, a decrease of nearly 20%; however, page views per visit and time on site increased. Website traffic increases/spikes are marked in conjunction with paid media campaigns.

Smartwaterways.org Website Visits



NOTE: Data from Google Analytics for www.smartwaterways.org.

Attachment B

MCM #2

Chittenden County Stream Team

Summary of Activities: July – December 2011

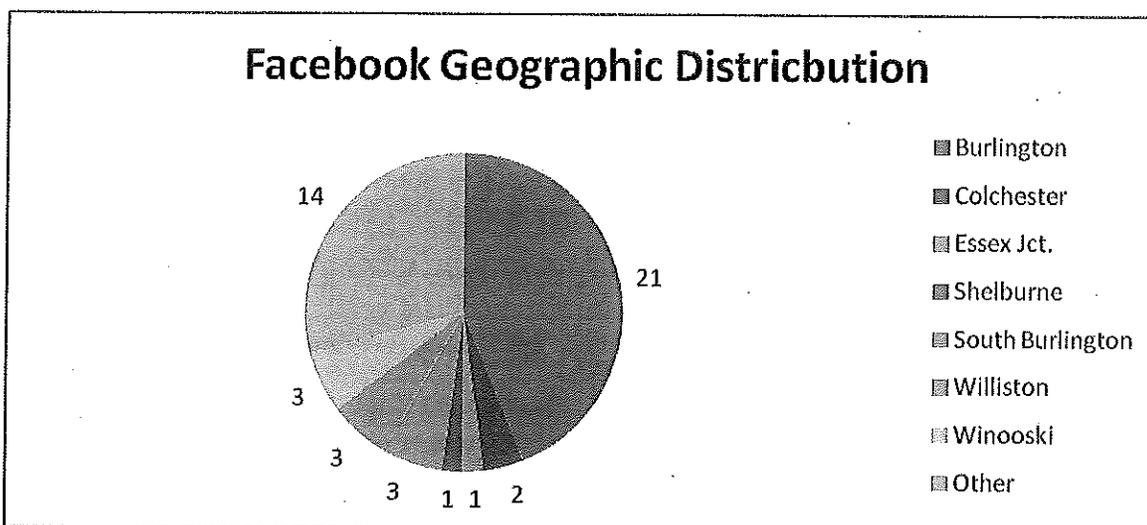
Prepared by Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

In the fall of 2009, nine MS4 communities and three non-traditional MS4s located in Chittenden County began to discuss a potential collaborative approach to fulfilling their Minimum Control Measure #2 requirement. At the request of these MS4s, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) applied for and received two grants totaling \$22,500. Using these grants, CCRPC implemented a regional pilot project called the Chittenden County Stream Team (CCST) from spring 2010 through May 2011. In its pilot year, CCST created a logo, launched a website and Facebook page, surveyed local residents, hosted a number of workshops, and completed a variety of local projects.

The success of the pilot project led to the formal adoption of the CCST program by eleven of the twelve MS4 permittees starting in July 2011 as their means of compliance with the Minimum Control Measure #2, Public Involvement and Participation. The program was put out to bid and awarded to the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District (WNRCD), a regional entity focused on natural resource protection and management. With support from CCRPC and the participating MS4s, WNRCD worked to expand the reach of CCST. This was done by focusing efforts in three main areas: Social Media, Projects, and Outreach/Events. Note that at this time Colchester has elected not to join the CCST effort.

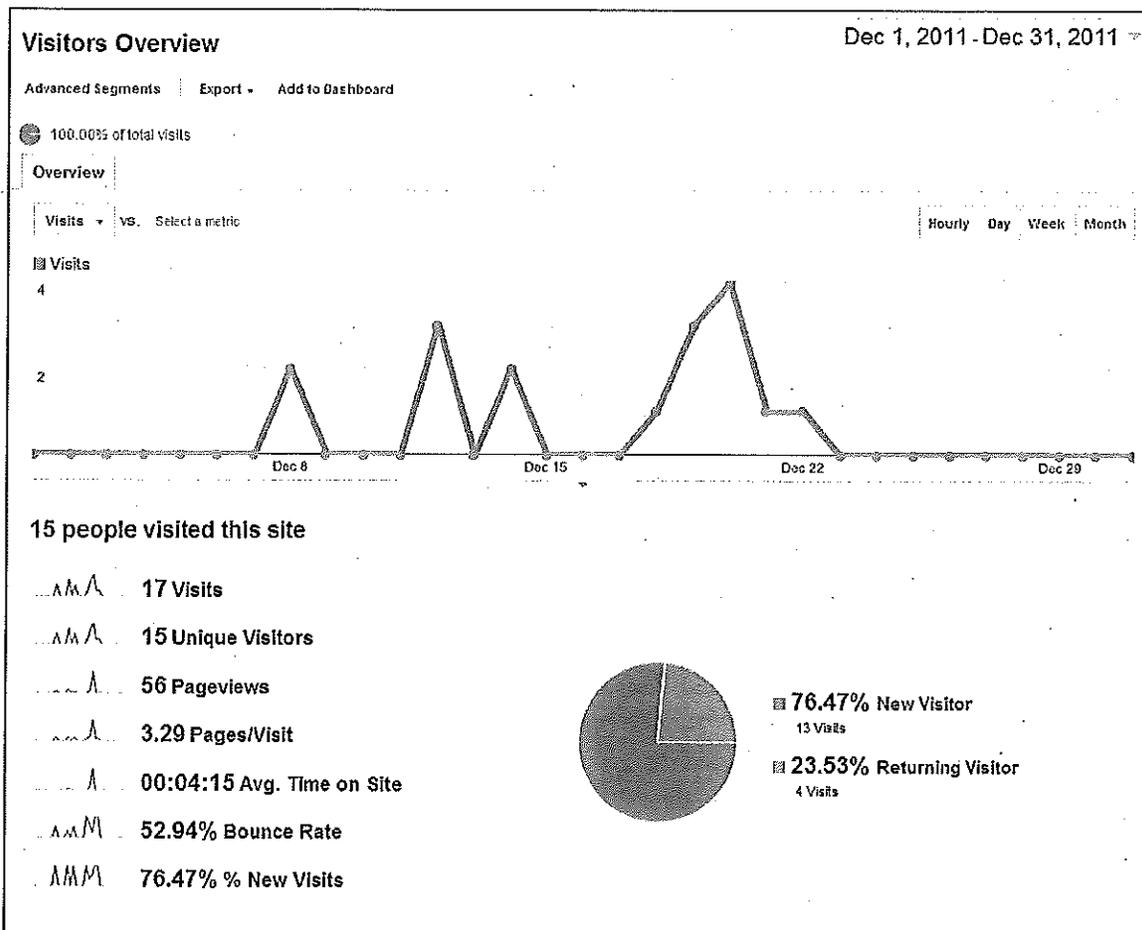
Social Media

Facebook – Facebook is just one of the tools that CCST uses to disseminate information to the public about workshops, events, and projects. It is updated on a regular basis and continues to grow at a steady pace. During the latter half of 2011, the number of 'likes' received on the CCST Facebook page grew to 48. This is a 50% increase from the pilot project. The majority of followers are in the 25-54 age groups. Current geographic distribution is as follows.

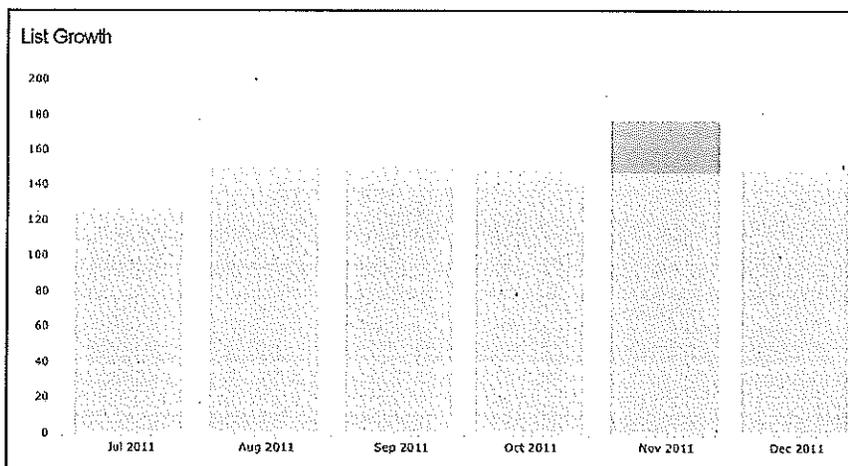


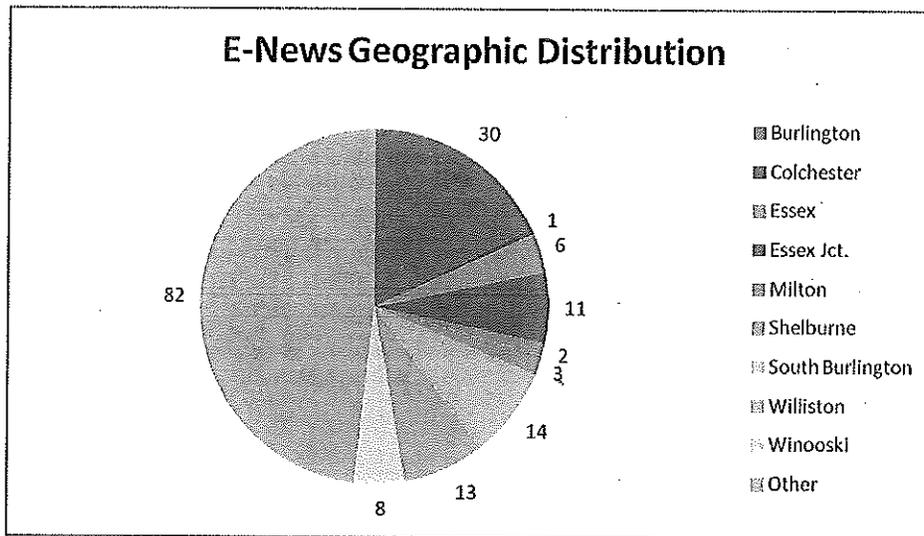
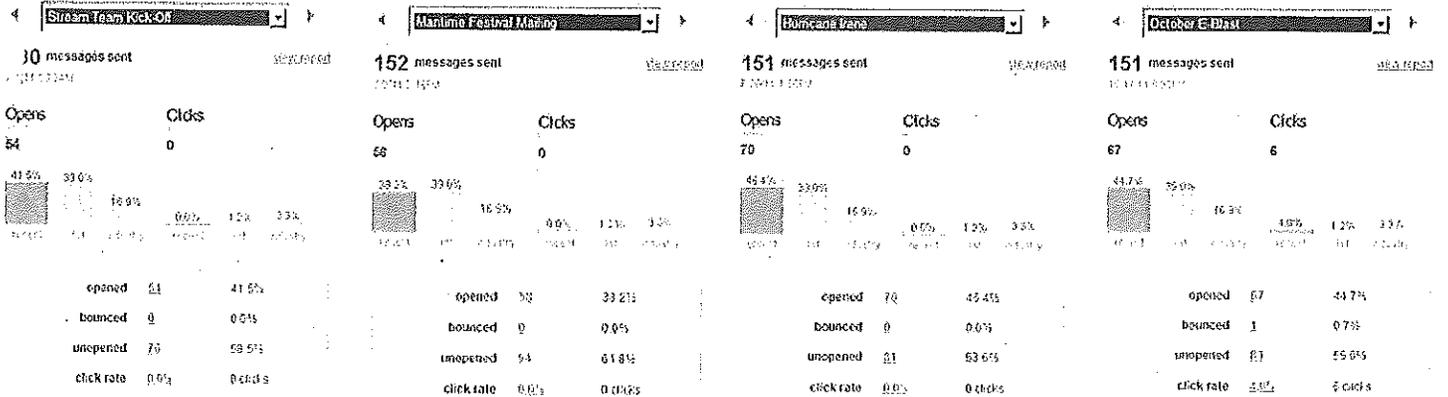
CCST Website – The website went through a significant overhaul in late 2011 and continues to change based on feedback from program partners and citizens. The website is the primary means by which individuals learn about CCST and as such, it was redesigned to provide users with easier access to information. The website includes information about the CCST program, impaired watersheds, events and workshops, volunteer opportunities, and helpful resources. Similar to the Facebook page, the website is updated on a regular basis.

In an effort to gain a better understanding of how the public uses the website, we began tracking access using Google Analytics in December of 2011. Below is a subset of the data collected throughout the month. In total, there were 15 unique visitors with an average amount of time spent on the site tracked at 4 minutes and 15 seconds. The full set of data is below.



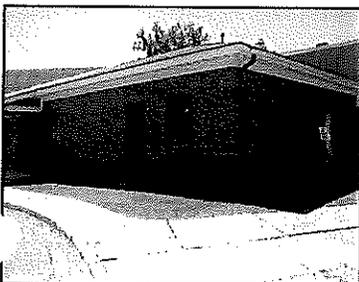
E-News – Periodic emails are another way by which CCST connects with the public. Emails, using *Mailchimp*, are typically sent out quarterly and include regional news, information about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities, and tips and resources. It is one of the more effective ways of getting information out to those who have expressed an interest in CCST’s mission. At the end of 2011, the list totaled 170 subscribers, which was a slight increase over the six-month period. In general, the open rate for E-News is high at 38 - 40%. The typical open rate for similar industries is between 20-25% according to research completed by *Mailchimp*. The geographic distribution is moderate and should be expanded in future years.



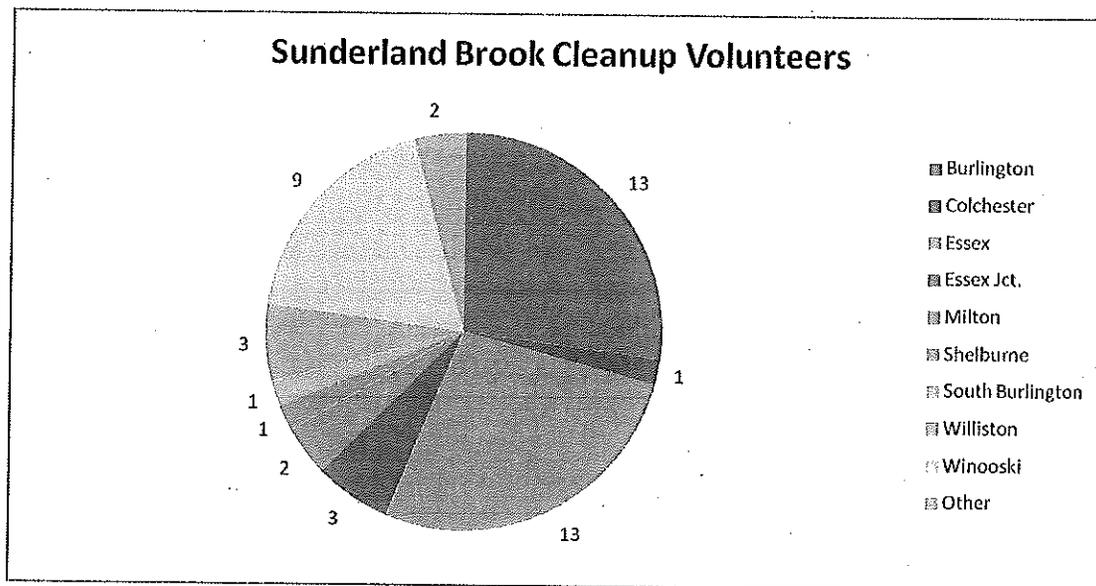


Projects

Chamberlin School Rain Garden – A rain garden at the Chamberlin School in South Burlington was constructed on September 6 and 7. The garden is 210 square feet in size and includes at least 49 native plants. The garden captures and treats stormwater from the adjacent roof. Previously the water was channeled to the parking lot through a gutter downspout. The project was completed with assistance from 42 students, six teachers, and two volunteers. The garden will continue to serve as an educational tool for the school in future years. A story about this project was included in *“The Other Paper”* which serves South Burlington.



Sunderland Brook Cleanup – CCST organized a cleanup of Sunderland Brook with assistance from the Town of Essex and Village of Essex Junction on October 22. Sunderland Brook is listed as an impaired waterway on the EPA 303(d) list. This event was very well attended with 48 volunteers from around the MS4 area (see below). Together these volunteers managed to remove 1.16 tons of trash and other material from the brook and adjacent landscape. Removed items included beverage containers, shopping carts, tires, wood stoves, shingles, etc.



Longmeadow - In the spring of 2011, during the pilot project CCST began a project to monitor stormwater flow from the Longmeadow neighborhood in Shelburne into Monroe Brook. In theory, once baseline data was established, the data would show reductions in stormwater flow as residents installed low impact development practices on their properties. A letter was sent to 77 landowners in the neighborhood explaining the project and how they could be involved. A water level logger, barometric pressure gauge, and weir were purchased for citizen monitoring. Monitoring will begin in 2012.

Outreach

Williston Fourth of July – CCST set up a booth at the Williston Fourth of July festivities on the Williston green. A number of people stopped by the booth and received information about CCST. Eleven of those signed up for the e-news and were added to the list. They included nine people from Williston, one from Burlington, and one from Essex Junction.

Kickoff Event – A kickoff event was hosted at Battery Park in Burlington in the evening on July 8. The purpose of the event was to expose people to CCST and educate them about stormwater issues in their community. The event included a discussion about stormwater and a chance to play the watershed game which was facilitated by staff from UVM Sea Grant. One person attended the event.

Maritime Festival – CCST tabled at the Maritime Festival at the Burlington Waterfront on August 13. Three volunteers from Burlington assisted by talking with and handing information out to passersby. A rain chain and a sample of pervious concrete were on display. Over 15 people stopped by the booth.