

MCM #2

Chittenden County Stream Team

Summary of Activities: July – December 2011

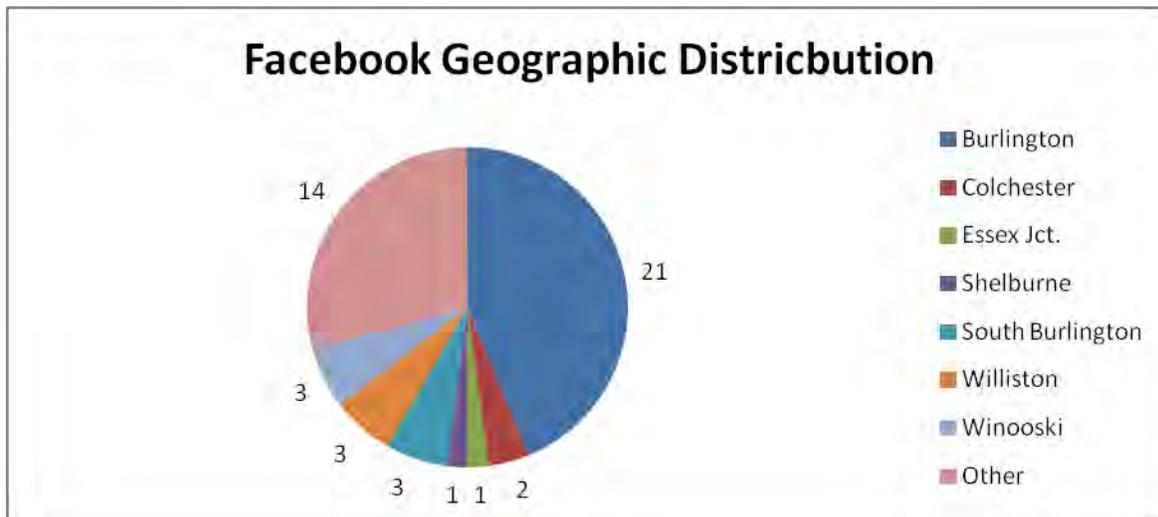
Prepared by Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

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.

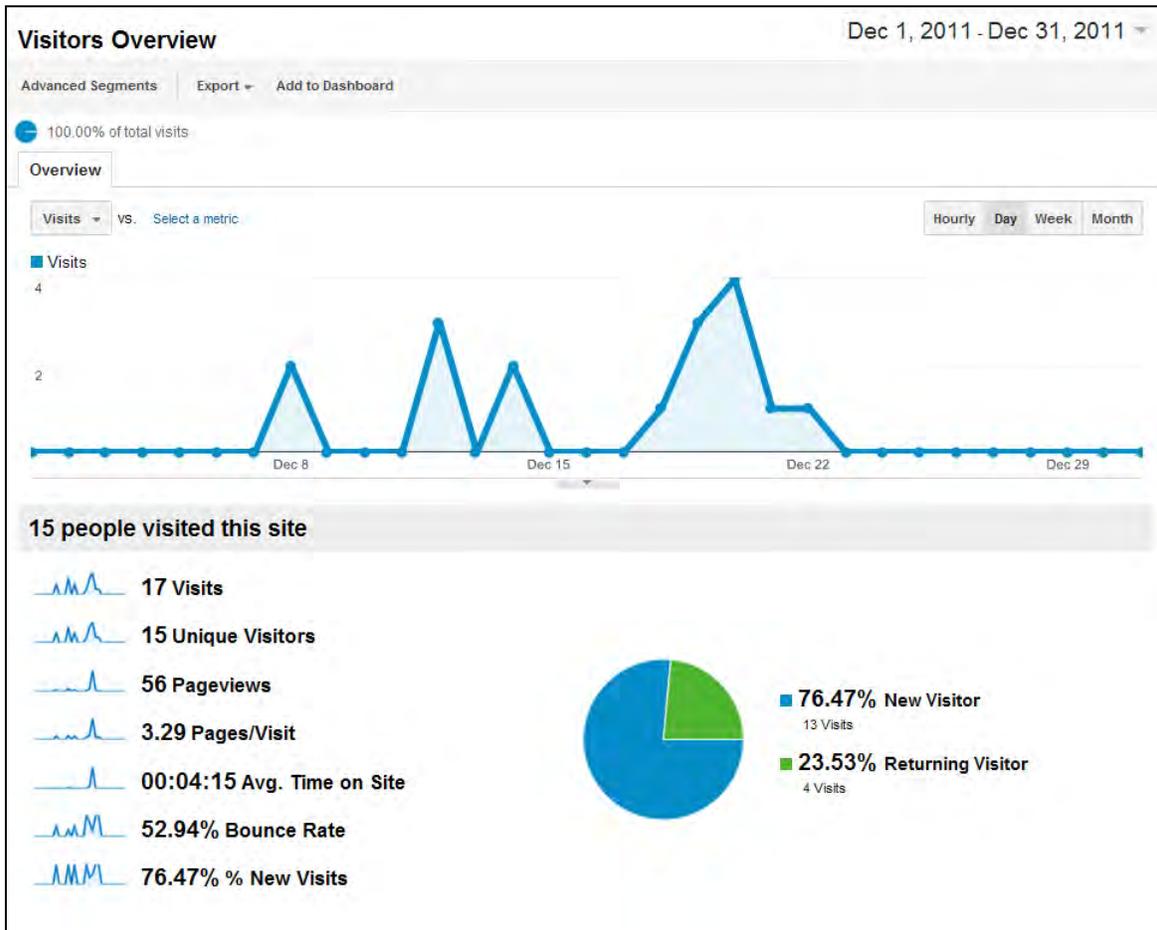
Social Media

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.

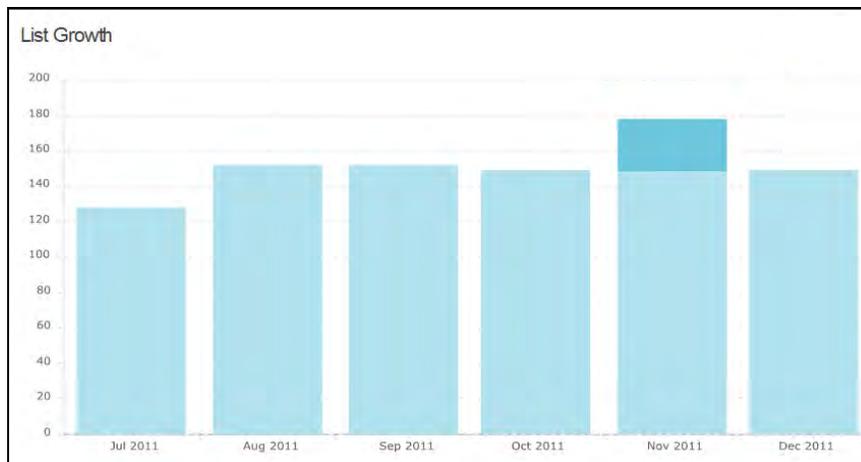


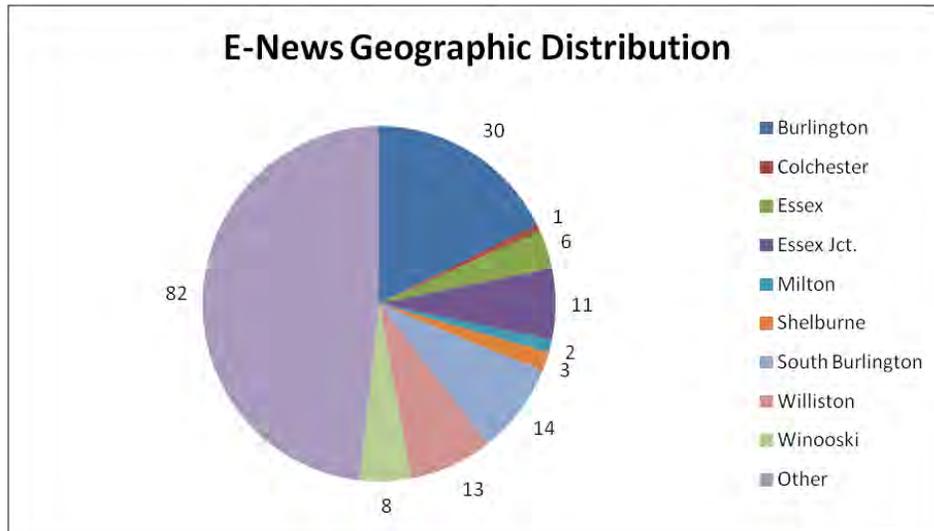
CCST Website – The website went through a significant overhaul in late 2011 and continues to change based on feedback from program partners and citizens. The website is the primary means by which individuals learn about CCST and as such, it was redesigned to provide users with easier access to information. 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.



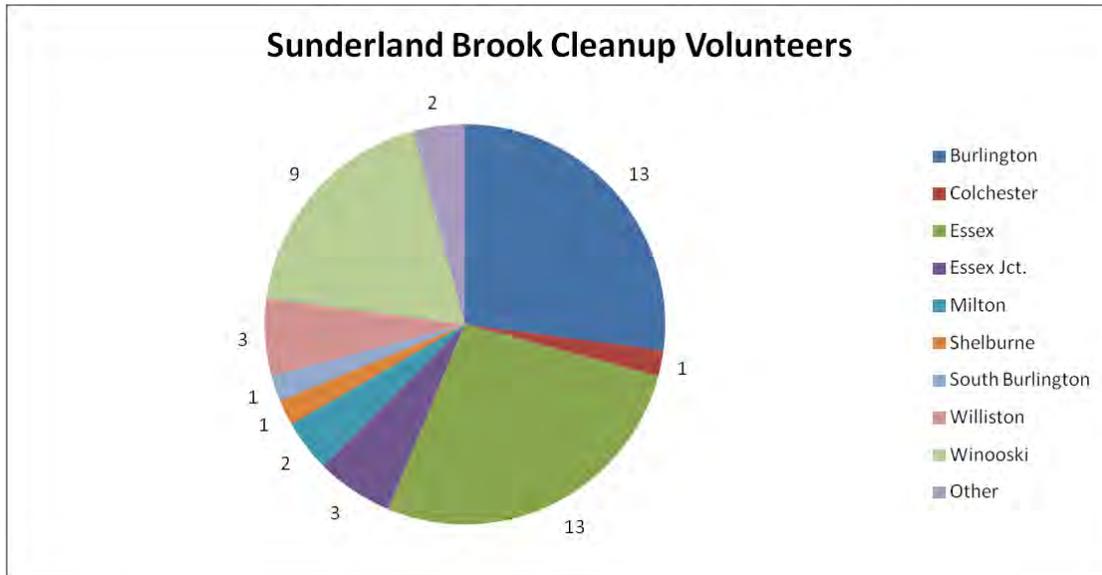


Projects

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.