

APRIL 26TH

MAQUOKETA RIVER
WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY



MARKETING PLAN

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BACKGROUND

OFFICIAL RECOGNIZED ON OCTOBER 24TH,
2017

A locally led team driving financial and social benefits through sustainable water resource quality and conservation for residents in the Maquoketa River Watershed.

In 2018, 16 streams and 3 lakes have been listed as impaired waters in the Maquoketa River Watershed.

72,118

PEOPLE RESIDE ON THE
WATERSHED AS OF 2018

80%

OF MR WMA LAND IS USED FOR
AGRICULTURE



PROBLEM STATEMENT



MR WMA is facing the challenge of bringing awareness to the effects of farming practices on the local watershed. MR WMA would benefit from introducing sustainable practices among farmers and their families to showcase their role in the health and longevity of the water sources within their communities.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

PASSIONATE TEAM

VALUES IN MISSION

INNOVATORS ON
CAMPAIGN

CREDIBLE DATA

THREATS

PUSHBACK FROM
FARMERS

COMPLEX AUDIENCE

GENERATIONAL
AGRICULTURE PRACTICE

LACK OF COMMUNITY
AWARENESS

WEAKNESSES

LOW BUDGET

SHORT STAFFING

SMALL MEDIA PRESENCE

OPPORTUNITIES

UNIVERSITY HELP

A HIGH NUMBER OF
VOLUNTEERS

COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT

POTENTIAL FOR VAST
REACH



GOAL OVERVIEW

**PROMOTE
SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURAL
TECHNIQUES**

**EDUCATIONAL
CAMPAIGN FOR
LOCAL CHILDREN**

**INCREASE SOCIAL
MEDIA PRESENCE**



GOAL

Attempt educational practices on 50% of farmers who reside on watershed land on sustainable practices and soil erosion

OBJECTIVE

Broaden sustainable farming practices through education, workshops, partnerships and community meetings

- Education and Resources: focus efforts on the 12% of farmers who are open to no-till practices
- The majority (well over 50%) of respondents indicated a need and a want for increased education and resources related to watershed issues.
- 76% agreed that there should be more education for landowners on flood and water quality issues

STRATEGIES

1

Training volunteers for educational opportunities/community involvement

2

Hold fundraisers or community events

3

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

- Connects Iowans with information and programs regarding crops and practices, food safety, livestock, and more.



TACTICS

1

Host gatherings, and city council meetings to develop educational materials to inform the participants of ways to improve their soil, move water through their soils and save money while doing it.

2

Farmers sign form dedicated to attempting sustainable practices such as:

- Plant cover crops
 - No-till/strip-till
 - Nutrient Management Practices
 - Diversify and extend crop rotations
-

3

Host educational field days for area farmers, particularly, focusing on the Iowa Water Quality Initiative and how they are working with Iowa farmers/their success stories



GOAL

Launch a sustainable educational campaign focusing on future generations of farmers in the watershed

OBJECTIVE

Spread awareness about the watershed through local schools by engaging in educational conservation to spark their interest.

STRATEGIES

1

Encourage local high schools to develop a club dedicated to environmental initiatives and sustainable agriculture

2

Contact local expert conservationists to team-up to spread educational messages

3

Host field trips for educational purposes for local kids



TACTICS

1

Utilize educational speakers at community schools, as well as FFA and 4-H

2

Local conservationists can assist in fun educational activities about water and soil quality

3

Fundraise for youth scholarships for club members interested in a career in sustainable farming



GOAL Increase social media presence and engagement by 50%

OBJECTIVE

Create a strong enough social media presence that MR WMA is known for cultivating a sustainable future for the watershed

STRATEGIES

- 1** Introduce new designs with consistent branding
- 2** Boost engagement through interactive polls and surveys
(SEE APPENDIX FIGURE 5)
- 3** Identify similar watershed accounts to find inspiration and content. Ex. Boone River WMA



TACTICS

1

Posting schedule of twice a week, boost posts, combination of educational and emotional material

(SEE APPENDIX FIGURE 4)

2

Use Facebook insights to identify follower's interest and activity

3

Consistent branding with new logo and color coordination, launch by June 2022

(SEE APPENDIX FIGURE 1 & 2)

RECOMMENDATIONS



INTERNSHIP

Offer an internship for a local high school candidate to aid in sustainable agricultural education

SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 2



EMOTIONAL APPEAL

(SEE APPENDIX FIGURE 4)

Communicate the importance of sustainable farming techniques and how that will benefit future generations

SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 1 & 3



SCHOOL BUS TOURS

Take a group of students on a tour around the watershed to see the areas of concern as well as conduct conservation activities

SUPPORTS OBJECTIVE 2

EVALUATION



ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE

- Not reaching a vast amount of farmers
- Push back from farmers not wanting to change their agricultural practices
- Finding enough volunteers



HOW TO EVALUATE

- After 6 months of launching, survey area farmers on their awareness of MR WMA and if they plan on changing their practices
- Use social media insights to determine engagement growth
- How many local schools have participated, receive feedback and recommendations

Appendix

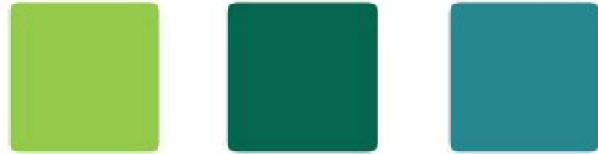


Logo

Figure 1

Color Scheme

Figure 2



Post Logo

Figure 3

YOUR FARM TELLS A STORY
HOW WILL THE NEXT CHAPTER
BEGIN?



Figure 4



Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority

@MRWMA

Cover crops can decrease nutrient and pesticide runoff by what percent?



629 votes · Final results

5:56 AM · Dec 16, 2021 · Statusbrew

4 Retweets 11 Likes

Figure 5



THANK YOU



Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority Marketing Plan

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May 6th, 2022

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Executive Summary

MR WMA's mission is to be a leader in Iowa watershed management, protect the Maquoketa River's resources, improve water quality, reduce flood impact, and ensure a healthy watershed for future generations. Your mission needs to reach a vast number of people residing in the watershed and inspire them to adopt changes to make your vision a reality. To achieve this, we have comprised a plan in pursuit of accomplishing this goal. To begin, we discovered that 80% of land in the watershed is used for agricultural purposes. Due to this, we believe that the target market should include local farmers and their families. Educating this group on sustainable farming techniques can improve the overall quality of the watershed. We have laid out what motivates our target audience and how these components are important to farmers today and can influence the way they view suggested sustainable farming practices to protect the watershed. To increase awareness and to encourage farmers to adopt such practices we have provided a list of goals; attempt educational practices on 50% of farmers who reside on watershed land on sustainable practices and soil erosion, launch a sustainable educational campaign for future generations of farmers in the watershed, and increase social media presence and engagement by 50%. Some tactics and strategies include having farmers sign a form dedicated to adopting sustainable practices, hosting field trips for educational purposes for local kids, and posting educational and emotional content to social media. A possible issue may be initial skepticism from farmers. To combat this, we recommend using an emotional appeal, reassuring them that these changes will help future generations of farmers. Other recommendations include farmer video testimonies of the benefits of sustainable practices and offering an internship to a local student. The goals, strategies, tactics, and recommendations provided will advance your mission in creating a healthy watershed for generations to come.

Marketing Research

The Maquoketa River watershed currently covers seven counties in eastern Iowa. The MRWMA was founded to improve the water quality, reduce flooding in the area and protect the local drinking water. The target market of the MRWMA is farmers in the seven counties that are covered by the watershed. There are many things that motivate the target audience. These things include:

- Prosperity of land for future generations
- Saving money
- Efficient agriculture practices
- Healthy soil and crops
- Tradition
- Lack of resources available
- Building connections

Most of the land in the watershed is used for agriculture; 54% is row crops, 26% pasture, 12% forest, and 17.7% is developed (Flynn, et. al., 2021). Farming practices play a significant role in the lives of the people who live in the watershed. To help protect the watershed farmers and other residents must understand research-based best practices that have been effective in sustaining the watershed. Some of these farming practices include:

- No-till farming (growing crops without tillage which decreases the amount of soil erosion)
- Cover crops (used to slow erosion, improve soil health, enhance water availability)

- Filter strips (an area of grass or other permanent vegetation used to reduce sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other contaminants from running into the water supply)
- Wind breaks (planting a few rows of trees or other big vegetation to block wind from carrying soil)
- Rotational grazing (grazing on a different part of pasture each year to maintain soil health)

Iowa lawmakers passed laws to authorize the creation of watershed management in 2010 (Iowa DNR). There are currently over twenty watershed management authorities in the state that the MR WMA can look to for examples of content and successful campaigns.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Passionate team members
- Values in mission
- Innovators on the campaign
- Credible data

Weaknesses:

- Low budget
- Short staffing
- Small media presence

Opportunities:

- Help from the university

- A high number of volunteers
- Community involvement
- Potential for a vast reach

Threats:

- Pushback from farmers
- Complex audience
- Generational agriculture practices
- Lack of community awareness

Stakeholders

Who is impacted by MR WMA actions?

- The population residing within the watershed, urban and rural residents
- Agricultural group
- MR WMA Project Partners

Who impacts MR WMA?

- State government
- Donors
- Volunteers

Who could MR WMA partner with to achieve objectives?

- Local schools, as well as their FFA and 4-H Programs
- University of Iowa

- Iowa State University Extension and Outreach
- Area agricultural associations, such as the Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Practical Farmers of Iowa, Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, Iowa Dairy Association, and Iowa Farm Bureau
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
- Iowa Water Quality Initiative
- Local conservationists

Who is indirectly benefiting or being harmed?

- Current and future generations of residents and farmers

Goals and Desired Outcomes

Based on our meetings and research, Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority desires to bring awareness to best management practices for farming in the local watershed. They want to reach local farmers and their families with their message to inspire healthy local water sources. Based on this information, we created three goals we believe MRWMA should strive for:

- Attempt educational practices on 50% of farmers who reside on watershed land on sustainable practices and soil erosion
- Launch a sustainable educational campaign on future generations of farmers in the watershed
- Increase social media presence and engagement by 50%

The objective of our first goal is to broaden sustainable farming practices through education, workshops, partnerships, and community meetings. Our research told us that up to

60% of farmers within the watershed are attempting no-till practices, while 12% are open to it. We want MR WMA to focus their efforts on that 12% who are willing to listen. Additionally, 50% of respondents indicated a need and want for increased education regarding watershed issues, and 76% agree there should be education for landowners on water quality (Flynn, et. al., 2021). This leaves room for opportunity to reach not only farmers, but also their families.

The second objective focuses on the farmer's families and local children, spreading awareness about the watershed through local schools to spark their interest. You can utilize volunteers to give speeches and conduct activities to convey the importance of the quality of the watershed and the local environment. The participants can then spread your message through word of mouth, increasing the overall awareness of MR WMA.

Lastly, it is imperative that your message reaches your desired audience of local farmers and their families. This leads way to our final objective for your organization, to create a strong social media presence so that the target audience knows that MR WMA is dedicated to cultivating a sustainable future for the watershed. Providing education and emotional material to your platforms can ignite a turnaround in farmers to adopt sustainable practices to ensure a healthy watershed for generations to come.

By implementing the outlined objectives, the desired outcomes are to increase awareness of MR WMA's vision to ensure the economic viability of farms and farming in perpetuity through land and water stewardship, to educate local farmers on sustainable farming techniques, and persuade them to adopt such practices, and to encourage local children to take an interest in their role in creating a sustainable future for the watershed and local environment.

MR WMA's goals and objectives are consistent with multiple UN Sustainable Development Goals. One goal is to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation of all. More specifically, MR WMA supports the target of protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems and by supporting and strengthening the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management. MR WMA also aims to improve biodiversity, wildlife, and habitats in the watershed. This aligns with the UN SDG goal to protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of ecosystems, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss. MR WMA supports this goal by taking significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats and to protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species (United Nations, n.d.).

The strategies and tactics provided will further accelerate MR WMA's advancement in these goals. As the recommendations listed will help generate support and action from stakeholders and residents to improve water quality and help preserve and improve habitats and ecosystems within the watershed.

Strategy and Tactics

The first goal is to attempt educational practices for 50% of farmers who reside on watershed land on sustainable practices and soil erosion. The objective is to launch a sustainable farming educational campaign targeting local farmers residing in the watershed.

Strategies for reaching these goals include training volunteers for educational opportunities/community involvement, holding fundraisers or community events, and involving the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to connect Iowans with information regarding farming practices. These strategies can be further implemented by tactics like hosting gatherings and city council meetings to develop educational materials on improving soil. Having

farmers sign a form dedicated to attempting sustainable practices like plant covers, no-till, nutrient management, and diversifying crop rotations to hold one another accountable. Lastly, we suggest they host educational field days for area farmers that focus on the Iowa Water Quality Initiative and how they are working with Iowa farmers/their success stories.

Engaging with area farmers will provide opportunities to share educational materials about sustainable farming techniques. By utilizing partnerships, the local agricultural population can connect with experienced farmers who have implemented sustainable practices, and who can convey the environmental and economic benefits. Directly targeting local farmers will subsequently aid in reaching the desired outcome to educate local farmers on sustainable farming techniques and persuade them to adopt such practices.

Our second goal is to launch a sustainable educational campaign focusing on future generations of farmers in the watershed. Our objective with this goal is to spread awareness about the watershed through local schools by engaging in educational conservation to spark their interest.

Strategies for this goal include encouraging local high schools to develop a club dedicated to the environment and sustainable agriculture. Doing this will encourage local teens to get involved with the environment and their local environment. They can fundraise for the watershed through events they set up through the club. Another strategy is to contact local conservationists to spread educational messages. These conservationists can host presentations at local schools to educate children about the watershed and why it is important. And the final strategy is to host field trips for educational purposes for local kids. Kids can visit the different aspects of the watershed and learn about why it is important to keep the watershed clean. Being able to see the watershed in person can help educate children because it gives them a visual that

can help them grasp concepts easier. These strategies can help us reach our second goal of launching a sustainable education campaign. To further implement these strategies tactics include utilizing educational speakers at community schools, as well as at FFA and 4-H meetings. Local conservationists can assist in fun educational activities about water and soil quality, and club members can fundraise for youth scholarships for kids interested in a career in sustainable farming.

All of these strategies start with the youth and can influence the practices of future farming. By starting young kids on sustainable farming practices, they can implement this into their future careers if they wish to become farmers. Also, kids can teach their parents what they have learned at school about sustainable farming and protecting the watershed, which can influence farmers to think more sustainably.

Our last outlined goal for MR WMA is to increase social media presence and engagement by 50%. The objective is to create a strong social media presence so that the target audience knows that MR WMA is dedicated to cultivating a sustainable future for the watershed.

To accomplish said goal and objective, we recommend employing several strategies. The first is to introduce new designs with consistent branding, boost engagement through interactive polls and surveys, and identify similar watershed accounts to find inspiration and content, such as the Boone River Watershed Management Authority. To further implement the strategies, tactics may include utilizing a posting schedule twice a week with a combination of educational and emotional material (See Appendix Figure 4 & 5), using Facebook insights to identify follower's interests and activity, and incorporating consistent branding with a new logo and color coordination, preferably launched by June 2022 (See Appendix Figure 1 & 2).

These strategies and tactics may be employed through social media platforms in MR WMA's name, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The target audience of farmers may be adequately reached by Facebook, while their families may be more active and accessible on Twitter and Instagram. Consistent branding allows for a strong brand identity that can be conveyed to your audience, aligning a sense of cohesiveness to the look and feel of your social media accounts.

Your social media presence has the potential to increase the integrity of your organization in the eyes of your audience, by being a reliable and trusted source of information about the watershed. Communicating educational material about sustainable farming practices can further the desired outcome of creating local farmers' interest in these techniques. Combining the educational material with an emotional appeal will increase the likelihood of farmers adopting these sustainable practices. You can also determine which posts are gaining traction among your audience through Facebook insights and use that data to make informed decisions about your content. Utilizing social media as a tool to spread your message is a low-cost way to spark changes for a sustainable future for the watershed.

Recommendations

Long-term Recommendations:

1. Internships (supports objective #1,2,3)
 - a. Offer an internship for a local high school candidate to aid in sustainable agricultural education
 - b. Low budget option, as they can count the internship as class credit
2. Emotional Appeal (supports objective #1 and #3)

- a. Communicate the importance of sustainable farming techniques and how that will benefit future generations (i.e., land and soil viability, water quality, future profits, generational farming)
 - b. Use tagline and/or hashtag: “Invest in your farm’s future”
3. School Bus Tours (supports objective #2)
 - a. Provide groups of students with a tour around the watershed to see the areas of concern as well as conduct conservation activities

Short-term Recommendations

1. “Boost” Posts on Facebook (supports objective #3)
 - a. Allows the post to reach a larger audience for a small fee
2. Video Testimonies (supports objective #3)
 - a. Post videos of local farmers speaking about their adopted sustainable farming techniques and the benefits they generate

Evaluation

Several issues may arise throughout the campaign to educate local farmers and their families about sustainable farming techniques. The message may not reach a vast number of farmers and there may be pushback regarding changing their agricultural practices. To combat these possible issues, we suggest that MR WMA partner with local agricultural groups and stress the importance of adaptation in practices to preserve their land for future generations and the profitable returns on their investments. Another issue may be the challenge of finding enough volunteers. One solution is to recruit students from the University of Iowa and surrounding school locations through social media posts.

To evaluate the success of the campaign, we suggest distributing a survey after six months of launching to evaluate area farmers on their awareness of MR WMA and if they plan to change their practices. Another way to evaluate is by utilizing social media insights to determine engagement growth. Lastly, you can ask for feedback and recommendations from the schools that have participated in watershed tours and guest speakers.

Appendix



Figure 1



#95CA3A



#0A664D



#2B8790

Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

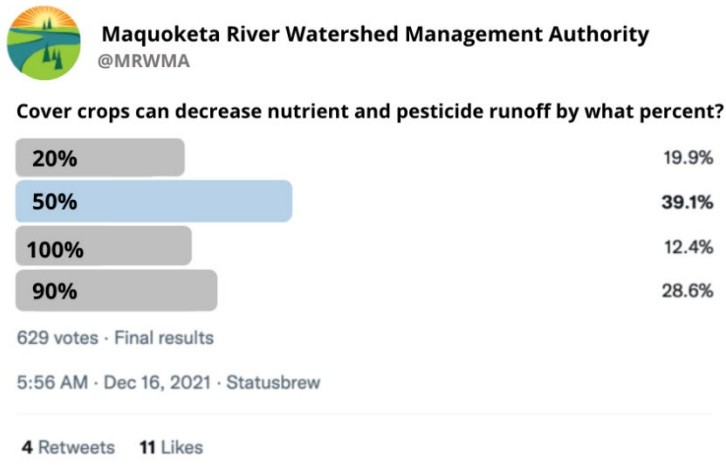


Figure 5

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