



# GREEN COMMUNITIES

**Engaging Homeowners' Associations (HOAs)  
in Clean Water programs**



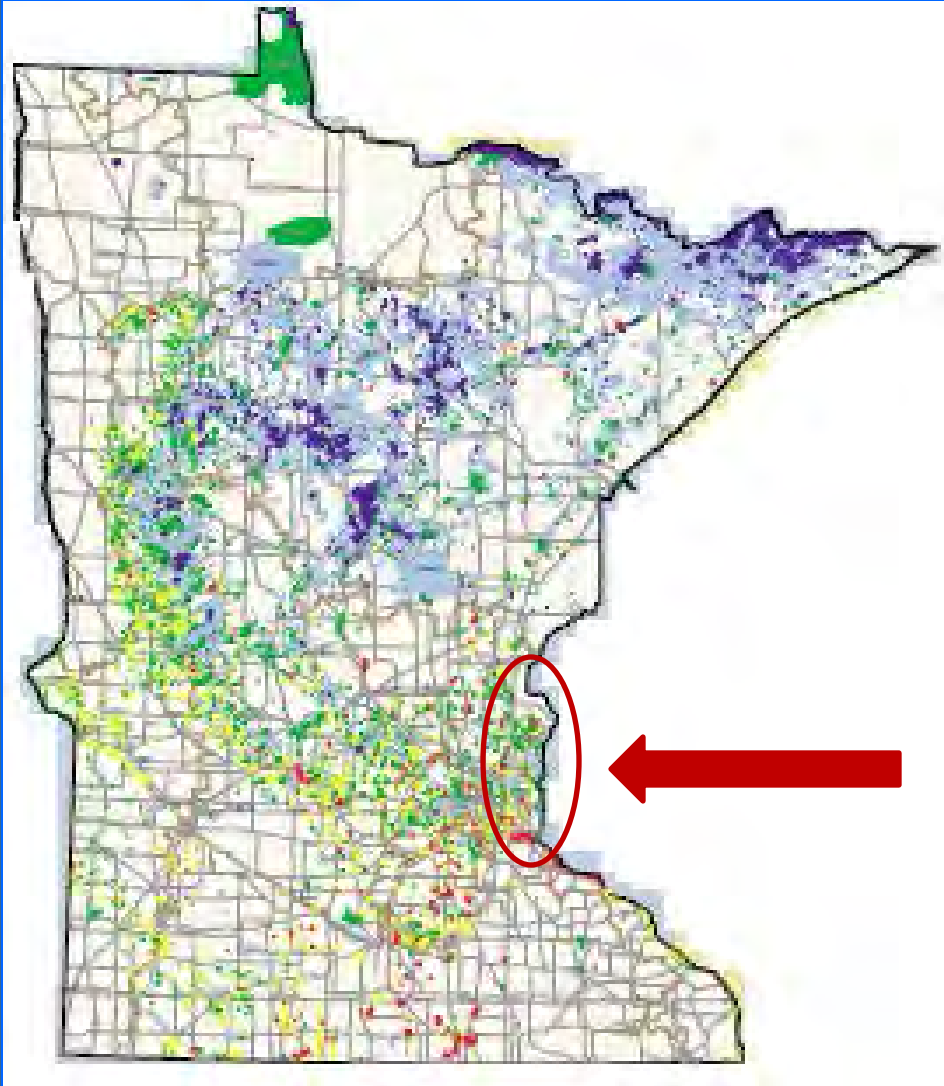
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# Land of 10,000 Lakes



- Minnesota has 11,842 lakes and 69,200 miles of natural rivers and streams
- 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the state's area is covered in lakes, streams, and wetlands – 13 million acres total!



# Washington County

- Mississippi & St. Croix Rivers
- 260 lakes
- 12+ designated trout streams
- LOTS of wetlands
- 100% of drinking water from groundwater

# Green Communities Grant



**\$50,000** Clean Water Fund Grant from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR)

1. Audience research + 3 focus groups
  - HOA board members
  - Property managers
  - Lawn care companies
2. Stormwater reduction projects at 5 HOAs
3. Green Communities Guidebook







# Focus Group Feedback

## **Barriers**

1. Lack of interest
2. Member turnover and generational tension
3. Limited funding

**MONEY ISN'T EVERYTHING**

**FALSE. IT'S THE ONLY  
THING.**



# Focus Group Feedback

## **Barriers**

1. Lack of interest
2. Member turnover and generational tension
3. Limited funding
4. Maintenance



# RAINGARDENS Need Maintenance

# Focus Group Feedback

## **Barriers**

1. Lack of interest
2. Member turnover and generational tension
3. Limited funding
4. Maintenance
5. Conventional landscape aesthetics





Photo credit: Bob Mugaas, U of MN

NORMAL ↑



NOT NORMAL ↑

# Focus Group Feedback

## **Barriers**

1. Lack of interest
2. Member turnover and generational tension
3. Limited funding
4. Maintenance
5. Conventional landscape aesthetics
6. Liability





TELL ME  
SOMETHING  
GOOD



# Focus Group Feedback



## **Opportunities**

1. Reducing irrigation expenses
2. Improving erosion and drainage problems

Before



After

# Focus Group Feedback

## **Opportunities**

1. Reducing irrigation expenses
2. Improving erosion and drainage problems
3. Working with developers during design and construction








## Case Study: Evergreen Country Homes





# PROJECTS INSTALLED

Total P reduction = 1.95lb

HOA	Watershed	BMP Type	P Reduction	Area (sf)	Grant Amounts
Evergreen Country Homes		Vegetated Swales (2)	.23lb/yr TP .11lb/yr TP	2,275 sf 660 sf	CWF: \$1,700 WD: \$11,400 LO: \$6,672
Lakeridge Townhomes		Raingarden & Bioinfiltration	.08lb/yr TP .03lb/yr TP	150 sf 200 sf	CWF: \$550 WD: \$12,112 LO: \$3,488
Powers Lake Townhomes		Vegetated Swale	.14lb/yr TP	600 sf	CWF: \$700 WD: \$700 LO: \$2,752
Tanners Lake Townhomes		Shoreline Buffer	.27lb/yr TP	3,094 sf	CWF: \$1,350 WD: \$8,934 LO: \$0
Heritage Glen		Plant Buffer/ Vegetated Swale	1.2lb/yr TP	5,200 sf	CWF: \$6000 WD: \$6000 LO: \$4,998

CWF: Clean Water Fund (\$5000/lb of P removed)

WD: Watershed District Match

LO: Landowner Match

# Tips for HOA Outreach

1. Identify HOAs in your community
2. Utilize existing contacts
3. Call them





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# Tips for HOA Outreach

1. Identify HOAs in your community
2. Utilize existing contacts
3. Call them
4. Focus on the benefits to them
5. Keep the big picture in mind.



# Trouble-shooting during project design



1. Think about utilities, space, and project feasibility before you create a design for your project.
2. Consider offering maintenance assistance.
3. Design for easier maintenance.
4. Stay inside the box.
5. Consider offering cost-share assistance for water conservation projects.
6. Set reasonable expectations.
7. Celebrate your success!

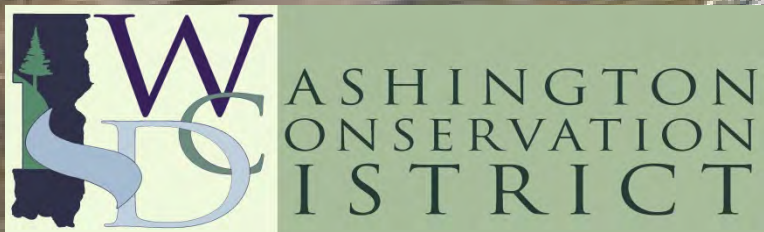


## Conclusions:

Focus your efforts on HOAs in high-priority areas;  
Consider funding water efficiency projects;  
Work with developers to do it right the first time; and  
Learn from ~~your~~ OUR mistakes.







## **Green Communities**

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