

BMP Owner Awareness Effectiveness Study

City of Wenatchee (Lead Agency)

Participating Partners:

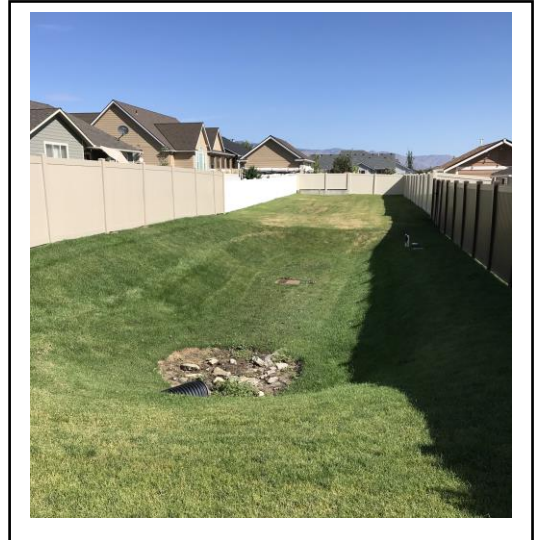
City of East Wenatchee, Douglas County, Chelan County, City of Pullman

Study Completed May 11, 2023

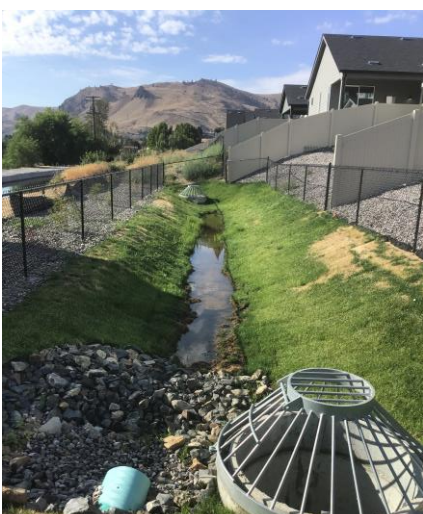
Project Description

The Eastern Washington Phase II Municipal Stormwater Permit requires jurisdictions to develop, implement, and enforce a program to address post-construction stormwater runoff from public and private projects. In many jurisdictions, projects completed after 2011 have an Operations & Maintenance Agreement (O&M Agreement), detailing the type, location, and maintenance requirements of the best management practices (BMPs). The O&M Agreement is used as the regulatory mechanism and in some places as the primary mechanism to inform property owners about their BMP and the inspection and maintenance obligations.

The BMP Owner Awareness Study evaluated the effectiveness of a recorded O&M agreement as the primary mechanism to inform property owners of the existence of the BMP and maintenance responsibilities related to the private stormwater BMP. The study also considered and evaluated various factors which may influence awareness of the BMP, including safety and appearance. The study compared BMP awareness between homeowner groups that have recorded O&M agreements (test) versus homeowner groups that do not have a recorded O&M agreement (control).



Privately owned BMP in a subdivision in Wenatchee.



Privately owned BMP in a subdivision in Wenatchee.

Study Methods

Goldstreet Design, LLC, in collaboration with their research partner, Corona Insights, was selected to conduct the survey and provide all statistical analysis of data. All of the data was collected by the consultant following standard operating procedures provided by the Quality Assurance Project Plan.

Activities Implemented:

- The participating jurisdictions and Goldstreet Design validated the survey to address question order, clarity, language, and reading level. The consultant then proceeded to build the online survey tool.
- Following the survey validation, Goldstreet Design sent residents within the study areas, City of Wenatchee, City of East Wenatchee, Chelan County, and Douglas County, a postcard with a link and QR code to the online survey. The postcard was sent to 703 homes with an O&M agreement and 1,345 without an O&M agreement.
- The consultant administered the survey from January 10, 2023 through February 3, 2023.

Study Results

Goldstreet Design compiled and analyzed the survey data. The final report was prepared by the City of Wenatchee.

- The survey received 130 complete responses and 2 partial responses, considered to be complete enough to be included in the final data report.
- According to the data, 59% of the total respondents were somewhat to very familiar with the BMP in their neighborhood. It was noted that those more familiar with the BMP were more likely to know the homeowners association was responsible for maintenance.
- The majority of residents (59%) were unfamiliar with the O&M agreement associated with their BMP and less than half (44%) of the residents within the Test area (with an O&M) were unfamiliar with the O&M agreement for their neighborhood.
- The study assessed factors which may raise awareness of BMPs, such as concerns for safety or appearance. Within the entire study area, approximately half reported having no opinion or no concerns about the BMP; however, when presented with a specific list of potential concerns, 79% reported at least one concern. The primary concerns identified were steep slopes, mosquito breeding, attracting pests and flooding. Concerns were also raised about the BMP becoming a fire hazard due to lack of vegetation management.
- The survey identified that the majority (79%) of total respondents have not received information about their BMP. Of the remaining 29% who indicated they have received information about their BMP, the homeowners association was the most commonly selected source of information. Over half (56%) of all residents indicated they would prefer to receive communication about their BMPs through a direct mailing.
- Very few residents within the Control (w/o O&M) and (Test (w/ O&M) (22% and 31% respectively) knew how often inspections or maintenance are performed.

Recommendations for the BMP Owner Awareness Education & Outreach

More education for BMP owner awareness are recommend throughout the study area, but additional information regarding the O&M Agreement specifically may be beneficial throughout the permit coverage test area. Based on this study, the recommended improvements to the BMP owner education and outreach program include:

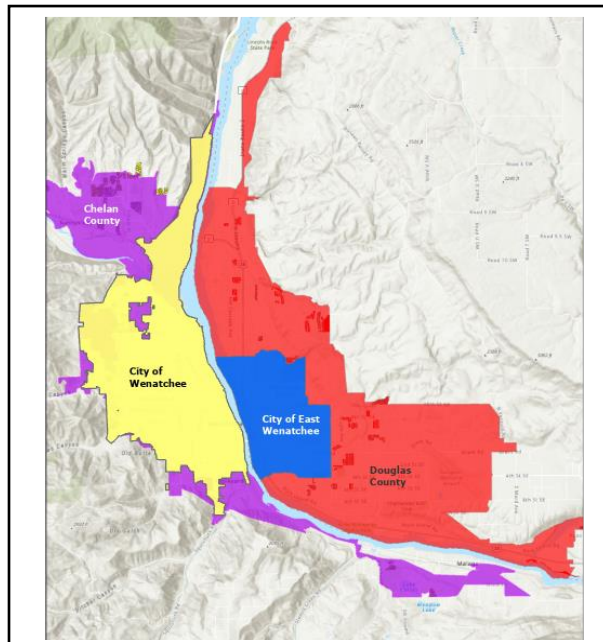
- Consider reviewing the O&M Agreement language and template to reduce the usage of legal terminology and stormwater jargon.
- Provide additional education and outreach to property owners using a direct mailing, which was noted as the preferred method of communication by study participants. The mailing will provide information and access to the effectiveness study data as well as refreshed information regarding stormwater BMPs., and develop some frequently asked questions (FAQs) about BMPs and required maintenance may be developed to serve as a quick reference for property owners.

Lead Agency Contact Information



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Final Report Available at
Wenatchee Valley Stormwater
Program webpage:
www.wenatcheewa.gov/WVSTAC



Project
Study
Area.