



LOI # 6

Name: Mary Rabourn

Organization: King County Stormwater Services Section

Study Title: Review and recommendations on public engagement, awareness and behavior change impact on stormwater pollution

Which topics from the SWG's priority list (Appendix A) do you propose to address?

7. How effective are public outreach and behavior change campaigns at reducing actions that contribute to stormwater pollution to MS4s? Which specific strategies yield the greatest impact? Make recommendations for outreach programs that apply to all jurisdictions.

What type of project is being proposed?

Literature review & synthesis; Survey; Qualitative research

Short description of the proposed project

A major challenge for jurisdictions, especially smaller ones, is determining which behaviors most affect stormwater pollution and how best to influence them. Conducting original research for multiple audiences (including overburdened and highly impacted communities) and multiple behaviors is often beyond the capacity of individual jurisdictions.

This study will collect and analyze regional data on community awareness, attitudes, norms, and self-reported behaviors related to actions that may reduce non-point stormwater pollution. The study will draw on findings from prior outreach and engagement efforts, conduct new data collection to assess behavior adoption over the past 5-7 years, identify gaps in outreach, and convene practitioners to interpret the results and recommend best practices for future implementation.

By analyzing results from multiple jurisdictions, the project will enable local governments to see how their communities compare, contribute to community norms, and enable them to identify which behaviors may warrant further or modified outreach. Findings will support development of shared behavior change strategies and consistent regional messaging, while allowing jurisdictions to evaluate local results within a larger regional context.



The outcome will provide a clearer understanding of which outreach strategies and messages are most effective in encouraging behavior change and adoption of actions that prevent pollutants from entering stormwater. And provide insights into norm change and its role in maintaining environment actions.

What type of information will be collected or analyzed for this proposed study?

The study will compile and analyze:

- Existing regional and local survey data on awareness and behaviors related to stormwater pollution and the relationship of climate, stormwater and human health.
- Findings from previous outreach evaluations, campaign metrics, and academic studies.
- New survey data, if identified gaps warrant additional research.
- National and local research and qualitative insights from interviews with overburdened and highly impacted communities.
- Qualitative insights from interviews with outreach practitioners and social marketing experts.

Permittees may be asked (mid-2026) to share existing public survey results, campaign metrics, and examples of outreach materials for synthesis.

What are the anticipated measurable outcomes and key deliverables that will be produced by the proposed study and how will they be used by Permittees and the Washington State Department of Ecology?

- A regional dataset and report on awareness, attitudes, knowledge and behaviors that include underserved communities.
- A set of recommendations for effective strategies and practices, consistent regional messaging and framing, and practices to support and build on environmental norms with all communities, including underserved communities.



- A dataset and qualitative insights that can be compared with Sound Behavior Index and would include new priority behaviors not assessed in the Sound Behavior Index, including underserved audiences not included in the original surveys.

Anticipated outcomes:

- Improved understanding of which strategies yield measurable behavior change.
- Greater consistency and efficiency in regional stormwater outreach.
- Insights into linking climate concerns and action with human health and stormwater.
- Data access for smaller jurisdictions that lack capacity to conduct their own surveys.
- A foundation for future evaluations that link behavior change to water quality outcomes and regional or local environmental norms.

List the permittees or agencies you are proposing to coordinate with.

STORM regional members

King County (lead)

City of Olympia

Kitsap County

ECO Net nonprofit recruitment