

# DRAFT - LWMP 2025-2029 Work Plan – July 2024

## Program Area 9: Education & Engagement

**Objective:** Educate and engage watershed residents and visitors to promote and facilitate the adoption of behaviors that protect water quality.

**2025-2029 Estimated Investments:** \$1.3 million

The Lake Whatcom Management Program (LWMP) educates and engages community members in the protection of Lake Whatcom. Education and engagement (i.e., outreach) work plan components are divided into three types. **General Lake Whatcom** outreach activities are designed to reach a general audience and provide a broad array of information about the Lake Whatcom watershed. **Program area-specific outreach** activities apply to a specific target audience and often include assistance or incentives to help community members take a specific action to protect Lake Whatcom. Outreach activities are listed both in relevant program areas and in the Education and Engagement section. **Community-wide** outreach activities are incorporated into education and engagement efforts that target a broader, community-wide audience, but which also may benefit Lake Whatcom.

### 9.1 General Lake Whatcom Education and Engagement

Provide education and outreach to watershed residents, property owners, visitors, and the community about Lake Whatcom and the Lake Whatcom Management Program.

9.1.1 Provide information about Lake Whatcom and its watershed as well as Lake Whatcom Management Program activities and programs to watershed residents, property owners, visitors, community members and elected officials.

9.1.2 Maintain and enhance up-to-date information and resources online.

9.1.3 Measure watershed residents' understanding of watershed issues and adoption of stewardship practices at least once every five years and use the results to adapt programs and direct resources more effectively.

9.1.4 Provide education and engagement for program-specific activities included in this work plan, in addition to those specified under 9.2.

9.1.5 Utilize the findings from the 2023 Lake Whatcom Survey to develop programming for topics in program areas where additional education and outreach is needed. For

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example, recommendations from the 2023 Lake Whatcom Survey suggest expanding outreach and education programs on:

- Wildfire risk reduction (Climate Change and Forest Management Program Areas)
- Phosphorous regulations in the Lake Whatcom watershed (Stormwater Program Area)

## ***Reporting Metrics:***

- Number of households (new and existing) sent informational materials per year
- Number of unique visitors to Lake Whatcom Management Program website per year
- Level of watershed residents' knowledge of and participation in key stewardship practices measured every five years through the Lake Whatcom Watershed Baseline Survey

## **9.2 Program Area-Specific Education and Engagement**

The following program area-specific education and engagement activities are also listed under their respective program areas. Any reporting metrics for these activities can be found under the respective program areas.

### **Stormwater**

2.2.3 Encourage the conversion of non-native landscape and lawn to native forested areas and the preservation of forested areas through incentives and permanent conservation agreements with landowners.

2.2.5 Provide resources and staff support to educate and inform owners of private stormwater facilities about system needs and maintenance.

2.2.6 Develop and disseminate Lake Whatcom watershed-specific education and outreach messaging that encourages residents to act to protect water quality.

### **Land Use**

3.1.4 Provide outreach to watershed residents to increase understanding of and compliance with Lake Whatcom specific land use and stormwater regulations.

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## **Hazardous Materials**

5.1.1 Promote and provide education on proper use, storage and disposal of hazardous materials.

5.2.2 Educate watershed residents and visitors on how to prevent and report spills.

## **Recreation**

6.4.1 Educate watershed residents and visitors about recreational practices that protect water quality and those that negatively impact water quality.

6.4.2 Engage recreational user groups (e.g., mountain bikers, horseback riders, boaters, etc.) in practices that protect water quality and those that negatively impact water quality.

## **Aquatic Invasive Species**

7.1.2 Inform watershed residents, boaters, and other lake visitors about AIS issues and engage them in prevention activities through informational materials, online education tools, community events and public meetings, and in-person conversations during inspections.

## **Utilities & Transportation**

8.1.2 Encourage water-use efficiency through outreach and rebate programs.

8.3.2 Encourage watershed residents and visitors to use alternative transportation in the watershed.

## **Climate Action**

11.1.2 Create educational materials based off of results from the Lake Whatcom Climate Vulnerability Assessment.

## **Forest Management**

12.4.1 Engage in partnerships to encourage wildfire risk assessments and mitigation on public and private land in the Lake Whatcom Watershed.

12.4.2 Engage in partnerships to educate watershed residents about wildfire preparedness.

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## 9.3 Community-wide Education and Engagement with Lake Whatcom Benefit

The following community-wide education and engagement activities target a broader, community-wide audience but may also benefit Lake Whatcom.

9.3.1 Dog waste: Programs that support dog waste pick up at home and in parks

9.3.2 Car care: Awareness efforts that use advertising (e.g. print, bus and movie theater ads) and in person outreach (brochures and similar handouts) to prompt vehicle owners to wash their vehicles at a car wash and check for leaks and fix them.

9.3.3 Yard care: Educate and encourage residents to use sustainable yard care practices.

9.3.4 On-site sewage (OSS) system maintenance: Support proper maintenance of OSS systems (septic systems).

9.3.5 School program: Educate Provide educational program to Bellingham School District students about Bellingham’s water treatment systems and water conservation principles.