

Metrics & Tools for Measuring Success

Part of *Approaches to Clean Water Communication*

Water quality programs use a variety of quantitative and qualitative metrics to evaluate the efficacy of their communication and outreach efforts. This document contains information about what methods have been used, including notes as to how effective methods have been and the purpose for which they were used, where available. The information provided here originates from responses to an Environmental Law Institute questionnaire on communication distributed in the fall of 2019. The examples are not intended to be comprehensive; rather, their collection is meant to facilitate the sharing of ideas among water quality programs, especially CWA 303(d) programs, and generate new ideas about how to evaluate the success of water quality communications.

The metrics included in this document are as follows:

Quantitative

- [Number of Event Attendees](#)
- [Number of Stakeholder Meetings](#)
- [Number of Responses Received as Part of TMDL Public Notice/Comment Periods](#)
- [Number of Supportive vs. Opposing Comments in the State CWA 303\(d\) List Approval Process](#)
- [Number of Entities/Sources that Send Data](#)
- [Number of Individuals Registered on Listserv](#)
- [Various Digital Analytics](#)

Qualitative

- [Composition of Event Attendees \(whether all relevant parties are present\)](#)
- [Testing Attendee Knowledge Before and After Workshops](#)
- [Ad Hoc Responses from Audiences](#)
- [Debriefing Meetings after Events](#)
- [Activities Conducted by the \(Intended\) Audience](#)
- [Before-and-After Ad Campaign Polling](#)
- [Changes in Stakeholder Knowledge Over Time](#)
- [Hiring Communications Staff](#)

Below are lists of the jurisdictions using each of the above methods.

Quantitative

Number of Event Attendees

- Alabama (somewhat helpful)
- Alaska
- Florida (inconclusive in identifying how different notifications translate to attendance)
- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Hawaii
- Illinois (via email sign-up lists)
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Meskwaki Nation
- Montana
- Oregon (in-person and webinar)
- Penobscot Nation
- Red Lake Nation (tracked but not analyzed)
- Rhode Island (reviewed but not formally tracked)
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- Virginia
- Washington
- West Virginia

Number of Stakeholder Meetings

- Colorado (re: improving/updating the CWA 303(d) Listing Methodology)

Number of Responses Received as Part of TMDL Public Notice/Comment Periods

- Illinois
- Indiana (to gauge opposition)
- Wisconsin

Number of Supportive vs. Opposing Comments in the State CWA 303(d) List Approval Process

- Missouri

Number of Entities/Sources that Send Data

- Colorado (re: annual data call for CWA 303(d) assessment)

Number of Individuals Registered on Listserv

- Washington

Digital Analytics

Web Analytics

- Delaware (but only viewed by IT staff)
- Florida (including weekly marketing reports)
- Missouri (to determine if webpage visits increase following announcements)
- Montana (in preparation for a webpage remodel)
- Oregon (number of hits on each site)

Google Analytics

- Maryland
- Michigan (along with an EGLE-created template)
- Minnesota (low value, except to show that external stories from local newspapers and public radio usually bring more traffic than internal communication such as social media and email)
- Pennsylvania (for the 2018 IR)
- Red Lake Nation
- Virginia (to assess if a webpage/topic is of interest, but not to measure the success of getting the information out there; helpful for this purpose)
- Wisconsin (does not necessarily convey “success” beyond someone clicking a link or opening an email)

Mailchimp Analytics

- Massachusetts
- Penobscot Nation (statistics are very useful)

Siteimprove Analytics

- Minnesota (low value, except to show that external stories from local newspapers and public radio usually bring more traffic than internal communication such as social media and email)

GovDelivery Analytics

- Michigan
- Missouri
- New Mexico (limited in that there is little customization of the email template and no way to find out why a subscriber leaves the mailing list)

- Wisconsin (does not necessarily convey “success” beyond someone clicking a link or opening an email)

Facebook Statistics

- Red Lake Nation
- South Dakota

Number of Story Map Views

- Connecticut
- Michigan

Qualitative

Composition of Event Attendees (whether all relevant parties are present)

- Colorado (for TMDL stakeholder meetings)

Testing Attendee Knowledge Before and After Workshops

- Texas (by NPS contractors)

Ad Hoc Responses from Audiences

- Connecticut
- Massachusetts (most helpful feedback)
- Penobscot Nation

Debriefing Meetings after Events

- Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Activities Conducted by the (Intended) Audience

- Louisiana
- Penobscot Nation
- Texas (NPS contractors survey the types of water quality management activities actually implemented by citizens)

Before-and-After Ad Campaign Polling

- Texas (The TCEQ’s Galveston Bay Estuary Program’s “Galveston Bay Public Awareness Campaign for Fats, Oils, and Grease” project used surveys on the campaign website and social media outlets to measure the public’s pre-existing knowledge about proper FOG disposal before campaign education efforts began. Surveys were once again distributed at the end of the project to

determine the effectiveness of different types of communication used: television ads, social media posts, digital ads, mail inserts, educational outreach events, etc. The number of impressions achieved by each platform was also easily calculated based on the number of viewers, listeners, recipients, or attendees reached.)

Changes in Stakeholder Knowledge over Time

- Virginia (within communities where the program is or was working actively)

Hiring Communications Staff

- Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians