

# **Appendix C Public Education and Participation Plan**

**Chapter Two****P****UBLIC PARTICIPATION & EDUCATION****2.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Administrative, Steering, and Technical committees provided oversight and guidance in the development of the Anchor Bay Watershed Plan. In addition, the Administrative Committee primarily was responsible for policy development and oversight of the fiscal responsibilities related to the 319 Grant that funded the planning effort.

The Steering Committee provided local governmental input and decision making guidance to the project. The first Steering Committee meeting was held in September 2001 to solicit interest and participation from watershed communities. Following the first meeting, the Steering Committee met approximately every other month throughout 2002. These meetings provided a forum to discuss the purpose of the Plan, the state of the watershed, impairments in the watershed, water quality concerns of the communities, Phase II storm water regulations, and the public participation strategy. As more information was gathered from the communities and the public, water quality goals for the Plan were established by the Technical Committee and portions of the Plan were developed and forwarded to the Steering Committee for review and comment.

In December 2002, the Plan was completed and presented to the Steering Committee. At this time, there was concern that the Plan needed reorganization and lacked community input. To address this concern, a Technical Committee was established to revise the Plan. The Technical Committee, with a total of seven representatives from St. Clair County, Macomb County, and local communities, provided focused feedback to the project consultant. Based on additional input from the counties, communities, and MDEQ, each chapter was revised, reorganized, and summarized to provide more concise information. As each chapter was completed, it was presented to the Steering Committee for review and comment. Once revisions of the entire Plan were completed, presentations were made available to municipal and county boards to gain additional support from the communities and Counties involved.

Members of the Administrative, Steering, and Technical Committees are listed in Tables 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3 respectively (Appendix D).

Beyond the Steering and Technical committee meetings and community board presentations, the Plan consultant and county representatives met individually with representatives from each community within the watershed in the summer of 2002 and 2003. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss watershed goals and objectives and develop an inventory of best management practices that were being implemented or planned by the community. At that time, the purpose of the Plan and how it fits into the Phase II storm water regulations was reemphasized.

Several public meetings were held throughout the Anchor Bay watershed planning process to gain a wider range of opinions regarding water quality concerns and desired uses for the Anchor Bay Watershed. The process included surveying different stakeholder groups about their water quality concerns in Anchor Bay. The public was notified about the meetings through articles and press releases in *The Macomb Daily*,

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*Times Herald, The Voice* and *Detroit News*. In addition, several stakeholders, including governmental agencies, environmental groups, remedial action plan groups, agricultural producers, wildlife groups, boating associations, marinas, local businesses, and public school representatives, were invited to participate in the public meetings. Representatives of most of these groups, as well as local residents, attended these meetings.

A summary of each public meeting, including the complete list of concerns by meeting participants, is presented in this section. In addition, a public interest survey was circulated to concerned residents, the results of which are also presented in this document.

At a public meeting on January 23, 2002, in Ira Township, a small group of stakeholders were asked to prioritize their water quality concerns in Anchor Bay. Participants identified the following activities as the most important, in order of priority:

- Fishing
- Swimming
- Healthy drinking water
- Erosion
- Recreation
- Waterfowl and wildlife habitat
- Educating the public
- Flooding

Participants also noted concerns about zebra mussels, aquatic weeds, boating, lack of biking and walking trails, construction site erosion, fishing access, and the North Channel dredging.

At the same meeting, public officials from the Anchor Bay watershed identified the following activities as the most important, in order of priority:

- Healthy drinking water
- Fishing
- Educating the public
- Swimming
- Erosion
- Flooding
- Recreation

Public officials also noted concerns about New Baltimore Beach closings, contaminants, bacteria, sewage disposal, drinking water, and sewage disposal on Harsens Island and outer islands, and development on outer islands and Harsens Island.

On April 9, 2002, in Lenox Township, a presentation of the watershed planning process and information gathered to date was made to a group of agricultural producers. This is significant because thirty-six percent of the land use in the Anchor Bay watershed is dedicated to agriculture. Following are some of the concerns expressed at that meeting:

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- Lack of open space
- Over-development or unmanaged development
- Lack of government support for agricultural buffer strips
- Lack of consistent application of agricultural Best Management Practices

As chapters of the plan were completed, presentations were made to stakeholders on June 19, 2002, in Chesterfield Township and August 28, 2002, in Ira Township. The stakeholders at the June 19 meeting were asked to distribute the Anchor Bay Watershed Survey of Issues and Concerns and to help plan a general public meeting to be held on September 25, 2002, at Anchor Bay High School in New Baltimore (Appendix E). Surveys were distributed in municipal buildings, at local schools, at township and city meetings, and on the Anchor Bay website. Four months later, 94 surveys had been returned from stakeholders representing 14 watershed communities. Based on the survey, the following concerns were ranked in order of importance:

- Remove sources of human waste in Anchor Bay that threaten public health
- Better control sources of fertilizer reaching Anchor Bay and the Great Lakes
- Improve habitat conditions for fish and wildlife in the water
- Increase community planning to address development and protection of water quality
- Better control soil erosion and limit sediments entering the water
- Remove paper, trash, and debris in the Bay and its tributaries to improve its appearance
- Encourage investments in land along waterways for recreation and wildlife protection
- Expand public education about the benefits of protecting Anchor Bay
- Minimize excessive flows that cause flooding, bank erosion, and habitat loss

These goals were reflected again when respondents were asked to state Anchor Bay issues most important to them. Those issues were:

- High bacteria levels
- Water quality
- Wetland protection

Respondents said they were most interested in receiving information on Anchor Bay fish and wildlife, water quality, and bacteria levels.

About 50 people attended a public meeting from 7 to 9 p.m. on September 25, 2002, at Anchor Bay High School in New Baltimore. The program included a presentation on the draft Anchor Bay Watershed Management Plan, the Illicit Discharge Elimination Program, and State Storm Water Permit Regulations. Participants were divided into groups to discuss various storm water issues addressed in the watershed management plan, such as, habitat, soil erosion, sewage, water quality education, and runoff from lawns, yards, and agricultural fields. All groups were asked to devise a water quality budget to address storm water management issues in Anchor Bay. Participants said they would concentrate their resources on the following in order of priority:

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- Reduce bacterial inputs
- Reduce storm water flows
- Preserve and increase habitat
- Reduce sediment loads
- Enhance recreational activities
- Reduce runoff from lawns, yards, and agricultural fields

Throughout this process, it has become clear that a major concern to Anchor Bay stakeholders is raw sewage and bacteria that affect Anchor Bay quality of life issues, such as swimming and fishing. There is also concern about protecting habitat and open space. Many who were surveyed or participated in the September 25 meeting agreed that the public needs to be better educated about illicit connections, leaking septic systems, and overuse of fertilizers. In addition, some participants indicated that protecting wetlands and forested land should be as big a priority as reducing bacterial inputs to Anchor Bay.

The input from public officials, watershed residents, and stakeholder groups was a primary consideration when evaluating the water quality impairments in the watershed and in the development of the goals and objectives of this plan.

### Anchor Bay Website

A project website ([awp.stclaircounty.org](http://awp.stclaircounty.org)) was established as a mechanism to keep Anchor Bay stakeholders informed during the watershed planning process. The website was operational in September 2002 and is accessible from St. Clair County's website [www.stclaircounty.org](http://www.stclaircounty.org). Signs were posted at municipal buildings to advertise the website address. The address was also included in newspaper articles that were written as the Plan was developed.

Having information on the website allowed the public to access draft copies of the plan, the Anchor Bay Watershed Survey of Issues and Concerns, meeting schedules, and names of key decision-makers. The website also provided a mechanism to obtain public comments and concerns regarding the quality of Anchor Bay.

This project website remains active at the time this plan was completed. Information there includes a fact sheet on the watershed, a list and links to project partners, a map of the watershed, and an interactive public interest survey (Figure 2-1).

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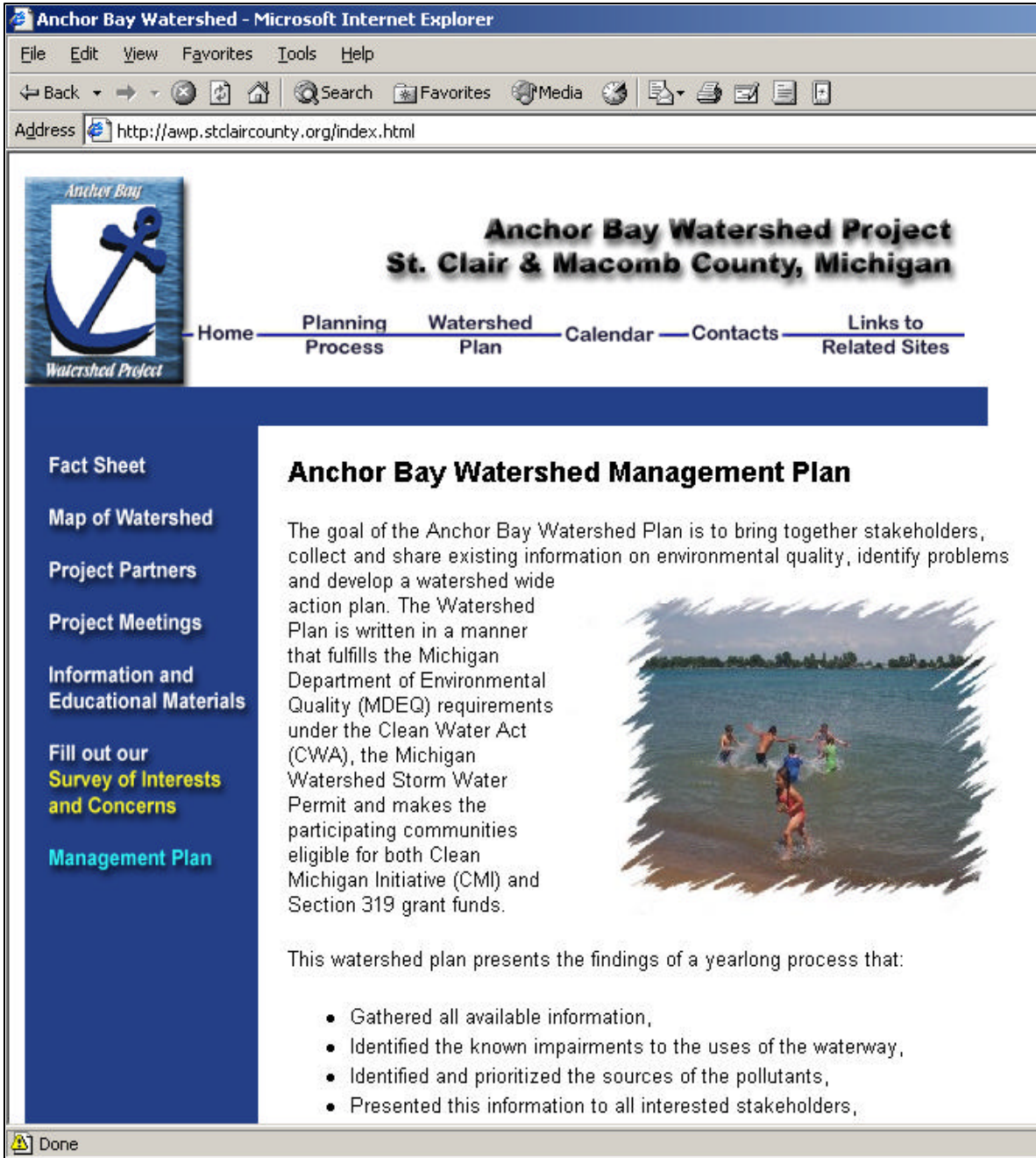


Figure 2-1:  
Anchor Bay  
Website  
Homepage

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**2.1 PUBLIC EDUCATION STRATEGY**

The Information and Education Strategy was developed to help minimize priority pollutant sources within the Anchor Bay watershed. The strategy aims to accomplish this by promoting a better awareness of priority pollutant problems and their solutions. Each educational issue was determined through the Anchor Bay Technical Committee and municipal input received during the May 6, 2003, Steering Committee Meeting.

Municipalities and counties within the watershed are responsible for implementing the following activities, as appropriate, from 2003 to 2008.

**Education Issue: Bacteria Control**

Source	Audience	Message	Delivery	Evaluation
Failing Onsite Disposal Systems (OSDS)	OSDS Owners	OSDS Maintenance	Newsletters, Websites, Brochures, Municipal Offices, Health Depts.	Track number of OSDS failures
Illicit discharges and illegal dumping	Homeowners	Report Illicit Discharges	Newsletters, Websites, Brochures, Municipal Offices, Health Depts.	Pre and Post survey

**Expected Tasks:**

- a) Create an Anchor Bay Education Committee
- b) OSDS Maintenance
  - 1) Collect septic system maintenance brochure(s) for Macomb County and St. Clair County
  - 2) Develop a set of 10 OSDS facts for newsletters and websites
  - 3) Distribute septic system facts and post educational materials on websites
- c) Discharge Reporting
  - 1) Determine best media vehicle for illicit discharge hotline publicity
  - 2) Publicize Macomb County and St. Clair County illicit discharge reporting hotline

**Education Issue: Sediment Control**

Source	Audience	Message	Delivery	Evaluation
New Construction	Builders/Developers	Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control (SESC) BMPs & Enforcement	SESC Programs	Track compliance; number of citations issued
	Building Inspectors	SESC and building permit coordination	SESC Programs	Status of cooperation

**Expected Tasks:**

- a) Create an Anchor Bay Education Committee
- b) Builders/Developers
  - 1) Determine priority SESC education issues with SESC Program staff and municipal building inspectors

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- 2) Develop SESC brochure targeting builders and developers
- 3) Develop the best method for dissemination
- 4) Disseminate information
- c) Building Inspectors
  - 1) Determine SESC educational need for local building inspectors
  - 2) Determine the best way to disseminate information
  - 3) Disseminate information

**Education Issue: Fertilizer Management**

Source	Audience	Message	Delivery	Evaluation
Residential lawn care	Homeowner Visitors	Limit phosphorus and applications, Fertilizer alternatives, Grass clipping disposal	Workshops, Brochures, Mass Media	Workshop attendance, Pre and Post survey

**Expected Tasks:**

- a) Create an Anchor Bay Education Committee
- b) Homeowners
  - 1) Develop and gather appropriate brochures, workshop agendas, and media tools
  - 2) Implement education activities
- c) Evaluation
  - 1) Develop pre and post survey questions
  - 2) Conduct pre surveys
  - 3) Conduct post surveys three years after educational activities have been in place

**Education Issue: Urban Runoff Management**

Source	Audience	Message	Delivery	Evaluation
Urban Areas	Residents	Storm water awareness	Mass Media River Day activities	Pre and Post survey
	Community Leaders, Municipal Engineers	Manage storm water flow and contaminants	Workshops	Create and implement storm water management ordinances

**Expected Tasks:**

- a) Create an Anchor Bay Education Committee
- b) Residents
  - 1) Determine consistent message and media vehicles
  - 2) Implement activities
- c) Community Leaders and Municipal Engineers
  - 1) Determine workshop needs and materials
  - 2) Conduct workshops

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- d) Evaluation
  - 1) Develop pre and post survey questions
  - 2) Conduct pre surveys
  - 3) Conduct post surveys three years after educational activities have been in place