

KC CLEAN STREAMS 2009

PROJECT OVERVIEW

KC Clean Streams, sponsored by the Blue River Watershed Association, is the only annual metropolitan-wide trash clean up event for students of all ages, with a focus on the rivers and streams that cross the Kansas City area. Since 1998, over 17,000 students and teachers representing more than 10 school districts across the metropolitan area have taken to streams to pick up trash and help to restore the environmental health of our local waterways. Students witness first-hand the adverse impact of trash on our environment, while taking a proactive role in caring for community resources. KC Clean Streams provides students with a hands-on, experiential learning opportunity specifically designed to align with important science curriculum standards.

Student participation in KC Cleans Streams has grown 38% in the last two years. BRWA anticipates at least a 5% increase in student participation for the upcoming year. In an effort to accommodate an increase in student participation in 2009, the Blue River Watershed Association plans to extend KC Clean Streams into a month-long event. This will allow teachers to have more flexibility in which to work around spring state assessment schedules. The 2009 KC Clean Streams event is tentatively scheduled to begin April 17 and run until May 22. Because of the extension, BRWA will actively pursue other funding sources to pay staff for more allocated time. This proposal to the Mid-America Regional Council seeks financial assistance in the amount of \$5,000 to pay 50% of staff wages for BRWA personnel to plan, coordinate and stage the 2009 KC Clean Streams event.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

KC Clean Streams is an annual watershed clean-up event, specifically designed for school students. The event begins in April each year to coincide with Earth Day. KC Clean Streams is sponsored by BRWA as part of its mission to engage the Kansas City metropolitan community in protecting and restoring the Blue River Watershed through community education, environmental stewardship, and strategic partnerships.

The 2009 KC Clean Streams event benefits water quality in the urban rivers and streams across the Kansas City metro in the following ways. First, by providing teachers with educational packets prior to the clean-up event, they can introduce students to important science concepts concerning non-point source pollution, proper waste disposal, and the importance of good water quality. Second, KC Clean Streams provides students, teachers, and community volunteers the opportunity to work together in a proactive community service effort. Students and adults alike learn that cleaning up trash from our neighborhoods is an important and fun way of implementing good environmental stewardship.

SCOPE OF WORK

I. Project Goals and Objectives

The 2009 KC Clean Streams project has two main goals. First, KC Clean Streams is designed to engage students in the greater metropolitan Kansas City community in an experiential learning opportunity that teaches them about the importance of protecting and restoring our community's rivers and streams. Second, the 2009 KC Clean Streams event provides a service to our community by picking up trash in our watersheds, thereby reducing non-point source pollution to metropolitan rivers and streams. BRWA will accomplish the goals set out above by completing the following objectives:

- A. Involve approximately 4,000 students, 75 teachers, and 50 adult volunteers in the month-long trash clean-up event, scheduled for April 17 to May 22, 2009.
- B. Provide teachers, students, and volunteers with the supplies necessary to successfully undertake the clean-up.
- C. Provide educational materials, aligned to important science standards, which teach students about non-point source water pollution, water quality and waste disposal issues.
- D. Provide the funding necessary to support the 2009 KC Clean Streams event.

II. Project Tasks

Working in partnership with the schools and public and private sponsors discussed below, BRWA will undertake the following tasks as a part of this project:

- 1. Solicit funding from public and private sources necessary to provide the project with the staffing, equipment, supplies and other resources needed to meet the project goals set out above.
- 2. Procure supplies and materials for approximately 4,000 students, 75 teachers, and 50 adult volunteers, including educational materials, gloves, trash bags, and t-shirts.
- 3. Create collateral materials including flyers, website advertising, and press releases.
- 4. Contact and register teachers, students, and volunteers.
- 5. Coordinate participants and clean-up sites.
- 6. Prepare/update educational materials to be distributed to teachers.
- 7. Prepare, disseminate, and file permission slips for student participants.
- 8. Plan, coordinate, and hold a pre-event meeting to distribute supplies and materials, and network with teachers and volunteers.
- 9. Plan, coordinate, and stage the clean-up event from April 17 to May 22, 2009.
- 10. Follow-up with teachers to solicit event evaluations and collected trash data.
- 11. Prepare final report and meet other reporting requirements.

III. Implementation Schedule

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| Fall 2008: | Begin soliciting funds from corporate sponsors; efforts continue through April, 2009. |
| December 2008: | Create marketing tools (logo, flyers, etc.). |
| January 2009: | Update website; begin solicitations for in-kind donations of supplies; begin advertising to teachers. |

February 2009: Continue advertising to teachers; begin marketing to other venues; contact cities and counties about event and trash pick-up.

March 2009: Update educational materials; order supplies; confirm clean-up locations; event registration terminates.

April 2009: Hold pre-event teacher meeting to distribute supplies; contact media; send out an e-mail for volunteers; pair volunteers with teachers; hold event.

May 2009: Finish up event; collect post-event evaluations; send thank you notes; prepare final reports.

PROJECT RESULTS

I. Public Participation and Behavior Change

Historically, approximately 2,000 school age students participate in KC Clean Streams annually. Schools participating in past years have represented the following school districts: Blue Valley, KCMO, Center, Hickman Mills, Belton, Independence, Grandview, Raytown, Shawnee Mission, Olathe, Turner, Gardner-Edgerton, and Blue Springs. Many private and parochial schools and homeschool groups have also participated.

As a part of KC Clean Streams, BRWA provides educational materials to teach students about the importance of reducing non-point source pollution in the metropolitan area. BRWA believes that exposing students to activities that engage them in protecting and restoring our community's rivers and streams builds good stewardship skills, which will result in long-term behavior change in our future generations. We all know that the future of our planet depends upon instilling in our children the attitudes and actions necessary to support sustainable environmental ethics.

However, participation by students is just the first step. KC Clean Streams also involves teachers and adult volunteers in its planning and implementation. BRWA anticipates that in 2009, approximately 75 teachers and 50-70 adult volunteers will be a part of the KC Clean Streams event. Developing good environmental stewardship habits among teachers, whose livelihood involves educating others, can only help to "spread the good word" about the importance of protecting and restoring our community's water resources.

In summary, the 2009 KC Clean Streams event will have a positive, first-hand impact on about 4,000 individuals across the Kansas City metropolitan area. These students and adults will witness first-hand the detrimental impact of trash on our rivers and streams. Such a hands-on experience will drive home the need to reduce non-point source pollution in our metro area and the desire among participating individuals to become further engaged in protecting and restoring our community's water resources. Most importantly, water pollution in urban waterways will be positively impacted by the reduction in the amount of trash that makes its way to our urban rivers and streams.

II. Evaluating Project Results

Evaluation of the 2009 KC Clean Streams will be measured in several ways. First, the number of participants that BRWA is able to involve in the event will be a good measurement of BRWA's ability to attract the resources, teachers, and students needed to make such an event a success. Second, the number of trash bags collected will be counted and appropriately disposed. Third, evaluations of the event will be provided to participants to measure the learning opportunities provided by the clean-up and the accompanying materials. Finally, BRWA will evaluate the public response to this event by analyzing the amount of volunteer response and media coverage afforded to the event.

LOCAL COMMITMENT/LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Historically, KC Clean Streams has been well-supported by public and private entities across the metropolitan area. Past partners have included the following cities, counties, state, and federal agencies: Cities of Lenexa, Olathe, and Overland Park, Johnson County, Kansas, the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the U.S. EPA Region 7 and the U.S. Geological Survey.

The following individuals and businesses have historically provided financial and in-kind support for KC Clean Streams: Adaptive Ecosystems, Inc., Applied Ecological Services, Black and Veatch, Cargill, Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Kansas City, Bridging the Gap, Broome Chevrolet-Oldsmobile, CDM, General Motors-Fairfax, George Butler Associates, HDR, HNTB, Mission Road Farms, L.P., Olsson Associates, Patti Banks Associates, Shafer, Kline & Warren, Shockey Consulting Services, Superior Buick-Cadillac, Tetra Tech EMI, The Reading Reptile, URS, and the Heart of America Fly Fishers.

As well, the school districts listed above have supported the KC Clean Streams event for over eight years, providing in-kind support through the volunteer efforts of parents, teachers, and of course, students.

Planning for the 2009 KC Clean Streams event, tentatively scheduled to begin April 17, 2009, has just begun. Solicitations for support will not be undertaken until fall 2008. BRWA anticipates it will be able to engage the above entities and more in the 2009 KC Clean Streams event.

GRANT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY

The Blue River Watershed Association is a Missouri not-for-profit corporation whose mission is to engage the Kansas City metropolitan community in protecting and restoring the Blue River Watershed through community education and outreach, environmental stewardship and strategic partnerships with key watershed stakeholders. Incorporated in 1998 by Jim Benz, a teacher, BRWA has grown to include sponsors and volunteers from across the metropolitan region. BRWA's flagship programs are its school-based programs, which include T.R.U.E. Blue (Teaching Rivers in an Urban Environment) and KC Clean Streams. BRWA has sponsored KC Clean Streams annually, with grant support and private funding, since 1998.

BRWA's staff includes an experienced educator and an education assistant. Kate Delehunt, BRWA's Education Director has over 26 years of experience in science education. Ms. Delehunt oversees BRWA's classroom programming and is the event coordinator for the 2008 KC Clean Streams. Colleen Casey is BRWA's part-time education assistant. Ms. Casey has classroom teaching experience as well as

a degree in English and creative writing. Ms. Casey assists with both the T.R.U.E. Blue program and the KC Clean Streams event.

BRWA has successfully managed a number of grants in its 10 year history. In fact, over 80% of BRWA's revenue comes from government entities, primarily in the form of grant funding. BRWA is implementing a plan in 2009 designed to diversify its funding base by looking for new funding opportunities from local foundations, as well as individual and business support. A copy of BRWA's 2006 Annual Report and a list of its 2008 Board of Directors are attached as Appendices to this proposal.