

Mojave River Watershed Group

Annual Report 2021/2022

Phase II MS4 Permit: Public Outreach and Education

Presented by Westbound Communications

20
22



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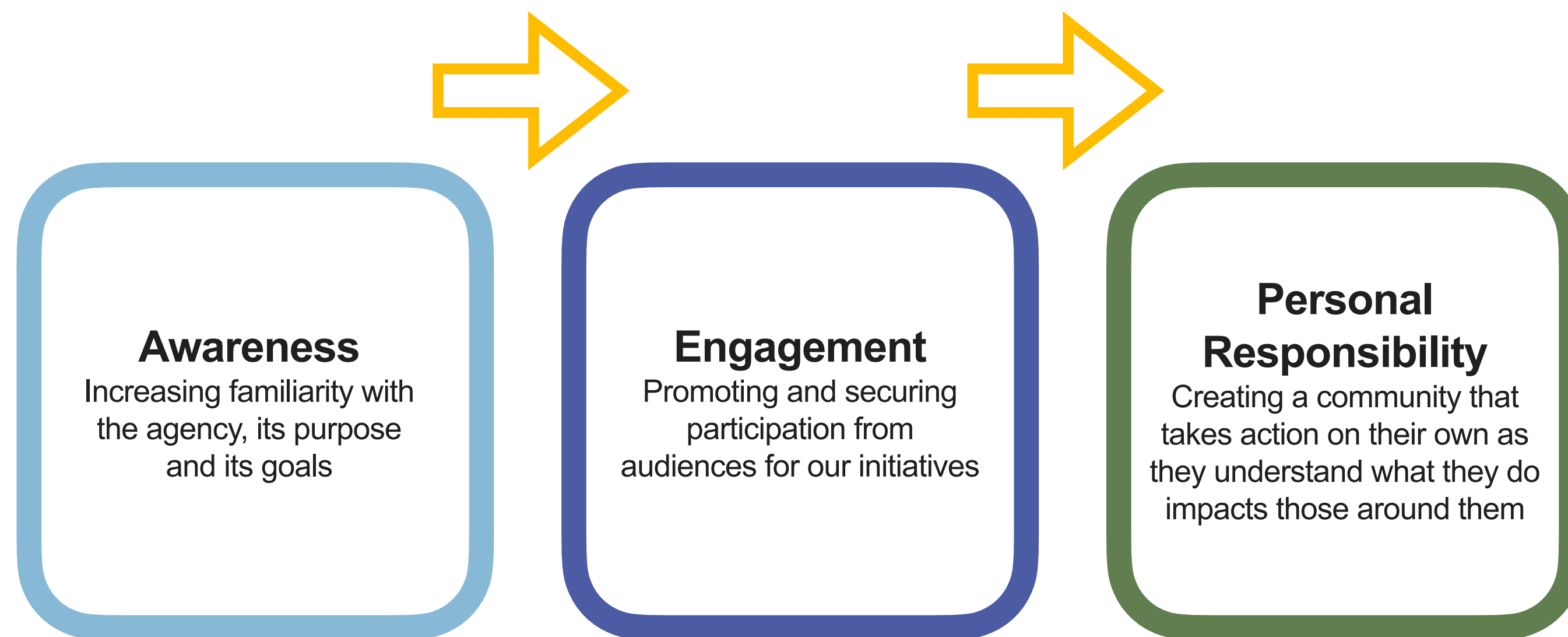
Year in Review

As the 2021/2022 fiscal year came to an end, Westbound Communications celebrated its eleventh year as the committee's public outreach team for stormwater pollution prevention. Just as the 2020 year was unprecedented, we continued to grow with the changes, and meet an evolved High Desert, post-pandemic.

Public Education During a Pandemic

Each year, the public outreach team develops a public education program to meet requirements of the Phase II MS4 Permit.

The nature of activities with businesses, schools, the community, and more, have traditionally focused on in-person and in-the-field opportunities to build awareness and engage residents for stormwater pollution prevention. As we all have, MRWG evolved our outreach efforts to adapt to new modes of communication and explored new ways to provide public education. Here are the highlights.



Adjusting Public Education Post-Pandemic

- We evaluated the ever-evolving landscape during the second year of the Covid-19 pandemic to become more effective in meeting community needs
- Built relationships within education, and federal programs, to achieve effective education in a digital world
- Continued Facebook Live events to increase access for students, parents and teachers
- Filmed and amplified educational videos for use on MRWG website, YouTube and social media platforms
- Continued opportunities for partnership such as sponsoring city beautification programs
- Capitalized on trending news for coverage in the Victorville Daily Press and the High Desert News





Success Overview



**E-newsletters
(High Desert Droplet)**



**Community clean-up
event partnerships**



**Facebook Live
Streaming events**



**Social media
contests**



**Testimonials from
business partners**



**Media
placements**



**DIY educational
videos**




**Business
Pledge**



Individual Pledges



A scenic view of a lake with autumn foliage reflected in the water. The trees on the left and right banks are in full autumn colors, ranging from bright yellow to deep orange and red. The water is calm, creating clear reflections of the trees and the blue sky. In the foreground, some reeds or tall grasses are visible on the right side. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

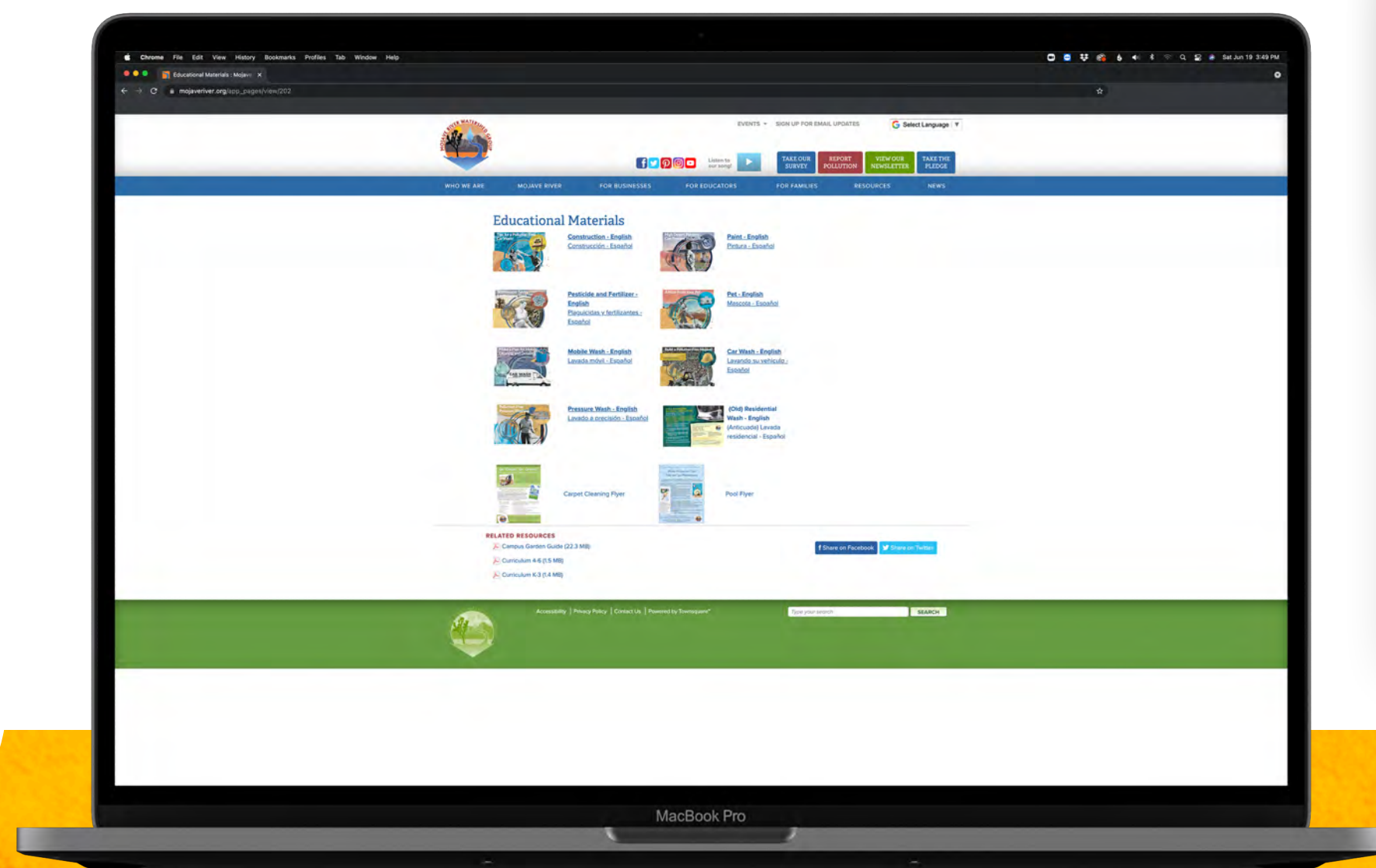
Per the requirements of the public education portion of the stormwater permit, the following activities were outlined and approved for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The details are listed in the following report and organized per our Scope of Work.

Tip Cards & Web

Strategy

Use website as an essential resource for people to learn about MRWG's mission, report pollution, access pollution prevention tips, download educational resources, and more.

- Revamped bilingual tip cards – Focus on pollution prevention tips, pollution reporting and disposal sites for industries most effected.



Make a Plan for Mobile Cleaning and Detailing

Toxic chemicals from mobile washing and detailing can cause runoff that pollutes our roadways and storm drains, which lead to the Mojave River Watershed.

Follow these stormwater-savvy steps to keep our local waterways pollution-free:

- 1 Clear the area of debris, then throw it away in a trash can
- 2 Guard nearby storm drains with sandbags or coverings
- 3 Use biodegradable products
- 4 Use a water shutoff nozzle to prevent excess runoff
- 5 Wash and detail vehicles driveway to reduce runoff
- 6 Invest in a portable vacuum to safely contain and dispose

Stormwater-Savvy Landscaping Tips!

Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers can wash into our Mojave River Watershed. We can do to protect our High Desert sacrificing beautiful lawns and gardens.

Choose to be stormwater-savvy:

- 1 Use nontoxic products, they are better for our water
- 2 Never apply pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers 24 hours before a rain storm
- 3 Avoid applying treatments driveway or gutter
- 4 Opt for spot treatment rather than large areas
- 5 Store lawn and gardening products in a secure container to prevent spills
- 6 Choose native plants and trees

Pollution-Free Pressure Washing

Pressure washing is essential to keep our community clean and we want to make sure it's pollution-free. Water runoff from pressure washing can carry toxic chemicals into storm drains, which lead to the Mojave River Watershed. So, when you're washing the outside of a building, there's a stormwater-savvy way to do it.

- 1 Collect debris and toss it in the trash
- 2 Protect nearby storm drains with sandbags or coverings
- 3 Use biodegradable products
- 4 Secure products in an airtight container to prevent spills
- 5 Use a water shutoff nozzle to prevent excess runoff
- 6 Invest in a portable vacuum to safely contain and dispose

Build a Pollution-Free Mojave!

Schedule a free training for your employees with MRWG at info@mojaveriver.com

- 1 Protect construction materials and covering to prevent runoff
- 2 Designate separate on-site waste disposal, construction waste and demolition debris
- 3 Remember to take all hazardous waste to the Hazardous Waste Collection Center
- 4 Never wash concrete or stucco residue into a storm drain. Have a designated wash to wash these materials
- 5 Establish protected vegetation area to limit runoff
- 6 Install perimeter controls along down slope
- 7 Install inlet controls and make sure they are the control when it is halfway filled
- 8 Make sure portable sanitation facilities prevent pollutant discharge
- 9 Stabilize exposed areas of the work site for 14 or more days
- 10 Prevent vehicles from tracking mud and debris out of crushed rock surface

The Mojave River Watershed's groundwater is the main source of water for many High Desert residents, plants and wildlife. It's up to us to keep it clean.

Tips for a Pollution-Free Car Wash!

Did you know that washing your car at home is a leading cause of pollution to our Mojave River Watershed? Toxic oils, soap and grime becomes runoff filling roadways and storm drains with chemicals that lead to our local waterways.

Take the stormwater-savvy route and opt for a commercial car wash instead. These businesses provide a cost-effective and eco-friendly option to keep your car sparkling!

We know that car washes are great fundraisers, so if you must have a DIY car wash please follow these steps to prevent pollution:

- 1 Collect debris on the ground and toss it in the trash
- 2 Use biodegradable soap
- 3 Attach a water shutoff nozzle to your hose

High Desert Painters Can Prevent Pollution

Your work beautifies High Desert homes and buildings, but did you know you can help do the same for our watershed? Commercial and DIY painters need to know that rinsing paint brushes and dumping the water in gutters causes harmful pollutants to enter our waterways.

Here's a few simple steps to keep our Mojave River Watershed safe for our residents, wildlife and plants.

- 1 Store paint in sealed containers
- 2 Choose water-based paint when possible
- 3 Never clean brushes or paint containers in the street, gutter or near a storm drain

And when you're done with a project, take any unused or old paint to a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center.

A Note From Your Pet

Dear Human,

Please pick up after me! You may not realize this, but the bacteria in my poo is a leading cause of pollution in our Mojave River Watershed. I'd hate to be the reason our water gets wrecked, so I'll need your help to make me a more perfect pet.

- 1 Bring doggie-doo bags on every walk
- 2 Pack a portable water bowl so that I don't drink from the street or ground
- 3 Toss my poo in the trash
- 4 Use a nozzle at bath time to reduce runoff
- 5 Tell everyone that doggie doo-doo is a stormwater don't

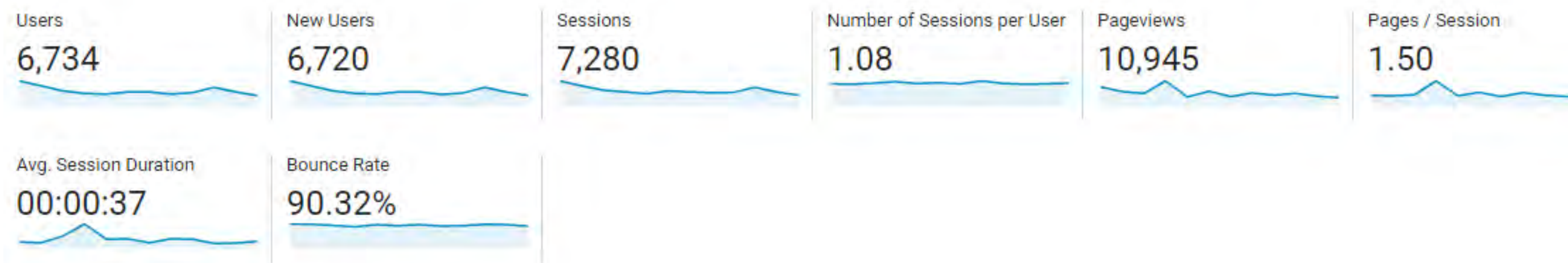
Easy enough to be a good boy, right?
XoXo,
Your Pal

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Centers:
 • Town of Apple Valley Household Hazardous Waste Facility
 13450 Nornwaket Road
 • City of Hesperia Household Hazardous Waste Facility
 17443 Lemon Street
 • City of Victorville Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center
 Located on Loves Lane behind the San Bernardino County Fairgrounds

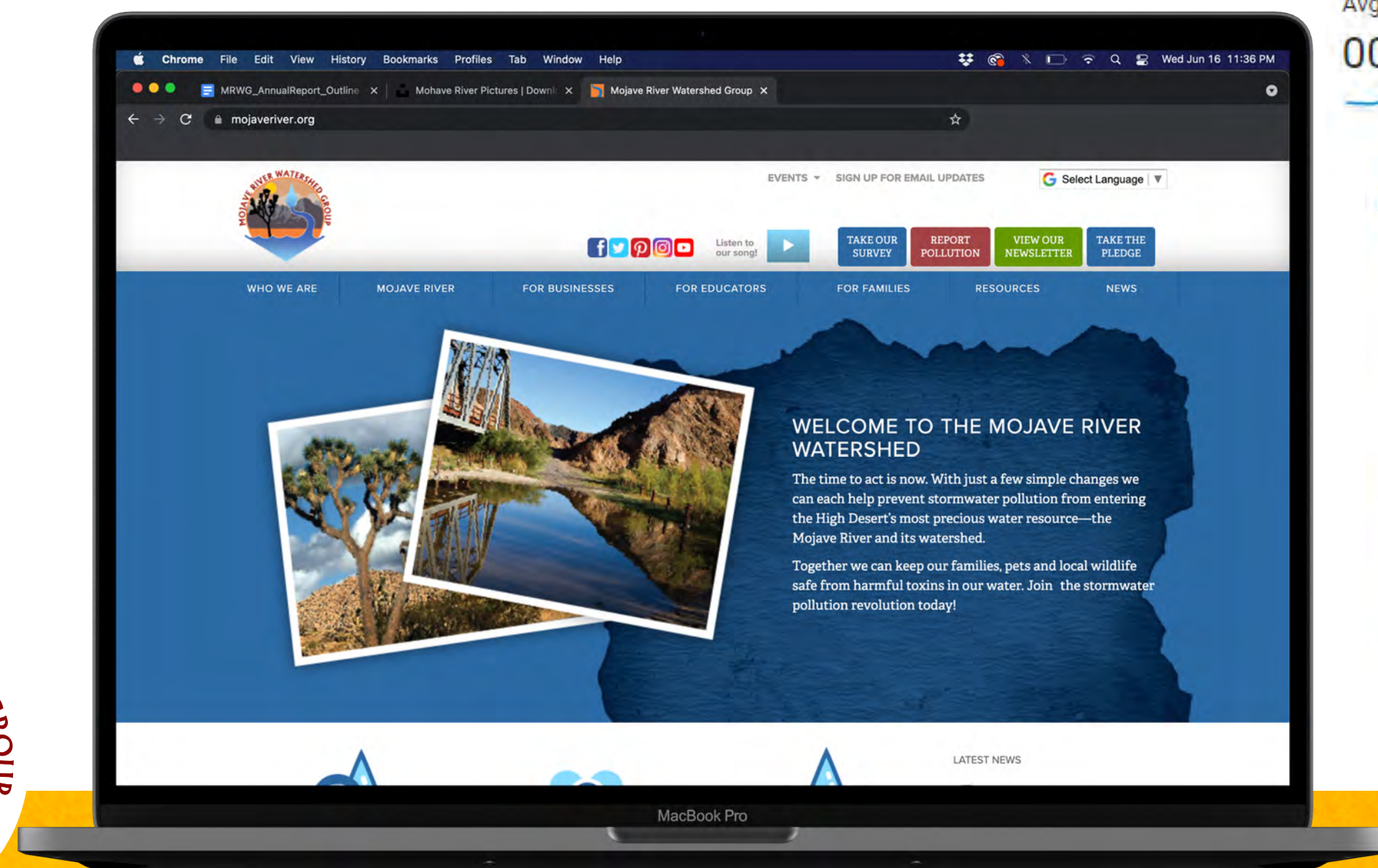
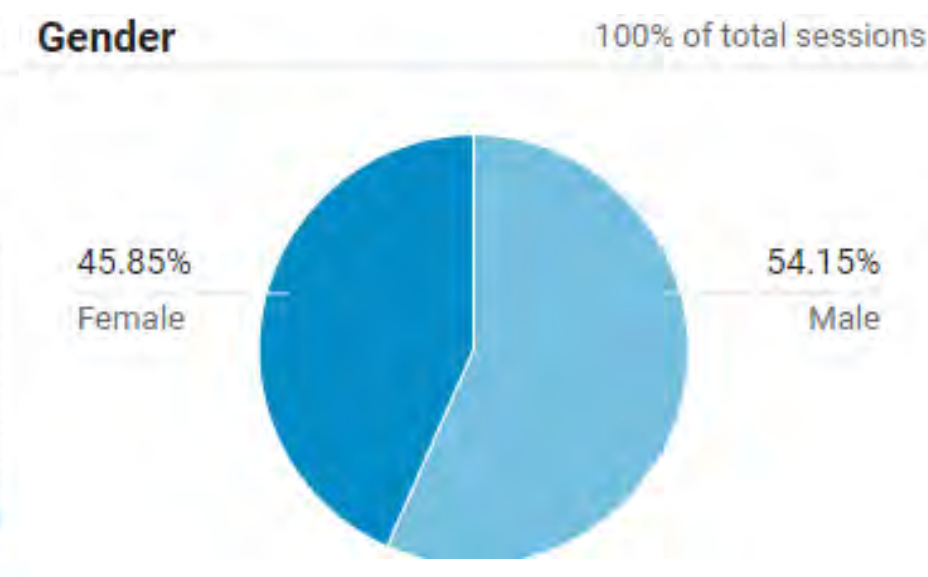
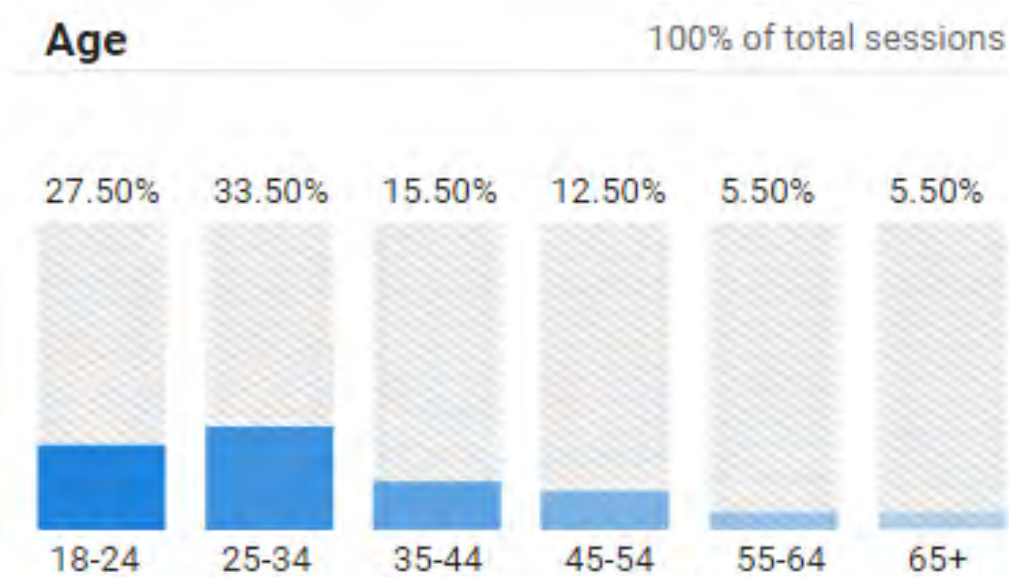
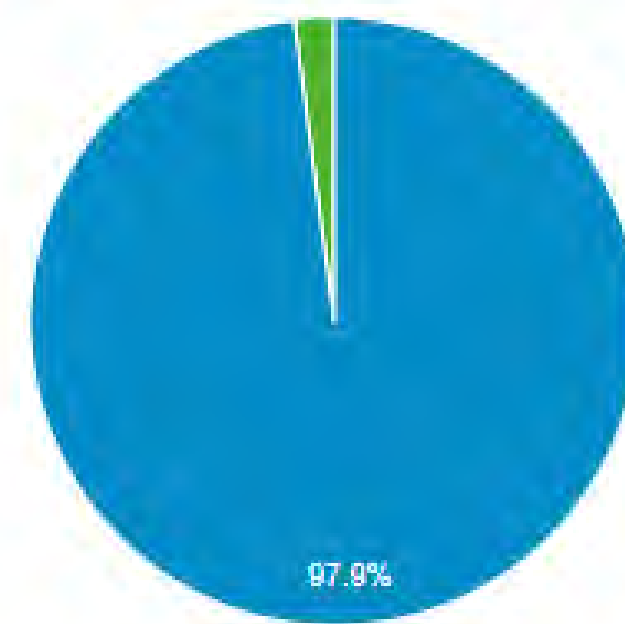
Website

- Users primarily visited the landing and news section page on the website.
- Traffic increased following each *High Desert Droplet* e-newsletter published, as well as directly after live social media events and community cleanups.
- We plan to update our website navigation in the '22-'23 Fiscal Year to optimize the user experience and encourage more website visits.

Average Session Duration '21-'22 FY



■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor



Website



Testimonials from
business partners



“Partnering together with MRWG to educate our community about stormwater pollution prevention has been a rewarding experience. The team is awesome and accommodating and the “swag bags” are a great way to get the word out to our clients and tenants about protecting our water source. We are proud to partner with this organization.”

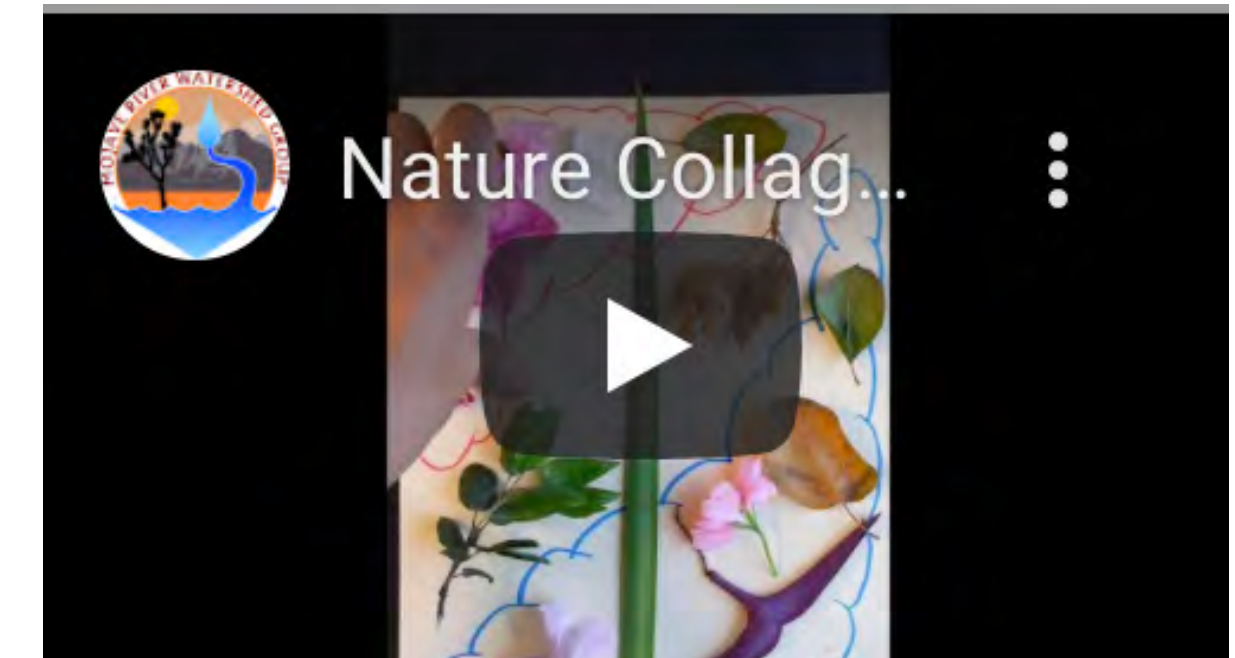
- Gail Piper, Coldwell Banker Home Source Brokerage Services Coordinator

“The Mojave River Watershed Group did a wonderful job giving the Garden Guide presentation to our students and parents on Earth Day. The children that participated recently came in very excited showing us pictures of their seeds sprouting. The parents that attended the Garden Guide presentation acknowledged that they didn’t previously know that washing your car in the driveway could cause stormwater pollution, but will now implement stormwater best practices in their home.”

– Lilia Rodriguez, Child Care Resource Center

Website

- Continued expansion of website video library to include new educational student activities led by Stormwater Trooper Marty:
 - ▶ [DIY Plant Absorption Experiment](#)
 - ▶ [Kitchen Compost DIY](#)
 - ▶ [Upcycling at Home Tutorial](#)
 - ▶ [DIY Backyard Nature Collage](#)



Community Outreach

Strategy

Utilized online presence to drive digital pledges allowing High Desert residents to make their commitment to stormwater savvy practices.

- Sponsored and/or staffed four community clean-up events in partnership with the cities of Hesperia and Victorville:
 - City of Hesperia Community Clean-up – October 29, 2021
 - City of Hesperia Community Clean-up – April 9, 2022
 - City of Victorville Community Clean-up - April 23, 2022
 - City of Victorville Community Clean-up - October 23, 2021
 - Provided MRWG kits to clean-up participants; shared on social media and website



Community Outreach

- Worked collaboratively with community partners to promote events and initiatives
 - Hesperia Parks
 - In the High Desert
 - Community Events



Community Outreach

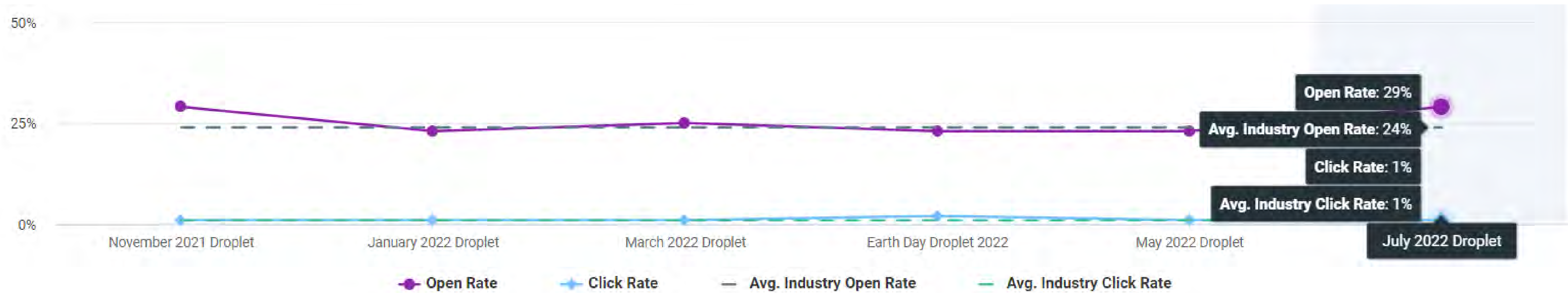
- High Desert Droplet
 - Seven e-newsletters were distributed to 1,227 subscribed MRWG community members
- The average open rate for the Droplet is 5% higher than industry average



E-Newsletters Distributed



Subscribed MRWG Community Members



Community Outreach

High Desert Droplet Articles						
August 2021	November 2021	January 2022	March 2022	May 2022	July 2022	Special Edition
Sustaining a Green Back-to-School!	Giving Thanks for a Green Community	Keeping the High Desert Beautiful in 2022	What is a Watershed?	What goes in a Garbage Disposal?	#Stormwater Savvy Summer Activities	Earth Day - Take the Pledge for a Chance to Win Giveaway
Act Now by Hosting a Neighborhood Clean-Up!	When it Rains it Pours—Stormwater Pollution in our Watershed	Renovate, Don't Contaminate	Commit to Keeping the Mojave River Pollution Free	Bulky Item Pick-Ups	Water Wise Landscaping	
Three Ways to Green Your Football Watch Parties	What is the Mojave River Watershed Group?	Microplastics Have a Big Impact	Earth Day Activities	Business Highlight: Nate's Nursery	How to Recycle Your Household Hazardous Waste	

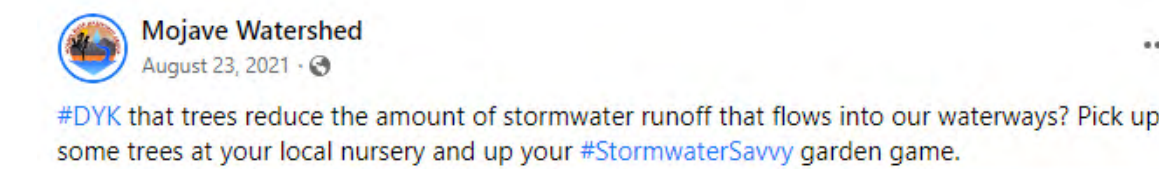
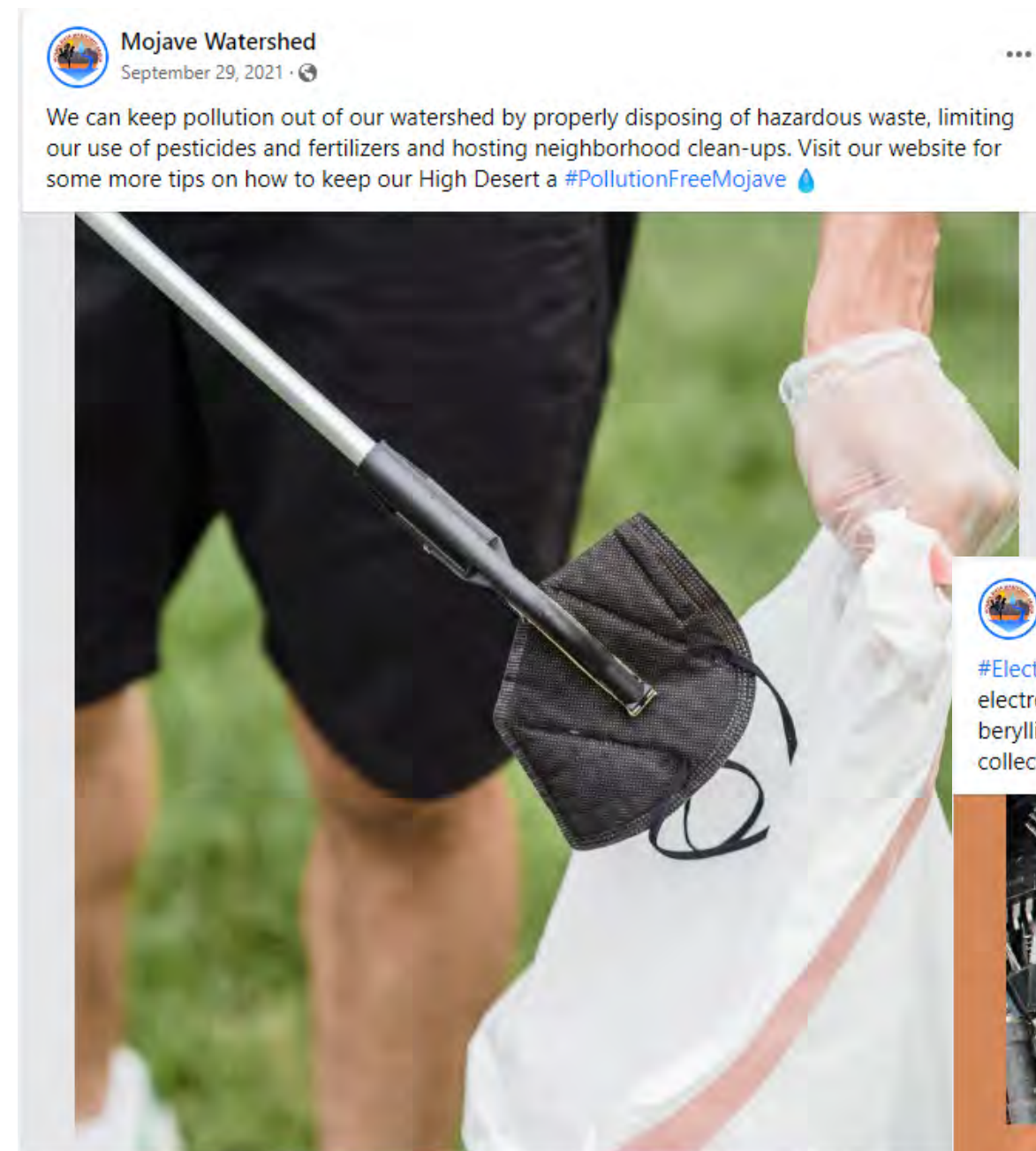


Social Media Outreach

Strategy

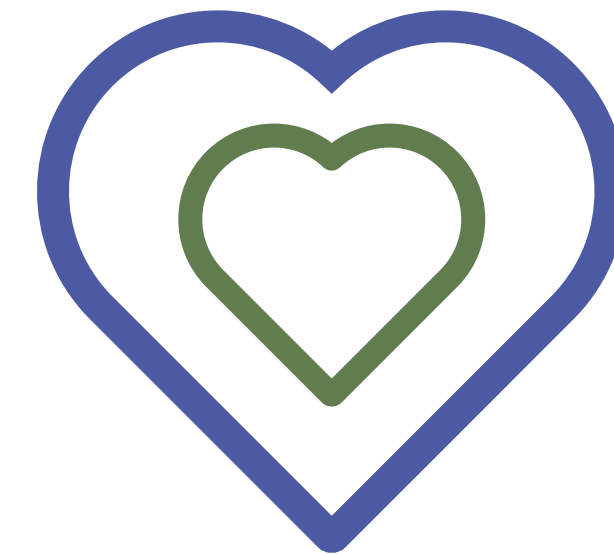
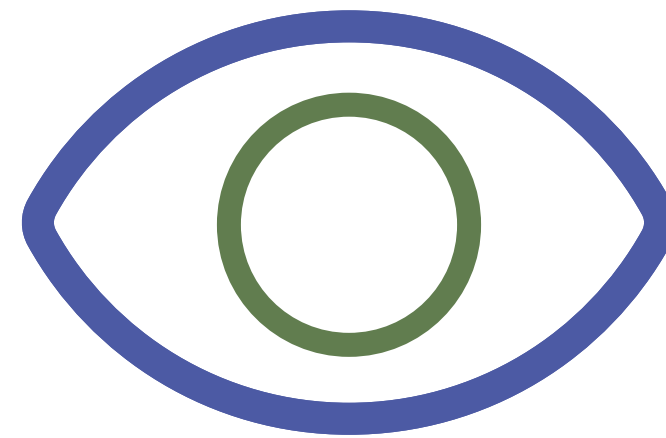
Use digital media to share MRWG's mission and strengthen its reputation as the go-to resource for stormwater-savvy news, resources and best practices.

- Kicked off the 21/22 FY with a series of Did You Know? (DYK) posts. This series highlighted MRWG's mission and educated the High Desert community about their impact on the watershed.
 - Planting trees to prevent stormwater runoff
 - How to dispose of electronic waste
 - How to keep the High Desert pollution free



Social Media Outreach

Analytics between August 2021 - July 2022*



Instagram following increased by 9% bringing total page followers to 714



Facebook following increased by 3% bringing total page likes to 646



Total Facebook Impressions; an increase of 15% over last year



Total Instagram Impressions; slightly higher than last year



Total Facebook Engagement; an impressive increase of 126.3%



Total Instagram Engagement; an increase of 51.4% from last year

* Twitter was a new platform that we started engaging towards the end of 21'-22' FY. This will be reflected in future reports.



Social Media Outreach

- Hosted social media giveaways on Facebook and Instagram to increase likes/follows, encourage conversations and promote MRWG pledges
 - For Earth Day, we hosted a chance to win a prize pack with #stormwatersavvy stickers, branded doggie water bowl and bags, MRWG information, t-shirt and more!
 - One giveaway item that was a huge success were the succulent pins. These are small, colorful cacti that folks can pin to various apparel. MRWG social media followers could enter to win by taking the Stormwater Trooper pledge. This giveaway was offered in both October of 2021 and March, 2022.



Social Media Outreach

Mojave Watershed
Thu 3/3/2022 8:01 am PST


What is a watershed? We're glad you asked! A watershed is an area of land that collects water and drains into a larger body of water, such as a river. #WhatsAWatershed #MRWG



Total Engagements	910
Reactions	268
Comments	4
Shares	11
Post Link Clicks	—

Mojave Watershed
Tue 9/21/2021 11:23 am PDT


It's giveaway time High Desert fans! Two winners will receive one of these adorable succulent pins! Succulents are a #StormwaterSavvy staple in #HighDesert neighborhoods an...



Total Engagements	100
Reactions	19
Comments	9
Shares	11
Post Link Clicks	13

Mojave Watershed
Fri 4/22/2022 8:09 am PDT

Happy Earth Day! We're giving away a #StormwaterSavvy prize pack that includes a Hydroflask, sunglasses, stickers and more. To enter, pledge to be #PollutionFree at...



Enter by pledging to be #PollutionFree at MojaveRiver.org or by using the link in bio!

Total Engagements	88
Reactions	35
Comments	3
Shares	0
Post Link Clicks	12

mojavewatershed
Thu 6/23/2022 11:20 am PDT


The #MojaveRiver flows throughout the Mojave Desert and eastern San Bernardino Mountains of San Bernardino County, California. 🌱



Total Engagements	20
Likes	18
Comments	2
Saves	0

mojavewatershed
Mon 2/7/2022 9:59 am PST


Coyotes live in the #HighDesert and share our water supply. Pollution we create affects their water supply, so let's be mindful of what we release into our High Desert! 💧



Total Engagements	19
Likes	17
Comments	1
Saves	1

mojavewatershed
Tue 5/31/2022 8:09 am PDT

Take our Business Pledge to be #StormwaterSavvy and we'll post about your business on our social media. https://www.mojaveriver.org/app_pages/view/172 #MRWG



Total Engagements	17
Likes	12
Comments	5
Saves	0

Top Performing Posts

Followers heavily engaged with community-centric posts. This included giveaways, education on what is a watershed, and local business highlights. While we encouraged individuals to take the MRWG pledge, we also offered businesses that took the pledge an opportunity to be highlighted in social media posts.



Media Outreach

Strategy

Use traditional media to tell MRWG's story to the High Desert and beyond.

- Secured story on *"Protecting our Watershed this Earth Day and Every Day"*
- Developed thought leadership OpEd on behalf of MRWG committee regarding increased litter in the pandemic aftermath



Pandemic fallout: Increased litter, waste a threat to High Desert's watershed

Jonathan Dillon Guest Columnist

Published 10:33 a.m. PT April 29, 2022 | Updated 5:49 p.m. PT April 29, 2022



Looking ahead in 2021-2022

Amid the Covid-19 pandemic, we shifted our focus to digitally-oriented outreach. As we all adapt to a new landscape, MRWG is evolving. We have taken the lessons learned in the past two years to grow with our High Desert community, and increase our effectiveness protecting our watershed. Here are some of the new programs and approaches we will implement in the next fiscal year.

- ▶ Website
 - Improve navigational friendliness, branding, messaging and ability to drive more traffic
- ▶ Community Outreach
 - Continue to participate in city-led programs and clean-up events
 - Work with Victor Valley College to recruit local volunteers for MRWG events
- ▶ Business Outreach
 - Through local events, chamber of commerce and Ignite High Desert, we will engage with local businesses
 - Highlight local businesses that take the pledge in advertising and on social media
- ▶ School Outreach
 - Renew participation in area science fairs
 - Update enviroscape and curricula for science courses
- ▶ Social Media Outreach
 - Increase dynamic content and posts in Spanish-language posts
- ▶ Advertising
 - Highlight local businesses and stormwater savvy practices



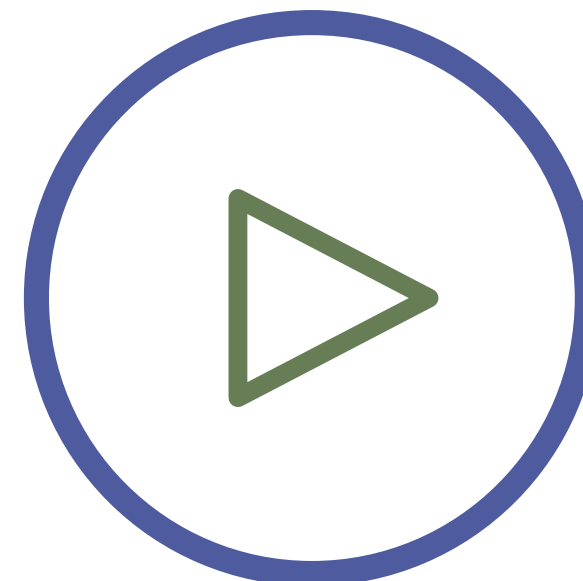
Website Updates



Local Volunteer Engagement



New Advertising Opportunities



Dynamic Social Content



City-led Programs



Community Clean-ups



Community College Partnerships

