

- A majority of citizens make up our board of directors
- Citizen driven local initiatives

- An efficient organization
 - 97% of our budget goes to grant funding; less than 3% is utilized for administration
 - Opportunities to find cost-sharing strategies with partner organizations
 - Access State resources to prevent duplication of natural resource efforts

- Building a legacy for the future
 - Our natural resources are the gifts we give our children; the Trust works to conserve these resources for the future.
 - The Trust emphasizes local involvement to solve resource issues in communities across Nebraska.

- Deserves public support
 - The Trust historically and consistently turns away three in every four dollars requested due to lack of funds.
 - When appropriate, remind the public the funds provided to the Trust are continuously subject to reallocation.

Brand Image and Positioning

Audience members will be educated that the Trust is a partner with many of the conservation groups they are familiar with and provides grants that allow our partners to do their important conservation work. The financial support of the Nebraska Environmental Trust makes the difference in taking these projects from concept to reality.

Message Delivery

In developing a message delivery plan for 2018-2019, an evaluation of our past activities revealed that there is still room for improvement in providing information to a larger audience in an efficient and timely manner. The Trust will look at participating or co-hosting events on a larger scale to maximize publicity to its target audience. Press releases and media interviews with local & state press members will be expanded, where primarily in the past they focused on the Trust grant cycle as required by Trust policies, but provided little information about local projects of interest for readers.

An enhanced delivery system using a combination of traditional and electronic formats will be used to deliver messages to the audiences described earlier. The Trust continues to build on “Resource”, our newsletter to highlight some of the projects and activities done for the month. This newsletter is delivered via e-mail to approximately 2,500 individuals and organizations. The newsletter has also been re-created to have a modern feel and look to represent our image. It generally focuses on one or two grantee projects, provides up-to-date information about the Trust and activities and notifies the public and grantees of upcoming events and deadlines. This information is also made available to media outlets via press release and our website.

This strategy should result in an increased frequency of contact with our audience members at a lower cost. Additional public relations activities will focus on cultivating relationships with reporters and editorial boards, in combination with media purchases in local newspapers and on local radio.

Purchase media buys in commercial TV, radio and local newspapers will be used on a wider scale to reach audience members not reached in previous communications efforts. Although the Trust has explored Public Service Announcements in the past years, we have found that more and more radio stations are offering that as a paid service these days. It has been a challenge trying to get PSAs without a cost involved. We have however compensated that by finding great deals during sale campaigns. Advertising will focus on how each community benefits from Trust grants. Additionally, in combination with the public relations activities described previously, these media buys will increase awareness of our organization and should result in more news stories written about the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

As a beneficiary of the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust will continue to work with the Nebraska Lottery to spread its message through Lottery events and their promotional road shows. We are always working with Lottery staff and its new Director to provide information about the projects that we fund and how to integrate our projects with their advertising efforts.

We will continue to participate at the Nebraska State Fair, Missouri River Outdoor Expo, Earth Day celebrations, World O' Water Fest, Heron Haven Wetland Festival, Children's Groundwater Festival, Lincoln Water Fest, Husker Harvest Days, Ponca Expo and co-promote events put together by our grantee organizations. The Trust's promotional materials are distributed widely at these events.

The Trust website continues to provide a constant point of reference for Trust grantees and the public. It will continue to be updated regularly with relevant content. Resources for grantees on the site will continue to expand with the continued availability of reporting forms that can be downloaded and completed electronically and returned for processing.

Advertising

- Advertising through broadcast media, selected magazines and print media.
- Grantee advertising in local media outlets (radio and newspaper)

Direct Marketing

- General Trust brochure that is distributed to at all events and distributed to grantee organizations.
- Resource newsletter delivered via broadcast e-mail (E-News).
- Annual Report: distributed to mailing list and provided to partner organizations for distribution.
- Distribution of Trust materials by partner organizations.

Website

- Monthly news flashes.
- Maintenance of our website with improved user-friendly features.
- To continue with updates with new grantee stories and content development.

- To retain and track usage of electronic versions of quarterly forms, Trust logos and other relevant information.
- To build on current database of contacts.
- To monitor popularity of website such as the number of visits and hits.

Social Media

- In the last two years the Trust has embarked on promotions through social media and it is in our plans to continue with our presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The pages have been a great tool in interacting with our grantees and Trust contacts although primary modes of communications such as e-mail and the website still takes precedence.

Public Relations

- Press releases about grantee projects in targeted markets
- Press releases for new Chairman, new board members, re-appointments and major Trust events.
- Sponsorship of Radio/TV stations for environment related programs
- Development of joint public relations projects with selected grantees
- Incorporate PR opportunities with scheduled site visits
- Meetings between media members and the Trust's Executive Director

Event Sponsorship

- Work with partners to distribute Trust materials at events or share event sponsorships
- A list of events to be participated in is reflected in Appendix 1.

Breakdown of Message Delivery by Audience

	General Nebraskans	Partner Organizations	Policymakers	Media Outlets
Advertising	*Advertising in local media outlets – print and electronic			
Direct Marketing	*Annual Report *Trust Brochure *Lift-out on NET *Resource newsletter	*Annual Report *Trust Brochure *Lift-out on NET *Resource newsletter	*Annual Report *Trust Brochure *Lift-out on NET *Resource Newsletter	
Events	*Event sponsorships	*Potential collaborators for events		

Internet	*Website *Broadcast emails *Facebook *Twitter *You Tube	* Website *Broadcast emails *Facebook *Twitter *You Tube		* Website *Broadcast emails *Advertising campaigns
Public Relations	*Press releases *Radio & TV advertising		*Personal contact with Executive Director	*Press releases *Meetings with editorial boards

Conclusion

The 2018-2019 Communications Plan will continue to build on the recognition of the Nebraska Environmental Trust as a key funding agency for environmental causes within Nebraska. The marketing communications campaign is tailored to be cost-effective yet comprehensive and far reaching to spread the message of the Trust through out Nebraska and give it the credibility it deserves.

Appendix I: Budget and Estimated Expenditures for FY 2018 - 2019

Purchased Media = \$25,000

- Radio sponsorships (NET Foundation for Radio, KVRN, KZUM)
- KOLN- KGIN sponsorship (MYTV Sponsorship)
- Advertising in local radio, newspapers, internet and other print media

Direct Marketing = \$20,000

- Printing of Annual Report
- Exhibition Material, New Posters & Banners
- Online Grant Portal Management
- Miscellaneous printing of materials as needed

Events = \$12,450

- Participating in local recognition events
- Husker Harvest Days, Nebraska State Fair, Earth Day, Groundwater Festival, World O! Water, Missouri River Outdoor Expo at Ponca, Heron Haven Wetland Festival, Lincoln Water Fest and others.

PR & Promotions = \$12,450

- Marketing communications material for Nebraska Environmental Trust and the Ferguson House
- Public relations activities
- Web site maintenance

Total: \$69,900.00

(FY 2018- 2019)

Past Year's Budget

<i>Public Information Budget</i>			
<i>Year</i>	<i>17-18</i>	<i>16-17</i>	<i>15-16</i>
<i>Purchased Media</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>	<i>\$18,900</i>	<i>\$16,000</i>
<i>Direct Marketing</i>	<i>\$20,000</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>Events</i>	<i>\$12,450</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>	<i>\$15,000</i>
<i>PR & Promotions</i>	<i>\$12,450</i>	<i>\$12,000</i>	<i>\$12,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$69,900</i>	<i>\$60,900</i>	<i>\$58,000</i>

APPENDIX II - MEDIA SCHEDULE & CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2018

Event	Date	Description/Organizer	Venue
Rain Water Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar	February, 2018	Rain Water Basin Joint Venture	Grand Island
NET – 1 st Quarter Board Meeting	February 6, 2018 (Tuesday)	Nebraska Environmental Trust	Ferguson House, Lincoln
Nebraska Crane Festival	March, 2018	Audubon Society	Kearney
NET – 2 nd Quarter Board Meeting	April 5, 2018 (Thursday)	Nebraska Environmental Trust	Ferguson House, Lincoln
Lincoln Earth Day 2018	April 2018	City of Lincoln	UNL 12 th & R streets, Lincoln (TBA)
Earth Day Omaha 2018	April 2018	Earth Day Omaha Coalition	Elmwood Park, Omaha
Gallup's Earth Day	April 2018	Arbor Foundation	Gallup, Omaha
Annual Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival 2018	May 2018	Central Platte NRD & The Groundwater Foundation	Central Community College (CCC) & College Park, Grand Island
NET – 3 rd Quarter Board Meeting	Aug 6-7, 2018 (Mon-Tues)	Nebraska Environmental Trust	TBA
Nebraska State Fair 2018	August/ Sep 2018	State Fair Board	State Fair Park, Grand Island
World O! Water Festival	September 2018	City of Omaha/ Papio-Missouri NRD	Wehrspann Lake, 154 th Street and Giles Road
Heron Haven Wetland Festival	September, 2018	Heron Haven	120 th and Maple, Omaha
Missouri River Outdoor Expo	September 2018	NGPC	Ponca State Park
NET – 4 th Quarter Board Meeting	November 1, 2018 (Thursday)	Nebraska Environmental Trust	Ferguson House, Lincoln

* Site visits will include media opportunities with local radio, newspapers.

Appendix III: Research and Analysis

Situation Analysis

Analysis of Previous Efforts

The FY 2017-2018/FY2018-2019 Communications Plan outlines a media campaign using a combination of purchased media, direct marketing and event sponsorships. A majority of the suggested tactics has been and will be implemented over the course of two years: the newsletter circulation will be increased to a broader target group with the current subscription management system we have adopted. We have seen many new subscriptions this past year since the change. The Trust website will be maintained regularly highlighting some of the key projects funded by the Trust in the current fiscal year.

Outcomes from FY 2016-2017 Efforts

As a communications management tool, the Trust will continue to undertake surveys or obtain feedback where possible. Evaluation and feedback forms are always circulated at our grantee seminars and there were also surveys done after Categories Roundtable in 2015. The response to the survey was very forthcoming and many grantees, contacts and members of the public expressed more visibility in terms of Broadcast Advertising. Most expressed that the Trust was doing a good job in getting its message out and the communications strategies adopted thus far had been effective.

In conducting further surveys, the Trust may also collaborate with NASIS Survey (Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey) to study recent behavioral patterns and sociological experiences encountered by various study groups in Nebraska.

This data, while unscientific, has been used to tailor the communications strategy for the current Communications Plan.

Problems and Opportunities

The problems facing our organization are similar to those listed in the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis from the 2017 Communication Plan. In addition, through observation and research the following issues have been identified:

- There is still a lack of understanding of the mission of the Trust, leading to comparisons to other conservation groups. These misunderstandings are hindering our awareness-building efforts.
- There is still a lack of understanding of the benefits that Trust-funded projects provide. The audience does not understand how the projects we fund benefit them today; previous messages emphasized future benefits, implying limited benefits that can be enjoyed now.
- Some do not think that the environment is a priority.

SWOT Analysis (from FY 2017-2018 Communications Plan)

The SWOT method is commonly used to identify an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats from other sources. This model helps to define and focus our promotional messages for maximum effect.

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Large, supportive base of grantees ● Efficient: low overhead costs ● Funded by the lottery, not tax dollars ● Citizen driven and accessible to all ● Fulfills an essential need in our state ● Emphasizes projects across Nebraska ● Proven record of partnerships with other conservation organizations 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding subject to reallocation ● State agency, not a traditional non-profit ● Limited resources for public information efforts ● Relatively new in comparison to other organizations
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand public information activities to encourage public participation ● Expand publicity efforts through collaborative initiatives with grantee organizations and other agencies. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Misconception that the Trust uses tax dollars for projects ● Limited public awareness ● Possible decrease in grant funds due to legislative actions