



Special Ad Council Update Issue – June 2013

Subject Line: Gearing Up for a Potential Ad Council Water Campaign

WEF is very excited about the potential opportunity to work with the water sector and the Ad Council on a water public awareness campaign. Early feedback from our MAs suggests many of you share this enthusiasm. Again, thank you so much!

For those not familiar with the Ad Council, they began producing public service announcements in 1942 and strive to inspire social change to improve the lives of Americans. With the help of the nation's leading advertising agencies (who donate their creative talents and energy) and the media (who donate valuable ad space and time), the Ad Council produces, distributes and promotes public service campaigns on behalf of non-profit organizations and government agencies. You are likely familiar with a few of their more notable and iconic campaigns such as "Smokey Bear", 'Crash Test Dummies' and 'High School Dropout Prevention (A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste)'. I encourage you to take a few minutes to visit the Ad Council's website and learn more about their mission, experience and full portfolio of successful campaigns:

<http://www.adcouncil.org/Our-Work>.

In the last communication, I shared that the proposal schedule has been adjusted to early September to provide more time to complete research which will help us better understand what the public knows about water problems and what topics will resonate with them in terms of behavior changes that will correct or improve the problem. In addition, the extended schedule allows for more discussion and hopefully consensus on a water campaign topic that meets both the Ad Council criteria and the needs of the water sector. WEF is working closely with the Value of Water (VOW) Coalition, a group of six nonprofit water organizations and six private water-related companies to hone in on two to three promising issues, and there will be an opportunity to share your thinking on the top contenders in the near future.

While the members of the VOW Coalition believe the number one water-related issue in America is our need to invest in our water infrastructure, this issue does not meet the Ad Council's criteria -- which is to determine a major public issue and identify actions an individual citizen can take to correct or improve the situation. There are many water

issues that lend themselves to citizen actions and that could form the basis of a national campaign and also substantially raise the visibility of water. But feedback from the Ad Council is that the water sector should choose one issue and begin building the campaign around it – others can be added over the three years.

While we evaluate the research results, and use these to help identify which water issues are best suited for an Ad Council campaign, we must begin thinking about the potential funding of the project. While we realize the current economic conditions aren't optimum, we are extremely grateful for the chance we've been given, and we realize this opportunity won't pass our way again.

We will do our part to meet the Ad Council's partner-funding requirements of \$3 Million (\$1 Million per year for three years) plus another 1.5 million to cover the costs of running a national campaign including fundraising, financial management and oversight, legal compliance plus coordination with the Ad Council and the potential development of supplementary materials. The total over three years will be about \$4.5 million. We know that's a large amount, but this investment will leverage the Ad Council's average \$90 million in pro-bono professional development and ad placement in multiple media over the three years.

There are many water sector organizations willing to do their part, and we are asking our MAs to get creative, perhaps set up MA challenges or competitions or share your own fundraising ideas with others, and tell us how you can help fund this initiative. If your MA is willing to help fund this initiative, please make your pledge by August 1 on the fundraising website: <http://adfunding.watersworthit.org/> . Also on this website, you will find a Q&A, a presentation and many other materials. We will know if we have an Ad Council project in mid September, and if so, collections would be needed by January 31, 2014 for year one.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact me, or any other member of the WEF Board of Trustees or WEF staff beginning with Linda Kelly - LKelly@wef.org.

This truly is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and we must act quickly. On behalf of the WEF Board or Trustees and the staff, we thank you for any pledge your MA can make towards the campaign. We will use the WEF Leader and our websites to post pledges and provide regular updates. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Cordell Samuels

President, Water Environment Federation