



National Association of Flood & Stormwater Management Agencies
2023 Excellence in Communications Award Application
For Projects Started after January 1, 2018, and completed by March 31, 2023
March 31, 2023, 11:59pm EST Deadline for Application Submission

Award Applications can only be submitted electronically at
nafsma2023awards@NAFSMA2022.onmicrosoft.com

If this is a partnered project, please list both entities and contact information for both.

Agency/Company Name _____

Project Name _____

Awards Category _____

Contact Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

For Public Agencies – Service Population: More Than 250,000 Less Than 250,000 (Check One)

For Private Firms – Number of Employees: More Than 30 Less Than 30 (Check One)

Submission Category (Please check below):

1. **Public Awareness of Flooding and/or Flood Prevention and/or Emergency Preparedness**
 - a. Communication Campaign _____ (Check here)
 - b. Individual Item (i.e., one brochure, one radio commercial, one billboard, etc.) _____ (Check here)
2. **Improving Water Quality**
 - a. Communication Campaign _____ (Check here)
 - b. Individual Item (i.e., one brochure, one radio commercial, one billboard, etc.) _____ (Check here)

Online application package should be submitted in one pdf file with agency or company name included in title of pdf file. The application package cannot exceed 5 MB.

Please note that applications for newsletter, brochure flyer or print publication, as well as outdoor category (picture or poster) need to be submitted in print-ready pdf format.

- 1) Completed Application Form
- 2) Project Description, Including Associated Costs of Production and Distribution
- 3) 500 word maximum written explanation of why the submission should be considered
- 4) Provide example of project (brochure (print ready pdf), posters (print ready pdf), radio commercial, video (please provide public available urls)
- 5) Describe the impact, effectiveness, and outcome of the campaign or item (for example, did the campaign result in greater emergency preparedness or improved water quality and how?)
- 6) Measurable metrics on the reach of the campaign or item ((# of participants, people reached, etc.)

I consent that my application submission can be used in Awards Video.

Please contact Dusty Williams: dustyw2015@gmail.com or 951-313-0257; Sunny Simpkins sunnys@nafsma.org or 503-705-4944 with questions.



4 NATOMAS

LEVEES, LIFT PUMPS, LIVES, LONGEVITY

Reclamation District No. 1000

4Natomas – Levees, Lift Pumps, Lives, Longevity

The Challenge

Second only to New Orleans, the Natomas Basin, North of Sacramento, is one of the most at-risk urban areas in the country for catastrophic flooding. For over one hundred years, the local reclamation district, RD1000, has been tasked with providing flood protection for its 60,000 acres and more than 140,000 residents. Very few residents knew who was responsible for this protection, much less the fact that the critical flood prevention infrastructure had not been updated in over 30 years and required substantial infrastructure improvements. The leadership at RD1000 needed to first educate their constituents, then ask their residents to vote on an increased property related fee to help fund the nearly \$94,000,000 in capital improvements needed to ensure a flood safe future.

Nobody likes to pay more in taxes, so we knew there would be some resistance. Starting over 18 months before the vote, RD1000 leadership and consultant team started planning how to best clearly communicate the initiative's benefits. Our team worked to establish a strategy; develop a clear message around the key benefits; and finally, plan all aspects of the campaign around the key milestones on this critical district-wide vote.

Step 1: Brand the Campaign

Everyone understood the strategy to simplify the story and develop public trust through a new narrative. Through our brand development process, **4 Natomas** became the new brand for this awareness campaign. This simple brand would highlight the 4 main benefits RD1000 provided Natomas residents — Levees, Lift Pumps, Lives, and Longevity.

Step 2: Craft the platforms

Armed with this new brand, our team went to work building the platforms necessary to get the word out to the general public. We began by designing a memorable and friendly branding system and extended it to a unique website, www.4natomas.org, which served as our flexible messaging hub as well as a feature where landowners could enter their information and see their exact economic impact. An explainer video outlined the story and clearly communicated the district's needs. Traffic was sent to the site during the 6-month billboard, local newspaper, social media, direct mail, and targeted, digital streaming audio and video advertising campaign.



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Step 3: Deliver the Message

The next steps in our strategy included integrating a paid advertising program with our coordinated mix of strategically-timed earned media and grass-roots, local outreach. The public relations team strategically placed members of RD1000 leadership in the media, at meetings with large landholders, local community meetings, distributing press releases, news articles and op-eds building authority while keeping the public updated on each step of the process and promoting trust in RD1000.

Step 4: Capitalize on the Moment

Our work originally began in 2021 amid a historical drought, with the final vote scheduled to take place during, what would soon become a historically wet winter. During this time, a major New York Times article about the looming threat of mega-storms in the west also helped to bring a national spotlight directly to the Natomas region. The flexible team capitalized on these two events and transformed the message into one of urgency, as the rain began to fall in January of 2023.

Step 5: Get Tactical

Over the course of the next 18 months, the experienced collection of public relations experts, lawyers, copywriters, printers, designers, photographers, videographers, and web developers worked tirelessly to develop the assessment, integrate the program and educate the voters. The team produced all of these communication materials, including videos and advertisements — even the materials for the actual vote. Ballots, voter guides, and certified return envelopes, with the requisite notifications, were all created and successfully delivered on time to the voters.

Results

The District spent roughly \$350,000 on the outreach program. Overall, the team delivered over 15 million total impressions over the course of the entire campaign. While impressions are a valuable number to validate our efforts, the true measure would be if the public approved this new property related fee. With a historically-high 23% voter turnout, the property related fee measure passed with a 56% majority vote. With the design and communication help of the whole RD1000 team, the residents of Natomas had the information they needed to make the courageous decision to help ensure a flood-safe future for Natomas.



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Resources:

- Webpage:

www.4natomas.org

- Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ruab-vcgQ7w&t=14s>

- News Media:

<https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/levee-district-will-ask-natomas-residents-to-help-fund-improvements/?intcid=CNM-00-10abd1h>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtExKHknPyU&t=7s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-8UqIKVtY4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtU7yZVE0Ek>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nv1XQfQgZI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHU4ePSt-hs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHU4ePSt-hs>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/sacramento-flood-pumps-die-mid-storm/?intcid=CNM-00-10abd1h>

- Print Media:

<http://www.4natomas.org/resources>

- Presentation:

https://assets.website-files.com/624369ac0ba6d5aeef29fa9e/629fca599b5b5b5c277d6906_4Natomas%20Powerpoint.pdf