



2026 Outreach, Communications and Intergovernmental Plan

Overview: Cascade and its members provide cost effective essential services in a governance model that is efficient and flexible to provide safe, reliable water for the future. This plan is driven by Cascade’s strategic plan and shaped through input from members. Cascade’s goal is to ensure it can provide services and reach key audiences and the public through effective communications and outreach programs. The plan builds on existing intergovernmental, outreach and communications efforts through a flexible service delivery model. Plans include separate outreach for member service areas and the Lake Tapps Reservoir community, with an emphasis on connecting with communities in both traditional and virtual ways.

Key Audiences:

- Our members, their councils, commissions and members’ residents
- Regional partners
- Key influencers that impact Cascade
- Residents surrounding Lake Tapps Reservoir

Key Messages:

- Cascade *is* its members. The organization is lean and nimble. Cascade and its members are ready to respond to challenges facing water supply and emergencies so customers can get water.
- Cascade leads regional advocacy and partners towards solutions.
- Cascade leads and supports efforts to provide a resilient water supply.
- Cascade and its members use water wisely.
- The Lake Tapps Reservoir is a future municipal water supply and nearby residents and Cascade care about water quality.

Strategies: To reach Cascade’s objectives, Cascade will continue and expand on its long history and strong culture of regional collaboration and leadership to:

- Lead and participate in processes for regional solutions to common challenges facing Cascade, its members and other water providers, including advocating for legislative interests.
- Collaborate and promote water-related issues that support Cascade and member interests with the Water Supply Forum, state government, industry and federal government, in policy and regulatory arenas, as opportunities arise.

- Continue resiliency planning and activities to meet the needs of Cascade, its members, customers and businesses.
- Continue a strong water quality outreach program at Lake Tapps Reservoir in anticipation of eventual municipal water supply use for members.

2026 Tactics - Overview:

- Continue to develop and implement flexible (both traditional and virtual) options for service delivery.
- Focus on outstanding regional leadership in all aspects of Cascade's operations.
- Develop and implement an outreach plan/process to introduce Cascade's new CEO and to begin relationship building with key leaders and stakeholders.
- Establish and implement a legislative agenda.
- Implement an outreach plan focusing on natural yard care, septic system inspections, water quality and milfoil treatment messaging for the Lake Tapps Reservoir.
- Continue implementation of creative social media options to reach Cascade and its members' leaders, businesses, industry sectors and residents.
- Combine traditional media, social media, advertising, meetings with key stakeholders and council/commissions of members and of the Lake Tapps Reservoir community as well as sponsorships, events, informational campaigns, TappsWise water quality efforts and other programs.
- Develop a year-long calendar that is updated throughout the year to ensure tactics are being finished and objectives met.

Evaluation: At the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2026, ask members for feedback and develop the 2027 Outreach, Communications and Intergovernmental Plan.

Tactics to Implement 2026 Plan

TACTIC	ACTIVITY	
<u>Partnership with Members</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update councils, commissions as needed or on specific issues as requested, updates, alerts • Work on regional legislative issues; support members’ legislative agendas • Monthly member updates, meetings as needed • Update members’ key stakeholders, business leaders, civic groups, etc., as requested • Support resiliency efforts • Coordinate on social media strategies 	
<u>Focus for 2026</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer member council/commission and staff presentations and/or briefings on issues including the Cascade Supply Program implementation and 2027-28 budget • Develop plan for new CEO introductions and presentations. • Continue to grow the newly established relationship with Tacoma Water • Continue established outreach via traditional outreach vehicles to identified audiences and public; expand web and social media outreach with new strategies • Continue to implement TappsWise natural yard care program, septic system maintenance education and Lake Tapps monitoring for water quality • Continue milfoil treatment coordination and messaging with the Lake Tapps community; explore native vegetation treatment options and appropriate messaging for any Cascade program • Continue the Lake Tapps Reservoir education campaign for new residents • Support ongoing implementation of the “Turf Out” program 	
<u>Legislative, Public Policy, Advocacy and Outreach</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Affairs Committee (monthly; first Wednesday or as decided by the committee) • State Legislative Agenda / 2026 Legislative Session - work with Cascade’s lobbyist on legislative plan to achieve priorities as outlined in agenda 	
<u>Community Relations and Outreach</u>	Members’ targeted outreach plans	<p>Create plans for key issues as needed</p> <p>Create plans for key stakeholders as needed</p>

	Continue chamber memberships and consider new memberships as appropriate	Chamber memberships: Join and participate as appropriate in all member service area chambers and those in the Lake Tapps Reservoir community
	Lake Tapps Reservoir community	Focus on water quality/natural yard care; advertising; operations; milfoil; community meetings; and meetings with Four Cities' mayors as needed
	Industry Groups, National industry	WWUC, WASWD, AMWA, AWWA
	New CEO outreach	Develop target list and timing to include all member councils and commissions and staff; Tacoma Water reps; chambers of commerce; key events; and others; 4 cities, and Lake Tapps Reservoir community
<u>Communications</u>	Earned media	Proactive communications opportunities for Cascade through stories, op-eds releases, etc.
	Web and Social Media	<p>Drive to web for latest on Cascade, members, water quality and increase ability to use to get news out; website allows staff to do work internally; continue to improve and enhance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to enhance integrated social media strategy that engages residents and businesses, including the We Need Water platform, video, web, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube • Continue updates to water efficiency resource page with new information, links, Cascade program offerings etc.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create new videos and podcasts • Ongoing water quality focus and information and resources • Ability to issue alerts
	<p>Paid Advertising – Members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade Gardener (several opportunities throughout the year), NW Flower and Garden Festival (February), Fix a Leak Week (March) • Others as needed 	Continue use of digital ads with Sound Publishing and/or other publications in vehicles (i.e. geofencing, online papers, etc.) that cover members
	<p>Paid Advertising -- Lake Tapps Reservoir</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber Collective back page • Announcements • ‘Who to Call’ update • SwimSafe promotions • TappsWise info/workshops 	Continue use of digital ads with Sound Publishing and other publications in vehicles (i.e. geofencing, online papers, etc.) that cover Lake Tapps Reservoir area
	Water efficiency support – members	NW Flower and Garden Festival, Cascade Gardener classes, turf removal education, leak detection, road shows, curriculum and enhanced web resources; water use efficiency rule outreach; irrigation and wise water through building efficiencies; water shortage messaging, other support as requested by members
	Periodic e-newsletter	Effort to reach leaders, key stakeholders and residents with Cascade information; include newsletter to communicate about Cascade in the community for summer events/activities
	Wise Water Use/Cascade Gardener/We Need Water	Outreach to promote classes, wise water use messages, water wall appearances, enhanced We

		Need Water social media strategies
	Update, maintain and build a current, usable database	Collect new contact information throughout the year through all appropriate Cascade activities (fairs, classes, newsletter, etc.), after November elections and update database of contacts for emergency communications: manage through existing Campaign Monitor platform content
<u>Sponsorships and community events</u>	Sponsorships: Major regional events as well as events in member areas and around Lake Tapps; Omnibus Sponsorship Package to full board in January 2025 for approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NW Flower and Garden Festival - February • Bellevue Family 4th – July • Issaquah Salmon Days – October • Kirkland Concerts or farmers market – July/August • Redmond Derby Days - July • Sammamish Sustainable Farmers market - August • Skyway Health/Safety Fair – August • Tukwila Events - July/Aug • Other Farmers Markets, etc. • Bonney Lake/Tunes at Tapps - August • Beautify Bonney Lake – September • New sponsorships as recommended through the staff and committee process

2026 Outreach and Communications Calendar

Month	Date	Activity or Event	Lead / notes	Status
Jan	1	January Member Update	AB	
	7	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	6	East King County Chambers Legislative Coalition breakfast	AB/SL	
	12	Legislative Session begins	AB	
	On-going	Prep for Cascade Gardner ads in member service areas to run Feb through April	AB/SL/JA	
	28	Board meeting – Board adopts sponsorship plan for 2026	All	
	TBD	Forum meeting	AB	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going	Ongoing presence in Olympia; update members as needed	AB	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	On-going	Gather sponsor information/documents	SL	
February	1	February Member Update	AB	
	4	Public Affairs meeting	AB/SL	
	TBD	Press release: Lake Tapps Reservoir Spring Fill	AB/SL/JA	
	By 2/15	Annual major database updates	AB/SL	
	Mid-February	Cascade Gardner ads in member service areas	AB/SL/JA	
	18-22	NW Flower and Garden Festival (booth, WNW display) Lead sponsor	JA	
	25	Board meeting/annual meeting	ALL	
		Begin preparing annual Spring Newsletter with new terms for leadership	AB/SL/JA	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going	Ongoing presence in Olympia/Legislative session continues	AB	
	On-going	Provide members with information for their water quality reports (CCRs) if updates needed	AB	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	On-going	Planning for TappsWise Natural Yard Care workshop(s) and program	AB/TPCHD	
		TBD	Begin Planning/pick date for Lake Tapps Reservoir Community meeting	AB/SL
March	1	March Member Update	AB	
	4	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	Feb - April	Cascade Gardner ads in member service areas	AB/SL/JA	
	TBD	Prepare annual Spring Newsletter with new terms for leadership	AB/SL/JS	

	TBD	Fix a Leak Week ads	AB/JA/SL	
	TBD	Fix a Leak Week press release	AB/JA/SL	
	16-22	National Fix a Leak Week	AB/JA	
	25	Board Meeting	ALL	
	March - June	Cascade Gardener Classes in member service areas	JA	
	TBD	2025 Who to Call updates made	PA/AB	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going	Ongoing presence in Olympia/Legislative session continues	AB	
	On-going	Continue planning for Lake Tapps Reservoir Community meeting	AB/SL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	On-going	Planning for TappsWise Natural Yard Care and Septic System workshop(s)	AB/SL/TPCHD	
April	1	April Member update	AB	
	1	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	TBD	Prepromotion of National Drinking Water Week	AB/JA/SL	
	22	Board meeting	ALL	
	On-going	Cascade Gardener Classes	JA	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	TBD	Forum meeting	AB	
	On-going	Continue planning for Lake Tapps Reservoir Community meeting including postcard/ad/release	AB/SL	
	On-going	Planning for TappsWise Natural Yard Care and Septic System workshop(s)	AB/TPCHD	
May	1	Verify with member jurisdictions sponsor/event summer strategy	SL	
	6	May Member Update	AB	
	3-9	National Drinking Water Week	AB/SL/JA	
	TBD	Press release: Lake Tapps Maximum refill	AB/JS/SL	
	7	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	TBD	TappsWise workshops	AB/TPCHD	
	TBD	Spring e-Newsletter to communicate Cascade in the community for summer festivals and events	AB/SL/JA	
	27	Board Meeting	ALL	
	On-going	Continued prep for Lake Tapps Reservoir Community Meeting/Hold meeting	AB/SL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	

	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
June	1	June Member Update	AB	
	3	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	TBD	Four Cities annual meeting with mayors	AB/new CEO	
	TBD or May	Lake Tapps Reservoir Community Meeting – in person	AB/SL	
	24	Board Meeting	ALL	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going/TBD	Farmers Markets	JA	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	Throughout	Members issue Water Quality Reports (CCRs)	AB	
July	1	July Member Update	AB	
	1	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	4	Bellevue Family 4 th (WNW wall and booth)	SL/JA	
	10-11	Redmond Derby Days (WNW wall and booth)	SL/JA	
	TBD or Aug	Tukwila Events	SL/JA	
	TBD	Forum meetings	AB	
	22	Board Meeting	ALL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	TBD	Kirkland Farmers Markets	JA/SL	
August	1	August Member Update sent	AB	
	5	Public Affairs Committee (or cancel?)	AB/SL	
	TBD	Sammamish Event (WNW wall and booth)	SL/JA	
	TBD	Bonney Lake Days/Tunes at Tapps	SL	
	TBD	Skyway West Hill Health and Safety Fair (WNW wall and booth)	SL/JA	
	TBD	Kirkland Farmers markets (WNW wall and booth)	SL/JA	
	26	Board Meeting	ALL	
	On-going/TBD	Farmers Markets/Sustainable Sammamish (or combine with sponsorship)	JA/SL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	On-going	Draft Member Survey 2026 Eval / 2027 Priorities	AB/SL	
	September	1	September member update	AB
2		Public Affairs Committee meets – reviews draft 2026eval/2027 Member survey	AB/SL	
3		2026/2027 Member survey sent to Board members and alternates (return by Board meeting)	AB	
TBD		Beautify Bonney Lake	SL/JA	
23		September Board Meeting – 2026/2027 Member Surveys returned	ALL	

	TBD	Leadership Eastside Mayors Lunch	AB/SL	
	TBD	TappsWise workshops	AB/SL/TPCHD	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going	Begin drafting 2027 Public Affairs, Communications and Outreach, and Water Efficiency plan	AB/SL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	On-going	Begin drafting 2027 legislative priorities	AB	
	TBD	Press release: LTR Fall Draw Down announced	AB/SL/JA	
October	1	October Member Update	AB	
	7	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	3-4	Issaquah Salmon Days (WNW wall and booth)	SL/JA	
	28	Board Meeting	ALL	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	TBD	Forum meeting	AB	
	TBD	Finish 2027 legislative priorities and communication plan preparation	AB/SL	
	TBD	Lake Tapps Reservoir fall drawdown press release	AB/SL/JA	
November	1	November Member Update	AB	
	3	General Election Day	ALL	
	4	Public Affairs Committee – review 2027 Public Affairs, Communications and Outreach, and Water Efficiency plan including 2027 event sponsorship plan; adopt 2027 legislative priorities, if haven't done so in October	AB/SL	
	Nov-Dec	Outreach to newly elected officials and provide briefings	AB/SL/GTH	
	Post-election	Begin update database – newly elected officials and stakeholder updates	SL	
	18	November Board Meeting – Board adopts 2027 legislative priorities if haven't done so in October	ALL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	On-going	Nature Vision Classroom Presentations in member area schools	JA	
December	1	December Member Update	AB	
	2	Public Affairs Committee	AB/SL	
	On-going	WNW web presence updates (daily/monthly)	JA	
	Nov-Dec	Year-end wrap up member update	AB/SL	