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Greening Real Estate Professionals: A Model for Landowner Engagement through Effective Education for Brokers & Appraisers

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Greening Real Estate Professionals: A Model for Landowner Engagement through Educating Brokers & Appraisers

BACKGROUND
The Salish Sea’s water resources are critically affected by land development and individual land-use practices. Real estate professionals influence these land-use practices, yet some may not have a good understanding of environmental issues. In 1998, a needs assessment of environmental educators identified this audience as under-served and a high priority for water resource education. As a result, Washington State University Extension developed and implemented a Water Resource Education Program for Real Estate Professionals. In recent years, the program has focused on two primary topics: Low Impact Development/Green Stormwater Infrastructure and shoreline property management.

WHY REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS?
- Broker-Developer connection & influence
- Land transfer – educational opportunity prior to development/re-development
- Water topics intersect with broker issues of concern
- Creates connection with audience of typically “green skeptics”

OBJECTIVE
“The program educates real estate professionals who share knowledge and resources with clients, resulting in stewardship activities that protect both property values and water resources/habitat impacted by landowner actions.”

PROGRAM DESIGN
- 1-day workshops certified by WA. Dept. of Licensing requirements that provide 7.5-clock hours of continuing education credits to licensed real-estate brokers & appraisers
- Multiple engaging instructors with diverse areas of knowledge
- Mix of classroom lecture, activities & outside field trip
- Audience engagement via in-class “clicker” data collectors
- Follow-up Survey Monkey program evaluation with cash incentives for completion

POPULAR FEATURES
- Field Trips
- Detailed resource binders
- Follow-up materials and online links
- Networking opportunities

EVALUATION: SURVEY MONKEY
Would a webinar have been just as useful as the workshop?
Yes: 6%
No: 94%

Would you recommend this training to colleagues?
Yes: 97%
No: 3%

ONGOING IMPACT
How valuable did you find the resource binders? (In-class polling)
Highly valuable – 95%

How likely are you to use them again outside of the workshop? (Survey Monkey)
Very likely to use again – 87%

FUTURE ACTIVITIES
- Longer-term evaluation – how much has it really impacted on the ground?
- Funding dependent: need to find more stable sources for program to be sustainable.

How would you rate the field trip?
“Best class I have ever been too in my seven years in real estate.”

How would you rate the class overall?
“Great class! I would be interested in almost any class from these passionate and knowledgeable instructors. It is rare to have such valuable and meaningful and relevant content for clock hours.”

What did you think of the instructors?
“The content & materials exceeded my expectations … have already shared with several people.”

How useful were the binders & other resources?
“For a free class with lunch and interesting lectures and hands-on field trip? Maybe you could offer to wash our cars while we are in class! It was one of the best clock hour classes I've ever experienced.”

How could we improve the class?
“ALL stops were enlightening and interesting and to the point. I especially enjoyed talking to some of the property owners about their costs, expectations, and results.”