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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Regional Stormwater Protection Team announces contest to encourage public input

BY: Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

Regional Stormwater Protection Team announces contest to encourage public input

The same creative thinkers who introduced the No Poop Fairy to the region are announcing a fun way to encourage people to offer suggestions on how to protect area lakes and streams from stormwater runoff. The local Regional Stormwater Protection Team (RSPT) will be raffling off prizes, and the way to be entered for a chance to win is to provide suggestions regarding what RSPT can do to better protect our lakes and streams from stormwater pollution. Alternatively, participants may review a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program document for one of RSPT's partner communities and provide input on their current program. Participants who provide a new idea or suggestion will be entered into a drawing for one of three prizes. The more ideas shared, the more chances to win.

A total of \$300 in prizes is available, including anti-slip winter boots from Tortoise and the Hare, a gift certificate to buy native plants, and a \$50 VISA gift card. Details on how to submit suggestions and be entered in the raffle are available online at poopfairy.university/game. The deadline to enter is December 13.

"We know stormwater runoff isn't always a common topic for people to be thinking about," said Ryan Granlund, City of Duluth's Utility Programs Coordinator. "But we also know the best ideas can come from unexpected sources, and that's why we're hoping this will be a fun opportunity for people to play along."

As an example, in a previous year, a citizen suggested adding educational messaging on local street sweepers. The St. Louis County Public Works sign shop was able to create decals to implement the idea.

"Send us your best idea, action, or public education topic the RSPT could tackle that would help protect our creeks, lakes, and wetlands from stormwater pollution," said Carol Andrews, Environmental Engineer with St. Louis County Public Works. "It could even be, what topic should the No Poop Fairy focus on next?"

RSPT works to increase awareness that runoff from yards and roads that flow via ditches or along the curb into storm sewers in Minnesota is not treated, nor does it go to a wastewater treatment plant. Instead, the runoff flows into nearby lakes and streams. This is why it's important to keep it clean.

The RSPT is made up of several cities and townships in the area plus Lake Superior College, University of Minnesota, and the St. Louis County and MnDOT highway departments. These "MS4s", along with partner agencies and organizations, aim to educate the public on actions they can take to help keep pollution out of stormwater runoff.

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