

Sno-King Watershed Council

Website Redesign Case Study

Design 360

Winter 2023

By Duncan Bennett





The Project

On a timetable of four weeks, designers were tasked with executing a website redesign for a nonprofit organization of their choosing. Requirements were an assessment of the current site, market research, usability testing, and a functional redesigned mobile and desktop prototype.

I selected Sno-King Watershed Council as my organization. Based in the Seattle area, SKWC is a grassroots, community-oriented organization tasked with the stewardship of local watershed resources. They advocate for legislation, organize cleanup projects, review construction permits for violations, and offer classes on water monitoring.



The Problem

Sno-King Watershed Council's website is their organization's hub. They use it to keep members informed, post project updates, and coordinate classes.

The current site does a poor job of accomplishing any of these tasks. The homepage displays only their blog posts, which distract from their services and purpose as an organization.

The rest of the content is buried in poorly organized submenus with an abundance of links leading the user away from the page or directing them to contact specific personal emails for more information.

The Solution

A navigational overhaul is in order to help clean up the site and bring more relevant and appealing content to the front. Keeping the appropriate amount of emphasis on content like the donate button while making space for information about the organization's mission and accomplishments is the best course of action. Providing a channel for curious users to sign up for classes and volunteer opportunities is also a must, as the website currently does little to promote these services.



Research

Original Site

Built out of a WordPress template, the current website leaves something to be desired. The front page consists of a selection of recent blog posts all from the same person, presumably one of the founders of SKWC, with topics ranging from important organization achievements to a poetic recounting of a walk they took.

Clearly there is room to shuffle some of the more important site features to more useful locations. SKWC does a lot of good for the community. The current website does not effectively convey that.

SnoKing Watershed Council

Helping to keep our waters clean and healthy



[Home](#) [About](#) [Water Watchers](#) [Get Involved](#) [Library](#) [Donate](#) [*Contact US](#)



RECENT POSTS



Unpermitted work at former Fruhling site



From Wellington Hills Neighbors



NorthPoint Development at former Fruhling Site



Regatta Estates lawsuit against Frogna/Baxley Ridge developers continues



Regatta Estates files lawsuit against Frogna/Baxley Ridge developers



Bothell-Kenmore Earth Day 2022 Events



We reached the Madrone!



Frogna/Baxley Ridge Out of Compliance





Research

Competition

Existing sites for other watershed and waterway conservation organizations (nonprofit or otherwise) possess the clean visual organization expected from public institutions. Indirect competition such as initiatives under a city, state, or federal umbrella are typically incorporated into the parent site as a secondary or even tertiary page. Direct competition also exists at the grassroots level and tends to consist of similar template-based layouts with minimal branding and lackluster information architecture.

There is certainly an opportunity to create something unique in this space. A fresh and modern website is often reserved for large, trendy corporations, but there is no reason a small nonprofit can't have a stylish digital impression as well.

The image displays two screenshots of nonprofit websites side-by-side for comparison.

Top Website: Carkeek Watershed Community Action Project

- Header:** Features a logo of a triangle with a wave inside, followed by the text "Carkeek Watershed Community Action Project". Navigation links include BLOG, PROGRAMS, and EDUCATION.
- Mission Statement:** "Learn. Educate. Act." followed by a short description: "The Carkeek Watershed Community Action Project (CWCP) uses education, advocacy, and community engagement to protect and restore the Carkeek Creek and its forest/stream ecosystem and Puget Sound."
- Content Area:** An aerial photograph of a industrial waterfront area with the text "Natural Beauty in an Urban Environment" overlaid. Below it is the subtext "Restoring Health and Harmony".
- Call-to-Action:** A green button labeled "OUR SITES".
- Footer:** Three circular icons with icons inside: a person, binoculars, and a group of people. Below them is a grid of six items with arrows and text: "Report environmental issues", "Find out if there's a burn ban", "Learn about Clean Fuel Standard", "Know about flood risks", "Find a recycling location", and "See more 'I want to...'".
- Bottom Content:** A section titled "Climate change" with a small image of a person walking a dog.

Bottom Website: Duwamish ALIVE! COALITION

- Header:** Features the text "DUWAMISH ALIVE! COALITION" in blue and green.
- Navigation:** Home, Our Duwamish River, About The Coalition, Event Map, Calendar, Duwamish Sites, Sound of the Duwamish Blog, and a search icon.
- Content Area:** An aerial photograph of a river and industrial area with the text "Natural Beauty in an Urban Environment" overlaid. Below it is the subtext "Restoring Health and Harmony".
- Call-to-Action:** A green button labeled "OUR SITES".
- Footer:** Three circular icons with icons inside: a person, binoculars, and a group of people. Below them is a grid of six items with arrows and text: "Report environmental issues", "Find out if there's a burn ban", "Learn about Clean Fuel Standard", "Know about flood risks", "Find a recycling location", and "See more 'I want to...'".
- Bottom Content:** A section titled "Climate change" with a small image of a person walking a dog.



Audience

Target Audience

SKWC is an all-inclusive organization. They provide opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in ecological conservation and activism.

However, there are two main groups which I believe deserve consideration when designing a new website. One is conscientious adults with disposable income. This group is more likely to donate to nonprofits, especially ones that adhere to their values and affect their local communities. The other group is elementary to university age students. This group is likely to be enrolled in or looking for local volunteer opportunities. In fact, SKWC already caters towards the younger demographic with several of their Water Watchers programs.

Personas



Jennifer Barlowe

52 year-old Female
Married with 2 kids
340k/yr household

"You get what you give!"

Hobbies: Backpacking, writing, community engagement, gardening, pet care

Values: Honesty, family, environmentalism, altruism

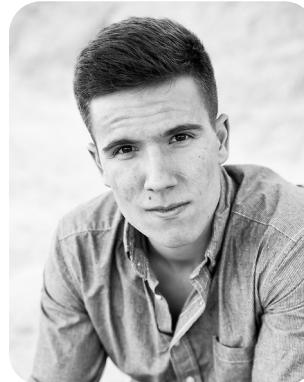
Life Goals: Travel the country, become a published author, leave a positive community legacy

Touchpoints: Learn about SKWC's accomplishments, donate

Product Expectations: Easy to use, secure, reputable

Pain Points: Small text, confusing websites, suspicious links

Media use: iPhone 14 Pro, Microsoft Surface Pro 8, Facebook, LinkedIn



Lukas Jarozs

22 year-old Male
Single
\$19.30/hr wage

"Honestly, I'm just tryna graduate"

Hobbies: Skateboarding, working out, working, amateur music production

Values: Loyalty, transparency, responsiveness

Life Goals: Graduate SU with a bachelor's degree in environmental science, find a girlfriend, write a drum & bass album

Touchpoints: Register for volunteer work with SKWC

Product Expectations: Clear organization, straightforward user flow, visually appealing

Pain Points: "Ugly design", confusing registration, contacting strangers

Media use: Galaxy S21, Macbook Air, Instagram, BeReal, Snapchat



Goals & Strategy

Business Goals

1. Grow membership
2. Increase donations
3. Increase awareness
4. Promote envr. stewardship
5. Influence legislation

Brand Goals

1. Overhaul website
2. Represent achievements
3. Positive social image
4. Social media presence
5. Simplify navigation

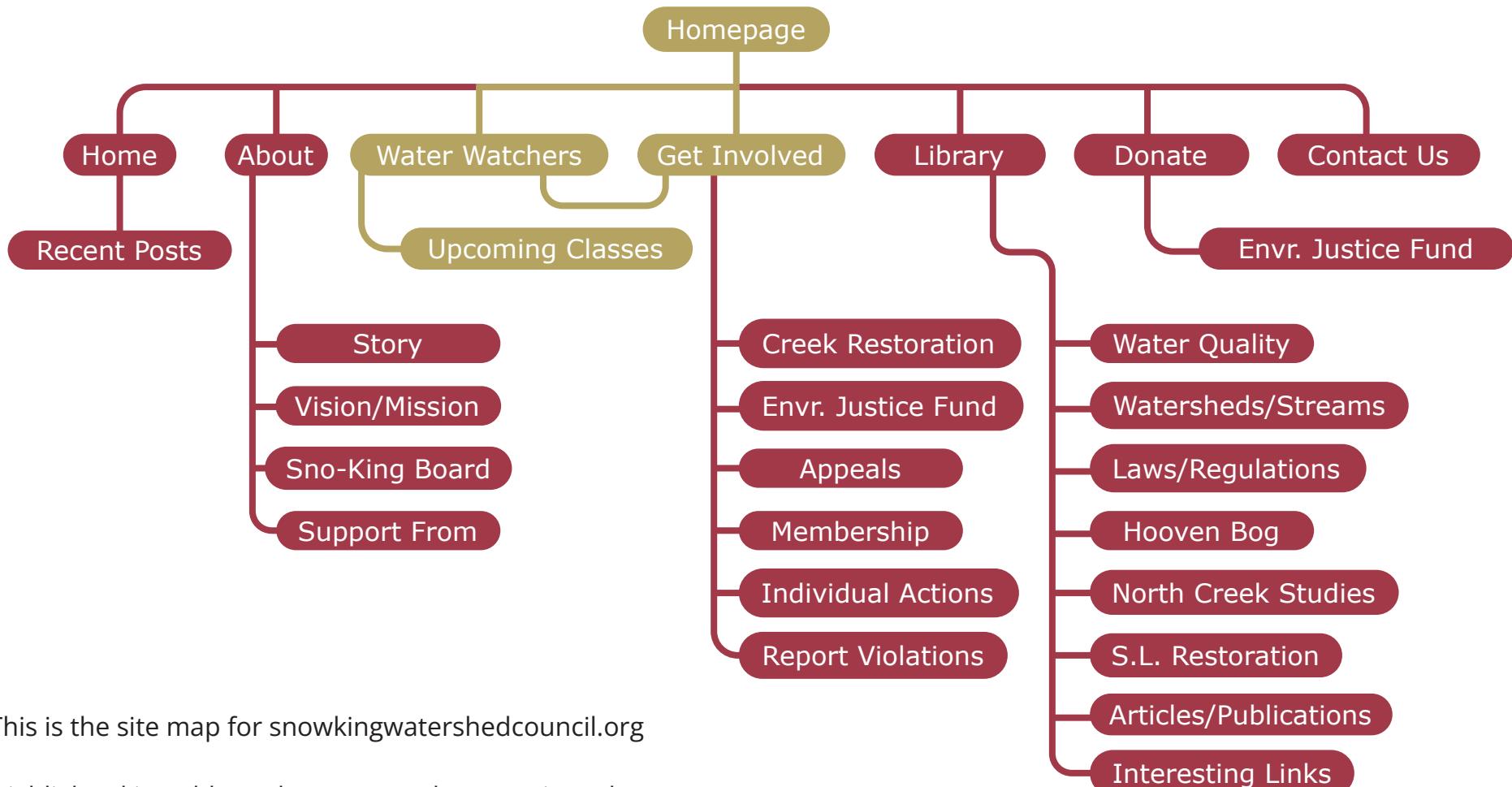
User Goals

1. Donate
2. Register for volunteer work
3. Register for classes
4. Share content
5. Sense of accomplishment

Strategy

To accommodate the target audience and their objectives, the site redesign will increase ease of use across the board. The navigation system will be completely reworked to focus on streamlining the user flows towards the most common elements: donations, signing up for classes, and learning about the organization. Visual identity will be updated to match the contemporary digital environment, and SKWC will receive a new brand identity with unique colors and visual language.

Site Map





Inspiration

There are websites for organizations similar in scope to SKWC that have clean and distinct visual identities. Portland's government website has a useful "card" system for easily identifying popular pages. Washington Conservation Action's website uses eye-catching colors, imagery, and typefaces to stand out from competitors. ECOS relies on vivid photography to give visitors a sense of the organization the site represents.

I believe SKWC can benefit from systems like these and has all of the content necessary to do so already somewhere on their site, it just needs to be given space to shine.

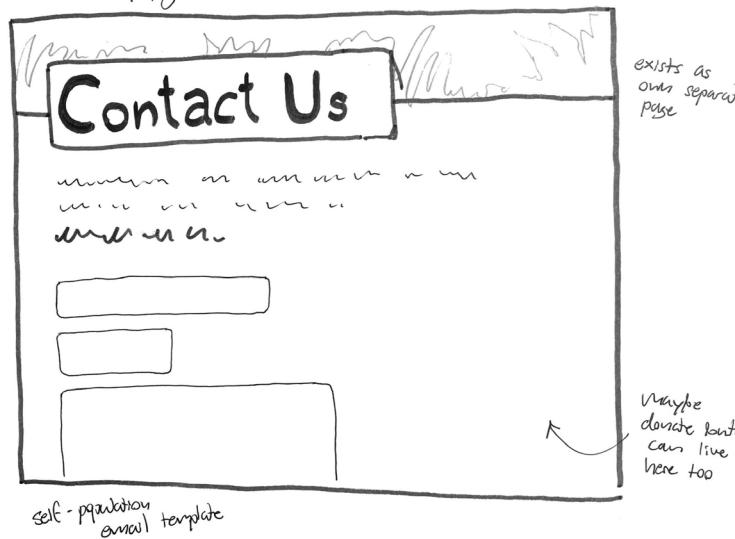
Sketches

Initial ideation developed several concepts to assist in streamlining user flows. Restructuring of the nav bar would end up making it to the final version. Site layout was modernized and decluttered.

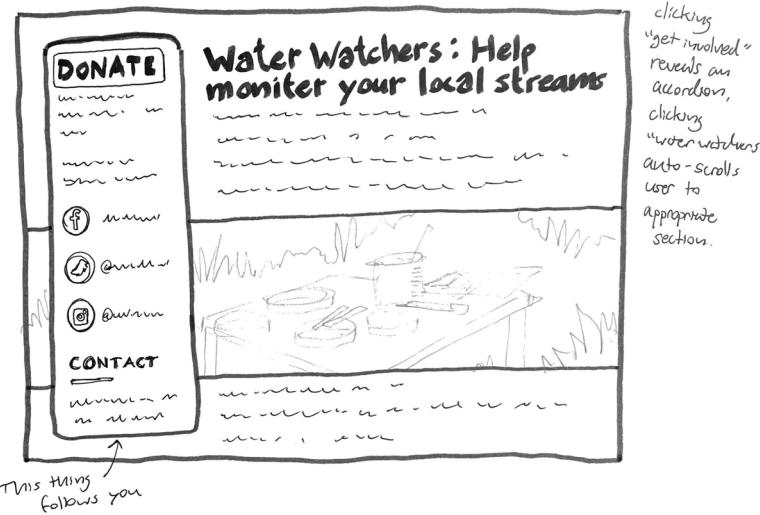
SNO-KING WATERSHED COUNCIL - primary landing page



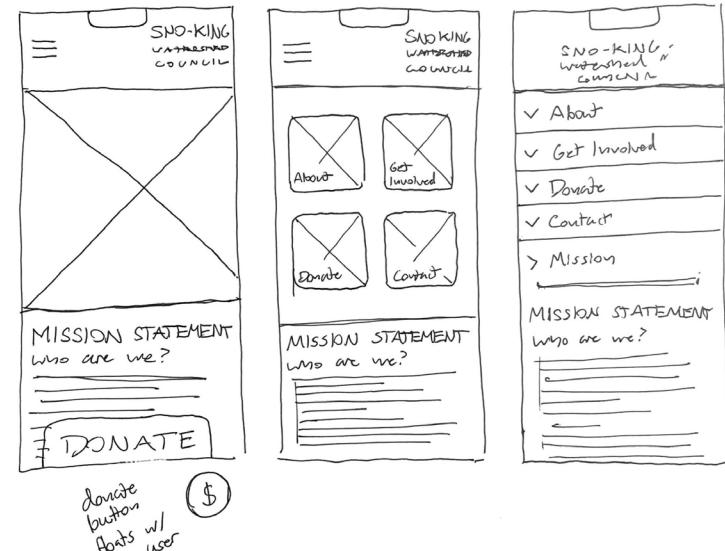
SKWC - tertiary page "contact us")



SKWC - Secondary page "water watchers" Home > get involved > water watchers



SKWC - Mobile Wireframing ~ "Homepage"





Wireframes

Insights

Translating the sketches to wireframes for the mobile version of the website yielded some useful insight into the positioning of various elements and gave a better impression of the potential user flows.

It was user feedback on this iteration that influenced the decision to change focus for the user flow goal. Instead of having a user navigate to a specific article, the primary, secondary, and tertiary pages would facilitate the discovery of a Water Watchers session for signup.

The wireframes illustrate the layout of the mobile website across various sections:

- Top Left:** A header section with the "SNO-KING WATERSHED COUNCIL" logo and a search bar. Below it is a large button labeled "Save Our Streams" with the subtext "Help us protect the watershed".
- Top Middle:** A news card for "Ironwood Site Clearing Commences" dated November 3rd, 2021, featuring a large image placeholder.
- Top Right:** A news card for "Unpermitted work at former Fruhling site" with descriptive placeholder text.
- Middle Left:** A navigation section with four buttons: "About", "Get Involved", "Donate", and "Articles".
- Middle Middle:** A "Mission Statement" section with the heading "Who are we?" followed by a large image placeholder.
- Middle Right:** A news card for "Bothell-Kenmore Earth Day 2022 events" with descriptive placeholder text.
- Bottom Left:** A "Water Watchers" section with the heading "Keeping an eye on aquatic conditions" followed by a large image placeholder.
- Bottom Middle:** A news card for "Ironwood site clearing commences" with descriptive placeholder text.
- Bottom Right:** A "Get in Contact" section with a "Donate!" button and social media links at the bottom.

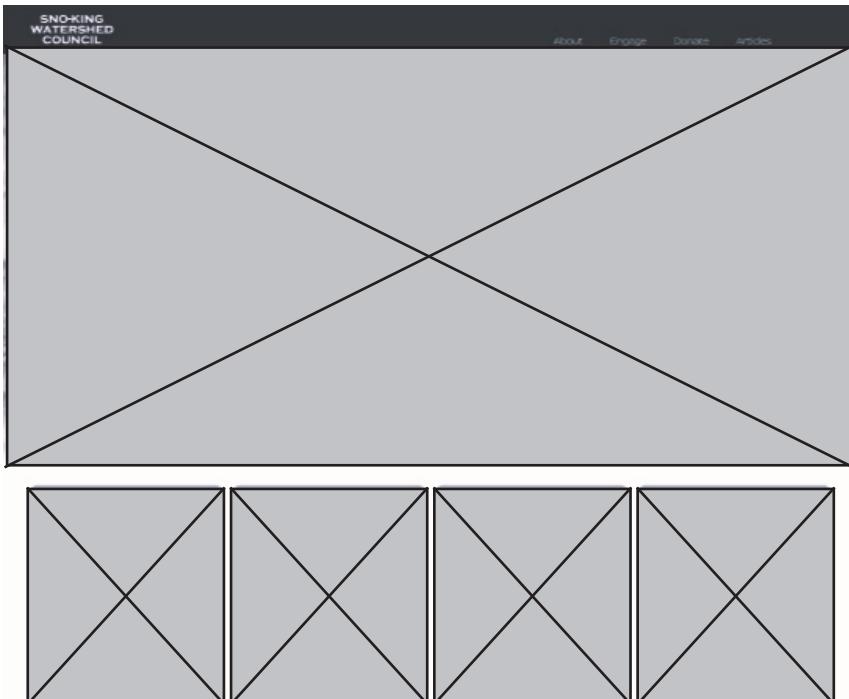


Lo-Fi

Insights

As the concept evolved, the home page underwent a series of redevelopments. Since it had originally been nothing but the blog posts, and my strategy involved removing those, several rounds of iteration each yielded different replacement layouts.

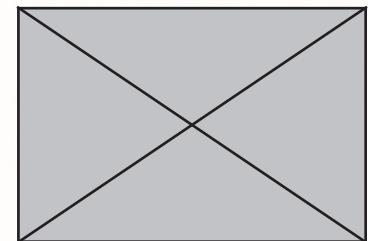
Eventually, the “content list” style where all the relevant content was displayed sequentially on the home page was abandoned in favor of a more succinct presentation.



Who is the Watershed Council?

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut et massa mi. Aliquam in hendrerit urna. Pellentesque sit amet sapien fringilla, mattis ligula consectetur, ultrices mauris. Maecenas vitae mattis tellus. Nullam quis imperdiet augue. Vestibulum auctor ornare leo, non suscipit magna interdum eu. Sed ac diam id nisl. Donec euismod, ipsum id lacinia, nisi arcu. Ut euismod, enim vel tincidunt, nunc ex aliquet, id pellentesque dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit ut et massa mi. Aliquam in hendrerit urna. Pellentesque sit amet sapien fringilla, mattis ligula consectetur, ultrices mauris. Maecenas vitae mattis tellus. Nullam quis imperdiet augue. Vestibulum auctor ornare leo, non suscipit magna interdum eu.

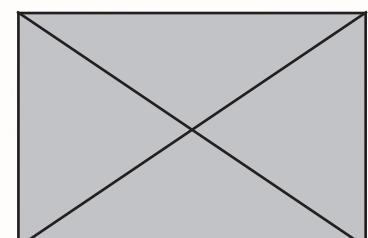
LEARN MORE



Get involved with local activism

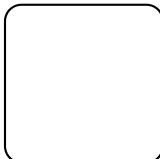
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit. Ut et massa mi. Aliquam in hendrerit urna. Pellentesque sit amet sapien fringilla, mattis ligula consectetur, ultrices mauris. Maecenas vitae mattis tellus. Nullam quis imperdiet augue. Vestibulum auctor ornare leo, non suscipit magna interdum eu. Sed ac diam id nisl. Donec euismod, ipsum id lacinia, nisi arcu. Ut euismod, enim vel tincidunt, nunc ex aliquet, id pellentesque dolor sit amet consectetur adipiscing elit ut et massa mi. Aliquam in hendrerit urna. Pellentesque sit amet sapien fringilla, mattis ligula consectetur, ultrices mauris. Maecenas vitae mattis tellus. Nullam quis imperdiet augue. Vestibulum auctor ornare leo, non suscipit magna interdum eu.

LEARN MORE



Rebrand

New fonts and a new color palette were carefully selected to relate to the organization's PNW identity. The logo has been slightly revised to better fit with the modernized visual language.



Header: Syne Protect Local Wildlife

Sub-header: Roboto Slab

Through advocacy and community outreach

Body: Open Sans

Every year, the streams, lakes, and reservoirs that provide Snohomish and King County with drinking water face a multitude of challenges. Pollution, legislation, and urban development all threaten the stability of the watersheds that nourish the Pacific Northwest.

**SNO-KING
WATERSHED
COUNCIL**





Usability Testing

USABILITY TESTING

1. Determine what the website is about.
2. Create 3 tasks for the user to perform:

Discover the org's mission statement

Sign up for a "WaterWatchers" session

Find the "Students Saving Salmon" article

4. Allow the user to explore the website
5. Rate your experience below (3 is highest):

| | RATING | COMMENTS |
|--|---------|----------|
| Site load time is reasonable | (3) 2 1 | |
| Font size/spacing is easy to read | (3) 2 1 | |
| Logo is prominently placed | (3) 2 1 | |
| Homepage is digestible in 5 seconds | (3) 2 1 | |
| Clear path to important information | (3) 2 1 | |
| Clear path to the "tasks" | (3) 2 1 | |
| Main navigation is easily identifiable | (3) 2 1 | |
| Navigation is clear and concise | 3 (2) 1 | |
| Navigation is consistent | (3) 2 1 | |
| Major headings are clear & descriptive | (2) 2 1 | |
| Styles + colors are consistent | (3) 2 1 | |
| URLs and page titles are explanatory | (3) 2 1 | |
| Overall website was easy to understand | (3) 2 1 | |
| Website is error free on all viewports | (3) 2 1 | |

USABILITY TESTING

1. Determine what the website is about.
2. Create 3 tasks for the user to perform:

Discover the organization's mission statement

Sign up for a "water Watchers" session

Find the "Students Saving Salmon" article

4. Allow the user to explore the website
5. Rate your experience below (3 is highest):

| | RATING | COMMENTS |
|--|---------|--|
| Site load time is reasonable | (3) 2 1 | |
| Font size/spacing is easy to read | 3 (2) 1 | ↑ could be smaller |
| Logo is prominently placed | (3) 2 1 | |
| Homepage is digestible in 5 seconds | (3) 2 1 | |
| Clear path to important information | 3 (2) 1 | |
| Clear path to the "tasks" | 3 (2) 1 | doesn't make it clear where programs are |
| Main navigation is easily identifiable | 3 2 (1) | order of pages doesn't make any sense |
| Navigation is clear and concise | 3 2 (1) | hard to navigate away from home pg. |
| Navigation is consistent | (3) 2 1 | |
| Major headings are clear & descriptive | (3) 2 1 | |
| Styles + colors are consistent | (3) 2 1 | |
| URLs and page titles are explanatory | (3) 2 1 | |
| Overall website was easy to understand | (3) 2 1 | |
| Website is error free on all viewports | (3) 2 1 | |

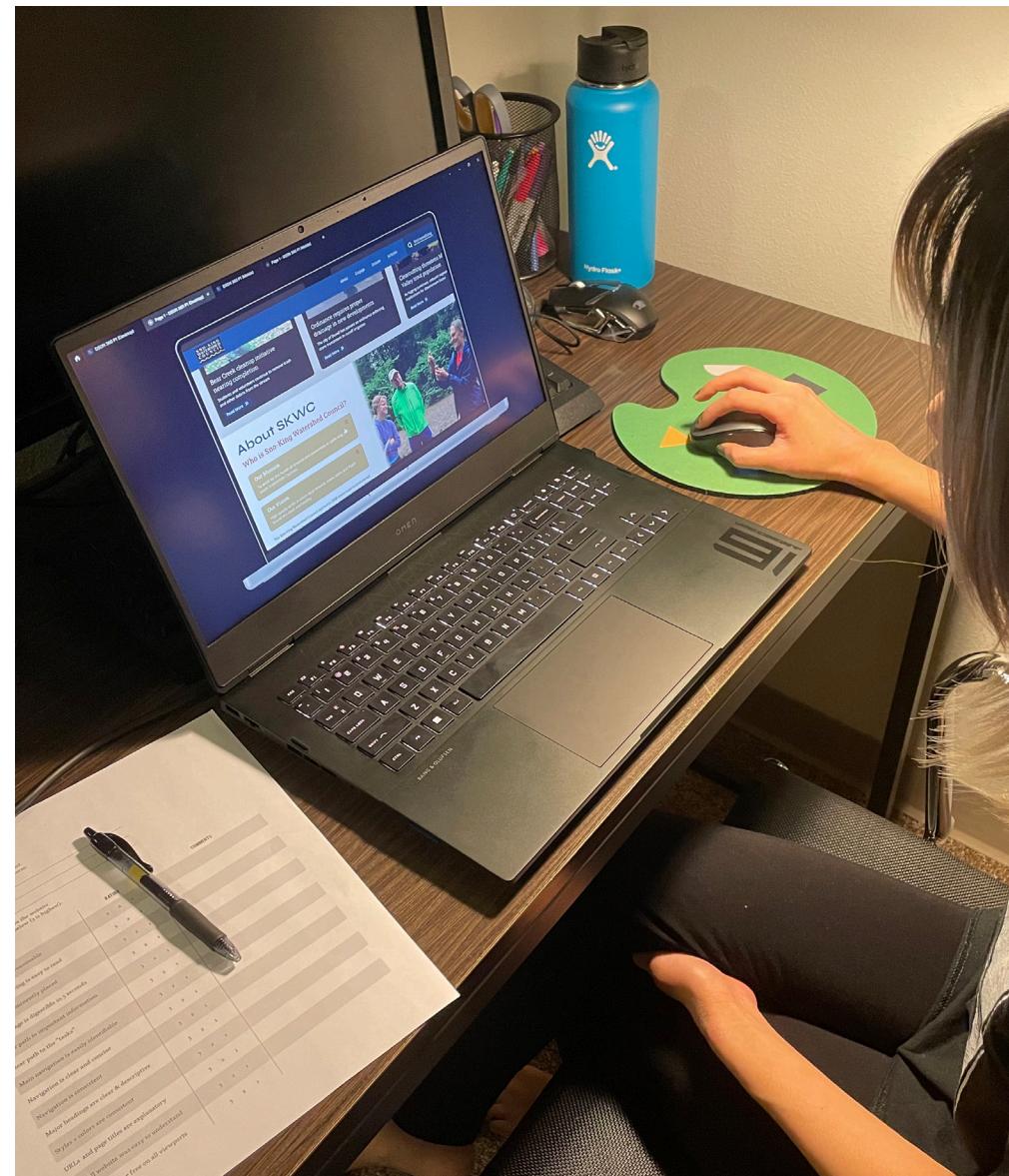
Usability Testing

Feedback

Testers were asked to browse the functional prototype and provide feedback on certain tasks.

The tasks were: Discover the organization's mission statement, sign up for a Water Watchers session, and find the Students Saving Salmon article.

Users had some difficulty with navigation away from the initial page, suggesting the need for further development on wayfinding. One user also suggested that some of the text was too large and distracting. It was reduced to a more tasteful point size for the final version. The user who tested the lo-fi prototype, before the home page was condensed, noted that the order of pages in the user flow for Water Watchers registration was confusing. This provided more justification for a restructuring of the "Engage" page.





Final Product

The image displays the final product of a website redesign for the Sno-King Watershed Council (SKWC). On the left, a laptop screen shows the homepage with a large banner image of a stream, the title "Protecting Our Waterways", and a subtitle "Through education, monitoring, and community outreach". Below the banner is a paragraph about the challenges faced by water bodies. At the bottom of the laptop screen are four prominent gold-colored buttons labeled "About", "Engage", "Donate", and "Articles". On the right, a smartphone screen shows a campaign page titled "Save Our Streams" with the same subtitle. This page includes a call-to-action text, a "About" section, an "Engage" section, a "Donate" button, and an "Articles" button.

SNO-KING WATERSHED COUNCIL

About Engage Donate Articles

Protecting Our Waterways

Through education, monitoring, and community outreach

Every year, the streams, lakes, and reservoirs that provide Snohomish and King County with drinking water face a multitude of challenges. Help us protect these irreplicable ecosystems and foster a culture of environmental stewardship for the future.

About

The story of SKWC, our mission, and what we do as an organization.

Engage

Learn how to get involved with our programs and make a difference!

Donate

Articles

Save Our Streams

Through education, monitoring, and community outreach

Every year, the streams, lakes, and reservoirs that provide Snohomish and King County with drinking water face a multitude of challenges. Help us protect these irreplicable ecosystems and foster a culture of environmental stewardship for the future.

About

The story of SKWC, our mission, and what we do as an organization.

Engage

Learn how to get involved with our programs and make a difference!

Donate

Articles



Final Product

Desktop

SNO-KING WATERSHED COUNCIL

About Engage Donate Articles find something

Protecting Our Waterways

Through education, monitoring, and community outreach

Every year, the streams, lakes, and reservoirs that profile Snohomish and King County with drinking water face a multitude of challenges. Help us protect these irreplaceable ecosystems and foster a culture of environmental stewardship for the future.

About
The story of SKWC, our mission, and what we do as an organization.

Engage
Learn how to get involved with our programs and make a difference!

Donate
Contribute to SKWC – all donations are tax-deductible!

Articles
Blog posts about our projects, local legislation, and general musings.

Recent Topics

The latest from around the watershed; news, politics, and activism

Bear Creek cleanup initiative nearing completion
Students and volunteers continue to remove trash and other debris from the stream

[Read More >](#)

Ordinance requires proper drainage in new developments
The city of Duvall has passed an ordinance enforcing more investment in runoff mitigation

[Read More >](#)

Clearcutting threatens M Valley trout population
As logging continues, reduced vegetation implications for downstream fauna

[Read More >](#)

SNO-KING WATERSHED COUNCIL

About Engage Donate Articles find something

[Home](#) » Engage

Get Involved

Programs and volunteer service

Give back to the planet! SKWC runs several programs for people to participate in. From environmental monitoring to political activism; there are many ways to make a difference and help the watershed thrive.

Swamp Creek Habitat Restoration Project

Water Watchers

Environmental Justice Fund

SKWC Membership

Report Construction Stormwater Violations

Individual Actions

Monday February 6th, 2023

| | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su |
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |

10:00am – 2:00pm: Bacteriological Monitoring

10:00am – 2:00pm: Water Chemistry Monitoring

3:00pm – 7:00pm: Stream Biomonitoring

Get in Contact

Reach out with questions or comments and we will respond as soon as possible!

Email: snokingwatershedcouncil@gmail.com
Call: 425-789-9731

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)

This organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization registered with the secretary of state under the non-profit organization act. The telephone number is 1-800-563-4481.

No goods or services are provided to donors for their contributions. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tax ID #91-1642615.

Our Partners:

[Back to Top](#)

Bear Creek cleanup initiative nearing completion
Students and volunteers continue to remove trash and other debris from the stream

[Read More >](#)

Ordinance requires proper drainage in new developments
The city of Duvall has passed an ordinance enforcing more investment in runoff mitigation

[Read More >](#)

SNO-KING WATERSHED COUNCIL

About Engage [Water Watchers](#) Articles find something

Water Watchers

Session calendar

Use the calendar to register for an upcoming class or session. Sessions occurring on a weekend or the first of every month are subject to more frequent rescheduling.

| Monday February 6th, 2023 | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Mo | Tu | We | Th | Fr | Sa | Su |
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |

Get in Contact

Reach out with questions or comments and we will respond as soon as possible!

Email: snokingwatershedcouncil@gmail.com
Call: 425-789-9731

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)

This organization is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization registered with the secretary of state under the non-profit organization act. The telephone number is 1-800-563-4481.

No goods or services are provided to donors for their contributions. We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tax ID #91-1642615.

Our Partners:

© Copyright 2023 — Sno-King Watershed Council

Web design by Studio Delta

[Back to Top](#)

Revitalization

An organization proud to share their story and invite others to join the cause. With a new visual identity and a drastically decluttered navigation system, SKWC is ready to lead others in making an impact.

About SKWC

Who is Sno-King Watershed Council?

- [Our Mission](#)
- [Our Vision](#)

The Sno-King Watershed Council started in 2008 when local environmental advocates decided to work together on stream and watershed protection in North King County and south Snohomish County.

Major program areas





Final Product

Mobile

The mobile version of the 'Get Involved' page features a large, bold title 'Get Involved' with a subtitle 'Programs and volunteer service'. Below the title is a photograph of a stream. A sidebar on the right lists various programs with dropdown arrows: Swamp Creek Habitat Restoration Project, Water Watchers, Environmental Justice Fund, SKWC Membership, Report Construction Stormwater Violations, and Individual Actions.

The mobile version of the 'Save Our Streams' page features a large, bold title 'Save Our Streams' with a subtitle 'Through education, monitoring, and community outreach'. Below the title is a photograph of a stream. A callout box contains the text: 'Every year, the streams, lakes, and reservoirs that provide Snohomish and King County with drinking water face a multitude of challenges. Help us protect these irreplicable ecosystems and foster a culture of environmental stewardship for the future.' At the bottom are two buttons: 'About' and 'Engage'.

The mobile version of the calendar page shows a weekly grid for Monday, February 6th, 2023. The days of the week are labeled Mo through Su. Specific dates are highlighted in red: February 6th (Monday) and February 27th (Sunday). Below the grid are three event cards: '10am - 2pm: Bacteriological Monitoring', '10am - 2pm: Water Chemistry Monitoring', and '10am - 2pm: Stream Monitoring'.



Conclusion

Challenges

One of the greatest challenges when redesigning something with almost no brand or unified identity is starting from scratch. Having the freedom to remodel a website's look and operation can lead to unexpected obstacles. Thankfully, steady prototyping and usability testing can help smooth out the wrinkles as they appear.

Adapting the site for desktop and mobile use simultaneously also posed a heavy challenge at times, as each component had to be reworked to mirror its counterpart.

Reflection

In completing this project, I gained a number of valuable digital prototyping skills, especially in Figma. I also learned a great deal about how much branding, visual identity, and online presence can affect an organization's image, nonprofit or otherwise. Most importantly I was able to reaffirm how crucial the act of cataloging progress is in a long form project, and how each part of the process builds on the last to support the final vision.

Thank you
for your
time