

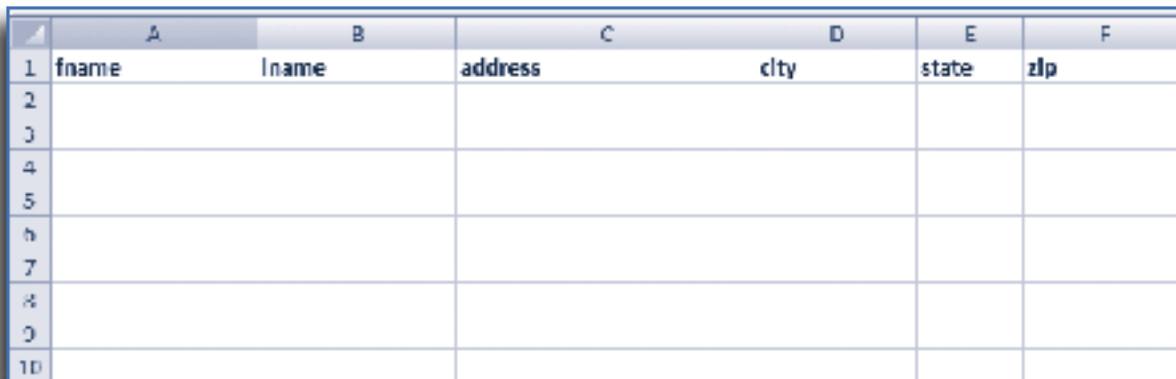
Assembling a Watershed Mailing List

Locating Sources for Watershed Resident and Landowner Addresses

- Track down the addresses of the watershed residents and landowners using the following tools:
 - Beacon by Schneider Corp. provides local government GIS on the web: <http://beacon.schneidercorp.com/> (disclaimer: not all Iowa counties have been uploaded for use on the site)
 - ◆ The site will allow you to search by county for landowners' addresses.
 - ◆ It works best for sparsely populated watersheds (less than 1,000 residents per community) but can be used for larger, highly populated watersheds.
 - ◆ Under the 'Map' tab you can zoom in and select an individual plot or property and a small window will provide the name and address of the owner.
 - Local utility companies such as gas, electric, or telephone, are also a resource for addresses.
 - ◆ In rural areas, most residents subscribe to the same utilities and the company may be able to provide a list of customers' names and addresses.
 - ◆ This list has the potential to be very large so it is important to only include those in the watershed. Scaling the mailing list down is described below.
- The County Assessor's office also maintains a list of landowners.
 - ◆ Contact the County Assessor to determine if they can provide a list of landowners in the watershed.

After the Address Sources Have Been Identified

- Compile all addresses in a Microsoft Excel file.
 - ◆ Using an Excel file will allow you to mail merge into a Word document to print address labels or print addresses directly onto the envelopes.
- Create a new Excel file and prepare the first row with the following text in each column to create the header, as in Figure 2-1:



The image shows a screenshot of an Excel spreadsheet. The first row contains headers for columns A through F: 'fname' in column A, 'lname' in column B, 'address' in column C, 'city' in column D, 'state' in column E, and 'zip' in column F. The rows are numbered 1 through 10 on the left side. The spreadsheet is empty except for the header row.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	fname	lname	address	city	state	zip
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						

Figure 2-1: Excel file spreadsheet with headers for ease of mail merge.

These headers (“fname”= first name, “lname”=last name) will allow you to match the appropriate fields when ready to mail merge. *It is extremely important that the first row have these headers in each corresponding column so that you are able to do a mail merge in MS Word.*

- Enter the addresses into the appropriate fields.
 - ◆ Accurate spelling and order of numbers in addresses and zip codes will prevent the return of undeliverable mail and the waste of resources.
- If the addresses are provided in a compatible electronic form (already in Excel) you can copy and paste into your mailing list file, making sure the information lines up correctly with the headers.
 - ◆ Remove repeated addresses or recipients.
 - ◆ Using the sort function in Excel, highlight the entire list of addresses.

- ◆ In the upper right corner of the Home tool bar, select “Sort and Filter,” then custom sort.
- ◆ You can then sort by the categories shown below in Figure 2-2.

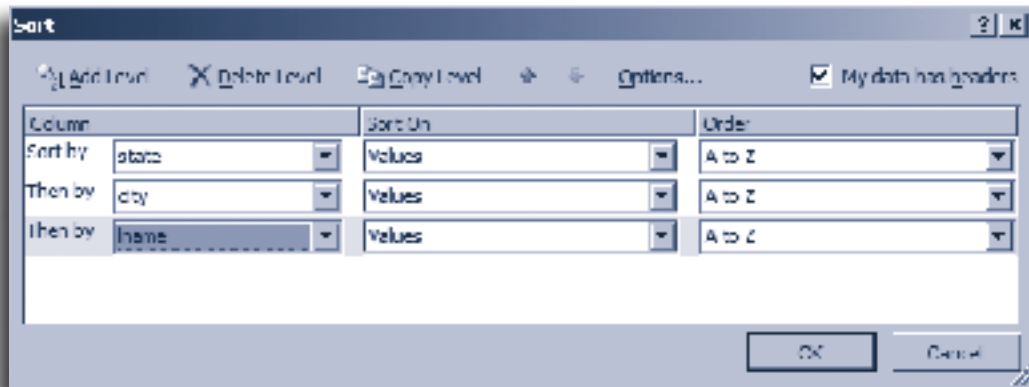


Figure 2-2: Excel menu window that shows instructions for sorting entered data.

- By using this sorting method you can determine whether you would like to include out of state or out of the watershed landowners.
- A useful feature that helps remove repeated addresses is the “Remove Duplicates” tool found under the Data tool bar. Highlight the entire list and select the “Remove Duplicates” button.
- Unselect all the choices by clicking “Unselect All” and then place a check next to “address” as shown below in Figure 2-3.

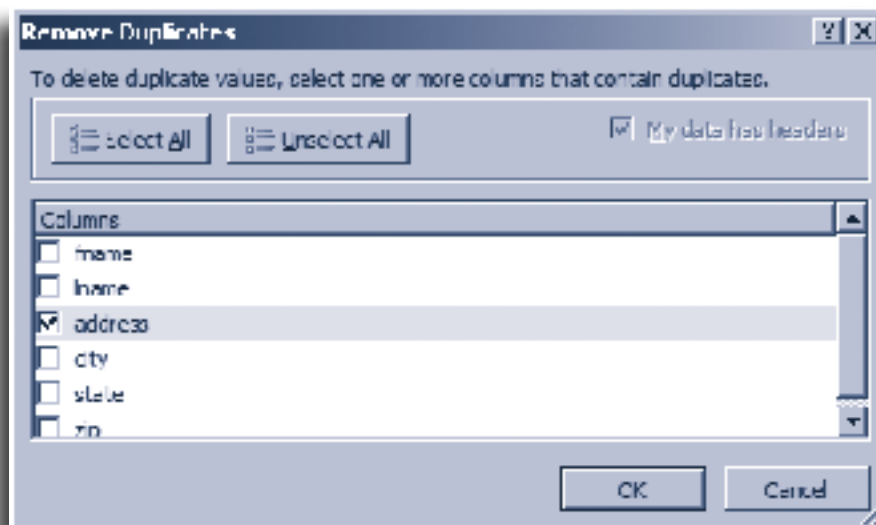


Figure 2-3: Excel menu window showing the “remove duplicates” to eliminate double entries.

Decide whether to include land held in trusts.

- Many landowner databases include land held in trusts. Depending on your budget and goal of the mailing you may want to consider removing these recipients.
- If you are unsure, you can create a copy of the file with and without the trusts by saving the file with trusts first and denoting it in the name of the file and then saving the file after removing the trusts, again denoting their removal in the name of the file. Using Black Hawk Lake Watershed as an example, the file with trusts is named “BHLWtrusts” and the file without the trusts is “BHLWno_trusts”.
- Saving the two files separately allows some flexibility when preparing mailings.

If the mailing list is very large:

- If the mailing list is very large and would exceed your mailing budget, you may wish to use a random sampling or stratified sampling technique to gain a representative sample of the addresses and landowners in the watershed (see page B-4). Using the random number generator noted on page B-6, create a new Excel file in which only the sampled addresses will be included. Make sure you save this file under a new name. For Silver Creek Watershed, the complete mailing list file is named “SCWmailinglist” and the sampled list is named “SCWsurvey_sample.”
- You may also wish to consider paring down the list by keeping only every other or every third name on the list (a form of sampling called systematic sampling). This can be time consuming, but if you or someone you know can use the VBA/Macro portion of Excel, the code on page 2-5 will help reduce the list.
- Remember to save this new list with a new name such as “SCWsurvey_sample_every3rd” to retain the entire list for future use. This is an example of how to keep every third record. If you want to keep a different number, change the number that follows “keep.” Right now it reads “keep = 3” and can be change to “keep = 4” if you want to keep every fourth record.

Table 2-1. Excel macro program that can be used to automatically generate a list that removes every third data entry line.

```
Sub everythird()
Dim keep As Integer
Dim tot As Integer
Dim extent As Integer
keep = 3
Range("A1").Select
tot = ActiveCell.SpecialCells(xlCellTypeLastCell).
Row extent = Round(tot / keep, 0)
Application.ScreenUpdating = False
For i = 0 To extent
Sheets("Sheet1").Select
Range("A1").Activate
ActiveCell.Offset(i * keep, 0).Activate
ActiveCell.EntireRow.Select
Selection.Copy
Sheets("Sheet2").Select
Range("A1").Activate
ActiveCell.Offset(i, 0).Activate
ActiveSheet.Paste
Next i
Application.ScreenUpdating =
True
End Sub
```

"Keep" is the number of records you skip (i.e. if the value is 5 you keep every fifth record). This Macro program keeps every 3rd entry.

**Written by Reid Christianson*

Complete the Mailing

When the mailing list is complete, you are ready to mail merge. Make a few final checks to be sure that the headings are correct and the appropriate file is being used.

- Open a new Word Document
- Under the Mailing tab, select “Start Mail Merge”
- Select the type of merge: labels, envelopes or letter
 - ◆ Be sure to match the label type to those that you plan to use or the size of the envelope to prevent any headaches.
- Choose the “Select the Recipients” button on the Mailings/Mail Merge Manager tool bar
 - ◆ Select “Existing List” to use the Excel file you created.
 - ◆ You may need to specify the workbook page before clicking “OK.”
- Select the area where the addresses are to appear.
- Choose the “Address Block” button from the Mailings/Mail Merge Manager tool bar
 - ◆ Verify that the address looks correct.
 - ◆ If there are any problems you can select the “Match Fields” button to make any corrections; if you use the suggested headers you should have few problems.
 - ◆ «AddressBlock» will now appear in the selected area.
- Finish the merge
- Select “Preview Merge” to view what the finished product will look like and make any necessary corrections.
- If the preview is correct, select “Finish and Merge” and “Edit Individual Documents”
- This will create a new Word file with all the addresses from the Excel file merged into the appropriate places. Be sure to save this file by

a new name such as: _____WatershedEnvelopes.

- Print the labels/envelopes/letters.
- When updates are made to the Excel mailing list file, you will need to re-merge the mailing list to make the corrections to the labels/envelopes/letters.

After the Mailing Has Been Sent

- Treat the mailing list as a living document. This means that the list will need to be updated regularly as addresses change, people move or pass away.
 - ◆ By keeping the file up to date, you will better utilize your mailing budget and reduce the number of returned/unopened mailings.
 - ◆ When searching for addresses after mailings have been returned unopened, www.yellowpages.com and www.411.com are good resources.
 - ◆ Saving the file after each round of mailings and corrections will help maintain a quality mailing list. A suggested naming system is listed below:
 - BadgerCreek_Mailinglist_06202011
 - BadgerCreek_Mailinglist_09152011
 - BadgerCreek_Mailinglist_12122011