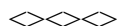


From:

Guide to Watershed Planning and Management
A Manual to Assist Washington's Local Governments and Tribes with Watershed
Planning and Management Under the Watershed
Management Act (RCW 90.82/ESHB 2514)
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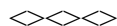
Key Concepts in Watershed Planning Manual

- * A watershed plan does not need to offer all the answers. Instead, it can lay out a long-term process towards finding answers and improving solutions.
- * Watershed planning needs to be fully integrated with other planning and regulatory programs;
- * Planning units can make their work easier by distinguishing clearly between:
 - A) agreement on facts; and
 - B) agreement on the implications of facts and the resulting recommendations;
- * The planning process must be broadly inclusive and use public input (required in the law);
- * The plan must establish a vision and context for the entire watershed; but the planning unit may choose to focus resources on problem-solving in particular sub-basins;
- * Implementation must be considered at every stage of the planning process.



Developing a Watershed Plan and Making Recommendations

This manual offers a planning process that uses traditional techniques such as identification of issues; analysis of causes and effects; analysis of alternative solutions using specified criteria; and recommendation of preferred alternatives. In addition, it is suggested that planning units devote considerable attention to designing an implementation program to ensure plan elements can achieve the desired objectives. This includes designation of implementing organizations, together with obtaining the commitments of those organizations; identification of funding sources, and development of fallback plans in case certain plan elements cannot be implemented as expected. One of the key aspects of watershed planning is integration with related planning processes and programs. Suggestions are offered for building this integration into the planning process. This manual devotes special attention to integrating watershed planning with city and county comprehensive plans (both those completed under the Growth Management Act, or GMA, and those completed in non-GMA jurisdictions); integrating with salmon recovery efforts including the Salmon Recovery Planning Act (ESHB 2496); and, integrating with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Incorporating SEPA procedures into the watershed planning process can greatly improve the watershed plan, and streamline its implementation.



Implementation

In order for watershed management to be successful, it is vital that all aspects of implementation are considered from the start. The planning process suggested in this manual includes design of an implementation program, formal agreements committing those organizations that accept implementation responsibilities, and consideration of an “implementation committee” within the planning unit structure.

Clearly funding resources will be one of the key aspects of implementation. Watershed planning embraces a variety of programs that are already funded, in part, by State and federal grants and loans. At this time, however, neither the federal government nor the legislature have established funding mechanisms specifically geared towards watershed management. Exhibit ES-7 identifies potential sources of funding, both for planning in the short-term, and watershed management in the long-term. This figure is only meant to be suggestive of potential sources, since the proportions of funding available from different sources will vary widely.

In order for locally-based watershed management to be effective, it is likely that local funding sources will be necessary for a large share of costs. In many cases, funds that are already collected by cities, counties, utilities, and tribes support management activities that essentially represent watershed management, or can be brought into the watershed plan framework with only minor adjustment. However, to a large extent, new sources of local money may be required to establish an effective watershed management program. Establishing these funding sources can be made easier to the degree that the watershed planning process fully engages the public in a discussion of problems, issues and opportunities.



7.7 Design Implementation Program

A watershed plan will be less effective if implementation has not been fully addressed. In addition to recommending alternatives, the planning unit should develop an implementation program, which specifies who will do what, and when. A well-designed implementation program will help establish the conditions necessary for successful implementation.

Components of the implementation program may include:

- Which organization is responsible for each implementation activity;
- New ordinances or rules, or modification of existing ordinances and rules (note differences among jurisdictions within the management area);
- Formal agreements among the planning unit participants or among the implementing organizations, including mechanisms to ensure accountability;
- How each implementation activity is to be funded;
- Rule-making requirements of APA;
- Sequencing and timeline for implementation activities, recognizing those that are timesensitive;
- Monitoring to ensure implementation achieves desired outcomes;
- Contingency Plans to address situations where an organization designated to implement one or more elements proves either unable or unwilling to do so;

- Integration with related programs and planning processes;
- Information needed to sustain an effective program over the long-term, and the means of obtaining this information;
- Creation of a consistent, compatible data management system to monitor progress, maintain historical record, and provide an information source for similar and future projects;
- Public education and involvement: role of community; and
- Composition of an implementation committee, if desired, together with a process for adaptive management of the Watershed Management Program and periodic reporting to the planning unit or other appropriate organizations.

During development of the implementation program, there may be a need to revisit the alternatives discussed in Section 7.5.