

The Community Based Watershed Management Planning Approach in Nebraska Watersheds

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Community Based Planning Purpose

- Develop a comprehensive watershed plan
- Maximize stakeholder input and partner cooperation
- Minimize conflict
- Accelerate and concentrate BMP adoption
- Achieve measurable results

Community Based Watershed Planning

The desired outcome is a
comprehensive
Management Plan
that is
Fully Implemented

Citizen Involvement Assumptions

- Meaningful citizen involvement can make a difference
- Science and local knowledge are essential
- Collection, Evaluation and Integration of information
- A group structure is important
- Partnerships are necessary

Citizen Involvement in Watershed Management Planning Process

- Local people lead the process
- Locally identified needs
- Social, Economic and Ecological concerns

Watershed Based Planning Nebraska Watersheds (includes both completed and watersheds in progress)



NDEQ



Community Based Watershed Management Plans

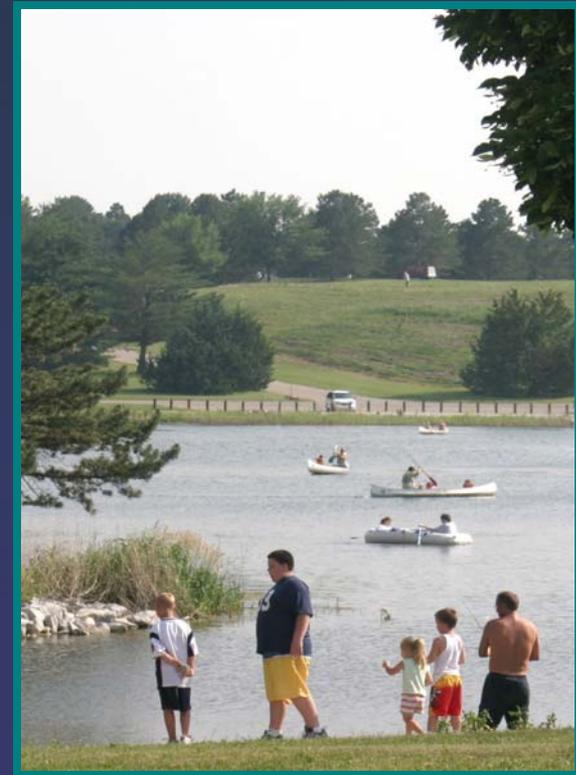
- 20 watershed projects
- Used to guide 319 grant funded projects
- Leverage funds from other agencies and sources

Goals of the Planning Process

- To get stakeholder involvement!
- To include the appropriate ecological, economic, and social factors.
- To maintain and enhance the quality of the environment.

Stakeholder: definition

- Anyone who works, plays or lives in the watershed
- Neighbors, business, sportsman, family users, etc.



How Does It Work?

- Identify a resource problem
- Identify a potential sponsor and appropriate partners
- Give stakeholders leadership
- Agree to a comprehensive land treatment strategy (watershed management plan)

Technical Advisory Team

- Sponsor and resource agencies
- Technical experts
- Provide advice and guidance
- Evaluate recommendations
- Assist in securing funding
- Provide implementation assistance

Community Based Planning Process

3 PHASES:

Phase I - Know Your Area

Phase II - Decision Making

Phase III - Plan Implementation

How We Do It?

- Generate support through participatory public meetings
- Form a citizen watershed council and a technical advisory team
- Collect input through public and watershed council meetings
- Stakeholders develop and implement a detailed management plan

Public Meetings

- Four progressive meetings
- Facilitated by neutral parties
- Transfer leadership to stakeholders
- Develop awareness and concern
- Foster understanding
- Stimulate action

First Public Meeting

- Agencies explain resource problems and causes
 - Water, Soils, Wildlife
 - Social/Economic Impacts
 - Mandates (TMDL, etc.)
- Stakeholders develop a vision statement

Second Public Meeting

- Agencies facilitate refinement of vision statement
- Stakeholders
 - Develop goals for watershed plan
 - Develop a timeline for planning
 - Identify leaders
 - Elect Watershed Council

Watershed Council

- Represent watershed interest groups
- Work with technical advisory team
- Set specific quantifiable resource goals
- Solicit input and share information with other stakeholders
- Assess alternative treatments
- Guide implementation of the plan





Third Public Meeting

- Council presents draft of the management plan
- Stakeholders review and amend the draft watershed plan
- Document initial interest in project participation

Fourth Public Meeting

- Council presents watershed plan
- Document landowner or operator commitment to participate
- Council outlines timeline and ongoing strategy to implement the plan

Celebrate Success!



Extension's Roles in the Process

- Leading the planning process
- Recruiting citizens
- Serving as a technical and educational resource
- Empowering citizens
- Conducting the educational component
- Recruiting and training volunteers



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Heartland

Regional Water Coordination Initiative

*A Partnership of USDA CSREES
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities*

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- Symposium on Citizen Involvement in Watershed Management 2004
- Workshop on Dealing with Conflict in Watershed Management 2005
- Forum on Building Partnerships for Collaborative Watershed Management 2006

Impacts

- Leave a Stakeholder Legacy
 - Sense of accomplishment
 - Ownership of the watershed
 - Continued stewardship by stakeholders to protect their investment into the future







Keys to Success

- Put the stakeholders in charge
- Promote the simplest effective and acceptable BMPs
- Strive for quantity of treatment over type of treatment
- Stick with the plan
- Celebrate success

Benefits to Citizen Involvement in Watershed Management Planning

- Community and stakeholders better informed
- Stakeholders are decision makers and plan implementation is higher
- Projects completed are more successful



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