EPA Perspectives on WPPs

- Why Watershed Planning is needed for achieving water quality standards

When it comes to watershed planning

- Watershed planning is complex,
- confusing,
- time consuming,
- and frustrating

BUT WORTH THE EFFORT

WE FEEL YOUR PAIN
WHY Watershed Plans?

Three Big Reasons

1. It’s the best approach to water quality protection

- Watershed planning is the most comprehensive approach that combines:
  - Science
  - Community Input
  - Strategic Planning

  Produces the water quality improvement/protection we need
2. It is required under CWA 319 Guidelines

- a.k.a. – we gotta do it!
- The current guidelines require use of 319 funds for development, implementation, and monitoring of WBPs.

Why is this statement in the Guidelines?

- In 1999 Congress increased CWA 319h budget by 100% - with proviso that new $$ be used more comprehensively
- EPA modified NPS Guidelines to achieve goal of better targeting, so the 9 element WBP was developed in 2004
319(h) funds: 2 categories (2013 Guidelines)

- Project Funds – 50% of State allocation
  - Must implement watershed projects guided by Watershed Based Plans to restore waters

- Program Funds – up to 50% of allocation
  - Supports basic State program needs to meet mgmt program goals, implement WBPs, protect unimpaired waters

3. Overall NPS Program improvement

- Attempt to restore 319 funds reductions of past few years and protect future funding

- OMB reviewed the 319h program and overall rated it a “poor performer”
OMB Rating

- Administration regularly evaluates Federal agencies
- 2010: OMB reviews CWA 319h - we don’t fare well
  - Program in existence for 20+ years; $12B invested
  - Few NPS WQ Success Stories and delistings through 319h activities
  - PART, PAMS instituted as tools to track program effectiveness

WPPs play role in achieving program success

- PART
  - Pollution Assessment Rating Tool: Annually tracks sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus reductions per state
- PAMS
  - Performance Assessment Measurement Strategy: Annually tracks regions to goals on 90 water related assessment measures
**PAMS – Relevant for NPS / WBPs**

WQ-9a,b,c: nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment

WQ-10: #of waterbodies identified by states mostly impacted by NPS that are partially or fully restored

SP-10: #of waters(2002) not meeting WQS, where these are now fully/partially met

SP-11: Remove specific causes of impairment

SP-12: Improve WQ condition in a watershed using watershed approach

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**Resources: Other Federal Agencies/Programs**

- Compliment, engage, integrate:
- USDA [EQIP, CREP, WHP]
- USGS & USFWS – monitoring/Assessment
- USACE
- CW State Revolving Funds (SRF) –
  - $60B available for low interest loans for NPS
  - Clean Water Needs Survey would benefit from better ID of funding needs from WPPs & NPS Assessment
Current Issues Affecting WBP Success

- 2006 EPA Survey of WBPs had the following Findings
  - Scale of plan too large
  - Did not set clear goals
  - Most Plans did well with Elements A&E
  - Most Plans had difficulty with Elements B, D, and H
    - Many struggled to calculate expected load reductions due to lack of data, complicated models

Current Issues cont.

- Funding

- Ensure future workplans are linked to WBP

- Lack of EPA, State, local capacity to support WBP development/implementation
Success Recommendations

- More sharing of successful plans & lessons learned
- Better training/resources for federal, state staff, locals
- Better Partnerships with EPA and states
- More funding/resources to locals