

*W*atershed Planning Grant *Proposal Application and Guidelines*

THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Applications due September 1, 2009



Watershed Improvement Program
Wallace State Office Building
502 East Ninth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

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PURPOSE

The Iowa DNR Watershed Improvement Program seeks to empower Iowans to revitalize impaired waterbodies by developing and putting into practice a comprehensive Watershed Management Plan (WMP). The Watershed Planning Grant is intended to support local stakeholder groups with a vision to rejuvenate a lake or stream by providing them a substantial funding mechanism to create a Watershed Management Plan.

The WMP serves as a road map for how to get from today's water quality problems to tomorrow's solutions. The creation and implementation of a locally-led, integrated and thorough WMP is continuously cited as the major reason for success in watershed improvement efforts. By using the most complete scientific information available, a WMP can identify what is necessary to improve water quality, why it is needed, and where to use watershed improvement practices in a strategic manner.

The Watershed Planning Grant will award funds to develop Watershed Management Plans aimed at restoring lakes or streams on Iowa's impaired waters list. Look to page 4 for additional information on watersheds eligible for grants.

The DNR will award up to \$200,000 in Watershed Planning Grants, with individual grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000. All awards will require a 50 percent local match, of which at least 20 percent of the local match must be in hard dollars. The Section 319 program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides DNR funding for nonpoint pollution programs, including Watershed Planning Grants.

Those that receive grants may request up to 24 months to finalize and submit to the DNR a WMP that meets the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's nine elements of a Watershed Management Plan. Once a local watershed group prepares an acceptable WMP, the DNR encourages them to use the WMP as a tool to seek funding to put the plan in action. Various state and federal sources, including the DNR Watershed Improvement Program, offer funding put the strategies outlined in the WMP into action to improve water quality.



GENERAL APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applicant Eligibility

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants include local or regional public and private organizations or agencies able to collaborate with other local stakeholders within Iowa watersheds to develop Watershed Management Plans (WMPs). Eligible entities include: soil and water conservation districts, county conservation boards, Resource Conservation and Development agencies, councils of government, regional planning commissions, city governments, county governments, public utilities, community colleges, colleges or universities, public solid waste agencies, drainage districts, local chambers of commerce, not-for-profit local watershed or community organizations or foundations, and other non-governmental not-for-profit organizations or associations capable of leading local watershed planning efforts.

Ineligible Applicants:

Ineligible applicants include individuals, for-profit businesses and corporations.

For clarification on eligibility requirements, contact the DNR program staff listed in Appendix B of the application.

Award Limits

The DNR will award up to \$200,000 in Watershed Planning Grants, with individual grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$50,000. Applicants may apply for any amount of grant funding between \$10,000 and \$50,000. All applications must demonstrate funding needs through an itemized budget included as part of the application.

Watershed Eligibility:

Watershed Type and Size:

Eligibility is limited to applications addressing watersheds of 50,000 acres or smaller that drain directly or indirectly to a waterbody on the state's impaired waters list (for more information on impaired waters, see www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/impaired.html). A waterbody is impaired if it does not meet water quality criteria designed to protect its designated uses (for example, aquatic life uses and primary contact recreation uses) as established in the Iowa Water Quality Standards (www.iowadnr.gov/water/standards/files/chapter61.pdf) and is placed in either Category 4 or Category 5 of the most recent (2008) Iowa Integrated Report: <http://wqm.igsb.uiowa.edu/WQA/303d.html>.

If a waterbody does not fully meet its water quality criteria, and is thus assessed as impaired in the Integrated Report, it is either placed on Iowa's 2008 Section 303(d) list (Category 5 of Iowa's Integrated Report) or in Category 4 of the 2008 Integrated Report. Category 4 waters are assessed as impaired but, for one of several reasons, these waters do not need a DNR water quality improvement plan (also known as a Total Maximum Daily Load report, or TMDL).

Watersheds ineligible for this grant include those draining greater than 50,000 acres and/or those that do not drain directly or indirectly to an impaired waterbody (included in Categories 4 or 5 of Iowa's 2008 Integrated Report).

Additional information about Category 4 and 5 impaired waters and/or the Iowa 2008 Integrated Report may be found at: <http://wqm.igsb.uiowa.edu/WQA/303d.html>

Project Duration:

Watershed Planning Grant awards will be issued for up to 24 months to complete a WMP that incorporates EPA’s nine elements of a watershed plan. Planning applications proposed to last longer than 24 months may be considered, subject to approval from the DNR Watershed Improvement Program.

Cost-Share (Match) Requirements

As a required part of the award, an applicant must contribute a local cost-share match of at least 50 percent of the grant (a match-to-grant ratio of 1:2) of which at least 20 percent of the local match is in cash and no more than 80 percent of the local match is from in-kind contributions. For example, a \$50,000 grant would require a local match of at least \$25,000 in total contributions, of which at least \$5,000 must be in cash. For this example, the total amount committed to the project would be \$75,000.

PROJECT FUNDING EXAMPLE				
Grant	+	Local Match	=	Total Project Amount
\$50,000		\$25,000		\$75,000
		<i>(\$5,000 hard match; \$20,000 soft match)</i>		

All grants require the same minimum 1:2 ratio of match-to-grant contributions, regardless of the size of the grant awarded. Unobligated IDALS – DSC Watershed Development and Planning Assistance Grant awards may be used as part of the local soft match.

Application Submission Guidelines

Completed applications must be received by the DNR Watershed Improvement Program no later than 4:30 p.m. CST on September 1, 2009. Applications must be mailed or hand-delivered to:

Mr. Steve Hopkins
 Iowa Department of Natural Resources
 Watershed Improvement
 Wallace Building – 5th Floor
 502 E. 9th Street
 Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034

Applicants must:

- Submit the application in electronic format on a CD, using Microsoft Word software. (Paper copies of applications will not be accepted. If you do not have access to Microsoft Word, please contact Steve Hopkins at (515) 281-6402 for assistance.)
- Utilize the application format provided.
- Include a detailed watershed map in the application.
- Describe known impairment(s).
- Include all letters of commitment from any third party funding sources for the local match.
- Submit an application narrative in Arial font size 11.

Encouraged, but not required:

- Letters of support from local watershed and community partners

Application Outline:

Applications must be submitted to the DNR Watershed Improvement Program using the application outline provided below. Applicants must follow all instructions and provide all required information to be considered eligible for a grant. Required forms are provided in Appendix A.

Applications must include the following forms (blank forms are provided in Appendix A) and the grant application package must be prepared and submitted in the following order and format:

Form A – Cover Sheet

Form B – Application Checklist

Form C – Plan of Work Outline and Narrative

Form D – Timetable

Form E – Budget

Form F – Volunteer Labor Worksheet

Attachments – Watershed map, letters of commitment, letters of support (optional)

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses:

Eligible Expenses:

Eligible expenses for planning grant funds include: staffing costs directly related to WMP development, WMP information and education activities, local stakeholder group facilitation as part of WMP development activities, contractor costs to assist with WMP development, water monitoring costs, sampling and laboratory fees and costs to conduct field assessments, purchasing selected field equipment and related project travel costs.

Eligible expenses for use as matching funds include direct grant-related costs such as: staffing costs, grant administration, vehicle costs, office/meeting space, selected field equipment costs, volunteer hours, monitoring costs and lab fees.

Ineligible Expenses:

Ineligible expenses for Watershed Planning Grant funds include: food and beverages, taxes, vehicle registration, overhead expenses, indirect costs and office expenses not directly related to project implementation.

Ineligible expenses for matching funds include: taxes, overhead expenses, indirect costs, and office expenses not directly related to project implementation.

Grant Product: Nine-Element Watershed Management Plan:

The final product required of this grant is a Watershed Management Plan which successfully incorporates the nine elements of watershed planning of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's Nonpoint Source Program. **The completed WMP that fulfills this requirement must be submitted to the Iowa DNR Watershed Improvement Program before final grant payment will be made to the grantee.**

Detailed information about nine-element watershed planning may be found in EPA's *Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters* (2005), available online at: www.epa.gov/owow/nps/pubs.html. In addition, EPA Region 7's Watershed Management Plan review criteria are provided in Appendix C.

A WMP may be developed to implement a completed water quality improvement plan (also

known as Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL), or it may be developed even if there has not been a TMDL completed for an impaired waterbody. A WMP may also be developed for watersheds which have previously received funding to complete watershed assessments and/or monitoring through the IDALS/DNR Watershed Development and Planning Assistance Grant program.

Generally, a WMP will identify actions needed to achieve water quality improvement goals, and it will identify the amount of time needed to implement the plan. A comprehensive WMP may include strategies to implement multiple phases over time to achieve identified water quality improvement goals. For example, a 10-year or 20-year WMP may identify several different phases, to be completed in a particular sequence, to achieve water quality improvement goals.

In Iowa, a completed WMP may be used as a basis to apply for funding for watershed project implementation. Current potential funding sources include DNR Watershed Project Grants (formerly known as Section 319 grants), Water Protection Funds (WPF) and Watershed Protection Funds (WSPF) administered through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and grant funding from the state Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB).

Timetable for Application, Selection, Award and Contract Execution:

Application Due Date: September 1, 2009

Applications must be received by the DNR Watershed Improvement Program no later than 4:30 p.m. CST on September 1, 2009.

Selection and Award Date: November 15, 2009

It is anticipated that award selection will be made and award notification provided to all applicants by November 15, 2009.

Contract Execution: February 2010

It is anticipated that contracts for grant awards will be executed in February of 2010. Grant awards of \$25,000 or more must be approved by the DNR Environmental Protection Commission prior to contract execution between the DNR and the grantee.

Award Disbursement and Contract Requirements:

Applicants selected for funding will enter into a contract with the DNR. The length of the contract will be up to 24 months, depending upon the activities proposed by the applicant and approved by the DNR. The contract will specify that the grantee provide the DNR with periodic project updates as a condition of completing the grant. Reporting requirements will include project expenditures, activities and accomplishments. The grantee must also prepare and submit a WMP to the DNR. All information submitted as part of the grant will be considered public information, unless otherwise provided by law.

Grant recipients are eligible to receive up to 10 percent of the total grant award as an advance at the beginning of the project. All remaining funds will be disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis. The final 10 percent of the grant award will be held until receipt of accepted final WMP.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Application Review and Selection Process:

Applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of staff from the DNR Watershed Improvement Program, IDALS Division of Soil Conservation, and USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. The DNR Watershed Improvement Program will make final decisions on funding. The review committee will evaluate applications based upon the criteria identified below.

Review Criteria:

Applications will be reviewed on a 100-point scoring system. Point values have been assigned to the following sections of the application: work plan; application objectives, actions steps and participation; timetable; and budget.

- 1. Work Plan:** Describe the watershed size; importance and use of the waterbody; and water quality problems of the waterbody, including the type of impairment, and cause(s) of the impairment (if known); description of the TMDL results (if applicable); the proposed strategy for developing the WMP; and if additional monitoring data is needed to develop the WMP, explain how monitoring will aid in the watershed planning process, including the time needed for monitoring. (20 points)
- 2. Application Objectives, Action Steps and Participation:** Describe application objectives; proposed action steps to achieve objectives; describe planning group participants, how community based planning will be used to aid in developing the WMP, and evidence of community support for watershed planning efforts; and describe funding organizations and their respective roles and responsibilities (40 points)
- 3. Timetable:** Reasonableness of timetable of proposed activities; objectives/action steps and responsible parties are clearly identified (20 points)
- 4. Budget:** Reasonableness and eligibility of proposed budget; local matches are clearly identified (20 points)

Incomplete or late applications will be disqualified from eligibility and will not be considered.

DNR Watershed Improvement Program staff can answer any questions and give individual assistance regarding the grant application process. Please contact:

Steve Hopkins

DNR Watershed Improvement Grants Coordinator

E-mail: stephen.hopkins@dnr.iowa.gov

Phone: (515) 281-6402

Allen Bonini

DNR Watershed Improvement Program Supervisor

E-mail: allen.bonini@dnr.iowa.gov

Phone: (515) 281-5107

Jeff Berckes

DNR Water Quality Improvement Plan (TMDL) Program Coordinator

E-mail: jeff.berckes@dnr.iowa.gov

Phone: (515) 281-4791

APPENDIX A: APPLICATION FORMS

The DNR requires that applications be submitted electronically, in Microsoft Word format on a CD or via e-mail. The following pages are for example only. Paper copies will not be accepted.

Please use the application form template (Microsoft Word) at www.iowadnr.gov/water/watershed/files/planapp09.doc

If you do not have access to Microsoft Word, please contact Steve Hopkins at (515) 281-6402 for assistance.

FORM A – COVER SHEET

Watershed Planning Grant Application

Application Title: _____

Applicant (Organization) Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Federal ID Number: _____

County: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Amount of Funding Requested: \$ _____

Amount of Applicant Match: + \$ _____

Total Project Cost = \$ _____

FORM B – APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Watershed Planning Grant Application

In order to ensure all materials are attached to the submittal, please use the following checklist.

- _____ Cover Sheet
- _____ Plan of Work Outline and Narrative
- _____ Timetable
- _____ Budget Sheet
- _____ Attachment: Watershed Map
- _____ Electronic copy on compact disc

Signature: _____

Printed: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

FORM C – PLAN OF WORK OUTLINE & NARRATIVE

Watershed Planning Grant Application

Project Narrative

Do not write on this page – Information purposes only

Follow outline – Use headings

Address the following evaluation criteria:

Work Plan (briefly describe)

- Watershed size and characteristics
- Known impairments to be addressed in plan, and causes of impairments, if known
- TMDL results, if applicable
- Proposed strategy for developing the WMP
- Explain how monitoring will aid in the watershed planning process (if additional monitoring data is needed)

Objectives, Action Steps and Participation (briefly describe)

- Application objectives (overall goals)
- Proposed action steps to reach objectives
- Evidence of community support for watershed planning efforts and how community based planning will be used
- Planning group participants and funding organizations, and their respective roles and responsibilities

FORM D – TIMETABLE

Watershed Planning Grant Application

Applicant (Organization) Name: _____

Work Plan Begin Date: _____

Work Plan End Date: _____

This timetable should map out the time needed to complete objectives and action steps in order to finalize an acceptable, nine-element Watershed Management Plan. A 12-month chart follows on the next page. Use two charts, labeled “Year 1” and “Year 2,” if you are requesting more than 12 months.

FORM E – BUDGET SHEET

ITEM	DNR REQUEST	LOCAL SHARE IN-KIND	LOCAL SHARE HARD DOLLARS	IDENTIFY SOURCE(S) OF LOCAL MATCH	TOTAL COST
Staffing	\$	\$	\$		\$
Grant administration	\$	\$	\$		\$
Vehicle costs	\$	\$	\$		\$
Office/meeting space	\$	\$	\$		\$
Info&education (outreach)	\$	\$	\$		\$
Field equipment	\$	\$	\$		\$
Volunteer hours	\$	\$	\$		\$
Contractor costs	\$	\$	\$		\$
Monitoring costs	\$	\$	\$		\$
Lab fees	\$	\$	\$		\$
Other: _____	\$	\$	\$		\$
Other: _____	\$	\$	\$		\$
Total	\$	\$	\$		\$

Note: Follow guidelines closely regarding cost-share (match) requirements (see page 5) and eligible and ineligible expenses (see page 6), when preparing proposed budgets. Applicants are required to provide a 50 percent match of requested DNR funds with 20 percent of the match in hard dollars. For example, if \$50,000 is requested from the DNR, the local match must be at least \$25,000, with at least \$5,000 in the form of hard dollars. The total cost in this scenario would equal \$75,000.

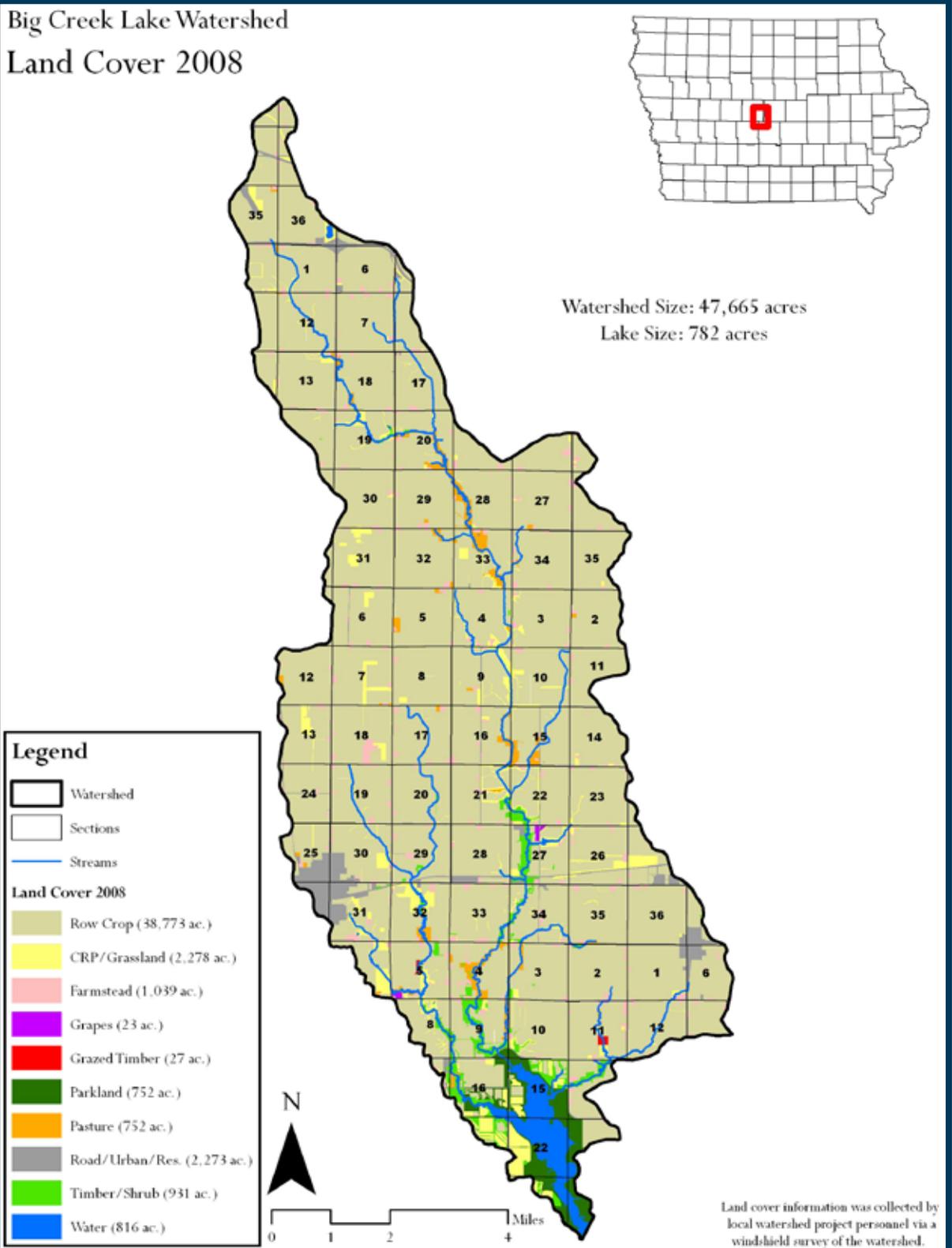
EXAMPLE BUDGET SHEET

ITEM	DNR REQUEST	LOCAL SHARE IN-KIND	LOCAL SHARE HARD DOLLARS	IDENTIFY SOURCE(S) OF LOCAL MATCH	TOTAL COST
Staffing	\$32,000	\$7,000	\$	DSC Development Grant	\$39,000
Grant administration	\$	\$5,000	\$	County Conservation Board (CCB)	\$5,000
Vehicle costs	\$	\$1,750	\$	DSC Development Grant	\$1,750
Office/meeting space	\$	\$5,000	\$	CCB	\$5,000
Info&education (outreach)	\$3,000	\$	\$1,000	CCB	\$4,000
Field equipment	\$1,000	\$	\$1,000	CCB	\$2,000
Volunteer hours	\$	\$1,250	\$	Friends of the Lake Association	\$1,250
Contractor costs	\$10,000	\$	\$		\$10,000
Monitoring costs	\$	\$	\$1,500	CCB	\$1,500
Lab fees	\$4,000	\$	\$1,500	CCB	\$5,500
Other: _____	\$	\$	\$		\$
Other: _____	\$	\$	\$		\$
Total	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$5,000		\$75,000

FORM F – VOLUNTEER LABOR WORKSHEET

VOLUNTEER NAME	ROLE IN PROJECT/TASKS PERFORMED	NUMBER OF HOURS (#H)	DOLLAR VALUE PER HOUR (\$/H)	VALUE OF SERVICE (#H*\$ /H)
TOTAL			\$	\$

ATTACHMENT: SAMPLE WATERSHED MAP



APPENDIX B: CONTACT LIST

This grant is administered through the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, which receives funding from the Section 319 program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for nonpoint pollution programs, including Watershed Planning Grants.

Applications should be mailed or delivered to the address below:

Steve Hopkins
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Watershed Improvement
Wallace State Office Building
502 East Ninth Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034

Please direct questions regarding the application process to one of the following contacts:

Steve Hopkins
DNR Watershed Improvement Grants Coordinator
E-mail: stephen.hopkins@dnr.iowa.gov
Phone: (515) 281-6402

Allen Bonini
DNR Watershed Improvement Program Supervisor
E-mail: allen.bonini@dnr.iowa.gov
Phone: (515) 281-5107

Jeff Berckes
DNR Water Quality Improvement Plan (TMDL) Program Coordinator
E-mail: jeff.berckes@dnr.iowa.gov
Phone: (515) 281-4791

APPENDIX C: WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN CRITERIA

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 Watershed Management Plan Review Criteria

Identification of Causes and Sources of Impairment

- General Watershed information including HUC information
- List of the 303d listed streams in the watershed and why listed.
- Is there a TMDL? What streams? What pollutants are addressed?
- Are there any point sources? Identify them and their potential impacts.
- What are the NPS sources of pollution in the watershed? Please note if it is not addressed in the plan then EPA 319 cannot fund it, unless the plan is modified.
- What are the current loads from all pollution sources being addressed?
- Maps are helpful, but not required.
- Are there any streams that need protecting? What impacts are threatening them?

Expected Load Reductions

- What load reductions are needed to meet designated uses in impaired streams?
- What is the source of the load reduction information? (TMDL, modeling, monitoring)
- What are the load reductions expected from BMPs? Will the proposed BMPs result in load reductions required to meet water quality standards?
- Please provide more than percentages, they are difficult to put into context.

Proposed Management Measures

- What BMPs/management measures need to be implemented to achieve the water quality goals?
- Have critical areas been identified? Are these areas mapped?
- Has the group prioritized areas of the watershed for implementation? What areas need to be addressed 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc? What BMPs should be implemented in these areas?
- Are the BMPs and critical areas strategically targeted to have the greatest improvements in water quality?
- Does the plan quantify the projected BMPs? (i.e. miles of fencing, terracing, waterways, number of grade stabilization structures)

Technical and Financial Assistance Needs

- Do the cost estimates reflect planning and implementation costs?
- Information is provided on how the cost estimate was determined?
- All potential funding sources have been identified for federal, state, local and private.

Information and Education

- Does the plan have a reasonable strategy to inform and engage stakeholders (federal, state, local, private) in the watershed? Examples include public meetings, watershed events, multimedia campaigns, news articles, signage in high visibility areas, etc.
- Is there an evaluation process included?

Implementation Schedule

- Plan describes the scheduled order of implementation including the planning process through actual implementation of BMPs and monitoring?
- Set time frames are projected to determine progress towards meeting goals – In other words, is there a timetable for addressing priority areas, a schedule for implementing critical BMPs, etc.?

- Does the schedule follow the prioritization of the critical areas? If not, is there a reasoning why?

Measurable Milestones and Project Outcomes

- Does the plan include milestones with anticipated completion dates to mark accomplishments? This information can be incorporated into the schedule.
- Is there a way for those implementing the plan to evaluate progress?
- Milestones can include implementing a certain number of BMPs, addressing a number of critical areas, number of outreach events, etc.

Load Reduction Evaluation

- This element looks for interim water quality milestones. The milestone can differ from the water quality standard violation; for example improvements in fish diversity, water clarity, benthic community, reduction of atrazine etc.
- These milestones measure progress towards meeting the overall water quality goals for the watershed.
- Does the plan identify a course of action if goals are not being met as anticipated?

Monitoring

- What water quality indicators are you monitoring? What parameters?
- Who is performing the sampling? How often are they sampling? Are they doing before and after sampling or upstream vs. downstream, for example?
- Is the monitoring supporting the milestones that are identified? Will it demonstrate the effectiveness of implementing BMPs over time?
- Is there a trigger to have the state reassess streams or the watershed?
- How are info/ed evaluations being considered?

Note, this information does not need to be detailed out like in a QAPP, however we would like to have an idea of what type of monitoring will be performed.