

Guidance
Regional Water Planning -- Baseline Council Activities
SFY 2014 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)

Introduction

1. This guidance provides the framework for Regional Water Planning Council (Council) activities during SFY 2014 (July 2013-June 2014).
 - a. Section I addresses expected baseline activity during this time period. Over the course of this year, the Councils will meet at least twice to promote continued local and regional implementation of regional water plans while maintaining an important forum for regional water resource topics.
 - b. Section II discusses the Regional Assessment of Implementation Status each Council will prepare. These reports will provide the Councils, EPD and key implementing actors important information to allow them to assess, promote and maintain regional water plan implementation. Additionally, this information will be among the starting points for the 5-year review and revision of the regional water plans.

SECTION I: Expected Activities, Roles and Responsibilities (July 2013 – June 2014)

1. Regional Water Planning Councils
 - a. Hold a minimum of two Council meetings per Council by June 30, 2014,
 - b. Prepare a Regional Assessment of Implementation Status (Section II) by June 30, 2014,
 - c. Coordinate with key implementing actors to inform preparation of the Regional Assessment of Implementation Status and to leverage local action on Regional Water Plan (Plan) implementation,
 - d. Provide a forum for engaging local and regional governments, key stakeholders and other interested parties on regional water topics,
 - e. As requested by EPD, coordinate information with state agencies to improve the interface between the Plans and agency resource management activities,
 - f. Continue to be guided by its public involvement plan and meeting rules,
 - g. Begin to prepare for the required 5-year Regional Water Plan review and revision, and
 - h. Coordinate communications with EPD, as needed.
2. EPD
 - a. Select Council Support Contractor and provide funds for Council support contracts,
 - b. Provide funds for technical data and information work,
 - c. Provide staff support for Councils,
 - d. Coordinate with Councils and contractors to support the preparation of the Regional Assessment of Implementation Status,
 - e. Provide guidance to Councils,
 - f. Provide Council websites, including management and maintenance support, and
 - g. Use the regional water plans to guide decisions regarding permitting.

3. Council Support Contractor
 - a. Provide Council support consistent with EPD guidance and contract with EPD.
4. Implementing Actors
 - a. A water planning region's implementing actors are local governments and other waters users in the region with the capacity to develop water infrastructure and apply for the required permits, grants, and loans,
 - b. Implement management practices and recommendations in regional water plans,
 - c. Assist the Councils and contractors as they prepare the Regional Assessment of Implementation Status, and
 - d. It is recommended that implementing actors take advantage of the opportunity to attend and participate in Council meetings.

SECTION II: Regional Assessment of Implementation Status

1. Each Regional Water Planning Council, with the support of their contractor, will prepare a Regional Assessment of Implementation Status (report). This report will summarize progress on implementation of regional water plan management practices and recommendations through June 2014.
2. Purpose and Audience
 - a. The State Water Plan and all 10 regional water plans identify the need for a regular assessment of regional water plan implementation status. However, surveying every possible implementing actor in the region without prioritization or other organizing principles would be cumbersome, expensive and yield information that would be difficult to use. Therefore, this report will include:
 - i. A non-inclusive summary and highlighting of the most significant regional water plan implementation successes and activities underway in the water planning region,
 - ii. A discussion of the connection between the described implementation activities and the vision, goals, practices and recommendations in the regional water plan(s), and
 - iii. Notable opportunities for near-term actions to further plan implementation.
 - iv. Given that this report will survey recent implementation highlights, a more systematic assessment of plan benchmarks, management practice implementation, and barriers to implementation will be reserved for consideration during 5 year review and revision.
 - b. Councils will use the report:
 - i. To better understand and develop their own role as a bridge to the regional water plan implementing actors.
 - ii. As input and one of the starting points for Council review and revision of the regional water plans, and
 - iii. During the review and revision, the Councils will use the report to assess the need for revision of Regional Water Plans and identify potential changes to management practices and other parts of the Plans.
 - c. EPD and other state agencies will use the report:

5. Activities for which local funds were raised and expended.
- iv. Summary information about the regional implementation activities may include:
 1. A description of the activity that was or is being undertaken,
 2. The implementing actor(s) undertaking the activity,
 3. The primary purpose the implementing actor(s) is undertaking the activity,
 4. The specific vision, goal(s), practice(s) and recommendation(s) in the regional water plan or the state water plan the activity is implementing,
 5. Cost of the activity,
 6. Anticipated next step(s), time frame for these next steps and implementing actors anticipated to undertake those step(s),
 7. Lessons learned,
 8. Activities that cross implementation action categories
 - a. These activities will be included in a single implementation action category. The summary information for activities that cross categories will include a brief discussion of its multiple effects.
 - v. State and federal agency activities to support implementation
 1. Regional water plan implementation is primarily the responsibility of local governments and others in their region with the capacity to develop water infrastructure and apply for the required permits, grants, and loans,
 2. A number of activities to support regional water plan implementation have been undertaken in each of the water planning regions with the support of or in partnership with EPD and other state agencies,
 3. While these agency actions will not comprise their own implementation action category, relevant agency activities will be included in the activity summaries where applicable.
 - vi. Some Councils have a high degree of alignment among their resource conditions, water demands, vision, goals, priorities, management practices and recommendations. In those cases, it may be beneficial to conduct elements of their information collection, organization and packaging jointly. Joint efforts may be particularly appropriate to the extent it would be less efficient to ask the same implementing actors the same or similar questions multiple times.
- d. EPD will provide format and style guidance for this report upon request and as necessary.