



## Chapter 7

# Implement Solutions and Track Progress

The last phase of the watershed assessment process includes implementing the identified solutions, tracking their progress, and updating your projects as required. Implementation is the “doing” stage, a critical component of watershed restoration. It brings together all of the activities necessary to reach your watershed restoration goals and puts them to work.

### 7-1 Planning and Budgeting for High Priority Projects

To implement watershed restoration projects and activities, you must budget the funds needed to obtain equipment, provide training, perform services, and conduct specific projects under the plan. Your watershed assessment plan should cover at least 8 years. However, the plan will be implemented based on the priority of projects and initiatives identified as well as the funds available for implementation. Therefore, you should review and update your plan at least annually to reassess and reprioritize projects.

#### 7-1.1 Estimating and Submitting Project Costs

For every project you want to implement (regardless of its funding source), you need to develop a cost estimate for budgeting and requesting funds. Appendix E contains a description of potential BMP websites, which cover associated unit cost factors for some projects.

#### 7-1.2 Integrate Project in Municipal Budget

The next step in implementation is incorporating your projects into the municipal budget as part of strategic asset management. Selecting projects for funding is largely a subjective process, with tight budgetary limits, and often influenced by politics. Municipalities may use return on investment and total costs to select watershed restoration projects as part of their infrastructure budget. However, developing an infrastructure budget is not an exact science. Exhibit 1-3 shows an assessment of the

#### Tip

**Review your plan at least annually to reassess and reprioritize your projects.**

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budgeting attractiveness of infrastructure investments on the basis of return on investment and total cost.

### 7-1.3 Identify Available Funding Sources

Municipalities can implement desirable projects that are not included in the budget by identifying and developing partnerships with other stakeholders. Form 6 allows you to list partners, agreements, benefits, addresses, and points of contact for tracking purposes. This guide provides links to groups active in each watershed around the country as well as types of groups that may provide assistance and support. Chapter 6 has a partnership template for tracking regional and project partners.

### 7-1.4 Update Zoning and Ordinance Requirements

Municipalities will need to evaluate and potentially update zoning and ordinance requirements to implement some watershed restoration projects.

## 7-2 Sources of Funds for Identified Projects

The funds you need to accomplish the projects you have identified can come from four sources: municipal budget funds, other municipal funding sources, partnerships, and outside sources (including federal funding).

The following publications are other sources of funding information related to wetlands and watersheds:

- *Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection: Second Edition*. The catalog (EPA841-B-97-008) includes funding source descriptions and department and agency statute and title indexes. It is available on the EPA's *Watershed Academy* website at <http://www.epa.gov/OWOW/watershed/wacademy/fund.html>. The website also offers online education and training for a wide range of issues related to watersheds.
- *EPA's Watershed Information Network's (WIN) List of Federal Catalogs of Financial Assistance*. This website contains links to over 20 different references. It is available through the WIN website at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/water/surfah.nsf/financial?OpenView&Start=1&Count=30&Expand=1-1>.
- *Funding for Habitat Restoration Projects: A Compendium of Current Federal Programs with Fiscal Year 1996–1999 Funding Levels: A Citizens Guide*. Updated versions are available at <http://www.estuaries.org/funding.html>. The listings include the type of support, authorities, funding levels, activities, and eligibility requirements.

- *River Restoration and Community Revitalization: A Digest of Select Federal Programs for Rivers.* This digest is published by American Rivers, Inc., and is available through their website at <http://www.amrivers.org>, or by e-mailing them at [amrivers@amrivers.org](mailto:amrivers@amrivers.org). The booklet includes descriptions and contact information for select federal programs that involve river restoration (directly or indirectly). It features case studies for cities currently engaged in funded projects.
- *An Introduction to Wetland Restoration, Creation, and Enhancement.* This document was developed by the Interagency Workgroup on Wetland Restoration, which includes EPA, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Army Corps of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Natural Resources Conservation Service. The guide includes technical resources, contacts, and funding sources. The document is available at <http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restdocfinal.pdf>.

### 7-3 Obligating Funds, Developing Scopes of Work, and Letting Contracts

The following steps summarize the process of obligating funds through an existing mechanism:

- **Step 1: Identify a potential mechanism for obligating funds.** This can include an existing contract or cooperative agreement. You should have a copy and understand its provisions fully.
- **Step 2: Understand all relevant review and approval procedures.** For example, approval for a project may require a series of reviews through the municipal organization.
- **Step 3: Notify your accounting and finance office.** Once a project has been approved for funding, the accounting and finance office requires advance notice of your intention to obligate funds. You must obtain certification of funds available before you can contract for services or obligate funds. Note where funds will be transferred from other offices to the installation.
- **Step 4: Prepare a statement of work (SOW).** The SOW describes the types of work to be performed and materials to be used or submitted. It should identify the point of contact within the military and contractor's organization and should specify the period of performance and specific deliverables. You may want to obtain and review good models or examples of other SOWs from your contracting office that have been prepared for the type of project you are considering.

- **Step 5: Verify that funds are available.** Ensure that the accounting and finance office has control of the funds you plan to obligate.
- **Step 6: Submit the form to transfer funds for obligation.** Obtain the appropriate form from your accounting and finance office that will formally commit funds obligated by contract.

## Summary

Tracking and monitoring your watershed assessment plan's efforts are central to maintaining accountability, documenting what you have done, and demonstrating that your efforts have been thoughtful and responsible.

Funds are not obligated until the receiving organization acknowledges receipt of the funding document. Again, you should ensure that the legal office and contracting office guide you through this process. You should anticipate that the obligation of funds may require 6 weeks or more from the time funds are certified and the contracting office gets an acceptable SOW.

When a suitable contracting mechanism is unavailable, you may want to consider a source selection process to obtain the services of a contractor. Keep in mind that this is a complex and time-consuming process, which can take 6 months or more to complete. Should you choose this avenue, we strongly advise against third-party contracting or other arrangements that create distance between you and the contractor.

Remember, when managing government funds, only certain individuals have the authority to obligate funds. The contractor cannot begin work until contracts have been finalized and funds are obligated. If you are the point of contact or project manager for the government, you are responsible for monitoring the contractor's technical progress. You should ensure that you have obtained all necessary training and guidance required to perform this role.

## 7-4 Produce Summary Reports to Track Projects

A final consideration when implementing your watershed restoration projects is measuring success, reporting, and sharing information. Tracking and monitoring progress toward watershed goals and objectives also allows you to adapt to feedback from monitoring efforts and reprioritize projects, if necessary. These types of efforts are central to maintaining accountability, documenting what you have done, and demonstrating that your efforts have been thoughtful and responsible.

## 7-5 Maintaining and Updating Your Watershed Restoration Projects

Watershed management is a critical dimension of strategic asset management. Optimizing environmental condition and asset valuation is not a one-time event; municipalities should continually evaluate watershed conditions and potential watershed restoration projects to maximize asset value. At a minimum, municipalities should conduct this *Municipal Watershed Impact Assessment Process* annually to prioritize, budget, and reallocate priorities as necessary.

Evaluating your management actions and using monitoring information to readjust project priorities and initiatives is proactive management; proactive management is integral to watershed and strategic asset management and is the reason for inherent flexibility in implementing this process. Most goals and objectives may be relatively set, but how and when you achieve them are subject to many internal and external forces. Keeping an updated list of watershed restoration project priorities helps newly elected officials, managers, staff, and others quickly assess the status of environmental compliance and the asset management program. An updated priority list also feeds directly into the planning and budgeting processes and helps identify successes as well as failures.

Use the information from your tracking and monitoring data to determine what needs to be updated and reprioritized. Monitoring data may indicate that some initiatives need to be reallocated to subsequent funding years, placed on accelerated schedules, or shelved indefinitely. External issues—such as increases in development, reprogramming of funds, or new compliance requirements—may also require you to reprioritize projects and adjust your budget requests. A review of monitoring data may also indicate that a particular objective has not yet been met and that follow-on steps should not be initiated as originally scheduled in the plan. Even climate or weather conditions can adversely affect project and initiative implementation

### Tip

**An updated list of priorities has the following benefits:**

- **Newly elected officials, managers, staff, and others can quickly assess the status of environmental compliance and the asset management program.**
- **It links to the planning and budget processes.**
- **It helps in monitoring successes and failures.**

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