

Session 4: Strengthening Your TMDL Project Through Public Participation

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Acronyms

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
MPCA – Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
NPDES – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems
PM – Project Manager
SAC – Stakeholder Advisory Committee
TMDL – Total Maximum Daily Load

What is Public Participation?

“The highest measure of democracy is neither the 'extent of freedom' nor the 'extent of equality', but rather the highest measure of participation.”
–A. d. Benoist

Public participation is the involvement of people in a problem-solving or decision-making process that may interest or affect them (Bryson, 2002).

Core Values of Participatory Decision-Making

Public participation is based on several core values:

- **Full participation** whenever possible
- **Mutual understanding** of the problem that is to be solved
- **Inclusive solutions** to reflect many points of view
- **Shared responsibility** for implementation

Why Should the Public be Involved in Your TMDL Process?

Managing a TMDL process can be complex, time-consuming, and challenging. Ensuring that the proper technical and administrative procedures are followed is often a challenge. It is understandable, therefore, that the prospect of involving numerous stakeholders and citizens in the TMDL process may seem like an additional burden. While involving the public may not seem to be worth the time and effort, in the long-run, it will typically make your job easier.

“The common people of America display a quality of good common sense which is heartening to anyone who believes in the democratic process.” -**George Gallop, Pollster**

Our society has long held the belief that people have the right to be involved in and to influence things that affect them (Bryson and Carroll, 2002). Our government represents all people and interests. Involving citizens and stakeholders and seriously considering their input and needs is ethically the right thing to do and contributes to a more responsive and democratic governance (Hamel 2002).

Collaboration with the public is a proven way to address complex problems and to effect long-term changes in a community. When citizens are brought together to work on a problem and have the time to get to know one another and the issues they are trying to address in a meaningful way, surprising things can happen.

Citizens and stakeholders can become some of the most effective and articulate

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advocates for your project. Citizens and stakeholders often speak with a passion and conviction that inspires others. If treated with respect and appreciation, citizens and stakeholders can become creative partners in the TMDL process. At the same time, they can also be some of your toughest critics if progress toward goals appears too slow.

Since citizens and stakeholders work outside the constraints of a government organization, they are often good at visualizing and promoting innovative solutions to problems, urging government organizations to set higher goals, and demanding greater accountability for decision makers across the board.

Citizen and stakeholder involvement can increase your long-term efficiency by helping you get the word out, uncover potential problems, and raise funds and other resources for project implementation. Citizen participants, with their many personal and professional contacts and experiences, can often offer creative ways to weave public, private and nonprofit resources together to address difficult water quality problems.

“Many lawsuits to stop or delay a project are aimed less at the actual decision but more at failures in the decision making process because options were not considered, meetings were not announced or open, the analysis was flawed, and so on.” – **Dr. John Bryson and Anne Carroll**

Finally, if you create a successful public participation process, your project is more likely to go smoothly, avoiding the costly legal and political battles that can end up scuttling your project. The very nature of democratic processes, such as advisory committees and public comment periods, is that they create fair, open forums for raising and discussing sometimes “thorny” water resource management issues. As a result, tough issues are often resolved openly and serious conflicts are avoided (Bryson 2002).

Public participation can help you to:

- quickly identify fatal flaws in your process
- identify new opportunities
- create a better understanding of the issues
- help single-issue advocates see the complexities of the problem
- build better relationships useful to implementation of the project
- manage conflict by bringing people into the process early and often
- build a coalition of support
- get it right the first time, procedurally and substantively
- create better decisions and outcomes, resulting from more perspectives and information

(Hamel, 2000)

(Bryson and Carroll, 2002)

While citizens and stakeholders are critical to your success, government plays a

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critical role in providing the vision, leadership, and support for their participation. Without the administrative support, vision, financial resources, and committed staff time provided by your organization, a collaborative watershed project will likely fail (National Policy Institute 2003).

It should be noted that, however important and valuable public participation is, collaboration with the public is not always successful. There are times when the key interests in a watershed are not ready to work together because they believe they can accomplish more by taking legal action (National Policy Center 2003). When lines are drawn in the sand, the opportunities for collaboration become greatly reduced or are completely absent.

What is the Difference Between Stakeholder Involvement and Citizen Participation?

***Stakeholder Involvement:* When we use the term stakeholder involvement, we typically mean working to involve any individual, organization, agency or other interested party which has an interest or “stake” in the outcome of a particular planning process.**

When we decide to involve stakeholders in a TMDL process, they typically have some specific interest in or concern about the ways in which a watershed planning process might impact their organization’s membership, interests, values or their way of life.

Stakeholder involvement is not necessarily the same as public participation. Stakeholders are typically representative of only certain segments of the public as a whole. They often become involved in the planning process in a much more in-depth manner and usually over a longer period of time. Stakeholders often become members of watershed advisory committees, attend monthly meetings and regularly share their concerns and points of view. Understanding the stakeholders in your project area will be of vital importance to your project’s long-term success.

***Citizen Participation:* When we use the term citizen participation, we are typically referring to activities that attempt to involve everyone who lives or works in the watershed.**

Citizen participation activities tend to be more inclusive than stakeholder involvement activities, attempting to reach a broad cross-section of the community. Citizen participation is an important and critical goal in the TMDL process; however, it is often used in distinctly different ways than stakeholder involvement.

How Much

There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to public participation. How much you

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Should the Public be Involved in the TMDL Process?

need to involve citizens and stakeholders in your TMDL project will depend upon the complexity of your watershed and the impairments you are trying to address. For example, in a small watershed, where there is one impairment caused by a single source, your public participation strategy will be inherently simpler than one you might develop for a large, complex watershed with multiple causes and sources of impairment.

The Public Participation Spectrum developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) concisely outlines the range of tools you can use to involve the public in your project. A low level of involvement in your project may simply mean keeping the public generally well-informed about its progress through the use of brochures, press releases, fact sheets, etc. A much higher level of public participation, might involve convening a citizen advisory committee or citizen jury process. **See Attachment 4A for the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum.** The specific conditions of your watershed and kinds of impairment(s) you need to address will largely dictate the kinds of participation tools you use.

Before You Begin

Before you begin to involve the public in your TMDL process, be certain to think it through carefully. Be clear about your motivations and goals for engaging and involving them in your project.

- participation processes should be designed purposefully and thoughtfully
- careful preparation is essential
- be certain you understand the amount of staff time and resources you are about to commit
- constant adaptation to changing circumstances will be necessary
- follow-through with commitments and promises is essential for success (Bryson 2002)

Once you embark on a long-term planning process involving citizens and/or stakeholders, you are the keeper of the public's trust. Be clear on your organization's commitment to taking this trust seriously.

Watersheds are not Created Equal

All watersheds have their own characteristics that make them unique. Some watersheds will be easier to work in than others because there are many motivated citizens, research facilities, clubs, nonprofit organizations, universities and so forth that can be tapped to help with your project. Other watersheds will pose much greater challenges (low population, absentee property owners, poor infrastructure, lack of experience in addressing an issue of common concern, etc.). Some TMDLs, therefore, will require more persistence and patience than others.

Setting

A common approach to involving the public in a watershed project is to convene

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Realistic Goals for Public Participation

a Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC). The committee is often charged with using a consensus-based decision making process to develop a set of solutions to water quality problems. While consensus is an admirable goal for any committee process, it is not necessarily an essential or constructive outcome.

An advisory committee exists to provide advice to the agency which convenes it. Dr. Hans Bleiker (1989) suggests that the most useful advice for government bureaucrats would be that which reflects differing points of view and which offers a variety of recommendations for consideration. Instead, consensus often delivers a perfectly packaged, but watered down set of recommendations reached by extensive compromise. By attempting to reach consensus, we often inadvertently strip away the real substance government officials most need to hear. Consensus can also give some members of the committee the feeling of being bullied into agreeing to something to which they are fundamentally opposed.

Committee decision-making processes should operate on the premise that everyone's opinions are important and that they should be respected equally. Disagreement is a normal part of any public discourse and should not be discouraged. It is as important to know the minority's point of view on a subject as the majority's point of view. At the end of your public participation process, it will be critical to know if those initially opposed to certain solutions remain so. Therefore, minority reports and dissenting viewpoints should be welcomed.

Informed Consent

Dr. Bleiker of the Institute of Participatory Management and Planning believes that public officials should not expect to use citizen participation tools to reach consensus on solutions for a problem, but instead should work toward building *informed consent*. Bleiker defines informed consent as:

“the grudging willingness of opponents to ‘go along’ with a course of action that they actually are opposed to.”

Dr. Bleiker suggests that, while it is tempting to spend time trying to increase levels of support among those that already agree with the goals of your project, you should instead focus your efforts on reaching *informed consent among your greatest detractors* because these are the people that can bring down your projects and frustrate reasonable efforts to solve a legitimate problem (Bleiker 1989).

Important

If you hope to develop informed consent among the opponents of your project,

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Objectives for any Public Project

Dr. Bleiker believes that all Project Managers must, at a minimum, accomplish the following objectives (adapted from *Citizen Participation Handbook for Public Officials and Other Professionals Serving the Public*, ©1989).

Before embarking on your public participation activities, carefully review and align your project with these objectives.

A. Responsibility Objectives

- 1. Establish and maintain the legitimacy of your organization to manage this project.** Do you have the authority and mandate to manage this project? If you do, clearly state that and repeat it often.
- 2. Establish your project as legitimate and essential.** Can you clearly characterize the serious problem that must be addressed? If not, take time to write it in a clear, concise manner.
- 3. Establish and maintain the legitimacy of your problem-solving and decision-making process.** Can you clearly defend your planning and problem-solving approach as the right one? If not, you may want to step back and rethink your strategy.
- 4. Establish and maintain the legitimacy of earlier decisions and assumptions.** Do all of the earlier assumptions you have made about the project remain true over time? If not, how have they changed? Does your current strategy reflect these changes?

B. Responsiveness Objectives

- 1. Identify and get to know all potentially affected interests within the project area.** Rather than simply making a list of them, try to meet with as many as possible to hear their concerns.
- 2. Get to see the project through their eyes.** Ask yourself, how do these interests see this agency? Their role? The project? Why? Get to understand and empathize with those who:
 - are directly affected
 - are indirectly affected
 - believe they are affected
 - want/need to be involved in the project.
- 3. Identify and understand their problems.** Identify and understand why a particular interest cannot give their consent to a project. What particular problems does the project create for them?
- 4. Generate an array of possible solutions.** Be open to all new ideas, no matter the source. The public can be immensely helpful in identifying creative new ways of solving old problems.
- 5. Articulate and clarify the key issues.** For each problem you have

Make sure the public understands that you can use all the help you can get.

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identified, do your best to clearly explain the issues your project is facing so that anyone with any involvement in the project can understand them. Explain the pros and cons of making certain choices or of doing nothing at all, so that your stakeholders can make reasoned and thoughtful recommendations.

Credibility:
believability, sincerity,
trustworthiness,
reliability, integrity.

“Information is the
currency of
democracy.”
Thomas Jefferson,
President

Whenever possible,
avoid unnecessary
jargon!

“Democracy is like a
raft: it won't sink, but
you will always have
your feet wet.” –
Russell B. Long,
Politician

C. Effectiveness Objectives

- 1. Protect and enhance your credibility.** The credibility of your organization and the credibility of your Project Manager (PM) will be the most important factors affecting your ability to be successful with your project. Credibility is sometimes difficult to obtain, but even harder to get back once it is lost. Bleicker recommends that you follow these rules at all times:
 - be very unbiased and fair in the kind of information you release and to whom you release it
 - be frank and open with information – the good, the bad and the ugly
 - be the best and most complete source of information on your project
 - do not classify information as confidential unless absolutely necessary
- 2. Ensure that information sent to stakeholders is received and understood.**
 - do not release any information until you are sure of why you are doing so
 - choose the right channels to reach each affected interest
 - decide how to best release information so that there are not likely to be misunderstandings
- 3. Receive and understand information from stakeholders.** Make every effort to be open to information and concerns of your stakeholders. Practice active listening. Seek out the channels of communication used by each stakeholder group and apply them effectively.
- 4. Bring stakeholders with diametrically opposing views together.** There will be times when you must bring people together who believe they have no common ground. They will assume that there will have to be winners and losers at the end of the process. When these perceptions persist, everyone involved ends up losing. It will be up to the leadership of your stakeholder process to bring these parties together early on and remind them that while they may have different values and interests, they are likely to share many values, concerns, hopes and dreams that can result in finding common ground. It will be your role to help them search for this common ground no matter how difficult this may appear at the beginning of the project.

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Getting Started Dr. Bleiker has developed a useful tool for all public servants initiating a public process. Bleiker refers to this as a “Life Preserver”, since he believes it is an essential part of your tool box when managing a public process. Whenever you, as the Project Manager speak, write about or discuss your TMDL project with the public, Bleiker suggests that you ensure that these four points are clearly made:

The Bleiker Life Preserver

- (1) **There is a serious problem**, or opportunity – one that has to be addressed.
- (2) **Yours is the right entity to be addressing this problem**; in fact it would be irresponsible of you, given the mission you have, if you did not address it.
- (3) **The way you are approaching the problem**, the way you are addressing it **is reasonable, sensible and responsible**.
- (4) **You do listen. You do care.** If you are proposing something that’s going to cause pain, it is not because you don’t care. (Bleiker, 1989)

When you describe your project, sell the problem, **not** the solutions.

When describing the problem you are trying to solve (impaired water quality), be certain to acknowledge that while this problem may not be the public’s number one priority, it is nevertheless important and not trivial; it must be addressed (Bleiker, 1989).

What Specific Tools can You use to Involve the Public in Your TMDL Process?

There are a number of different tools or techniques available for involving the public in your TMDL process. These can be used alone or together to accomplish your goals. For more information about these tools, including the pros and cons of using each, see Attachment 4B.

The most common tools and techniques used in collaborative watershed projects are advisory committees, open houses, public meetings, printed materials, press releases, tours, community fairs, and television. You should not feel limited by these tools; however, they often form the backbone of successful public participation efforts.

Tips for Convening a Stakeholder Advisory Committee

As stated above, Stakeholder Advisory Committees (SAC) are a commonly-used tool for involving the public in watershed projects; however they are not always appropriate or desirable. Before convening a SAC process, consider that you will be committing a good deal of time, money, and energy to the process. Most successful watershed projects are more than four years old (National Policy Consensus Center, 2002). Staff working with a SAC should, as much as possible, remain consistent over a long period of time to build trust, knowledge and a clear vision for the project (National Policy Consensus Center 2002).

Stakeholders are

Stakeholder Advisory Committees are typically made up of 15-25 stakeholders,

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more likely to get involved if you can show them a clear benefit to their participation.

brought together for the purpose of offering substantive advice to a government organization on a particular problem. While you should try to be very inclusive when you select committee members, it should be understood that SACs rarely represent all interested parties.

When using an advisory committee, it is important to understand that they should not be used in a way that allows your organization to abdicate its authority for decision-making on an issue. When working with a SAC, it must be made clear time and again, that the agency will consider all ideas. However, they will only use those that make sense to them and which are compatible with your organization's authorities and mission (Bleiker 1990).

At the same time, it will be very important to articulate in a sincere manner that you are, in fact, very willing to listen and seriously consider all ideas they develop. A major reason to use the advisory committee tool is that it allows you to "pick the minds" of many talented people, those who can easily see the fatal flaws in your proposals, or who can think "outside the box" about new approaches that may be feasible (Bleiker 1990).

If you use an advisory committee for your watershed project, think carefully about the membership of that committee. You will first want to identify all of the key stakeholders in the watershed that may have an interest in the outcome of your project. Where possible, tap into existing water resources committees for possible members of your Stakeholder Advisory Committee.

Identify Important Stakeholders

Follow these rules when using an advisory committee:

- Represent all interests
- Never exclude any interested party
- Accept and consider all of their ideas
- Don't let the committee censure itself
- Make it

Examples of stakeholder groups:

- County Local Water Plan Task forces
- Agricultural producer groups
- Agricultural producers
- Environmental organizations
- Watershed districts
- Developers
- Federal, state, local agencies
- Universities
- Drainage committees
- Taxpayer organizations
- Land trusts
- Farmers
- Business associations
- Water suppliers

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enjoyable!
– Dr. John Bryson,
2006

- County extension agents
- Lake/river associations
- Conservation organizations
- Youth organizations
- Hunting and fishing clubs

The size of the advisory committee will depend on the size of the watershed and the number of issues and concerns which you must address. Include those who will be:

- responsible for implementing the TMDL
- affected by the TMDL Implementation Plan
- knowledgeable about technical and financial issues
- knowledgeable about existing programs and resources that can be integrated to make the project a success

Boschken (1992) states that having large numbers of participants in a public process is not as important as selecting participants that represent the range of stakeholder perspectives. Typically, state and local governments select the ‘usual suspects’, those they have typically dealt with in the past. Oftentimes, this is not a truly representative group and does not necessarily represent the public interest (Bryson, 1995). When selecting your TMDL Stakeholder Advisory Committee, think beyond the groups you might typically see involved in a public process. It is highly likely that you will inadvertently miss a critical stakeholder that should be represented on the committee. Other stakeholders, if asked, will usually be quick to identify any gaps in the makeup of the committee (EPA, 2006).

Learning Opportunities for Committee Members

As a member of the Advisory Committee, there will be a number of opportunities to learn, including:

- how MPCA assesses water quality
- the variety of tools that can be used to protect water quality
- conditions that can influence water quality
- how a maximum pollutant load is determined
- how current pollutant loads can be reduced
- how to determine if efforts have been successful

Roles and Responsibilities for Committee Members

When stakeholders agree to be a part of your advisory committee, you will need to be very clear and truthful about your expectations of them. Will you expect them to lead or participate? Will they need to participate in subcommittees? Will they need to produce work products? Is their role primarily to learn and advise, or to be an ambassador to the community who is willing to share what they have

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learned with others? How long do you expect them to be involved?

Being honest about your expectations early in the process will help build the trust that will carry you through, even when the process becomes difficult or controversial. It can be important at this stage to let them know that *their role is purely advisory*, so that there are no misunderstandings later in the process.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Project Manager

As coordinator or Project Manager (PM) of an advisory committee process, you may need to wear many hats. In cases where the local project sponsor is capable and practiced at this type of work, they may want to take on one or more of these responsibilities, with your input. These include:

“Do you want to be a positive influence in the world?”

First, get your own life in order. Ground yourself in that single principle so that your behavior is wholesome and effective. If you do that, you will earn respect and be a powerful influence. Your behavior influences others through a ripple effect. A ripple effect works because everyone influences everyone else. Powerful people are powerful influences.”

- John Heider

1. **Planning and organizational consultant** – It will be the PM’s job to plan meetings, develop agendas, manage logistics, locate speakers, develop meeting minutes, etc. This can be a time-consuming part of your job. That should be understood and acknowledged up front.
2. **Visionary** – You will need to develop and articulate your own vision for the project. Projecting a positive vision for the project will go a long way toward keeping your SAC members enthused and committed to the project.
3. **Reporter** – It will often be the PM’s duty to keep a written record of the meetings, including minority opinions, and decisions made. This historical record will prove critical, especially as the process progresses.
4. **Educator** – PMs often spend a great deal of time with committee members providing information or linking them with the appropriate experts who can answer their questions.
5. **Facilitator** – You may be asked to facilitate discussions during your committee meetings. Facilitation is an art form which requires some training and a great deal of practice to master. PMs may want to rely on professional facilitators to take on this responsibility, if funding allows.
6. **Writer** – You will often be expected to create reports, plans, etc. for your committee and the general public. If your budget allows, you may want to use consultants to pull together and polish the final TMDL documents.
7. **Logistics Coordinator** – The importance of providing good food, refreshments and comfortable meeting locations cannot be underestimated. Sharing food has long been an effective tool for encouraging conversation and bonding people together across continents and cultures.
8. **Coach/”Counselor”** – As issues are raised and the process becomes more

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complex and thorny, people often forget why they have been brought together. Repeating this information now and then will help keep the committee focused and efficient.

- 9. General Advisor** – You will be an important “go-to” person for your committee chairperson and others involved in the day-to-day management of the committee process.

Your role as PM is an important one. Committee members will look to you for guidance, support, information and vision. People can become discouraged as you move through the messiness of the democratic process. It will be important for you to stay positive and to be sensitive to subtle messages from your committee members in the form of body language, comments, jokes, etc. which may show that committee members are frustrated. If you detect frustration, it is best to talk with them immediately and to try to address their concerns promptly.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee Chair

Selecting a committee chair is one of the most important things you will do when forming your committee. Your chairperson will set the tone for the process, making it relaxed, productive and enjoyable, or not. Your committee chair must be:

- a leader, but also a servant of the members
 - interested in the group’s concerns, while sensitive to individual needs
 - aware of current social and political situations
 - neutral, while protecting the minority
 - an effective communicator and group facilitator
 - respected as knowledgeable and fair
 - able to share responsibility and credit with others
 - able to encourage the sharing of all views
 - patient, creative, and flexible
 - compatible with the PM
 - comfortable with all kinds of people
 - able to see opportunities for compromise, when appropriate
- (adapted from “*Leading and Communicating*”, *Conservation Technology Information Center, CTIC*)

Who makes an effective leader?

A farmer, pastor, county commissioner, teacher, homemaker, or anyone with leadership skills and an interest in your project.

--CTIC, 2006

Roles and Responsibilities of Technical Advisors

Technical advisors will play a critical role in your watershed project. Technical advisors often come from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), universities and other natural resource organizations to provide scientific and administrative support to TMDL projects. TMDLs are inherently complex and technical. It will be important to have technical staff available to answer questions and provide advice to the advisory committee as they deliberate.

Your advisory committee will often rely on staff’s technical expertise as they

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move through the process, making it a highly collaborative effort.

When Should You Consider using a Professional Facilitator?

A well-run and productive meeting can inspire and reward the participants. Yet this experience is often the exception rather than the rule. Learning to put together an effective meeting agenda and running a complicated group exercise is really more art than science. Meeting facilitators can often help PMs create effective group exercises that can move your committee in a positive direction toward resolution of a problem or issue.

Facilitation is a process by which a group of people are allowed to discover answers for themselves, rather than being told or taught how to proceed. Project Managers should not necessarily be expected to fulfill the role of facilitator in addition to all the other responsibilities. When faced with a particularly difficult topic of discussion or a complex problem-solving task, it may be a good idea to bring in help. If your budget allows, professional facilitators can help you think through your process and develop meaningful ways for committee members to participate. Ask MPCA staff if a facilitator can be arranged through the Master Contract.

What Traits must a Facilitator have to be Successful?

A facilitator should be sensitive to group dynamics, asking questions at key points so that members can gain new insights and develop new ideas for themselves. An effective facilitator supports everyone in doing their best thinking. In addition, the facilitator should create a context that sets appropriate boundaries for participants.

If you decide to hire a professional facilitator, look for the following traits:

- self knowledge (strengths and weaknesses)
- knowledge of the audience and their expectations
- neutrality
- empathy and the ability to see things from someone else's eyes
- commitment to a quality outcome (and the ability to describe it)
- ability to adjust to the needs of the committee and change course at a moments notice, if required
- ability to inspire
- self confidence and skill in projecting it
- “big picture” thinking skills and the ability to summarize complex discussions through synthesis and observation

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What Role can Consultants Play in Your Stakeholder Advisory Committee?

Your SAC process should be “homegrown” and reflect you and your local community. However, there may be times you will have more work than you can manage alone. If your budget allows, you may want to use consultants to take some of the more mundane, but important tasks off of your plate. Consultants should be used judiciously to enhance the experience for all involved, and should rarely, if ever, be placed in a leadership role.

Consultants can be used effectively to:

- conduct research for the committee
- provide technical expertise
- conduct literature reviews
- conduct focus groups
- take and transcribe minutes for each meeting
- set up meeting rooms and take care of other logistical arrangements
- create written summaries or reports that come from the committee’s deliberations
- create informational and educational materials related to work of the committee
- create graphics for use by Technical Advisors in educating SAC members on watershed science

Caring for your Committee

As PM, you will be responsible for creating a welcoming and worthwhile experience for the members of your SAC. This means establishing an engaging, fair, and enjoyable process which honors their time and service. You will want to treat your committee well. Select pleasant locations for your meetings, provide good food and beverages, and, if your budget allows, take field tours, boat rides, etc. to keep them interested and motivated. This will be especially important if your committee members are volunteering their time with little or no compensation. In addition to showing your appreciation for time spent on your project, these informal activities offer important opportunities for the members of the committee to get to know each other better, which ultimately strengthens their relationships and your process.

A Few Simple Tips for Running Successful Meetings

- Begin and end meetings on time.
- Follow the agenda, asking for input at the beginning of each meeting.
- Take minutes.
- Monitor group process, adjusting as needed to keep things moving.
- Encourage open discussion, even when it means disagreements.
- Make sure all members have an opportunity to speak and be heard.
- Honor the messiness of the democratic process, remembering that consensus is not necessarily the goal.

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Ineffective vs. Effective Committees

When working with your committee over the coming months, be sensitive to group dynamics. Judge the effectiveness of your group process against these criteria. If your committee process shows signs of strain, it may be time to reconsider your approach.

Ineffective Groups:

- The atmosphere reflects boredom or indifference – the group is not engaged;
- a few (or one!) tend to dominate;
- the group does not get (or accept) the group task or objectives;
- the group does not address its disagreements;
- actions are taken before real issues are addressed;
- action decisions are unclear – no one knows who is doing what;
- leadership stays at the head of the table;
- criticism is embarrassing or produces tension;
- personal feelings are hidden and
- group avoids discussing its maintenance

Effective Groups:

- Atmosphere is informal, comfortable and relaxed.
- Everyone participates but discussion stays on track.
- Task and objectives are well understood and accepted by the group.
- Members listen to each other.
- There is disagreement.
- Most decisions are reached by a kind of consensus in which it is clear that everybody is in general agreement and willing to go along. However there is little tendency for individuals who oppose the action to keep their opposition private and thus let an apparent consensus mask real disagreement. Formal voting is at a minimum, the group does not accept a simple majority as a proper basis for action.
- Criticism is frequent, frank and relatively comfortable;
- People are free in expressing their feelings as well as their ideas both on the problem and on the group's operation.
- When an action is taken, clear assignments are made and accepted.
- The leader does not dominate, in fact, leadership of the group shifts from time to time.
- The group is self-conscious about its own operations.

(Adopted from Richard DeBlieck, Summit Management Consulting Services, Based on Douglas McGregor's "The Human Side of Enterprise")

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Your First Meeting

To keep your committee running effectively, all meetings will need to be well-thought out and well-organized. Your first meeting will help to set the tone for those to come. During your first meeting, you will want to:

- learn about the people on your committee and what brought them to the table
- ensure that members are clear on their roles and responsibilities
- ensure that the committee's charge is effectively communicated and understood
- develop ground rules for future meetings
- discuss logistical and administrative issues

(Adapted from “*Leading and Communicating*”, CTIC)

Creating a Project Notebook

As a courtesy to your committee you should create a project notebook for each committee member and present it to them at the first meeting. The notebook can be a large 3-ring binder which can hold all important paperwork related to the SAC's work such as meeting minutes, technical background information, draft and final reports, etc. This will help committee members stay organized for the duration of the process and keep critical documents at hand.

Conflict is Inevitable and Often Healthy

Whenever people from differing background are brought together to solve a problem, conflicts often arise. Conflict is not always negative. In fact, it can be healthy when effectively managed. Healthy conflict can lead to:

- growth and innovation
- new ways of thinking
- additional management options

(CTIC 2006)

It is helpful if the Committee Chair and/or facilitator is comfortable with conflict and has negotiation skills for creating a win/win for all participants.

Why Education is Such an Important Part of a Stakeholder Advisory Committee Process

Frisby and Bowman (1996) note that a common barrier to meaningful participation is that participant's lack the knowledge that would allow them to firmly grasp the issues at hand. TMDLs are inherently complex and heavily technical. Consequently, you should commit significant time and energy (many meetings) to bringing all members of the committee to a similar level of competence and scientific literacy before beginning any serious discussion about solutions. Without adequate time to take in and digest the important science that supports your TMDL study, your attempts to create an effective implementation plan will be stymied.

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It is estimated that 90% of the population is not science literate (Kyle, 1995).

Simonsen and Robbins (2000) recommend providing citizens information in an easy-to-understand visual manner and in layman's terms. Developing clear, understandable information on your TMDL can be challenging given the highly technical nature of the process. You and your technical advisors will need to strive for simplicity and clarity when presenting information to your advisory committee. It will be easy to overwhelm your members with data, graphs and charts. Providing smaller amounts of information over a period of time will likely be more successful than providing too much too fast. Keep in mind that most citizens, and even some stakeholders, have a high-school level knowledge of science.

What Should the Committee Accomplish?

Once your committee members are well-versed in the science behind the TMDL, it will be time to move them into the problem-solving mode.

Your Stakeholder Advisory Committee should be involved in the following activities as you prepare the TMDL study:

A. The TMDL Study

- listening and learning about watershed science
- understanding and influencing the TMDL work plan (goals, schedules, outcomes)
- identifying sources of water quality and other data that can be used
- in cooperation with the Technical Advisors, setting water quality goals
- when numeric water quality criteria do not exist for a pollutant
- in cooperation with the Technical Advisors, allocating pollution loads between point and nonpoint sources

Once the TMDL study is completed, some of your advisory committee members may decide to no longer be a part of the process, or you may decide that new members need to be brought on board. This is a good time to reexamine the membership of the committee, to strengthen it and ensure key interests are represented.

B. The TMDL Implementation Plan

The TMDL study should provide information about the causes and sources of impairment and allocated pollution loads between point and nonpoint sources. With that information, your committee can help you to develop an Implementation Plan that includes strategies for addressing problems in the watershed. Armed with good technical information to support their efforts, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee can work with you to develop very specific strategies for bringing water quality into compliance with water quality standards.

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A first step may be to use the simple table below, developed by the Ohio Extension Service, to help you and your committee analyze, in some detail, each impairment and the sources of that impairment. This tool requires that you identify each impairment, each source contributing to that impairment, the related environmental impacts it is causing, goals for reducing contributions from the identified source, as well as objectives and tasks that will allow you to meet water quality goals. This table should be completed for each source of impairment. Completing this task will require you to make some difficult decisions about the allocation of pollution loads. When deciding where to allocate pollution loads, you will have to consider issues such as equity, cost, feasibility, political realities, etc.

When completing this table, ensure that goals provide a clear idea of what you hope to accomplish with your water restoration efforts. Goals can be general or specific. Goals should be clear, achievable, and measurable. Whereas goals are the ends you want to achieve, objectives are the means. Objectives are more specific than goals. Objectives outline specific steps that must be accomplished to achieve a goal. These should also be concise, understandable and measurable (Ohio Extension Service 2006).

Finally, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee will need to outline specific tasks that must be accomplished to make the plan a reality. The detailed Implementation Plan should be very specific about the goals and the tasks needed to achieve them. This is the heart of the Implementation Plan.

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Define Each Cause of Impairment

Example:

Cause of Impairment	Nutrient Enrichment
*Potential (p) and/or known (k) sources	Failed septic systems (k)
Related biophysical, social, policy, and institutional considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General concern about cost associated with upgrading septic systems ▪ Lack of knowledge of failing systems and their related effects on water quality ▪ Outdated standards and practices for siting and construction of home septic systems
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce organic enrichment by x % or by x lbs. per day ▪ Minimize costs ▪ Increase community understanding of problem
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educate septic system owners on how to maintain system ▪ Develop ordinances requiring septic system owners to certify functioning of systems ▪ Update standards and practices for siting and construction of home septic systems
Tasks	List specific action items that, if completed, would ensure you accomplish your objectives
* indicates if sources is potential by placing a (p) for potential or (k) for known after source	

Develop Goals and Objectives for Each

List Specific Tasks to Accomplish Objectives

Source: Ohio Watershed Network, Ohio State University, Ohio Watershed Academy Lessons

Write the Plan

Information derived from this exercise can be useful in developing the written TMDL Implementation Plan. The MPCA has developed an Implementation Plan guidance document for you to follow when writing the document.

It will be very important for you to encourage the Committee to help you to develop a document that will achieve the following goals. (Adapted from “Implementing a Watershed Plan”, Ohio Extension Service 2006)

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“Experience suggests that planning participants are most likely to fulfill on their commitments if they share a common understanding of the problem, have contributed to identifying solutions, and hold a personal interest in the successful implementation of those solutions.”
- Ohio Extension Service, Ohio Watershed

- **Address the highest priority pollution sources** – Make good use of your advisory committee. One common mistake advisory committees and planners make is asking advisory committees to address too many issues at once or problems that are too complex. It will be very important to focus your committee’s efforts on the highest priority areas, such as the most thorny or difficult causes and largest sources of impairment. A few, very powerful and well-thought out recommendations will be more readily received and are more likely to be acted upon than many poorly-conceived ideas.
- **Work toward integrating local, state and federal programs into your plan** – Identify grant programs, regulatory programs, and other partnerships that could be relevant to your water quality goals. This may lead to the identification of technical assistance, funding, or data that could be useful to your project. Consider the following potential partners:
 - Local Officials
 - Local Extension Service Staff
 - Local Soil and Water Conservation Districts
 - Parks and Recreation Department
 - Planning and Zoning Programs
 - Regional Planning Council
 - Watershed Districts
 - Watershed Management Organizations
 - Stormwater Management Programs
 - Citizen Monitoring Programs
 - MN Coastal Zone Management Programs
 - MN Department of Transportation
 - MN Department of Natural Resources
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service
 - MN Department of Health
 - Board of Water and Soil Resources Grant Programs
 - Regional Geographic Watershed Initiatives
 - MN Department of Agriculture
- **Outline practical suggestions for the thorniest problems** – Stakeholder involvement is most useful to public decision makers when the solutions are not simple, when government credibility in solving the problems is low, or when traditional approaches are not working. Work to keep members focused on helping you develop practical, workable solutions to the most challenging, intractable problems.

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- **Ensure there is ownership of the recommendations by those who will have to implement changes** – There is often nothing worse than having decisions imposed on you by people you do not know or by people who have never asked your opinion. It will be very important that the Stakeholder Advisory Committee includes in their deliberations those key stakeholders who will have to implement changes in the watershed. This will allow you to build trust, develop shared understandings and detect potential objections to new ideas early in the process.
- **Ensure that the necessary financial, technical and other resources are available to implement the recommendations** – Implementation Plans created without the necessary capital behind them will frustrate you, your committee members, as well as the public. Don't let your Implementation Plan suffer the fate of so many others which were left to sit on a shelf collecting dust. Ensure your plan is put into action! Create a plan that has realistic goals for the given amount of resources available through local, state and federal programs.
- **Plan for an oversight function** – The final component of the Implementation Plan should be accountability measures. The Implementation Plan must include action steps, responsible parties, deadlines and deliverables.

Development of a plan should not be your ultimate goal, although groups often begin to view it this way. A plan is only a beginning. The Ohio Extension Service suggests that you find an individual or group that will be a champion for the plan, those that will ensure that the report is not forgotten or that it is not just partially implemented.

When the Committee Process is Complete

A Stakeholder Advisory Committee process can make important contributions to your TMDL process. While their work is useful and important to your organization, you want the members of the committee to remember the SAC as an enjoyable experience, and one that they would participate in again, if asked. So it important, at the end of the committee process, to take the time to celebrate. If your budget allows, take your committee to dinner and provide them with a small token for their efforts.

Before your time with the committee is complete, it will be important to set realistic expectations for the future. Implementation can be slow and incremental steps forward may be the reality for a period of time. Encourage members to think about the long-term view and to be patient with progress.

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Once the SAC has completed its work, communication between you and your members should not end. Committee members who have worked hard over a long period of time will be anxious to know whether decision makers have used their recommendations to develop effective solutions. It will be important to keep them apprised of their use. If you choose not to use some of their recommendations, those reasons should also be explained, preferably in person. Participants will feel heard if they perceive that they have had an impact on your decision-making activities or if they understand your rationale for not using their recommendations.

One of the underestimated benefits of convening a Stakeholder Committee is that you will have a group of individuals armed with the most recent, information about their watershed. You will have provided a solid foundation for each of them to build upon. Each member should be encouraged to take what they have learned out into the community and to share it in as many settings as possible. Many of your members will be passionate ambassadors for your project. While rarely acknowledged, there is a ripple effect created when each SAC member goes back into the community and shares their new knowledge with others. This may be the greatest benefit of bringing stakeholders into the TMDL process.

Many of the strategies included in the TMDL Implementation Plan are likely to require action by local planning authorities (National Policy Consensus Center 2002). Minnesota has delegated many authorities to the local level, for example, Shoreland Rules, Feedlot ordinances, Wetlands Conservation Act enforcement and stormwater ordinances. When the Stakeholder Committee process is over, your committee members may want to continue to advocate for the project and to press for its implementation at the local level.

TMDL Study— Local Water Plan Connection

MPCA encourages project sponsors to ensure that TMDL requirements and strategies become part of the local water plan. Integration of these two planning efforts is critical and likely to increase the probability that implementation will proceed.

Roles and Responsibilities for Implementation

In general, local sponsors take the lead in implementation of the plan in areas such as developing grant and loan requests, ordinances and working with local landowners. MPCA usually takes the lead in areas such as NPDES permitting issues, feedlot concerns and stormwater enforcement.

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Watershed Outreach Campaigns

Developing and distributing effective messages about your TMDL process through outreach materials and activities will be important if you want to engage the public in your watershed project. Outreach materials and activities should be designed to raise public awareness, educate people on wise management practices, and motivate them to participate in the project to restore water quality (EPA 2006).

For detailed information about how to develop and conduct a watershed outreach campaign, visit the EPA Web site given below. A helpful publication called “*Getting in Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns*” is available on the site or by calling 1-800-490-9198.

Topics include:

- Developing goals and objectives
- Defining your audiences
- Creating the message
- Packaging the message
- Distributing the message
- Evaluating the outreach campaign
- Implementing the campaign

EPA Web site: www.epa.gov/ncepihom or www.epa.gov/nps

Other Tools/ Techniques You Can use to Encourage Public Participation

The most effective public participation efforts provide multiple opportunities for public involvement early in the process when citizens feel they may actually have an impact on decision making. While Stakeholder Advisory Committees are often the backbone of many successful watershed projects, general public participation activities are also critical to raising awareness and building support for the project.

Any of the following tools can be used to encourage people to learn about their role in protecting water quality:

- Printed public information materials
- Technical reports
- Paid advertisements
- Newspaper inserts
- Feature stories
- Bill stuffers
- Press releases
- News conferences
- Television

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- Field offices
- Expert panels
- Briefings
- Web sites
- Technical contact persons
- Hotlines
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Focus groups
- Tours
- Open houses
- Community fairs
- Coffee klatches
- Public hearings
- Advisory committees
- Task forces

Enjoy the journey. Working with the public can be one of the most enjoyable and challenging portions of developing and implementing a TMDL. During the process, you may be inspired, infuriated and enlightened all at the same time. Public participation is often a messy process. However, the rewards can be significant for all involved. Make the most of the people and resources available to you and try to enjoy the journey as much as the destination.

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Worksheet 4-1

Complete this worksheet with members of your technical team to help you determine the level of sophistication and complexity needed when designing a public participation plan for your TMDL project. Keep in mind that this is a simple tool to get you started.

Circle one answer for each question:

Questions	Answers			Points
*What is the size of the watershed you are working on?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">0–50 sq. miles</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">50–500 sq. miles</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">>500 sq. miles</p>	
How many reaches does your TMDL address?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 reach</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2–4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5 or more</p>	
How many impairments are you trying to address in your TMDL?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1–2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3–4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	
Can the sources be addressed through existing regulatory programs (permits, etc.)?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Some Yes and Some No</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	
Do you expect your TMDL process to be controversial?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Not sure</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>	
How many stakeholders will be affected by the TMDL?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10–15</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">15–20</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">More than 20</p>	

*An 8 digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) is typically over 1000 sq. miles.

Worksheet 4-1 (continued)

Questions	Answers			Points
What level of support is there among stakeholders for the project?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Relatively high</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderate</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Low</p>	
Who will be responsible for implementing land use and other changes needed to improve water quality?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">State or local units of government</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Citizens alone</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Citizens, state and local governments</p>	
Is the water body heavily used for recreation?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderate use</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>	
How much local money will be required to restore beneficial uses?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Small investment - Local in-kind required or state funded</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Moderate investment - State, some local</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Significant - State, local, & private property owners</p>	
Are data available that link sources to the problem?	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yes. Data shows clear linkage</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Some studies show linkage, but it is inconclusive</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No. Much additional information needed</p>	
<p>Grand Total:</p>				

Interpreting Your Score

If you're total points added up to between **11–17** **See Basic Strategy 1**

If your score added up to between **18–25**..... **See Basic Strategy 2**

If your score added up to between **25–33**..... **See Basic Strategy 3**

Attachment 4A

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

Developed by the International Association for Public Participation

INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT

INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
<p>Public Participation Goal:</p> <p>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</p>	<p>Public Participation Goal:</p> <p>To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p>	<p>Public Participation Goal:</p> <p>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</p>	<p>Public Participation Goal:</p> <p>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</p>	<p>Public Participation Goal:</p> <p>To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.</p>
<p>Promise to the Public:</p> <p>We will keep you informed.</p>	<p>Promise to the Public:</p> <p>We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p>	<p>Promise to the Public:</p> <p>We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p>	<p>Promise to the Public:</p> <p>We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.</p>	<p>Promise to the Public:</p> <p>We will implement what you decide.</p>
<p>Example Techniques to Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact sheets • Web sites • Open houses 	<p>Example Techniques to Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings 	<p>Example Techniques to Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberate polling 	<p>Example Techniques to Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen Advisory Committees • Consensus-building • Participatory decision-making 	<p>Example Techniques to Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions

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THE IAP2 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TOOLBOX

Techniques to share information

TECHNIQUE

ALWAYS THINK IT THROUGH

WHAT CAN GO RIGHT

WHAT CAN GO WRONG

PRINTED PUBLIC INFORMATION MATERIALS

- Fact Sheets
- Newsletters
- Brochures
- Issue Papers
- "KISS" - Keep It Short and Simple
 - Make it visually interesting but avoid a slick sales look
 - Include a postage-paid comment form to encourage two-way communication and to expand mailing list
 - Be sure to explain public role and how public comments have affected project decisions. USA format works well.

- Can reach large target audience
- Allows for technical and legal reviews
- Encourages written responses if comment form enclosed
- Facilitates documentation of public involvement process

- Only as good as the mailing list/distribution network
- Limited capability to communicate complicated concepts
- No guarantee materials will be read

INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

Libraries, city halls, distribution centers, schools, and other public facilities make good locations for housing project-related information

- Make sure personnel at location know where materials are kept
- Keep list of repository items
- Track usage through a sign-in sheet

- Relevant information is accessible to the public without incurring the costs or complications of tracking multiple copies sent to different people
- Can set up visible distribution centers for project information

- Information repositories are often not well used by the public

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Technical documents reporting research or policy findings

- Reports are often more credible if prepared by independent groups

- Provides for thorough explanation of project decisions

- Can be more detailed than desired by many participants
- May not be written in clear, accessible language

ADVERTISEMENTS

Paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines

- Figure out the best days and best sections of the paper to reach intended audience
- Avoid rarely read notice sections

- Potentially reaches broad public

- Expensive, especially in urban areas
- Allows for relatively limited amount of information

NEWSPAPER INSERTS

A "fact sheet" within the local newspaper

- Design needs to get noticed in the site of inserts
- Try on a day that has few other inserts

- Provides continually-wide distribution of information
- Presented in the context of local paper, insert is more likely to be read and taken seriously
- Provides opportunity to include public comment form

- Expensive, especially in urban areas

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Attachment 4C

Basic Public Participation Strategies For Simple to Complex TMDL Studies

1. Basic Public Participation Strategy for Less Complex TMDL Studies

Use for waterbodies:

- That have one impairment or 1 river reach
- That are in small watersheds
- Where the impairment is likely caused by one or two major sources
- Where controversy is not expected to be significant

Ensure you meet these objectives:

- A. Establish and maintain the legitimacy of your organization to manage this project
 - Clearly articulate your authority and mandate to manage the project. Put it in writing and share with all interested parties
 - Articulate that yours is the right organization to manage the process
 - Prepare a description of the planning and problem-solving approach and be prepared to defend it as the right one
- B. Identify all potentially affected interests within the project area and meet with as many possible to establish effective and productive relationships
- C. Articulate and clarify the key problems as summarized in the TMDL study.
- D. Generate an array of possible solutions to the impairment you are trying to address. Be open to other ideas. Listen to interested parties.
- E. Communicate major elements of your workplan and project timeline to interested parties.

Basic Tools:

- Develop fact sheets and/or brochures describing the TMDL project, including key points outlined above
- Issue press releases about the project prior to newsworthy events
- Hold one or more open houses to assess interest in the project and to gather information about the watershed
- If interested parties are few, make an effort to meet with them often to provide updates on progress and to hear concerns
- Convene small Stakeholder Advisory Committee to help in the development of the TMDL study and Implementation Plan
- Convene Technical Team to assist throughout development of the TMDL study
- Hold public meeting on draft TMDL
- Develop formal record of public involvement activities including:
 - Meeting sign-in sheets
 - Agenda
 - Mailing lists
 - Public notices
 - Press releases

- o PowerPoint presentations
- o Public comments and responses to comments

2. **Basic Public Participation Strategy for Moderately Complex, Potentially Controversial TMDL Studies**

Use for waterbodies:

- With more complex impairments
- Where causes and sources of the impairment are not known
- In larger or more complex watersheds
- Where a TMDL study is likely to provoke controversy

Ensure you meet these objectives:

- A. Establish and maintain the legitimacy of your organization to manage this project
 - Clearly articulate your authority and mandate to manage the project. Put it in writing and share with all interested parties
 - Articulate that yours is the right organization to manage the process
 - Prepare a description of the planning and problem-solving approach and be prepared to defend it as the right one
- B. Identify all potentially affected interests within the project area and meet with as many possible to establish effective and productive relationships
- C. Articulate and clarify the key problems as summarized in the TMDL study.
- D. Generate an array of possible solutions to the impairment you are trying to address. Be open to other ideas. Listen to interested parties.
- E. Communicate major elements of your workplan and project timeline to interested parties.

Public Participation Tools to Use:

- Develop fact sheets and/or brochures describing the TMDL project
- Encourage development of feature articles for local or regional newspapers
- Hold individual briefings for social and civic clubs as needed
- Issue press releases about the project prior to newsworthy events
- Hold one or more open houses to assess interest in the project and to gather information about the watershed
- Convene MPCA Technical Team
- Using list of interested parties you have developed, convene Stakeholder Advisory Committee
- Hold public meetings on the Draft Study
- Provide 30-day public comment period on Draft Study

Extras:

- Participate in community fairs/festivals to share information and gather feedback
- Conduct one or more field tours for Stakeholders, Stakeholder Advisory Committees, and the media
- Hold briefings to explain Final TMDL conclusions and recommendations for social and civic groups, the media and other interested parties
- Encourage citizen monitoring activities within strategic areas of the watershed

3. Basic Public Participation Strategy for Complex, Potentially Controversial TMDL Studies

Use for waterbodies:

- Which have highly complex impairments,
- Where the sources of impairments are unknown
- In large watersheds or basins
- Where a TMDL study is likely to provoke controversy

Ensure you meet these objectives:

- A. Establish and maintain the legitimacy of your organization to manage this project
 - Clearly articulate your authority and mandate to manage the project. Put it in writing and share with all interested parties
 - Articulate that yours is the right organization to manage the process
 - Prepare a description of the planning and problem-solving approach and be prepared to defend it as the right one
- B. Identify all potentially affected interests within the project area and meet with as many possible to establish effective and productive relationships
- C. Articulate and clarify the key problems as summarized in the TMDL study.
- D. Generate an array of possible solutions to the impairment you are trying to address. Be open to other ideas. Listen to interested parties.
- E. Communicate major elements of your workplan and project timeline to interested parties.

Basic Tools:

- Develop fact sheets, brochures, posters describing the TMDL project
- Encourage development of feature articles for local or regional newspapers
- Develop web site containing up-to-date information on the project and its findings
- Hold individual briefings for social and civic clubs, and the media, as needed or feasible
- Issue press releases about the project prior to newsworthy events
- Hold one or more open houses to assess interest in the project and to gather information about the watershed
- Convene MPCA Technical Team
- Using list of interested parties you have developed, convene Stakeholder Advisory Committee
- Conduct one or more field tours for Stakeholders, Stakeholder Advisory Committees, and the media
- Hold public meeting on DRAFT TMDL study
- Provide 30-day public comment period on DRAFT TMDL study

Extras:

- Encourage citizen monitoring activities within strategic areas of the watershed
- Participate in community fairs to share information and gather feedback
- Hold briefings to explain Final TMDL conclusions and recommendations for social and civic groups, the media and other interested parties