

Chapter 5 - Administration and coordination

WIB manages and coordinates the statewide program through various cooperating agencies, non-profits such as watershed associations, colleges and universities, conservation districts, NGOs, municipalities and others. As implementation efforts are initiated, close coordination is necessary to ensure that individual program elements are adequately being addressed. Because plans are never static, there may be a need to revise implementation elements. Any changes in implementation procedures must first receive approval from the NPS Program, and if approved, be reported to the USEPA project office.

WIB provides funding directly to agency partners, watershed associations, other non-profits, NGOs, colleges and universities and others through sub-grants. Project proposals for WBP development, project and BMP implementation, monitoring, and education and outreach are reviewed and approved by the NPS Program. Management and oversight of the existing sub-grants related to NPS projects is a necessary aspect of the workload.

Responsibilities include preparing, reviewing and approving WBPs and watershed restoration project proposals; preparing program guidelines and policies; delegating program activities to state and federal agencies through negotiations of interagency agreements; oversight of agency and partner progress in implementing field work; analysis and evaluation of water quality impacts from NPS pollution; and managing financial budgets.

USEPA has mandated the use of GRTS for tracking §319 grants and submitting progress status reports. The NPS Coordinator is responsible for maintaining West Virginia's portion of GRTS. The NPS Coordinator is also responsible for providing guidance to our partners so that the necessary data elements that need to be reported are provided in the proposals and entered in the GRTS database. Coordination between WIB and its partners is required to facilitate adequate and timely GRTS data entry and annual reporting.

A wide variety of training materials, mostly web-based, have been developed to provide information, guidance, facilitate reporting, and provide a means of submitting the necessary documents for watershed proposals. The next phase is the development of a tool to improve the submission of AGOs and watershed proposals. WIB has developed an initial tool but the use of the tool has been slow to catch on thus far. Even with all the guidance manuals and the effort already provided we realize additional training is needed. Below are some thoughts for the future:

- The nuts and bolts of WBP developments
- The basics of how to read TMDLs, taking that information, and translating it to a WBP
- Nuts and bolts of reporting
- §319 101 (currently planned for 2019-2020)
- What is the most important and critical information needed for reporting?
- What is the best way to communicate the successes of your projects?
- How do we develop better and more sustainable partnerships?

Another goal is to have continuous submission of project proposals and a review process in place twice each year. We will develop a bank of proposals from which to choose from in any given fiscal year and communicate with the stakeholders so that they are fully aware of our plans for a project. For the last three years, the number of watershed project proposals have far exceeded our §319 allocations and we've had to either phase projects, not fund them, or look for other creative ways to cut back. This has been a challenge and impedes the implementations of WBPs. Over the years, our review processes have evolved, which allows us to make better decisions. The basic scoring rubric we use to help us decide on AGO funding is described below. We use a similar methodology to review watershed project proposals, except that the rubric is more intense.

Project ranking

Initial proposals include the organizations contact information, and consist of a brief description, including an initial budget. NPS personnel evaluate the initial proposals to determine which organizations will be invited to submit formal grant proposals. The proposals are evaluated on the criteria below using a 1-10 scale. High and low outliers are removed, and rankings are determined based on the total score. The rankings are then compared to the amount of funding available and the awards will be determined based on the ranks and funding.

Criteria and ranking

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Poor		Fair			Good			Excellent	

1. Project is nonpoint pollution related.
2. Project fits the mission of the NPS Program and will benefit the watershed and/or public.
3. The project is an activity that would qualify for §319 funding based on the appropriate planning or listing qualifications.
4. The project will result in a substantial benefit to the watershed and/or community either through reducing NPS pollution through BMP implementation, providing outreach and education, monitoring sources and causes of NPS pollution or sustaining/improving capacity of organizations to develop and manage future §319 projects.
5. The organization is viable with the capability to successfully complete the project.
6. The budget and total funding request is reasonable.
7. The organization has proven it can complete a project and can manage grant funds responsibly.

Organizations that are invited to submit a formal proposal (e.g. workplan) must do so within 30 days of the invitation. The workplan must be submitted to the NPS Program Coordinator.

Program evaluation

§319(h)(8) of the CWA provides that no §319 grant may be made to a state in any fiscal year unless USEPA determines that the state has made satisfactory progress in the preceding fiscal year in meeting the schedule specified in its NPS management program. USEPA regions determine, based on an examination of state activities, reports, reviews, and other documents, as well as discussions with the state in the previous year, whether the state's progress for the previous fiscal year in meeting the schedule set forth in its NPS management program was satisfactory.

§319(h)(11) requires states to report annually on progress in meeting the schedule of milestones contained in their NPS management programs, and, to the extent information is available, report reductions in NPS pollutant loadings and improvements in water quality resulting from program implementation. This information may be provided in the format suggested in the most recent guidance. States may also use GRTS to meet some of their annual reporting requirements.

In addition to the federal evaluation, West Virginia will evaluate the NPS Program every two-years through key performance indicators (KPIs). Evaluating the outcomes helps to keep the process of change moving forward. If the original strategy needs to be revised, it allows managers to make decisions that enable future processes of change to be more effective. KPIs include the following:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Outcomes and impacts
- Benefits
- Learning
- Effectiveness of the project

The method(s) for this internal evaluation will be shared questionnaires. The NPS Program will ask BCs to engage local stakeholders in this process, and WIB Program Managers as well as other staff will provide input from their experiences working within the §319 Program. Below are examples of evaluation questions. Note: This list may be expanded and/or revised as the process evolves.

1. Are goals and objectives being achieved or not? If they are, then acknowledging, reward and communicate the progress. If not, then consider the following questions.
2. Will the goals be achieved per the timelines specified in the plan? If not, then why?
3. Should the deadlines for completion be changed (Note: Great care goes into this decision, it is important to know why efforts are behind schedule before times are changed)?
4. Do personnel have adequate resources (money, equipment, facilities, training, etc.) to achieve the goals?
5. Are the goals and objectives realistic?
6. Should priorities be changed to put more focus on achieving the goals?

7. Should the goals be changed (Note: Know why efforts are not achieving the goals before changing the goals)?
8. What can be learned from our monitoring and evaluation to improve future planning activities and improve future monitoring and evaluation efforts?

This internal program evaluation is separate from any/all federal requirements from §319(h)(8) or annual reporting requirements described in §319(h)(11). The major goal of the KPI process is to use regular feedback to improve the NPS Program services, when possible, and grow to meet future challenges.

Funding

WIB is supported by a variety of funding sources. Statewide program activities, watershed restoration and watershed protection are all important to the program's success. Coordinated efforts among a variety of partners help the nonpoint source program diversify and extend our limited resources. Below are the primary sources of funding used for nonpoint source activities in West Virginia.

Abandoned Mine Lands Set Aside Fund

WVDEP's OAMLR has established an AMD set aside fund to address AMD problems. Dollars from the fund including all interest earned are used to for the abatement of causes and treatment of the effects of acid mine drainage from abandoned mine lands. In the past, these funds have been used for project construction of both active and passive treatment systems as well as O&M. Several projects, though not all, have been constructed in 319 priority watersheds in cooperation with the NPS Program.

More recently, WVDEP's Abandoned Mine Lands Program has been offering funding through OSM and the Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Economic Development Pilot Program. This pilot program provides \$25 million to accelerate the remediation of AML sites with economic and community development end uses. The intent of the pilot program is to explore and implement strategies to return legacy coal sites to productive uses. This funding has been used to eliminate failing septic systems and straight pipes in conjunction with economic development opportunities.

Chesapeake Bay Program funding

West Virginia accesses several financial resources made available through the Chesapeake Bay Partnership. Chesapeake Bay Program implementation and regulatory and accountability grants include and complement the NPS Program efforts. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grants have also been awarded to nonprofits in West Virginia that are conducting nonpoint source outreach, education and projects.

Clean Water Act §106 Funds

WVDEP uses §106 funds to support several activities related to nonpoint source pollution. WVDEP's Watershed Management Framework's five year cycle including watershed sampling and assessment; TMDL development and implementation; and environmental permitting and enforcement are supported by the 106 Program. Currently, WVDEP's statewide Watershed Coordinator, who provides supervision for nonpoint program staff, administers the SPP, coordinates the WV Watershed Network (WVWN), Watershed Celebration Day (WDC), and CB Program funding; and the Western BC, who conducts nonpoint source program outreach, assistance to local watershed associations, and develops and implements watershed plans are funded by 106.

Clean Water Act §319 Funds

WVDEP-WIB is the primary recipient of §319 funds in West Virginia. WIB provides program and watershed project funding to partner agencies, nonprofits, universities, local governments, watershed associations and others to undertake nonpoint source education efforts, monitoring, demonstration projects, and BMP implementation statewide and in watersheds with WBPs.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

The primary long term goal identified in West Virginia's CWSRF FY 2019 Intended Use Plan (IUP) is to expand CWSRF accessibility by creating new financial assistance programs to address nonpoint pollution control

problems. A secondary long term goal is to integrate the CWSRF into WVDEPs Watershed Management Framework to increase program effectiveness by targeting CWSRF funds toward higher priority watersheds. CWSRF funds are available through the WVDEP's Agriculture Water Quality Loan Program (AgWQLP) in partnership with the WVCA. The AgWQLP provides a source of low interest financing match funds to implement best management practices that will reduce agricultural NPS impacts on water quality. CWSRF funds are available to eliminate existing health hazards and water quality problems from direct sewage discharges resulting from failing septic systems or direct pipes to streams.

This program operates statewide in cooperation with the WV Housing Development Fund and local county sanitarians. In §319 priority watersheds, WIB staff will facilitate the use of these funds. Stormwater/green infrastructure funding is also available through the SRF program. Finally, the CWSRF funds West Virginia's Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) through its administrative fee account. Project WET provides education and outreach on water quality and nonpoint source pollution to teachers and students statewide.

Local Watershed Groups, Nonprofit Partners and Local Governments

Local watershed associations and other nonprofits often bring a variety of resources to the program. Contributions from local businesses, contractors, association members, local governments and other stakeholders, as well as fundraising and grant writing have brought match and/or operation and maintenance to nonpoint source projects. Watershed associations have accessed EPA Brownfields and urban watershed funding for nonpoint source projects.

Office of Surface Mining Watershed Cooperative Agreement Program (WCAP) Funds

OSM WCAP funds are provided to watershed organizations to complete local AMD reclamation projects on abandoned mine lands. Funds are limited to 33% of total project cost up to \$100,000. WIB relies heavily on WCAP to match §319 funds in priority watersheds.

USDA Farm Bill Program Funds

WIB cooperates with NRCS and FSA to access USDA Farm Bill programs and funding. EQIP, WHIP, CREP, RCPP, Farmland protection, and wetlands reserve programs are the primary resources available in West Virginia to address agricultural nonpoint source pollution statewide. In §319 priority watersheds, a combination of funds is used to achieve a comprehensive watershed approach. Special programs, such as USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and National Water Quality Inventory (NWQI) are also coordinated in West Virginia to select priority watersheds and implement agriculture best management practices.

USFWS Partners for Wildlife

The USFWS Partners for Wildlife program is very active in West Virginia, constructing fence and planting trees in cooperation with CREP and other programs to restore and protect riparian corridors. In 2013, the Program hit a milestone of 1 million feet of fence installed in West Virginia.

West Virginia Conservation Agency Agriculture Enhancement Program Funds

The WVCA has funds available through its Ag Enhancement Program (AgEP) for technical assistance and agricultural practices identified as priorities in Conservation Districts. The purpose of the AgEP, administered by the WVCA through local conservation districts, is to increase farm productivity by conserving soil and making wise use of agricultural resources and to improve water quality in the state's streams and rivers. Each of the 14 Districts identifies their own practices for funding.

West Virginia General Revenue Funds and/or Permitting Fees

WV state agencies, including WVCA, WVDA, WVDOF, WVDEP and others are supported by state general and special revenue funds, including permitting fees. Programs within state agencies, such as NPDES CAFO permits, groundwater permits, oil and gas permits, logging sediment control act and others protect rivers and streams from nonpoint source pollution and are funded through general and special revenue. Nonpoint source environmental enforcement activities related to nonpoint source pollution are supported by these funds as well.

West Virginia In Lieu Fee Program and/or Mitigation Funds

In some instances, it is possible for mitigation or ILF projects and funds to complement our nonpoint source projects in 319 priority watersheds. Historically long term operation and maintenance of passive AMD treatment has been obtained, though this is no longer an option under the 2008 Mitigation Rule. In Lieu Fee stream mitigation projects have been implemented in watersheds with nonpoint source watershed based plans including the Elk Headwaters. WVDEP continues to look for opportunities where these programs can be coordinated to increase or enhance nonpoint source projects.

West Virginia Stream Partners Program

The Stream Partners Program (SPP) is a cooperative effort of the WVCA, WVDEP, WVDOF, and WVDNR. The Program is housed within the Nonpoint Source Program of WV DEP. The program provides \$100,000 annually to support the efforts of local watershed volunteers, many of whom partner with the Nonpoint Source Program on larger watershed planning and implementation efforts.

Other funding sources

Other funding sources used have included: US Army Corps of Engineers for watershed planning, USDA Rural Development programs for wastewater and failing septic, WVDHHR SWAP Program, WV Community and Development Block Grants, Regional Planning and Development Council funds, and EPA Clean Water Act § 604(b) funds.

Outreach

Accomplishing the goals and objectives of the NPS Program requires the maintenance of public awareness through the development of educational materials, public presentations, media, workshops as well as individual contacts. The NPS Program strives to promote the Program's efforts and educate the broader population regarding the need to reduce and control future impacts from nonpoint sources of pollution. By educating our citizens through training, workshops, informative materials, web-based information and the media, a climate of concern is built that will support strong policies, regulations and programs to restore water quality.

All NPS Program staff directly contributes to the accomplishments of the education component for agriculture, silviculture, wastewater, urban stormwater, acid mine drainage etc. We assist and participate in Project Wet activities, stream monitoring demonstrations, watershed outreach activities, and other environmental activities with academic institutions, 4-H, scouts, community groups and many others. As a supporter of the WV Watershed Network (WVWN) the NPS Program participates in organizing and sponsoring Watershed Celebration Day (WCD). WCD is a two-day annual event that celebrates the accomplishments of watershed association volunteers. WCD provides an opportunity for these volunteers to network with other associations across the state as well as state and federal agencies, to share and learn new techniques. The volunteers are honored for their efforts with awards and recognition.

Two Statewide Programs are housed within WIB, Project WET and WV Save Our Streams, both promote the NPS mission statement "**To inspire and empower people to value and work for clean water**". These programs are nationally recognized for their accomplishments and continue to inspire volunteers, teachers and students throughout West Virginia.

In addition, WVCA's Watershed Resource Center (WRC) educates the public, watershed associations, and others on nonpoint source pollution and best management practices. The WRC houses an extensive website and disseminates information related to nonpoint source pollution. Assistance is also provided through a variety of efforts with targeted audiences ranging from one-on-one discussions to presentations made in large group settings. Education is delivered through distribution of brochures, fact sheets, conference presentations, watershed model demonstrations, hands-on field days, articles written on NPS topics and published in newsletters, project demonstration, presentations to school students, community groups, watershed associations, landowners, land/resource users, professionals, local farmers, developers, contractors, engineers, government representatives, the public, and staff. The WRC also publishes its own newsletter quarterly, WaterNet, hosts Facebook and twitter sites, and provides desktop publishing as needed for agency staff and watershed associations.