



Community Conservation Assistance

CHECKLIST

Re-invigorating County Water Quality Coordinating Committees

Considerations:

- 90% New York's water quality impairments are due to nonpoint sources of pollution
- Nonpoint source pollution is a land use issue
- Land use decisions are made by landowners and local officials
- No one agency or level of government is responsible for abating all types of nonpoint source pollution
- It takes people working together at the federal, state, and local level, including the public and private sectors, to tackle nonpoint source pollution
- SWCDs are the natural focal point for local coordination because they are authorized to implement local programs to reduce nonpoint source pollution

Committee Active:

- ___ Determine current environmental health of priority watersheds using watershed report card and share with County Legislature and Soil and Water Conservation District Board
- ___ Provide Annual Report of CWQCC activities to County Legislature's Subcommittee on Environmental Protection or equivalent sub-committee
- ___ Consider expanding efforts to address all natural resource concerns in a watershed in addition to water quality
- ___ Conduct watershed assessments using existing agency information and performing "rapid watershed appraisals"
- ___ Encourage information sharing and networking between counties that share watersheds
- ___ Engage local agencies and professionals working on specific watershed issues (AEM or MS4 stormwater requirements or source water protection) so committee is up to date on their efforts. For example the SWCD's Updated AEM Strategy should be incorporated into the CWQCC Strategy
- ___ Agree on remaining priority needs for each watershed
- ___ Establish goals, desired results and strategies for achieving desired results for each priority watershed
- ___ Develop annual partnership action plan to address priority needs
- ___ Identify any potential county wide programs needed such as household hazardous waste disposal, anti litter campaign etc.
- ___ Establish process for the ongoing identification, assessment and verification of nonpoint source problems
- ___ Serve as local reviewer on the accuracy and completeness of the Department of Environmental Conservation's five year update of their Water Body Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List and if further verification of problems is needed determine how the committee can assist
- ___ Develop or update communication plan that identifies key audiences, messages and vehicles for delivering the key messages. Examples of ways to deliver messages might include: establishing a website that citizens and public officials can visit for information on the committee; printing CWQCC brochure; exhibit at county fair; holding Water Week event; providing groundwater & watershed models to local schools; etc.
- ___ Identify projects that could be implemented by the committee such as stream cleanup day, septic tank pump out for homes within impacted lake's watershed
- ___ Identify potential local funding support for committee activities such as DEC Water Compliance Funds or SWCD Performance Measure Part B Funds
- ___ Review and endorse grant applications that support CWQCC Strategy

Committee Inactive:

- ___ Review current membership and contact members to determine interest and gain insight as to what needs to be done to re-invigorate
- ___ Identify “spark plug” to serve as catalyst to help reactivate
- ___ Identify potential new members
- ___ Hold informational meeting to discuss importance of having local committee to coordinate efforts to address local water quality concerns. Review existing strategy
- ___ Discuss benefit of addressing all natural resource concerns in a watershed in addition to water quality
- ___ Obtain agreement to proceed
- ___ Identify and agree on roles and responsibilities of each committee member
- ___ Conduct watershed assessments using existing agency information and performing “rapid watershed appraisals”
- ___ Encourage information sharing and networking between counties that share watersheds
- ___ Engage local agencies and professionals working on specific watershed issues such as AEM or MS4 stormwater requirements or source water protection needs so their efforts are incorporated into your watershed strategies and they participate on the committee
- ___ Agree on remaining priority needs for each watershed
- ___ Establish goals, desired results and strategies for achieving desired results for each priority watershed
- ___ Develop annual partnership action plan to address priority needs
- ___ Identify any potential county wide programs such as household hazardous waste disposal, anti litter campaign etc.
- ___ Establish process for the ongoing identification, assessment and verification of nonpoint source problems
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- ___ Identify projects that could be implemented by the committee such as stream cleanup day, septic tank pump out for homes within impacted lake’s watershed
- ___ Identify potential local funding support for committee activities such as DEC Water Compliance Funds or SWCD Performance Measure Part B Funds

Committee Disbanded:

- ___ Identify local agency or organization to take lead to re-establish committee
- ___ If SWCD, review concept with SWCD board and obtain motion to serve as catalyst
- ___ Establish planning committee to organize first meeting (SWCD, Extension, County Planning, locally active environmental group such as local chapter Trout Unlimited)
- ___ Determine who committee will report to (ad hoc, county legislature, SWCD Board etc.)
- ___ Ensure membership includes federal, state, regional and local organizations
- ___ Ensure local includes private and public sector representatives
- ___ Identify what data such as research, watershed studies, resource maps, or other information do the participating agencies and organizations have access to
- ___ Identify special programs and projects each agency/organization is currently administrating that effects natural resources
- ___ Hold first coordinating committee meeting and explain potential role of committee
- ___ Obtain agreement to precede
- ___ Identify who will chair the group and serve as local contact for the committee
- ___ Prepare county map of 11 digit watersheds, identify locations of water quality impairments from NYSDEC’s “Water Body Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List”
- ___ Locate municipal water supplies within each watershed and identify susceptibility to nonpoint source pollution based on NYSDOH’s Source Water Assessment
- ___ Prioritize watersheds for further assessment
- ___ Conduct watershed assessments using existing agency information and performing “rapid watershed appraisal”
- ___ Agree on priority needs for each watershed
- ___ Develop annual partnership action plan for priority watershed(s)