

SECTION 6
KEY COMPONENTS OF WATERSHED PLAN SUCCESS

6.01 WATERSHED PLAN IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Watershed Plan (WP) and implemented best management practices (BMPs), the implementation plan should be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. This section discusses methods to evaluate the implementation plan.

6.02 ORGANIZATION

The following entities, agencies, and organizations are identified as responsible parties for implementing various solutions identified in the WP:

- Agriculture Water Quality Authority
- City of La Grange, Kentucky
- Future Watershed Group
- Kentucky Division of Water
- Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
- La Grange Utilities Commission
- Louisville Gas & Electric
- Oldham County Board of Education
- Oldham County Conservation District
- Oldham County Environmental Authority
- Oldham County Cooperative Extension Office
- Oldham County Fiscal Court
- Oldham County Greenways
- Oldham County Health Department
- Oldham County Planning and Development Services
- Oldham County Road Department
- Oldham County Solid Waste Department
- Oldham County Water District
- Producer Organization(s)
- Property Owners
- Salt River Watershed Watch
- United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency
- United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- United States Department of Agriculture, Fish and Wildlife Services
- University of Louisville
- Watershed Residents

The cooperation and collaboration of these groups and completion of their respective tasks are vital to meeting the goals of the WP. Each individual group should be accountable for its assigned action items for each BMP through the implementation plan evaluation and review is critical for implementing the plan and improving water quality conditions in Curry's Fork.

Because of the number of involved parties, studies conducted, and recommendations made within the WP, it is recommended to engage a Watershed Coordinator. The Watershed Coordinator would be a link between responsible parties, funding agencies, watershed residents, and technical resources. The Watershed Coordinator would also monitor the progress of WP-related projects or activities and provide updates on progress made.

6.03 MARKETING THE WATERSHED PLAN

The Curry's Fork Watershed Coordinator will work to ensure that responsible agencies, organizations, and groups understand the objectives and recommendations of the WP. Using the WP Executive Summary as a reference, presentations will be made to responsible parties. The Watershed Coordinator will tailor presentations to meet local group's needs and expectations. Marketing the Curry's Fork WP will be an important role and function of the Watershed Coordinator. In addition to agency, organization, and group presentations, the WP will be marketed via the Web site, newspaper articles, public meetings, community events, one-on-one interaction, and other forums as appropriate.

The Watershed Coordinator will also encourage and support the formation of a citizen-based watershed group for the watershed, which currently does not exist.

6.04 FUNDING FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Depending on the type of solution and involved parties, a variety of funding sources may be pursued. The Watershed Coordinator will seek local sponsorship(s) for smaller projects. Larger projects may require contributions from involved parties or applications for state and/or federal funding. As discussed in Subsection 6.02, the Watershed Coordinator would work as a link between responsible parties and potential funding sources to ensure solutions have the necessary funding.

Creating a watershed group to receive sponsorship, grants, or other funding is often the first step. Creating the watershed group as a nonprofit organization often makes it easier to secure donations or grants. As an alternative, partnering with nonprofit groups can be equally as effective and expands involvement.

6.05 MONITORING PLAN

A number of agencies have conducted water quality sampling within Oldham County and Curry's Fork for various purposes, such as Salt River Watershed Watch, Kentucky Waterways Alliance (KWA), Kentucky Division of Water (KDOW), and United States Geological Survey (USGS). Stormwater sampling will also be conducted throughout Oldham County for municipal separate stormwater system (MS4) permit compliance. Oldham County Fiscal Court (OCFC) and the Watershed Coordinator will coordinate with these organizations and utilize their sampling and assessment results for implementation monitoring. OCFC will compare results from implementation sampling and assessments to baseline data already collected as part of the WP to assess the impacts of installed BMPs and solutions implemented.

OCFC will also request that Curry's Fork be a part of KDOW's Basin Cycle Monitoring Program for 2014 and 2019 to provide critical sampling information within the watershed.

Establishing overarching criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the plan is a useful tool to capture a "big-picture" view of the overall health of the watershed through the implementation process. The following metrics are recommended to be monitored to evaluate the Curry's Fork Watershed Plan:

1. WAH Support–Currently the watershed is listed for partial support of WAH. The change in designation to full support of WAH would indicate that improvements are happening in the watershed and the Watershed Plan is part of that shift. A decrease in support to nonsupport or no movement in the level of support would indicate that the Plan is not being effective at improving WAH and its implementation should be reevaluated.
2. PCR Support–Currently the watershed is listed for non-suport of primary contact recreation. The change in designation to partial or full support of PCR would indicate that improvements are happening in the watershed and the Watershed Plan is part of the that shift. A continuation of the current status would indicate that the Plan is not being effective at improving PCR and its implementation should be reevaluated.

Monitoring should not be confined to sampling and assessments alone. Records of educational material developed, seminars conducted, participation in public education programs, and other watershed events should be documented and reviewed to see if outreach efforts are reaching the appropriate audiences and resulting in changes in behavior that help to improve water quality.

6.06 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

It is important to periodically step back from implementation of BMPs and evaluate progress. Potential items to consider during these evaluations are discussed further.

A. Implementation

At a minimum, progress updates should be provided for BMPs and milestones by the Watershed Coordinator on a quarterly to annual basis, although certain BMPs may require more frequent evaluation depending on the requirements. Progress updates should include, at minimum, whether the BMP implementation is on schedule, a brief evaluation of available postimplementation assessment results, any problems or concerns encountered during the implementation process, and plans to alleviate these problems and concerns. Sharing progress updates during future meetings of the Technical Committee (TC) could be especially effective. The Watershed Coordinator should prepare updates on a quarterly to annual basis as established by OCFC. Posting reports online for public viewing can help maintain interest in the project.

B. Outcome Indicators

Section 5.04-4 has suggested indicators for each of the BMPs recommended. However, during the detailed planning and/or implementation of the BMP other indicators may be identified that are more useful, illustrative, easier to collect, or have other attributes that make them a better option to use as an

indicator than the suggestions in Section 5. Identifying alternative indicators is encouraged and should be considered before actual implementation of any BMP. Quantitative indicators are encouraged as they can often more readily assess progress. During progress updates and meetings, involved parties should refer back to the selected indicators.

C. Outreach

Outreach activities are important for a number of reasons and should be evaluated on at least an annual basis. Outreach activities serve a number of functions, including educating the public, maintaining public involvement, maintaining involvement of involved parties, promoting the successes of the plan, and potentially identifying new funding sources.

As mentioned in Subsection 6.05, outreach activities should be monitored and documented to assess whether they are using appropriate advertising venues, reaching appropriate audiences, and facilitating the involvement of watershed residents in projects and activities in the watershed.

D. Adaptive Management

Goals and objectives described in this WP were developed based on the best available information and the current and predicted future needs of the community, but the needs of the community or watershed can change. Impacts within watersheds are dynamic, meaning they are continually changing. Land use changes, human impacts, and naturally occurring changes within the watershed can create new problems or concerns and alleviate existing ones.

Because of this, the WP development and implementation are an iterative process. It is important for involved parties to establish tracking procedures, follow these procedures by evaluating the progress and impacts of BMP implementation, and be prepared to adjust plans as necessary based on BMP results and the changing needs of the watershed. As mentioned in item A, practical times to perform evaluations are at milestone stages annually, and/or semiannually. As milestones are reached, responsible parties should answer the following questions:

1. Is this BMP helping us reach our goal(s)?
2. Is it costing more or less than expected?
3. Are there changes we could make to improve it?
4. Should we revise or set new goals based on what we know now?

Answering such questions and evaluating the implementation plan can help identify and correct problems early in the process, preventing them from becoming very large problems later.

To assist in the adaptive management process, a list of other potential BMPs is included in Appendix F. These BMPs were identified through the same process as the BMPs in Section 5 but are determined to be likely less effective. They are included as potential alternatives to the recommended BMPs if the recommended BMPs turn out to be less effective than originally thought. With an approved TMDL, there may be adjustments to WP, or based on WP implementation, the allocations of the TMDL may need to be adjusted.