

US Coral Reef Task Force Watershed Partnership Initiative

Name of Priority watershed: _____

Initials: _____

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) developed a Watershed Partnership Initiative (Resolution 28.1) to focus the capabilities and capacities of the USCRTF agencies and the U.S. coral reef jurisdictions to reduce Land-based Sources of Pollution (LBSP) from entering into coastal coral reef areas. The intent of this initiative is to facilitate and enhance coordination, partnerships, and contributions of agency resources and expertise to implement geographically specific and integrated activities to reduce pollutant loads to coral reef ecosystems, while also promoting consistent and strengthened application and enforcement of laws and authorities intended to address LBSP. This Checklist is for watershed coordinators and is intended to help them assess the status of the institutional and stakeholder support for the watershed partnership sites, and determine whether agency resources and support are adequate for the successful implementation of a ridge to reef watershed management plan. This tool was developed to be broadly applicable and can be used for priority sites identified by the USCRTF as well as any other watershed in the U.S. coral reef jurisdictions.

INSTRUCTIONS

Watershed coordinators: On an annual basis, complete each of the questions below. By annually completing this checklist coordinators can monitor progress, and will be able to better identify the needs and areas of focus for continued implementation of their watershed’s plan.

CHECKLIST EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1) Does the watershed have the commitment of at least two partner Federal agencies (at HQ and local levels) and a lead local jurisdiction agency? Who? **YES** **NO**

Please specify

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2) Does the watershed have a full time coordinator? YES NO

If yes, provide name and how long current funds will cover their salary

3) Does the watershed have a finalized watershed management plan (WMP)? Does the WMP fully address EPA’s Nine Minimum Elements of a Watershed Management Plan* for Restoring Impaired Waters using Section 319 funds? YES NO

***<http://www.epa.gov/region9/water/nonpoint/9elements-WtrshdPlan-EpaHndbk.pdf>**

If yes, please provide copy of plan and describe whether it addresses the EPA elements.

4) Do/Did stakeholders have the opportunity to provide input to development of the WMP? If so, what are the mechanisms for collecting this input? Was a structured decision-making process used, were public meetings held, and were prioritized objectives developed? YES NO

Please specify

5) Has the WMP undergone a process to be institutionalized as an official policy to be implemented by the jurisdictional government and all other appropriate stakeholders? YES NO

What Tier does it achieve (*see language on Institutionalizing WMPs on page 6)?

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6) Does the watershed have an implementation agreement in place based on the WMP and adequate resources to accomplish the plan's goals and objectives? Are roles and responsibilities specified in the agreement? **YES** **NO**

If yes, please provide copy of agreement

7a) Do there appear to be problems with runoff from construction sites within the watershed? **YES** **NO**

Please rate using guidelines below:

- High – No perceived run off issues from construction sites
- Medium – Sporadic perceived run off issues from construction sites
- Low – Wide-spread perceived run off issues from construction sites.

7b) Is the appropriate NPDES general permit for erosion and sediment control at construction sites active in the watershed? Are appropriate local permits in place and do they cover sites of less than 1 acre? **YES** **NO**

If yes, please rate the effectiveness of this program using rating guidelines below – work with local officials as applicable.

- High – No perceived run off issues from construction sites
- Medium – Sporadic perceived run off issues from construction sites
- Low – Wide-spread perceived run off issues from construction sites.

In addition, provide any additional information on the permit(s) and provide information about their adequacy and/or effectiveness in this watershed.

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8) Are enforcement actions taken at sites with known issues? YES NO

Please describe the level of compliance for permitted sites in the watershed.

9) If applicable, is the appropriate NPDES MS-4 stormwater program active in the watershed? YES NO

If yes, please provide the status of the MS-4 program in the municipality(ies), and rate low to high the effectiveness of this program – work with local officials as applicable. Explain your rating.

10) Is there centralized wastewater collection and treatment in the watershed? YES NO

If so, what level of treatment is achieved? (check one)

_____ **Primary treatment** consists primarily of physical processes (settling or skimming) that remove a significant percentage of the organic and inorganic solids from wastewater.

_____ **Secondary treatment** depends on biological action to remove fine suspended solids, dispersed solids, and dissolved organics by volatilization, biodegradation, and incorporation into sludge. In addition, secondary treatment satisfies much of the oxygen demand of the pollutant(s).

_____ **Tertiary (advanced) treatment** uses a variety of biological, physical, and chemical treatment approaches to reduce nutrients, organics, and pathogens.

What percentage of properties are connected to the centralized wastewater collection and treatment system? What percentage of properties have onsite wastewater systems? Work with local officials as applicable.

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11) Are agricultural BMPs for erosion control, pathogens and pharmaceuticals, and pest and nutrient management being implemented in the watershed? YES NO

If so, what percentage of agricultural operations implement BMPs and how successful (low to high) are they at reducing LBSP? Work with an NRCS representative and your local soil and water conservation districts.

12) How many of the recommended implementation actions from the WMP have been funded? How many are completed?

Please provide a list of recommendations funded and completed.

13) How many partners are contributing funds? In-kind services? Leveraging funds?

Please provide a list of partners and their contributions. (spreadsheet)

14) Is an ecological monitoring program underway to collect baseline and long term data, including key water quality, fish and coral metrics? YES NO

If so, please provide information about the monitoring program including key metrics/indicators for the watershed.

15) Is there an adaptive management or watershed plan evaluation process to learn and modify implementation approach? YES NO

If yes, please explain.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

* **Institutionalizing Watershed Management Plans** (see question 5)

How to measure success: we suggest several different levels, similar to the LEED certification process. The lead jurisdiction agency would manage this process (not the federal agencies).

Platinum: Jurisdiction has passed the watershed management plan through a state/territory legislative process and it has been ratified as official jurisdiction policy. Local governments (counties, municipalities, cities) have also passed the watershed management plan through a legislative process have ratified as official government policy.

Gold: Either the state/territory or the local governments have passed the watershed management plan through a legislative process. The other government level has endorsed the watershed management plan, with signatures from all the relevant government agency heads.

Silver: Both the jurisdiction and local governments have endorsed the watershed management plan, with signatures from all the relevant government agency heads. The watershed management plan has not been made official government policy.

Bronze: Either the state/territory or the local governments have endorsed the watershed management plan, with signatures from all the relevant government agency heads. The other government level has not endorsed the watershed management plan.

Tin: The watershed has a formal watershed management plan. However, the watershed management plan has not been endorsed or ratified through a legislative process.

Failure: A watershed management plan has not been developed for the watershed.