



## Polluted Runoff (Nonpoint Source Pollution)

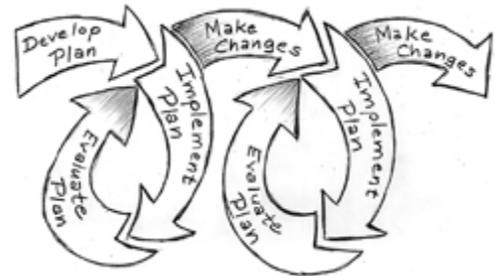
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# Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters

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## Fact Sheet

A watershed plan is a strategy and a work plan for achieving water resource goals that provides assessment and management information for a geographically defined watershed. It includes the analyses, actions, participants, and resources related to development and implementation of the plan. The watershed planning process uses a series of cooperative, iterative steps to characterize existing conditions, identify and prioritize problems, define management objectives, and develop and implement protection or remediation strategies as necessary.



EPA is releasing a document to help communities, watershed organizations, and local, state, tribal, and federal environmental agencies develop and implement watershed plans to meet water quality standards and protect water resources. The *Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters* is designed to help anyone undertaking a watershed planning effort, but should be particularly useful to persons working with impaired or threatened waters.

Since the late 1980s, organizations and agencies have moved towards managing water quality by using a watershed approach, which includes stakeholder involvement and management actions supported by sound science and appropriate technology. The watershed planning process works within this framework to identify and quantify specific causes and sources of water quality problems. It also identifies water quality goals and specific actions required to solve those problems.



EPA intends the handbook to be used to supplement the many good watershed planning guides developed by other agencies, universities, and nonprofit organizations. It contains in-depth guidance on quantifying existing pollutant loads, developing estimates of the load reductions required to meet water quality standards, developing effective management measures, and tracking progress once the plan is implemented.

The document is structured so that it can be followed step by step though the watershed planning process or so that readers can go to individual sections that highlight specific technical tools for use in the watershed planning effort. Worksheets and checklists are provided throughout the handbook to help work through the watershed planning process. Each chapter includes information that addresses the key issues for each step, along with examples to illustrate how to apply these concepts to your own situation.

You can [order a free copy of the Handbook](#) from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP). Contact NSCEP at 800-490-9198 or by e-mail, [nscep@bps-lmit.com](mailto:nscep@bps-lmit.com). When

requesting a copy of the Handbook, please refer to EPA document number: EPA 841-B-08-002. Hard copies of this guidance are expected to be available by late May 2008. You can also [download the Handbook here](#).

For handbook questions, contact [Stuart Lehman](mailto:lehman.stuart@epa.gov) (lehman.stuart@epa.gov), EPA Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds, at 202-566-1205.

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