



# Watershed Planning

Section 729 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, as amended, authorizes the US Army Corps of Engineers to study water resources on a watershed level. Watershed assessments are planning initiatives that have a multi-purpose and multi-objective scope and are designed to address integrated water resources management. Possible areas of investigation for a watershed assessment include water supply, watershed protection, ecosystem restoration, navigation and port management activities, flood damage reduction, drought preparedness, and regional economic development. A holistic approach is recommended since numerous entities within the boundaries of any watershed must agree with and support watershed improvement and management initiatives, in order to successfully implement effective system-wide solutions.

Watershed planning can have a two phase approach: the Initial Watershed Assessment, which is similar to a reconnaissance-level study, and the Final Watershed Assessment, which is similar to a feasibility-level study. The outcome of a watershed assessment will generally be a Watershed Management Plan, which identifies the combination of recommended actions to be undertaken by various partners and stakeholders to achieve the needs and opportunities identified in the assessment. The Watershed Management Plan may identify further Corps studies or implementation projects, or it may highlight actions that can be implemented by others for the benefit of the watershed.

## Watershed Planning Partners

The watershed planning process is built upon the establishment of a collaborative between the Corps and affected Federal, tribal, state, interstate and local government entities.

## What does it cost?

- The Initial Watershed Assessment is 100% Federally-funded up to \$100,000, and cost-shared 75% Federal and 25% non-federal for costs over \$100,000.
- The Final Watershed Assessment costs are shared 75% Federal and 25% non-federal.
- Work in-kind can be considered as cost share.
- Watershed assessments are subject to review and approval by HQUSACE and are subject to availability of Federal appropriations.

## Characteristics of a Watershed Study

Typical characteristics of the watershed planning process include the following:

- Collaborative, holistic watershed vision
- Multiple partners and stakeholders
- Beyond USACE mission areas
- Multi-purpose or comprehensive single-purpose projects
- Broad set of solutions for multiple stakeholders

## Questions?

To learn more, visit [www.sac.usace.army.mil/partnerships](http://www.sac.usace.army.mil/partnerships).

Questions? Email [cesac-planning@usace.army.mil](mailto:cesac-planning@usace.army.mil) or call (843) 329-8050.