

Draft Framework for Integrated Municipal Planning Approach



NACWA Winter Conference
Los Angeles, CA
February 14, 2012

What is an Integrated Approach?

- Under an integrated approach, EPA and States would use the flexibility of EPA's existing regulations and policies and encourage municipalities to evaluate how best to meet their CWA requirements within their financial capability to better allow—
 - sequencing wastewater and stormwater projects in a way that allows the highest priority environmental projects to come first, and
 - innovative solutions, such as green infrastructure

Why an Integrated Approach?

- Addresses most serious public health and water quality problems sooner
- More cost-effective, may lower overall cost of compliance
- Fosters innovative sustainable approaches, such as green infrastructure



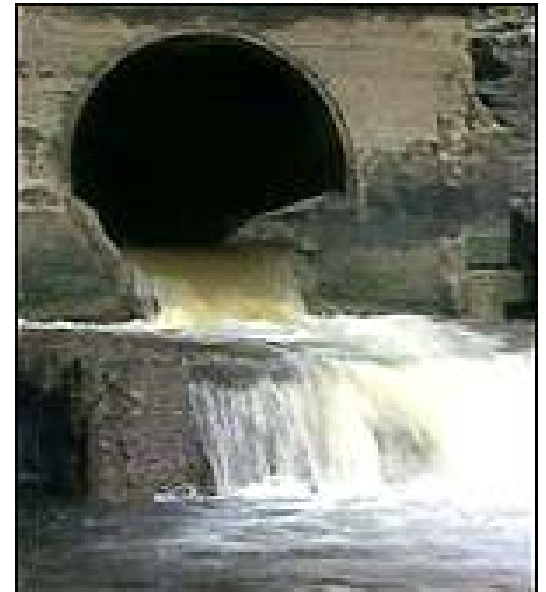
Stoner/Giles Memo to Regions

October 27, 2011

- Encourages Regions to work with States and communities on implementing comprehensive, integrated planning approaches
 - CWA and implementing regulations and guidance provide necessary flexibility
 - Existing regulatory standards will be maintained
- EPA is developing integrated planning framework
 - Will obtain feedback from States, local governments, utilities and environmental groups
 - Looking to identify municipal leaders to serve as models

Outline of Framework

- Draft Framework released on January 13, 2012
- Comments due on February 29, 2012
- Outline of Framework
 - Background
 - Principles
 - Overarching Principles
 - Guiding Principles
 - Elements of an Integrated Plan
 - Implementation
 - Permits
 - Enforcement



Overarching Principles for Integrated Approach

- Integrated planning will maintain existing regulatory standards that protect public health and water quality
- Integrated planning will allow a municipality to balance various CWA requirements in a manner that addresses the most pressing public health and environmental protection issues first
- The responsibility to develop an integrated plan rests with municipalities

Guiding Principles for Plan Development

Integrated Plans should:

- Reflect State requirements and planning efforts and incorporate State input on key issues
- Provide for meeting water quality standards using existing flexibilities in the CWA and its implementing regulations

Guiding Principles for Plan Development (continued)

- Maximize the effectiveness of infrastructure dollars through analysis of alternatives and the selection and sequencing of actions needed to address water quality challenges and non-compliance
- Incorporate effective innovative technologies, approaches and practices (including green infrastructure)
- Evaluate and address community impacts and consider disproportionate burdens resulting from a municipality's implementation of its plan

Guiding Principles for Plan Development (continued)

- Implementation of technology-based and core requirements are not delayed
 - proper operation and maintenance of facilities
 - secondary treatment requirements
 - nine minimum controls for combined sewer overflows (CSOs), including elimination of dry weather overflows
 - stormwater minimum measures

Guiding Principles for Plan Development (continued)

- Financial strategy is in place, including appropriate fee structures
- Opportunity for meaningful stakeholder input throughout the development of the plan

Integrated Plan Elements

Element 1: Water Quality, Human Health, Regulatory Issues

Description of the water quality, human health and regulatory issues to be addressed in the plan, including

- An assessment of existing CWA challenges - current and projected future regulatory requirements
- Identification and characterization of human health threats
- Identification and characterization of water quality impairment and threats - TMDLs or an equivalent analysis
- Identification of sensitive areas and environmental justice concerns
- Metrics for evaluating human health and water quality objectives

Integrated Plan Elements

Element 2: Existing Systems and Performance

Description of existing wastewater and stormwater systems under consideration and summary information describing systems performance, including:

- Identification of municipalities and utilities that are participating in the planning effort
- Characterization of wastewater and stormwater systems
- Characterization of flows in the wastewater and stormwater systems under consideration
- Identification of deficiencies associated with existing assets

Integrated Plan Elements

Element 3: Stakeholder Involvement

Process for involving relevant community stakeholders in the planning and selection process

- Opportunities for meaningful input at various stages of development of the plan

Integrated Plan Elements

Element 4: Evaluating and Selecting Alternatives

Process for evaluating and selecting alternatives and proposed implementation schedules

- Use of sustainability planning elements to assist in providing information for prioritizing investments
 - Includes asset management principles
- A systematic approach to considering green infrastructure and other innovative measures
- Identification of criteria to be used for comparing alternative projects
- Identification of alternatives, including cost estimates, projected pollutant reductions and other benefits associated with each alternative
- Analysis of alternatives that documents the criteria used, the projects selected, and why they were selected.
- Proposed implementation schedules
- For each entity participating in the plan, a financial strategy and capability analysis

Integrated Plan Elements

Element 5: Measuring success

Measuring success

- Proposed performance criteria and measures of success
- Monitoring program to address the effectiveness of controls, compliance monitoring and ambient monitoring.



Integrated Plan Implementation

Role of Permits

- Incorporate all or part of an integrated plan into NPDES permit where legally permissible
- Considerations for incorporating integrated plans into permits
 - Compliance schedules for meeting WQBELs need to be consistent with the requirements in 40 CFR 122.47
 - Green infrastructure approaches and related innovative practices
 - Appropriate water quality trading

Integrated Plan Implementation

Role of Enforcement

- All or part of an integrated plan may be able to be incorporated into the remedy of an enforcement action
- Considerations for incorporating integrated plans into enforcement actions
 - Compliance schedules prioritize the most environmental significant needs first to address CWA requirements
 - Green infrastructure approaches and related innovative practices
 - Parties needed to effectuate a remedy are involved

Stakeholder Workshops

- Atlanta, GA – January 31, 2012, at EPA Region 4 Office
- New York City, NY - February 6, 2012, at EPA Region 2 Office
- Seattle, WA - February 13, 2012, at EPA Region 10 Office
- Kansas City, KS - February 15, 2012, at EPA Region 7 Office
- Chicago, IL - February 17, 2012, at EPA Region 5 Office