



Watershed-Based

Performance Standards Checklist Guidance

February 2024

General Instructions: The Performance Standards checklist is to be used as part of BWSR's Watershed-Based PRAP Assessment review process. The purpose of the checklist is to provide an overview of partnership operations, as they relate to comprehensive watershed management plans as described in *MS103B.801*, in five performance and partnership areas. These include:

- General Administration
- Policy Committee
- Advisory Committee
- Steering Committee
- Communication and Coordination

The performance standards cover three areas: basic requirements (●), best standard/practice (■), and high-performance practices (★). Each partnership is expected to meet the basic requirements. Best standard/practice are those items that would be in the best interest of the partnership to complete. The high-performance standards describe the practices of high performing partnerships and are met less frequently. Partnerships will receive BWSR commendations for compliance with high performance standards. Any unmet high-performance standards can serve as stretch goals for performance improvement.

For the sake of clarity, the following groups are defined as follows:

- **Policy Committee:** Policy committee consists of one official from each County, SWCD and Watershed District within the planning area. Other governmental entities that may be involved in planning activities include Water Management Organizations, Municipalities (city or township), or Minnesota Tribal Nations. These officials represent their entities throughout the planning and implementation process.
- **Advisory Committee:** At a minimum advisory committees consist of staff from local and tribal governments and staff from Minnesota's five state water agencies and Metropolitan Council where applicable. It may also include other members with an interest in or affected by watershed management.
- **Steering Committee:** The steering committee is made up of local staff, the BWSR board conservationist, and any consultants that may be hired to help manage the process or write the plan.

General Administration

- **Each participating member has adopted the comprehensive watershed management plan.**
All watershed partner LGUs have approved a resolution to adopt and implement the comprehensive watershed management plan.
- **Coordinator or lead staff person(s) identified for the partnership.**
The policy committee has designated a lead staff person(s) from the partnerships to serve as coordinator.
- **Operational guidelines for fiscal procedures exist and are current.**
The watershed partnership has entered into a formal agreement (fiscal agent agreement) outlining fiscal procedures and designated a participating LGU as fiscal agent.
- **Financial Reports provided to Policy Committee on annual basis.**
Financial Reports are prepared and presented to policy committee on an annual basis. Financial reports summarize activities related to watershed-based planning and implementation activities that are being implemented jointly by the partnership.
- **eLINK Grant Report(s): submitted on time (annual or biannual if funds exceed \$500,000)**
eLINK reporting for the partnership is completed by February 1st of each year. Additional biannual reporting for grants greater than \$500,000 is completed by August 1st.

The assurance measures below are from BWSR's Website and outline BWSR's expectations - [Assurance Measures for Watershed-based Implementation Funding | MN Board of Water, Soil Resources \(state.mn.us\)](#)

- **Assurance Measure 1: Prioritized, Targeted, and Measurable Work is making progress toward achieving clean water goals.**
Work plan activities are prioritized and targeted towards priority areas. Progress towards plan goals is being measured as a percentage of proposed outcomes.
- **Assurance Measure 2: Programs, Projects, and Practices are being Implemented in Priority Areas.**
The percentage of time spent in priority areas for Project Development and Practice Installation (outcomes) is being measured.
- **Assurance Measure 3: Grant Work Is On-Schedule and On-Budget.**
Work plan activities were completed according to original schedule and grant funds were not returned.
- **Assurance Measure 4: Leverage of Non-State Funds.**
Watershed Based Implementation Funds have been used to leverage other non-state funds that would not otherwise have been available if it were not for the state's investment.

- ★ **Project tracking system is used by the watershed partnership to track all work that contributes to plan goals.**
All projects, regardless of funding source, are being tracked to quantify contributions towards plan goals.

- ★ **Shared services opportunities are leveraged between partners.**
Watershed partners are working together to share services related to technical and engineering assistance, project development, administration and coordination, education, or other implementation efforts.

Policy Committee

- **Conflict of Interest Policy exists and is reviewed/signed by the JPE or fiscal agent.**
Grant recipients have an approved conflict of interest policy which has been reviewed/signed by Policy Committee Members.

- **The policy committee or board is involved in project funding discussions or decision making, as defined by an implementation agreement.**
Watershed partners are following implementation agreement guidance for how project funding discussions occur and how funding decisions are made.

- **Committee membership is reviewed/updated annually.**
Policy committee has reviewed membership and officers as outlined in approved bylaws/agreement within the past 12 months.

- **Training: Orientation on Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans is provided to new Policy Committee members.**
New members have received orientation on CWMP within the last 12 months.

- ★ **Training: efforts are made to inform on watershed related topics.**
Policy Committee is provided training on watershed related topics such as priority resource issues, concerns, trends, and emerging issues.

- **Reviewed governing documents (bylaws, formal agreements) within the last 5 years (if applicable).**
Watershed partnership has reviewed governing documents such as by-laws and other formal agreements within the last 5 years.

Advisory Committee

- **Technical Advisory Committee participates in plan development/implementation and plan amendments.**
Watershed partners work with agency partners on planning, implementation, and plan amendments.
- **Members meet at least once annually.**
Technical Advisory Committee meets at a minimum annually to review and discuss comprehensive watershed management plan efforts.
- **Water quality, hydrologic, and monitoring trends are used to evaluate progress toward plan/resource goals.**
Technical Advisory Committee presents new data to measure progress towards plan and resource goals once every five years.
- ★ **Technical Advisory Committee reviews members.**
Technical Advisory Committee members update the Policy Committee when staff changes occur and make recommendations when new members would benefit the partnership.
- ★ **Agency members provide updates on agency initiatives, projects, and other information related to the watershed.**
Technical Advisory Committee members provide updates at all meetings.
- ★ **Water quality trends tracked for priority water bodies.**
Water quality data is tracked for priority water bodies and has been reviewed with Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee members within the past 12 months.

Steering Committee

- **Steering committee meets at least four times a year (quarterly) and reviews plan goals and actions.**
Steering committee met at least four times in the past 12 months.
- **Staff has open (2-way) communication about comprehensive watershed management plan activities with policy committee and local boards/councils.**
Watershed partners have regular communications with the policy committee and their local boards/councils.
- **Steering committee coordinates a mid-plan review to evaluate progress toward plan goals.**
Steering committee held a mid-plan review with Technical Advisory Committee and Policy Committee in the past five years.

- **Watershed Partners solicit stakeholder input within the last year.**
Watershed partners solicited input from agencies, citizens, and/or stakeholder groups to coordinate watershed-based planning and implementation activities within the past 12 months.
- **An annual work plan (outside of WBIF grant) is developed and implemented.**
A work plan allocating staff and financial resources to guide watershed-based planning and implementation activities is created and updated annually.
- **Individual partner governing boards/councils are updated on annual workplan activities .**
Individual partners are reviewing annual workplans with their local boards/councils.
- ★ .
The watershed partners review progress towards water quality goals on an annual basis.

Communication & Coordination

- **Partnership Website(s) contain board meeting information, partners contact information, committee membership, and annual eLINK reports.**
*Information as outlined above is posted on partner websites annually.
For specific Grant Reporting requirements see: [Grant Reporting | MN Board of Water and Soil Resources \(state.mn.us\)](#)*
The grantee must also prominently display on its website the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Logo and a link to the Legislative Coordinating Commission website.
- **Partnership Website(s) hosts a current copy of the plan and is maintained and updated regularly.**
Partnership website contains a current copy of the plan and includes regular updates on plan accomplishments and progress made towards plan goals.
- **Communication pieces sent to highlight work and program opportunities.**
The partnership has provided at least 4 communication pieces to stakeholders within the past 12 months. Examples include newsletters, press release, newspaper article or social media posts.
- **Public education materials are watershed focused and reinforce high priority issues and actions to address plan goals.**
Partners have developed and distributed materials that target high priority issues and actions in the watershed within the past 12 months.
- ★ **Watershed partners have developed new partnerships with partners outside of the planning/implementation partnership.**
Watershed partners have cooperated with other organizations, that are not included within the partnership's agreement to implement plan priorities.