

Watershed Planning and 319 Projects

How Watershed-Based Plans Inform Funding
Decisions

Wilson Yee
US EPA Region 9
CA Watersheds Workshop
February 8 and 9, 2012

What this session covers

- What are the challenges for the NPS Program?
- What are some solutions?
- What is EPA's current approach?
- Where is the NPS program going?

WQ impairments due to NPS are the same in 1990 as 2010

- 76% of all WQ impairments due to NPS pollution
 - 40% due to nutrients from agriculture (nitrogen and phosphorus)
 - 25% due to hydromodification

What are the challenges?

- Increased scrutiny
- Push for greater accountability
- Shrinking budget (-15% in 2011, -20% in 2012)
- Inconsistent understanding of 319 requirements
- Inability to show results

What are some solutions?

from 2011 National Study:

- Review WBPs and discuss shortcomings
- Provide good examples of WBPs
- Better training and guidance for NPS staff
- Develop standardized expectations for each element

Current approach for projects

EPA has mainly focused on:

- Meeting 319 requirements
- Technical adequacy
- Scientific defensibility
- Adaptive management

Current approach, cont'd

EPA has focused on the following elements:

- Critical sources and causes (1)
- Priority locations and actions (3)
- LRs are quantified and significant (2)
- Monitoring to track and report benefits (8 & 9)

Future approaches

- Focus efforts and resources in fewer areas, where we have the right information
- Better coordination of TMDLs and watershed plans
- Better coordination with other State and Federal programs
- Data-driven approach with feedback loops at multiple scales: project – watershed – program

Resources and Contacts:

319 Grant program:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/319h/index.shtml

EPA's Nonpoint source program in California:

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/water/nonpoint/california.html>

EPA Watershed Priorities:

<http://www.epa.gov/region09/water/watershed/index.html>

Wilson Yee
Watersheds Office (WTR-3)
US Environmental Protection Agency - Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
415-972-3484
yee.wilson@epa.gov