

**COORDINATION & POLICY
WORK GROUP MEETING
Notes
February 25, 2009**

Members Present

Mark Lowry (AECOM), Philip Moore (Montgomery County), Snehal Patel (HCAO), Steven Johnston (TCEQ), Kathy Richolson (GCWDA), Alisa Max (Harris County), Steve Archer (AEC), Ingrid Fairchild (HCFCD), Linda Pechacek (Public), Mary Purzer (AECOM), Ashley Wadick (TCEQ), Richard Chapin (City of Houston), Pat Buzbee (Montgomery County), Lauri Thanheiser (Environmental Infrastructure Planning)

H-GAC Staff Present

Rachel Powers, Erin Anderson

Discussion

Discussion began with a brief overview of the screening tool. The tool breaks up the 19 criteria into five basic categories. Not all 19 criteria will always be applicable to all implementation activities (IAs) such as walking the bayous to locate sources. This activity will result in no direct load reductions but it is a good precursor activity. Giving it a low score would not be fair, if it's not applicable that will be taken into account and this will help with the scoring. An average will be taken of all applicable criteria scores for each particular IA. At the last meeting, the group decided on 0 to 5 for the range of scores.

Dividing the criteria into categories is important to help workgroups focus the objective of the criteria when scoring an IA.

Do we want the I-Plan to include precursor ideas or just the IAs? A lot of the workgroups seem to think there are precursor activities are necessary to address sources. Maybe we don't have them break it down to that level of specificity. Could say you need to have a screening program in place, don't have to say do screening in 2012. Some communities have already done screening and so the I-Plan should not make them do it again.

Should the screening tool include scoring for each of the categories as well? The opinion was expressed that giving the categories a score would be like double counting the criteria.

Is using the form voluntary or do all workgroups need to use it? We are not asking the workgroups to score all IAs, maybe they could just score the top ones. We should have consistency between groups. H-GAC and some other individuals will be able to score most of the IAs, we will have the 9 elements identified for the IAs. We should strongly encourage the use of the table by the workgroups. This was also leading up to having a weighting system between workgroups.

Rachel showed Plan 2 Fund OPT, a tool that comes from the Environmental Finance Center of Boise State University, a financial center of the EPA to fund watershed and water related activities. Plan 2 Fund OPT was specifically designed to try to prioritize activities that are being considered for

implementation in a watershed. Rachel showed the group how to add a rule and assign scores. She then demonstrated how IAs are scored in the tool. Many can access the tool, because it is online, and input their scoring.

General consensus on the applicability of the Plan 2 Fund OPT tool was that it was a more refined prioritization method and should be used later on in the process.

The idea of having a flexible framework for the I-Plan was introduced. Benefits of this would be that some IAs will be well suited for rural areas while others are well suited for urban areas. With a flexible framework different IAs can be used in different settings.

The group then did a trial run through of the C&P screening tool for the IA "illicit discharge program".

Changes made to the screening tool during the trial scoring:

- one criteria was added under the "Benefits" category, "Immediacy: Will results be seen immediately or over a long time range?"
- a comments column was added so that workgroups could record notes on their reasoning
- added draft to the title
- added some instructions at the top

Observations made during the trial scoring of the screening tool:

- IAs need to be well defined, very specific
- Some of the criteria need to be scored for a specific entity implementing an IA and not just the IA in general
- An instruction sheet should be created to go along with the screening tool
- Maybe there are too many criteria, it took a long time to complete
- Some of the criteria need better descriptions, their intent is not always clear

Next Meeting:

Monday, March 30, 2009, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM, H-GAC offices, Conference Room B