

Principles and Guidelines for Federal Investments in Water Resources

Federal Support Toolbox

National Action Plan: Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Actions

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Principles and Guidelines

- On March 22, 2013, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) released updated Principles and Guidelines (P&G) for Federal investments in water resources.
- To view the updated Principles and Guidelines, please visit:
www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/PandG



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March 22, 2013

CEQ Releases Updated Principles and Guidelines for Federal Investments in Water Resources

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) today released updated Principles and Guidelines (P&G) for Federal investments in water resources to accelerate project approvals, reduce costs, and support water infrastructure projects with the greatest economic and community benefits.

The modernized P&G, which incorporate extensive public comment, will allow agencies to better consider the long-term economic benefits of protecting communities against future storm damage, promoting recreational opportunities that support local business, and supporting other local priorities. These updates to the P&G, called for in the 2007 Water Resources Development Act, will align Federal policies with the modern approach communities are taking toward water infrastructure projects, and will help the Federal government reduce bureaucracy and make it quicker and easier to pursue projects that communities support.

“Smart investments in America’s rivers, lakes, wetlands, and coasts are essential to promoting economic growth, ensuring clean drinking water, and building thriving communities,” said Nancy Sutley, Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. “This much needed update of the 30-year-old Principles and Guidelines will help agencies better evaluate and expedite water projects that grow our economy and are essential for protecting our communities from floods, droughts and storms.”

Since 1983, the Principles & Guidelines have provided direction to Federal agencies when evaluating and selecting major water projects, including projects related to navigation, storm resilience, wetland restoration and flood prevention. The 1983 standards used a narrow set of parameters to evaluate water projects that made it difficult for agencies to support a range of important projects that communities want. As a result, lack of local support for selected projects has often led to substantial delays, costing taxpayers and leaving communities at risk while issues are resolved.



Principles & Requirements and Draft Guidelines

- The updated P&G consist of final Principles & Requirements (P&R) that lay out broad principles to guide water investments, as well as draft Interagency Guidelines for implementing the Principles & Requirements.
- Draft Guidelines will be available for 60 days of public comment beginning March 27th. Once the Guidelines are finalized, each agency will update its procedures as needed to apply the new P&G to their agency-specific missions.





Background on Changes

- P&G are the rules that govern how federal agencies assess their water resource development projects and activities.
- New P&G will apply to a wider range of Federal agencies and activities, and emphasize more integrated approaches.
- New P&R specify that Federal water resources investments shall reflect national priorities, encourage economic development and protect the environment.
- Overall intent is to ensure decision-makers consider a more diverse range of benefits and costs associated with water resources development proposals.



Federal Objective

- “The Federal Objective, as set forth in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, specifies that Federal water resources investments shall reflect national priorities, encourage economic development, and protect the environment by:
 - (1) seeking to maximize sustainable economic development;
 - (2) seeking to avoid the unwise use of floodplains and flood-prone areas and minimizing adverse impacts and vulnerabilities in any case in which a floodplain or flood-prone area must be used; and
 - (3) protecting and restoring the functions of natural systems and mitigating any unavoidable damage to natural systems.”
- 1983 P&G: “Federal objective of water and related land resources project planning is to contribute to national economic development consistent with protecting the Nation's environment, pursuant to national environmental statutes, applicable executive orders, and other Federal planning requirements.”





Restrictions on USACE

- New Principles and Requirements align with the USACE Civil Works Strategic Plan and its overarching goal of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).
- Manager's Report on Appropriations for FY12 has restricted USACE from developing or implementing new rules or guidance upon issuance of the revised P&G. Under current Continuing Resolution, this funding restriction still applies.
- The restriction also specifies that the Corps shall continue to use the 1983 Water Resources Principles and Guidelines during that same period.



P&R: Climate Change

D. Risk & Uncertainty

- i. **Climate Change.** "... projected accelerating changes in aquatic systems and sea level resulting from a changing climate ***should inform the understanding of water resource needs*** and how these needs can be realistically addressed. ***Analysis of climate change impacts should be informed by both historical records and models of projected future impacts*** of an altered climate on water resources."





P&R: Land Use and Adaptive Management

D. Risk & Uncertainty

- ii. **Future Land Use.** “Future land use patterns should be assessed and analyzed as part of the evaluation process....”

- iii. **Adaptive Management.** “... Adaptive management measures should be clearly identified and evaluated as part of alternative actions or strategies in order to further reduce uncertainty, particularly when more detailed information and better tools are not readily available. ...”





Draft P&G: Climate Change

- Development of project-level procedure
 - ▶ Forecast future conditions of the study area
 - Because forecasts of future conditions are inherently uncertain, ***degree of uncertainty must be characterized*** (quantitatively and/or qualitatively at the commensurate level of detail) for all forecasts. Key assumptions used in the forecasts must be explicitly stated. Where uncertainty may meaningfully affect the baseline in a manner that could affect the investment decision, ***multiple baselines can be used***, with a clear explanation of the basis and assumptions underlying each.
 - Forecasts of future conditions ***should account for expected changes*** in hydrologic and other conditions ***as a result of a changing climate*** when these are likely to be significant.



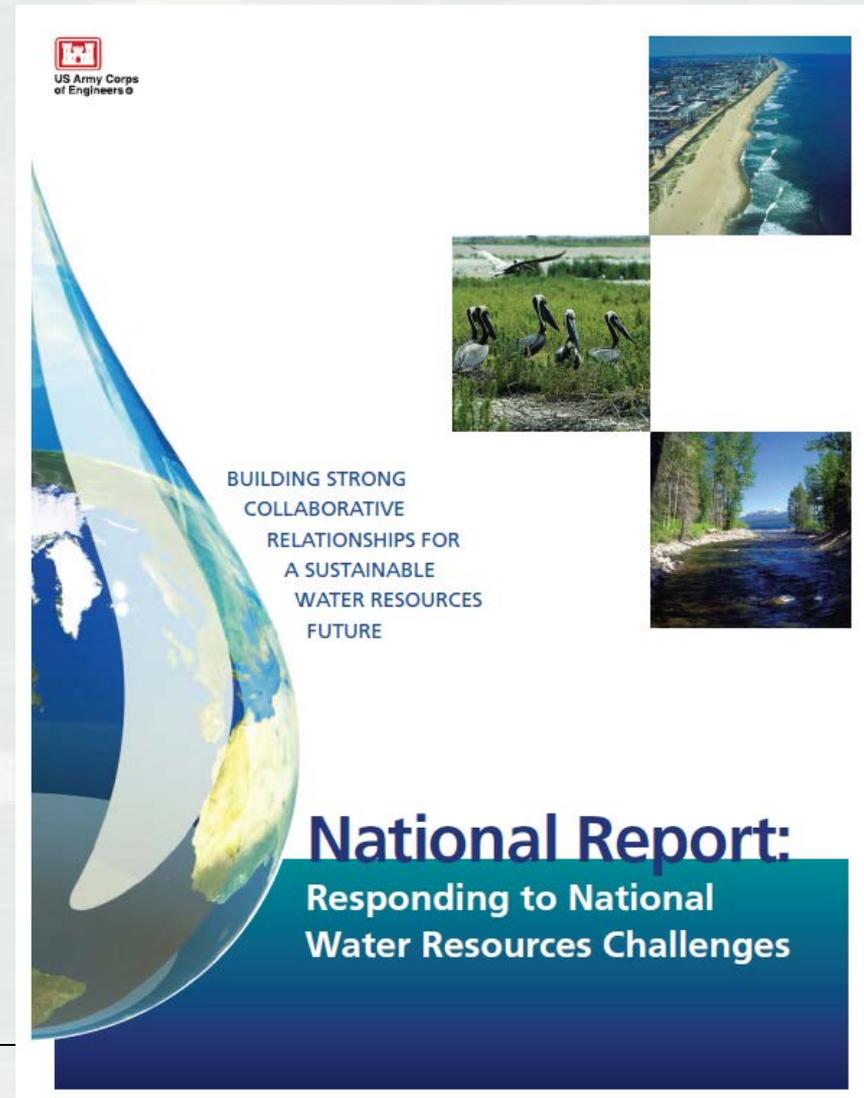
Federal Support Toolbox



BUILDING STRONG®

Building Strong Collaborative Relationships for a Sustainable Water Resources Future

“A Federal Support Toolbox of Federal authorities, programs, technical tools, and scientific and management information would facilitate Federal agencies to support water planning across the Nation.”



Federal Support Toolbox

[Watertoolbox.us](http://www.watertoolbox.us)

<http://rsgisias.crrel.usace.army.mil/intro/f?p=689:1:0>

The screenshot shows the top portion of the Watertoolbox.us website. At the top, a dark blue banner contains the text "BUILDING STRONG COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS FOR A SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES FUTURE". Below this is the website logo "watertoolbox.us" with the tagline "Federal Support Toolbox for Integrated Water Resources Management". To the right of the logo are links for "FAQs", "Glossary", "Site Map", "Help", "Contact Us", and "Login". A central banner features a water ripple graphic and the text "Promote Information Sharing Through Collaboration Opportunities". Below the banner is a search bar with a "Submit" button. A navigation menu is located at the bottom of the banner, with categories: HOME, ACCESSIBILITY, TOOLSBOX RESOURCES (Programs, Databases & Models, Map Search), NEWS & EVENTS (What's New at watertoolbox.us, Water Resources Events, Water Resources Headlines), COMMUNICATION & EDUCATION (Education & Outreach, Water Resources Forum), A SUSTAINABLE WATER FUTURE (Building Relationships, Collaboration Opportunities, Identify Needs), WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (Water Resources Organizations, Legislation, Policies & Guidance, Best Management Practices, State Water Plans), and LINKING THE WORLD TO WATER.

About the Federal Support Toolbox

The water challenges facing the nation are compelling and the needs are great. Managing water resources as a collaborative endeavor is crucial to address these challenges and water needs effectively.

The Federal Support Toolbox is a dynamic, evolving and comprehensive "one-stop-shop" water resources data portal with direct links to [available databases](#), [innovative programs and initiatives](#), and [state-of-the-art models and tools](#). This website also serves as a leading-edge resource for [sharing ideas and water resources needs](#), [best management practices](#), [collaborations](#), and [partnerships](#) and more for the water resources community in the U.S. and Internationally.



What's New at watertoolbox.us

April 3, 2013
U.S. EPA, Climate Ready Water Utilities Workshop Planning/Adaptation Strategies Guide Webinar
[Event](#)

April 3, 2013
U.S. EPA, Climate Ready Water Utilities CRBAT 101, Risk Assessment Process with the Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool
[Event](#)

April 3, 2013
U.S. EPA, Climate Ready Water Utilities CRBAT 201, the Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool
[Event](#)

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Upcoming Events

April 24, 2013
U.S. EPA, Climate Ready Water Utilities CRBAT 201, the Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool On-line Webinar
[Event](#)

April 24, 2013
ABCE Summit on Building a Framework for Flood Risk Management
Hendrix, VA, USA
[Event](#)

May 7, 2013
2013 National Mitigation & Ecosystems
[Event](#)

DATABASES, TOOLS & MODELS

Access water resources management programs, databases and models created by the U.S. federal government, states, Tribal Nations and non-governmental organizations by keyword or map search.

- Search active databases for water management
- Access models that facilitate analysis & predictions
- Acquire new tools and technologies
- Search by location for data, models and programs

GET INVOLVED

Become a part of the Water Toolbox community

- Become a [Federal Support Toolbox partner](#)
- Stay informed about the latest [headline news](#) and [upcoming events](#)
- Join in the [discussion forums](#)

COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY

Contribute and take advantage of water resource solutions

- View [existing collaborations & partnerships](#)
- Be aware of needs within the water resources community
- Visit the [water resources forum](#) to learn about water activities and issues
- Find out how to become a [Federal Support Toolbox partner](#)

WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Effective water resources management depends on acquiring deep knowledge and astute skills

- Search the list of [legislative resources](#)
- Locate specific [policies and guidance](#)
- Review [best management practices](#)
- View the [list of agencies](#)

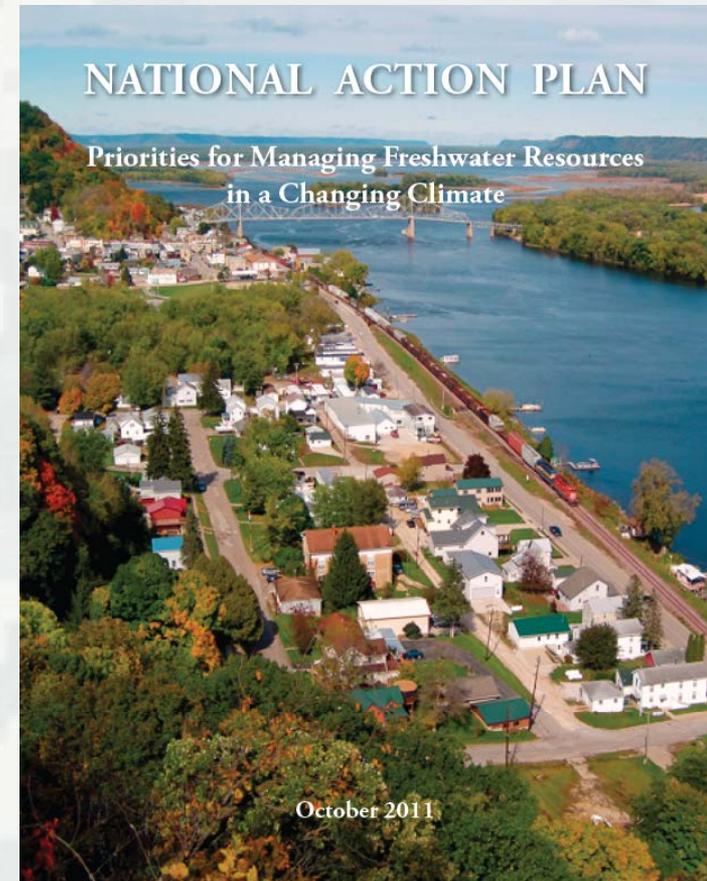
National Action Plan: Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Actions



BUILDING STRONG®

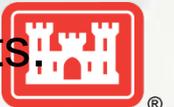
National Action Plan (NAP)

1. Establish a Planning Process
2. Improve Water Resources and Climate Change Information for Decision making
3. Strengthen Assessment of Vulnerability of Water Resources to Climate Change
4. Expand Water Use Efficiency
- 5. Support Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)**
6. Support Training and Outreach to Build Response Capability



What is IWRM?

- **Sustainable outcomes** — the practice of making decisions and taking coordinated actions for outcomes and benefits that use or affect current economic, environmental and quality of life resources conditions in ways that preserve these resources for future generations.
- **Collaborative planning** — a process that avails collaboration to secure the input of all stakeholders about their interests and needs.
- **A systems perspective** — a systems approach that arrays interests and needs as input variables, modeling a system of interdependent variables with multiple outputs.
- **A geographic context** — a geographic perspective that examines who is doing what where at a broad geographic scale, e.g., a river basin, watershed or coastal zone.
- **Balanced aims** — a process that seeks to balance multiple objectives as diverse desired outputs producing multiple benefits.





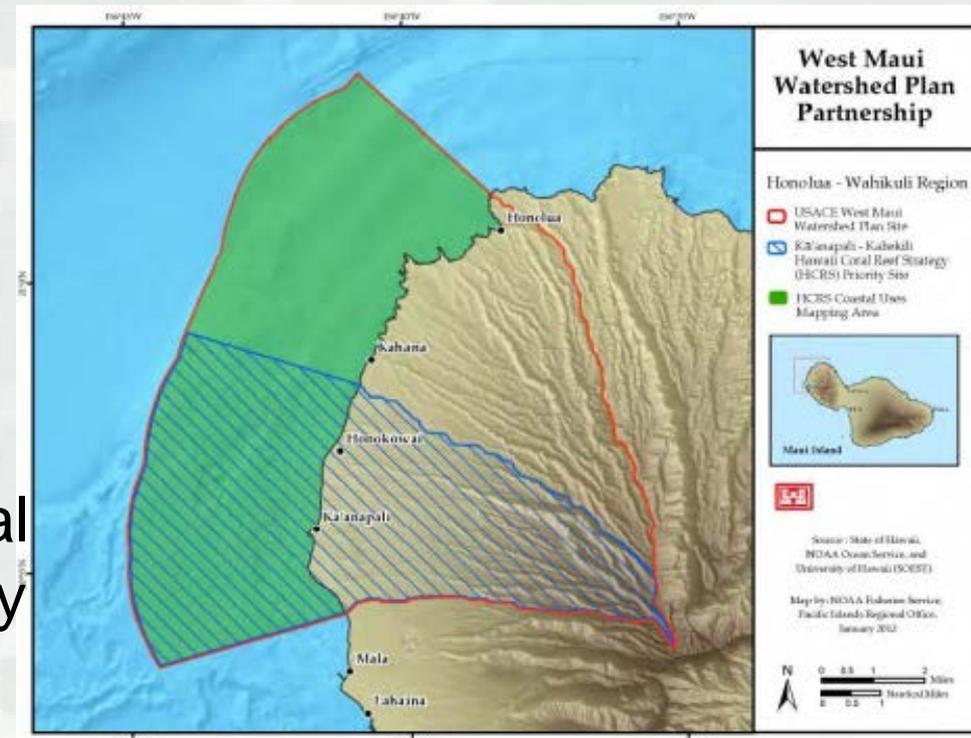
Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Actions

- Action 17: Work with States and interstate bodies (e.g., river basin commissions) to provide assistance needed to incorporate IWRM into their planning and programs, paying particular attention to climate change adaptation issue.



West Maui Watershed Study

- Focus: Reduce land based pollution impacts across the watershed that impact nearshore waters.
- Expected Outcome: Integrated watershed plan that identifies and prioritizes actions to be implemented across federal, state and local jurisdictions and among many partners.
- Designation: US Coral Reef Task Force Priority Partnership in the Pacific



Ohio River Basin Alliance

Ohio River Basin Alliance: a coalition of Federal and state agencies, conservation organizations, NGOs, universities, consultant professionals.





Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Actions

- Action 19: Work with States to review flood risk management and drought management planning to identify “best practices” to prepare for hydrologic extremes
 - ▶ Strengthen coordination among Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies on drought and flood issues
 - ▶ Work closely with States to review flood and drought planning activities to identify “best practices” that can be shared with others
 - ▶ Reviewed State Hazard Mitigation Plans (SHMPs) and surveyed State officials





Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Actions

- Action 20: Develop benchmarks for incorporating adaptive management into water project designs, operational procedures, and planning strategies
- Technical team
 - ▶ USACE, DOI (USGS), USDA (Forest Service, NRCS), EPA, NOAA
- Products
 - ▶ Inventory of existing “adaptive management” practices and policies in Federal government
 - ▶ Recommendations for wider application of adaptive management strategies



Questions, Suggestions, Next Steps?

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Federal agencies want to “plan” and “study” and “recommend” but not “fund” and “do.”

- State official

