Communication of National Monitoring Programs

Using the Principles of Public Participation

Creation of a National Monitoring Network

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U.S. Geological Survey
Dialog on Public Participation

- Use of the combined input of
  - science, technology, and policy experts
    from Federal, State and local government
  - with economic, social & practical issues
    from a cross-section of non-government representatives

- Results in more *Realistic Outcomes*
Dialog on Public Participation

- Technical expertise alone may
  - result in an over-simplified solution
  - not address community resource needs

- Reflects a better *Balance of Powers*
  - among governments and the public and private sectors
Benefits of an Open Participatory Process

- Produce Policy Decisions that promote public interests
  - meeting the needs of many customers

- Decentralize decision power closer to the user community
  - at the watershed level
Benefits of an Open Participatory Process

- Recommend *collaborative* solutions to problems of access and comparability by multiple users
  - members of non-profit water associations who educate their membership
  - private industries that use or impact waters
  - volunteers who monitor local waters
In 1972, the United States Congress enacted a Public Law -- **FACA**

**The Federal Advisory Committee Act**

To ensure that advice given to Federal agencies by committees

- be objective
- have balanced membership
- be accessible to the public
Improve access, sharing, and understanding of water data and information across the U.S. — *through*

- Improved Coordination among Federal water agencies
- Shared Information with non-Federal entities
- Increased Collaboration with non-government associations & the private sector
- Development of public-private partnerships
Useful Monitoring Products

- **Framework for Monitoring**
  - Visual Guide to developing an effective program

- **National Environmental Methods Index**
  - Select & compare methods @ www.nemi.gov

- **Water Quality Data Elements**
  - Guidelines for comparable metadata

- State & Regional Monitoring Councils

- **Biennial National Monitoring Conferences**

- **National Monitoring Network**
National Monitoring Network

- Develop a Network to
  - Coordinate & expand existing efforts
  - Cover both
    - coastal waters
    - upland watersheds
  - Link to the Integrated Ocean Observing System
80 Participants in the Network Design
40% Fed, 30% State+, 23% Academic, 7% Industry
Network Pilot Studies

Delaware Bay – Delaware River Basin Commission

San Francisco Bay – SF Estuary Institute

Lake Michigan – Great Lakes Commission

- More than 100 individuals, representing over 50 organizations, were active partners including:
  - 15 State Agencies
  - 7 Federal Agencies
  - 11 Universities
  - 15 non-government organizations
  - 3 private sector companies
Techniques and Approaches

- **Communication by**
  - Regular conference calls, web conferencing
  - Frequent emails; broad discussion via List Serves
  - Wiki Web sites
  - Periodic regional meetings

- **Reports developed through**
  - Word processing using tracking features
  - Intranet sites for posting materials for review and comment

- **Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADA’s)**
  - Participation by Government, University and Private Sector
  - Partners may contribute funding or in-kind support
Key to Success

- Guidance provided by Federal Interagency Steering Committee
  - Clear and consistent goals and objectives for all pilots
  - Flexibility built into initial design
  - Outline for comparable reporting
  - Formats for data and statistics
  - Frequent communication to consider, accept and adjust to meet the needs and resources of participating partners
Goals of ACWI and Council using Public Participation

*Improve access, sharing, understanding of water data and information*

- Use known principles of **Public Participation**
  - [http://iap2.org](http://iap2.org)
- Share Information openly among governments
- Use an **Advisory Committee** process to
  - bring multiple stakeholders to the table
- Increase **Collaboration** with non-government organizations
  - Develop public-private partnerships
- Create better policy by combining
  - Science and Technical Knowledge
  - Public perspectives on their watersheds
Let’s Make Things Better by...

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