

08742

Coastal Zone
Information
Center

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

6-76-02

OCT 26 1976

HD
1694
.A5
P82
1976
2381086

MAR 4 1997

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION HANDBOOK

FOR

WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

**COASTAL ZONE
INFORMATION CENTER**



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NOAA
COASTAL SERVICES CENTER
2234 SOUTH HOBSON AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29405-2413

Property of CSC Library

U.S.
E.P.A.

HD
1694
.A5
P82
1976

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUNE 1976

This handbook is one of a series designed to provide State and areawide agencies with assistance in carrying out water quality planning and implementation. Designation, Grant Application and Work Plan, Cost Analysis, Interim Outputs, Management Agencies, and State Continuing Planning Process handbooks have already been published. This handbook serves as a supplement to 40 CFR, Parts 105, 130 and 131 which describe agency responsibility for obtaining public participation in water pollution control efforts. It also expands on the public participation chapter of the Draft Guidelines for State and Areawide Water Quality Management Program Development (February, 1976):

The purpose of this handbook is to explain more fully the sections of the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Act Amendments which pertain to public participation. Regulations, guidelines, and policies are repeated and referenced, and realistic examples of ways to obtain meaningful participation are provided. The principles of and requirements for maintaining an effective public participation program, within broad planning phases, are described. The model program section delineates a program structure, and describes a variety of methods for encouraging productive public participation.

Other EPA reference documents and previously published handbooks dealing in part with public participation in the Water Quality Management process include:

- 40 CFR, Part 105, Public Participation in Water Pollution Control
- 40 CFR, Part 130, Policies and Procedures for the State Continuing Planning Process
- 40 CFR, Part 131, Preparation of Water Quality Management Plans
- Cost Analysis Handbook for Section 208 Areawide Waste Treatment Management Planning, Federal Assistance Applications (May, 1975)
- Management Agencies Handbook for Section 208 Areawide Waste Treatment Management (September, 1975)
- Revised Area and Agency Designation Handbook for Section 208 Areawide Water Quality Management Planning (November, 1975)

- Revised Grant Application and Work Plan Handbook for Section 208 Areawide Water Quality Management (December, 1975)
- State Continuing Planning Process Handbook (December, 1975)
- Draft Guidelines for State and Areawide Water Quality Management Program Development (February, 1976)

This handbook was prepared under Contract No. 68-01-3195 by Susan F. Vogt, Centaur Management Consultants, Inc. with contributions from Professor Gene Willeke of the Georgia Institute of Technology and the direction and support of James W. Meek and the Areawide Management Branch and James Lund and the Planning Assistance and Policy Branch.

Mark A. Pisano
Director, Water Planning Division
Washington, D.C.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	i
INTRODUCTION	1
I. REQUIREMENTS AND PRINCIPLES	3
A. Eight Requirements	3
B. Principles	6
II. MAJOR PHASES	9
III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT THE STATE LEVEL	21
A. Purpose	21
B. State Water Quality Program	22
C. Major Methods to Achieve Public Participation	25
D. Benefits of Public Participation	29
IV. MODEL PROGRAM DESIGN	30
A. Organization	30
B. Funding	36
C. Information Dissemination	40
D. Consultation	60
E. Obstacles to Public Involvement	74
F. Evaluation	76

APPENDIX

NOTE

This document is not a replacement to the Act, the Regulations, or official EPA Policy Statements. It is a supplement to these documents, showing hypothetical examples to assist State and areawide agencies in responding to water quality management program requirements. The examples in this handbook do not constitute a uniform National EPA standard of acceptability. Any clarification and specific conditions applicable to a designated area should be discussed with the EPA Regional Offices.

INTRODUCTION

One of the major expectations of the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments is that the public will play a key decision-making role in all water pollution control activities. The "public" includes all interested or affected parties - State and local elected officials and their key civil servants, businesses, unions, neighborhood groups, developers, environmentalists, and others.

Section 101(e) of the Act states that "public participation ... shall be provided for, encouraged, and assisted" at Federal, State and local levels. The purpose of public participation in the water quality management process is to aid public education, create a plan sensitive to local needs and values, and build support for plan implementation.

Several water quality management planning activities may occur simultaneously within a region. State and Areawide Water Quality Management (Sections 208 and 303) might well coincide with State Program Planning (Grants for Pollution Control Programs, Section 106), Facilities Planning (Grants for Construction of Treatment Works, Section 201), Water Resource Planning (Section 209), and/or the Continuing Planning Process (Section 303(e)). Implementation may also be simultaneous, as with the management provisions of Areawide Waste Treatment Management (Section 208) and the issuance of permits, under National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (Section 402).

The essence of the water quality management process is decentralized decision making - by citizens to influence planners, and by elected officials responding to electorates. Publics must be identified early and be urged to take active roles in the process to assure that fair and practical decisions are made. Local expressions of needs and values should be respected and should affect how planners study water pollution, as well as which strategies for cleaning up the water can be considered. Public input into water quality decision-making means that impacts will be better assessed, implementation will be feasible, and the costs and benefits to the various publics will be more palatable. Local elected officials are influenced by constituent pressure. If citizens have been able to influence decisions throughout the process, they will be more likely to accept those decisions and urge local officials to support the best implementable plan.

This handbook provides additional guidance to State and areawide agencies on how to more effectively assist, encourage, and provide for productive public participation. It is divided into four parts (1) Requirements and Principles for Public Participation; (2) Major Phases; (3) Public Participation at the State level; and (4) Model Program Design.

The principles established in the Draft Guidelines for State and Areawide Water Quality Management Program Development clearly emphasize that agencies must go beyond minimum requirements if the purposes of public participation are to be served. An agency involved in a public participation program must identify publics, recognize the increasing level of participation over time, respond to citizen input, and be wary of common obstacles in obtaining productive participation. The Model Program Design in this handbook describes in detail many methods of facilitating an effective participation program. It is intended to be modified, expanded, and adapted to local preferences and conditions. References are provided at the end of this handbook.

I. REQUIREMENTS AND PRINCIPLES

A. Right Requirements

In the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments, Congress provided for a State and areawide water quality management process to deal with complex water pollution problems. Section 101(e) of those amendments established citizen participation as an integral part of that process. That section requires State and areawide agencies to encourage, as well as provide for and assist citizens to participate in making decisions which will help solve water pollution problems. While the particular emphases of a public participation program are left to local discretion, regulations (40 CFR 105) specify that at least eight requirements be met in order to carry out the letter of Section 101(e). It is important to emphasize that only by going beyond these minimum requirements can the spirit and intent of Section 101(e) be captured. The eight requirements and some recommendations for meeting them are:

1. Informational Materials and Access to Them - Technical and procedural information must be continuously available to citizens at the earliest opportunity. This requirement includes summarizing or interpreting complex data and making it understandable to the public and the media. The requirement may be met by mailing to the public newsletters, brochures, etc., by meeting the public through briefings, exhibits, meetings, etc, and by setting up depositories. Several depositories should be established, scattered throughout the area, conveniently located, open during evenings and weekends, and have low cost copying facilities. They should contain draft as well as final documents and reports of citizen comments and participation. Assistance in locating documents in the depository should be provided.

Citizens can make productive and informed input into the decision-making process only if they are given enough time to study background reports and relevant data. Drafts of reports and studies and other important information should be as available to citizens as they are to planners.

2. Assisting the Public - Assistance to public groups for citizen education and/or training, must be promptly provided. The public must be assisted in finding ways to participate effectively. This requires allocating technical staff time to meet special needs, as well as assigning staff to be responsible for the public participation program. To fulfill this requirement adequately, agency staff must be willing and flexible enough to interrupt their scheduled work and meet public needs promptly.

3. Consultation - Early exchange of views with affected or interested citizens before decisions are made is mandated. Advisory committee(s), briefings, workshops, and issue committees are some of the vehicles for consultation. The goal is to establish a dialogue utilizing input from citizens throughout the process. Citizens should not be reacting to a final plan, but making decisions which help create it.
4. Notification - An up-to-date list of interested or affected persons and organizations must be kept. Newsletters or bulletins must be mailed regularly to them and they must receive early notification of key developments in the planning and decision-making process. Public notice of meetings will reach non-participating citizens only if it appears in a well read section of the newspaper, is inserted in the water bill, advertised on public transit, or through radio and TV spots.
5. Enforcement - There must be procedures to ensure that information and evidence from citizens gets proper consideration. This requirement can be met by keeping records of specific citizen input and the agency response to it. When citizens raise significant points, the agency must describe actions taken to investigate those points. An updated summary of citizen input and agency response should be regularly published and is one way of meeting the requirement.

The public should also be encouraged to report violations of water pollution laws, and reports should be investigated quickly by the agency. Newsletters or exhibits can educate the public to recognize violations and tell how to report them.

6. Legal Proceedings - The agency must provide full and open information about legal proceedings. Citizens should understand litigation and its ramifications. An individual's right to publicly comment before legal action is taken against dischargers should be made known. Presenting information about current and possible legal action through newsletters, briefings, exhibits or public meetings helps satisfy this requirement. Meetings and files should also be kept open to all interested groups and individuals.
7. Public Hearings - Hearings are supplementary and not the major vehicle for citizen participation. However, public hearings must be provided to give the public a formal opportunity to be heard prior to decision-making. Testimony at the hearing should be evaluated and weighed, along with previous citizen input before moving to the next planning or implementation step.

Hearing notices should be advertised and mailed out at least 30 days in advance. Locations and times should take into consideration travel hardship, availability of public transportation, and should facilitate attendance of a cross-section of interested or affected publics. Notice of the hearing should include the agenda, rules about statements, and should give procedures for obtaining fact sheets, reports or documents to be discussed at the hearing. More complete guidelines for hearings are listed in 40 CFR 105, Section 105.7. The spirit of this requirement can best be met if hearings are conducive to obtaining testimony from a wide variety of publics.

8. Advisory Committees

Designated Area - Agencies must establish an Areawide Policy Advisory Committee. Membership must include representatives of appropriate State agencies and the general public. In accordance with Section 304 (j), representatives of the Departments of Army, Agriculture, and Interior must be invited to participate in order to better coordinate all water quality programs. An effort should be made to include representatives of agencies responsible for other environmental programs being conducted in the area.

The Policy Advisory Committee's function is to give guidance to agency staffs throughout planning and implementation and to provide a continuing structure for citizen input. The areawide agency may also create Citizen and Technical Advisory Committees in order to focus on specific substantive issues. Close coordination among the committees and with the agency is imperative. Agency staff should serve on each committee to assure a two way flow of information and a good mix of technical and citizen perspectives. All committees should be kept to a workable size. The Policy Advisory Committee might serve as a steering committee to coordinate efforts of all sub-committees.

State - Agencies must also establish a Policy Advisory Committee to regularly advise agency staffs during development and implementation of the plan. This committee should consider broad policy matters, including the plan's potential fiscal, economic, and social impacts. It is strongly recommended that Policy Advisory Committees be established for each nondesignated planning area.

Policy advisory committees must include a majority representation of locally elected officials (except where the Regional Administrator agrees to a lesser percentage, and provided the affected local jurisdictions do not substantially disagree). Membership must also include representatives of appropriate State agencies, interested organizations, and Federal agencies (especially Federal land managing agencies where Federal lands constitute a significant part of the planning area). The use of existing advisory committees is recommended.

B. Principles

Section 101(e) of the 1972 Act requires that EPA, the States, and designated areawide agencies provide for, encourage, and assist public participation. The regulations (40 CFR 105) set basic requirements, but only by applying some equally important principles to the requirements can the spirit of the law be met.

1. Agency Initiative

The agency must want the public to be involved in an active program. This will require the agency to take the initiative in encouraging citizen participation. Agency staff must assume an open attitude, willing to put forth preliminary estimates concerning impacts, effects, feasibility, etc. Too often, by the time final reports are issued or data is verified, decisions have been made. Although planners and technicians feel uncomfortable making public their educated guesses, it is the only way citizens can enter the decision-making process and have an effect on decisions to be made.

2. Target Key Groups

The agency must seek out important publics. Elected State and local officials and their key civil servants, as well as representatives of State and Federal agencies should be involved. They have valuable contacts with non-participating citizens, and have useful knowledge to contribute to the water quality management process. The agency should make citizens aware of who these elected and governmental representatives are, so they can be easily contacted. If these officials are involved in continuous decision-making, then approval and support for feasible strategies to clean up water will occur more readily.

Potentially affected groups must be sought out, and continuously informed of the choices and impacts involved in various alternatives. Their viewpoints, needs and values must help shape decisions about policies, plans, and programs. This is equally as important during implementation, when a program may face revision, as during the planning process.

Special interest groups, even if hostile or initially unwilling, must be encouraged to participate in decision-making. This is the only way decisions can be made which will be supported by the community and local officials, and which can be implemented. However, a special interest group should not be allowed to dominate participation, no matter how responsible or productive its input.

3. Staff and Funding

If the intent of Section 101(e) is to be realized, broad staff responsibility must be assigned and adequate funding allocated. Public participation must be a continuing activity, integral to the process, not an add-on effort conducted parallel to or independent of other activities. Thus, all technical people should be involved with the public throughout the process. This may require training the agency staff in writing, speaking, and other communication skills. Because of the demanding public participation requirements of PL 92-500, there should be at least one staff member responsible for day-to-day activities. This person(s) should be clearly identified and advertised so that citizens have a starting point when contacting the agency. This person(s) must be familiar with the activities of other agency staff and consultants so that members of the public can be immediately referred to the appropriate staff member. Adequate funds to carry out the public participation program should be included in both planning and implementation budgets.

4. Two Way Communication

In the water quality management process, information must be given and received by both the agency staff and the public. Staff members must give out information in terms people can understand. Reports should be summarized and contain the information people want to know and can use in the decision-making process. Information to different groups might emphasize different areas according to that group's needs and concerns. All information should be easily available to the public.

Citizens should be able to question and understand the basic study assumptions (i.e., growth and population projections). They should have all preliminary estimates about possible effects of various alternatives (i.e., to whom, how much, what cost). And the public should understand and be able to affect all phases of the program, including those most directly related to implementation (i.e., timing, costs, responsibilities etc.).

The technical people at the agency must study and be able to understand the problems, needs, and concerns of different groups and areas. The need for identifying public values and priorities is constant, and that process should go on throughout planning and implementation.

Whenever information is exchanged it must be a two-way process. The public needs to hear and to give information. And agency staff need to listen as well as talk. When citizens are initiating ideas and influencing decisions about how a water quality program should operate and when planners are listening and modifying that program, then the public participation effort begins to be successful.

II. MAJOR PHASES

According to the provisions of PL 92-500, public participation must be assisted and encouraged during the development and implementation of programs to improve water quality. Throughout the water quality management process, citizens should take an active role, educating planners about community goals, initiating ideas, evaluating alternatives, helping to develop a feasible and fair plan of action, and watchdogging its implementation. States and/or area agency staff must respect citizen contribution and support such an active role.

Broad but distinct phases in the water quality management process can be identified. By focusing on these phases, agencies can identify short term public participation goals, and can better structure their program to achieve those goals. For each phase the staff should accomplish the following five tasks:

1. Identify objectives and decisions to be made
2. Define information needs for the public and planners
3. Identify key citizens and groups
4. Select productive methods for information exchange
5. Assure public impact on the decision-making process, and give evidence of citizen impact.

The phases in the water quality management process are: establishment of goals and objectives, design of alternatives, impact assessment, recommendation and acceptance of final plan, implementation and plan revision. These phases are presented below. For each phase, the five tasks listed above are discussed.

A. Establishment of Goals and Objectives

1. Identify Objectives and Decisions to be made. The objective of this phase is to open channels of communication with the public in general, and to specifically seek out individuals and groups with special knowledge and/or decision-making power.

Basic decisions about the water quality study and its scope will be made early. Planners will need to decide such things as: which population and growth projections to use, what tasks must be given to consultants, how planning funds will be allocated, which agency(ies) might be selected to manage the approved plan, if a new agency could be created for implementation responsibility, and many more.

2. Define Information Needs. During this first phase, planners need to understand the values, preferences, and concerns of the citizens, and where water quality stands among them while citizens need to understand the scope and potential impact of the planning effort.

Assessing the values and concerns of key individuals, and affected interested or powerful groups will enable the first step toward devising a plan which is supportable, approvable, and implementable. Values and concerns may be expressed in many ways - "The water smells", "We want camping facilities", "Taxes are too high", "Unemployment is a problem", "A land use bill failed last year", "We want to be able to fish again", "What are the Feds trying to control now". The public must feel free to express its values. Planners must be willing and able to listen.

The public needs to have PL 92-500 summarized in relevant understandable terms. Possible effects on citizen lifestyles and local government responsibilities should be stressed as well as ways in which improving water quality might achieve other community goals. Citizens need to be aware of the regional nature of water quality management - that water quality programs will often need to cross political jurisdictions to attain more effective and lasting solutions. Finally, citizens must be convinced that this is "bottom up" planning and implementation, that their input is important and will affect the ultimate water quality management program.

3. Identify Key Citizens and Groups. This first phase must open the channels of communication between agency staff and as many publics as possible. The range and richness of input received during this phase will be determined by how many publics are encouraged to participate, and how free they feel to express their values. By traveling to and communicating with many publics, planners will also learn how the community organizes for action, where the traditionally non-participating publics are, and who the key leaders are.

However, some citizens are especially important to contact. These include elected officials who must themselves assess constituent values and preferences for election purposes, local government civil servants who make water related decisions, the influential community leaders who represent potentially affected citizens, business, environmental or special interest groups whose support or opposition could affect a plan's approval, and those potentially responsible for implementation.

4. Select methods for Information Exchange. Agency staff should use a variety of methods for increasing public understanding of PL 92-500 and the potential impacts of its water quality management program. In addition to meetings, such things as newsletters, briefings, exhibits, and, media coverage can be effectively used to increase public understanding.

Values and preferences will be most openly expressed in interviews or small meetings, structured to encourage discussion and share ideas. The acceptance of citizen values, and the openness which the agency shows at this stage will influence all future interactions.

Questionnaires or checklists for rating traditional values (open space, recreation, economic growth, clean water, etc.) can be useful in ascertaining public preferences. Also, it is helpful for agency staff to hypothesize about decisions which might be made or situations which might occur due to the effort to clean up water, (i.e., rezoning to discourage intense development, construction of new storm sewer system with concomitant disruption of roads, or limiting the area's mining industry etc.). As citizens react to these "straw men possibilities", their values will be expressed. Public interest will be sparked and participation increased as long as these possible outcomes are clearly understood to be hypothetical and not expressions of fixed agency intent.

5. Assure Public Impact on Decision-Making. Citizens must be able to see that their values and strong preferences are taken into account and can already affect options considered for water quality management. The agency can show that they have allocated funds, set meeting agendas, made extra efforts to obtain citizen viewpoints, structured committees and commissioned studies according to citizen direction.

2. Design of Alternatives

1. Identify Objectives and Decisions to be made. As this phase of planning begins, the emphasis shifts from defining goals, values, problems and roles, to the formulation and preliminary testing of alternative suggestions. Decision-making during this phase will include eliminating options which are clearly unacceptable to the public, eliminating those which local decision-makers or agency staff feel are impractical, combining subplans or ideas into workable alternatives for further consideration, and selecting areas for in depth public education (i.e., best management practices for forestry, the need for a regulatory program, etc.).
2. Define Information Needs. As alternative suggestions emerge, the public needs to know in rough terms the probable effects which would accompany each. They need to learn more about the technical aspects of various approaches. Planners need to learn which suggestions are unacceptable or infeasible, what biases exist among local decision-makers, and how local political realities will impact water quality management.

The planning agency's responsibility is to help the public compare alternatives. This requires preliminary but fair cost and impact estimates. Management concerns (alternative methods of financing, environmental effect, technical feasibility, etc.) are also of interest and relevance to the public. For instance, in evaluating the best management practices for a nonpoint source of pollution, the public should understand a management agency's regulatory position, its ability to provide technical assistance, and which fiscal programs it can offer as incentives to the impacted public.

3. Identify Key Publics. It is especially important to contact and involve key citizens and State and local politicians and bureaucrats during this phase. They will give critical feedback about the feasibility and/or political acceptability of alternative suggestions. In obtaining those suggestions, however, a wide spectrum of individual and group points of view must be sought. At this point, while alternatives are incomplete and fluid, planners can best incorporate new ideas from citizens, and understand which aspects of potential alternatives are unacceptable. This input must be received before alternatives become comprehensive and finalized for comparison during the impact assessment phase.

4. Select Methods for Information Exchange. Agency staff must encourage situations where citizens feel comfortable in offering or reacting to suggestions. This may mean going to meetings of citizens associations, chambers of commerce, county councils etc. Or, it may mean in depth conversations with an elected official, influential local civil servant or community leaders. It is important to have some meetings include several interest groups during this phase. Understanding and respect for different points of view among the public and the agencies will lay the groundwork for the negotiation and compromise which must follow later.

Public education can happen through newsletters, exhibits, talks, workshops etc. Field trips can show examples of land management practices for forestry, mining and agriculture, as well as the workings of a sewage treatment plan.

5. Assure Public Impact on Decision-Making. The alternatives at this stage should be fluid, able to incorporate citizen input in an obvious way. First, all citizen suggestions should be considered equally. Local decision-makers and key community leaders (perhaps as part of an Advisory Committee) should be actively involved in combining sub-plans into viable regional alternatives. A report from them to citizens at large could explain why some suggestions were not taken and others were. Finally, a public meeting or hearing should be held to give a formal opportunity for input before two or three alternatives are chosen for detailed impact assessment.

C. Impact Assessment of Major Alternatives

1. Identify Objectives and Decisions to be made. Assessing regional impacts of the selected alternative plans requires public deliberation over their relative merits and drawbacks. The first objective of this phase is to receive citizen input as to how each plan reflects public preferences, impacts various groups, and can be best implemented. Other objectives are to foster citizen awareness of the need for negotiation, compromise, and trade-offs, and to focus citizen education according to the proposed alternatives.

Decision-making in this phase will include such things as finalizing procedures for ascertaining social impacts, modifying the alternatives, further detailing various management structures, and weighting the preferences of citizens, officials, and special interest groups.

2. Define Information Needs. Citizens will need as much understandable information about the effects of these alternatives as is possible in order to make an informed judgement. Agency staff need as much information as possible about preferences in order to devise an implementable plan which can be supported.

During this phase, the requirements of providing citizens with understandable, complete, and easily accessible information must be rigorously met. Possible energy and resource demands of various alternatives should be considered as well as long-range effects, irreversible impacts, and induced impact. Furthermore, each alternative should show which dischargers (i.e., construction firms, agricultural interests, mine owners) would face possible legal action. As impacts are further defined, and planners modify their assessments, the impact studies should be updated.

Citizens must have the data to judge for themselves which alternative is -- or can be modified to become -- the most acceptable. Suggested changes to an alternative should be carefully considered, especially those which would make it more acceptable, even if cost or ideal effectiveness is compromised. If one alternative precipitates suggested changes from several groups, it should be considered less acceptable to the public, and less desirable as a final plan.

3. Identify Key Publics. Publics to be given special attention during this phase include those directly affected, (i.e., those who live near a proposed sewage treatment plant, who must implement a costly solution to their nonpoint pollution, or whose streets will be torn up while a new storm water runoff system is laid), as well as those responsible for financing construction, operations, monitoring and enforcement. New publics who discover they might be affected, are likely to emerge in this phase, and should be incorporated into the public participation program by including them in the mailing list, notifying them of meetings, and sending them back issues of the newsletters.

Groups or individuals who seem adamantly opposed to all of the alternatives, and who might lobby against local acceptance of a final plan, should be encouraged to make their objections public, and to work with other groups in creating an acceptable alternative. Agencies, individuals, or groups who might be responsible for implementation should be involved supplying data, and listening to citizen expressions of acceptability. This will prepare them for taking over the responsibility of citizen participation after the final plan is accepted.

4. Select Methods for Information Exchange. The best method of obtaining useful citizen input at this stage is through small and moderate-sized meetings. A briefing or meeting with one special interest group provides an opportunity for off-the-record comments (i.e., insights about other groups, possible inducements for accepting an alternative, potential problems of particular enforcement or monitoring) which would not be made in public. Small meetings also provide a chance for planners and implementors to assess the unanimity of preference within the group for one or another alternative, rather than relying solely on a spokesman. Larger meetings, representing several publics, enables planners to get a variety of inputs at one meeting. It also helps citizens become better informed about each other's points of view, values, and needs, laying the groundwork for productive negotiation and compromise.

Drafts of impact assessments with accompanying technical back-up, should be available in depositories, summarized in the newsletter, and presented at meetings. Understandable summaries of this information should be sent to local officials and other decision-makers who might not have time to go to depositories. Potential impacts should be made public as they evolve, as data is being collected, and before a final report is written.

Media coverage through newspapers, newsletters, or special booklets can focus on a subject, broadening public knowledge about the technical aspects or complicated ramifications of an alternative. This will enable the public to make more informed comparisons of alternatives.

5. Assure Public Impact on Decision-Making. Citizens should be encouraged to challenge data or an impact assessment if they think it's incorrect or incomplete. The agency(ies) should be willing to undertake further assessment and should involve the objecting individual or group. For instance, if the agency's study of a proposed pretreatment ordinance is challenged, the group objecting, and the agency(ies) potentially responsible for implementing the ordinance should meet with the agency staff. After becoming familiar with the specifics of the objection and reviewing the agency(ies)'s study, the groups should reconsider the original study. This may be time-consuming, but will produce a better plan and reduce the possibility of opposition from that group.

A public hearing should be held at the conclusion of this phase to receive formal citizen input prior to recommending a final plan. A brochure defining the alternatives helps prepare citizens to make knowledgeable and productive comment. While it is crucial to set up the hearing in such a way as to get a variety of informed opinions, it should not constitute the entire bank of citizen expression upon which final decisions are based. The months of working participation and citizen involvement should be considered as well as that input given formally on one night.

D. Recommendation and Acceptance of the Final Plan

1. Identify Objectives and Decisions to be made. The primary objective now is to arrange the details of the recommended plan so as to make it equitable, effective, and acceptable to most citizens. At the beginning of this phase the agency staffs must decide which alternative to recommend for approval. At the end, local elected officials, and finally the Governor, must decide whether to accept that recommendation. Between these two events, many decisions will be made modifying and adapting the plan to a final and most acceptable form.
2. Define Information Needs. In arranging the details of the final plan prior to local acceptance, citizens will have to be knowledgeable about the mechanics and implications of the plan. They will want to know exactly who and what will benefit as well as who and what will be adversely affected. Means for mitigating those adverse effects should be worked out. For instance, if construction is to be undertaken, local residents might be given first crack at construction jobs. If leaking septic systems are to be abandoned, financial assistance might be arranged to mitigate the expense of sewer hookup. If sludge is to be burned, extra equipment to reduce anticipated odor problems might be specified.

The legal requirements of keeping citizens informed, asking for and reacting to public input, and keeping the mailing list updated, should be met during this phase as they have before. Possible legal action stemming from this plan should be described. Agency staffs will need to know which modifications to the final plan will satisfy the most publics, are fair, and will lead to more broadly based support.

3. Identify Key Publics. The publics which should be targeted for consultation about possible modifications include those most affected, those most responsible for the particular implementation, those who strongly preferred another alternative, and those who strongly support the alternative selected. Since the atmosphere at this point should be one of negotiation, trade-off, and compromise, meetings should include groups with different interests and opinions, and should be structured to allow maximum discussion.

As the approval time nears, a special effort must be made to make local officials aware of citizen comments and contributions throughout the process. Not everyone will be pleased with the results, but most should feel that they've had a chance to participate and have been taken seriously. The inevitable opposition, relayed directly to local officials, will be weighed against the evidence of constituent participation. If the planning effort has been open and conducive to citizen input, local values and suggestions will be incorporated and evident in the final plan. Official approval will then be more likely.

4. Select Methods for Information Exchange. The negotiation, compromise, and modification necessary during this phase is best undertaken at small and moderate sized meetings with several interests present. For one group to feel that the final changes are fair they must be able to understand the values and problems of many other groups. Meeting with just one group, however, also serves a purpose. They will feel more comfortable airing concerns, and suggesting changes. Misconceptions can be corrected.

All groups should be made aware of meetings, workshops, etc. where modifications will be discussed. If a group feels shut out at this point, its opposition will be automatic.

5. Assure Public Impact on Decision-Making. Even at this stage, the plan should be open to modification and change. Considering citizen comments, planners and implementors should investigate the attainment of additional benefits, and attempt to further minimize undesirable social, economic, or environmental impacts, even if it means increasing expenditure.

A final plan, incorporating changes suggested by the public will be difficult to oppose. The water quality management program then will be something the public can live with, which will work according to the local implementation system, and - most importantly - will clean up the water.

E. Plan Implementation and Revision

1. Identify Objectives and Decisions to be made. The main objective of this final but continuing phase is to get the water quality management program implemented. The Governor will have designated an agency(ies) responsible for implementation. Staff of the management agency(ies) will be making decisions regarding such things as timing and fiscal arrangements consistent with the approved plan. Other implementation activities might include such things as further design of the regulatory program, construction of treatment works, urban storm water management and effecting zoning changes.

A second objective is to assure that the original plan remains relevant and workable within changing conditions. To do this the plan will require continuous updating. In most if not all cases, the continuous updating of the plan will be the responsibility of the originally designated agency. The required annual certification by the Governor is a time when decisions will be made about necessary revisions.

2. Define Information Needs. Citizens need to know if any unforeseen problems arise regarding implementation of the water quality management program which necessitate changes. If so, agency staff will need to assess public acceptance of those changes. Citizens should be made fully aware of the plan's annual certification by elected officials. There should be provisions for performance assessment, plan revision and updating. Generalized contingency measures should be publicly described in case the original course of action becomes infeasible or inadvisable in light of changed conditions. Summaries of progress toward the water quality goals, and evaluations of how effective and on schedule the plan has been to date should be mailed out and put into depositories. Comments, data, and reports should be available so that citizens can themselves evaluate the progress made under the plan. The name of an individual in the continuing planning agency should be included so that citizens can easily make their opinions known.
3. Identify Key Publics. During this phase, the key publics to remain in touch with are those responsible for or affected by actual implementation. Data and experience gained during planning might well be of use to implementors. If the plan must be revised in any major way citizens who previously participated as well as those who might be affected should be consulted and encouraged to become involved again.

4. Select Methods for Information Exchange. The procedure for re-activating a structured program of public participation should be known and available to both citizens and staff of the continuing planning agency. This will insure that, over time, the plan for achieving water quality within a designated region, will continue to adapt to local needs and changing conditions. Reusing the mailing list is a good way to let the public know when review and certification is about to take place. Since it is likely that participation will have waned by this time as public interest shifted to other issues, a direct personal contact, such as a telephone call, is advised if major revision is anticipated.

5. Assure Public Impact on Decision-Making. Public participation should be "assisted, provided for and encouraged" during implementation and plan revision just as it was during planning. The staff of the continuing planning agency must be willing to allow citizens an active role as part of the continuing decision-making process. The staff of management agencies must also be willing to communicate with citizens. In many cases, citizens will be able to provide ideas and information which will aid in the implementation of the water quality program.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

Section 101(e) of the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments states that public participation must be provided for, assisted, and encouraged in the development, revision, and enforcement of any water quality management plan or program. This section actively applies to all elements of the State water quality management program. Requirements and principles pertaining to public participation, as contained in 40 CFR 105 of the Act, are described in Section I of this handbook.

A. Purpose

The purpose of an active Statewide public participation program is to build broad citizen and legislative support for the overall water quality management effort. In fact, the ultimate success of a State water quality program depends on this support from key groups of citizens and affected units of State and local governments.

These key "publics" include local elected officials, appointed officials who make water quality related decisions, those groups or individuals who express a special interest, groups whose support or opposition could affect a plan's approval, and citizens who would bear the brunt of implementation impacts. These groups (and others) must be able to influence policy decisions about water quality. It is the responsibility of the State agency to help citizens become informed about water quality management in their State, so that citizen input can be influential at the policy level. Only if plans can be tailored to the values, needs, political realities, and specific conditions of a State or locality will they be feasible to implement. Only if decisions reflect public concerns and input will the plans be acceptable.

B. State Water Quality Program

The State is responsible for carrying out public participation requirements in the nondesignated areas and overseeing public participation programs throughout the State. Certain planning activities will be delegated by the State water quality management agency to local municipalities, other State, or Federal agencies. In these cases, public participation responsibilities may also be delegated. For example, if the State water quality management agency delegates an analysis of the water quality impact of silvacultural activities to another appropriate State agency, that agency should encourage active public participation in its analysis.

Dividing responsibilities, however, can leave no agency accountable to the public. Therefore, one agency in each planning area -- either the State in the nondesignated areas, or the areawide agency in the designated areas, should assume overall responsibility for overseeing and encouraging public participation in all water quality efforts. Points of contact with that agency should be advertised. At least one person should be assigned to answer or refer citizen questions.

There are two major and closely related parts to a State Water Quality Program. The continuing planning process is the State's overall management and decision-making framework for water quality programs. The Annual State Program sets forth both long and short range strategies to solve the State's water quality problems.

1. Continuing Planning Process

The public should be encouraged to take an active role in the review and revision of the continuing planning process. The State must seek public reaction to any annual revisions by holding public meetings or hearings. This must be done before revisions are submitted to EPA for approval. Major elements of the continuing planning process for which public input should be actively sought include the following:

- The State Strategy - This strategy is the foundation and background for the Annual State Program. Its purpose is to identify Statewide water quality problem areas, prioritize the control of those problems, schedule broad corrective measures over a 5 year period, and generally project resources needed to accomplish the tasks. Decisions and evaluations will be made about long term resource allocation during the preparation of the State strategy. Options for future priorities and schedules may be narrowed in the process. These basic decisions and choices must not be made without public input. A State level public participation program should assist and encourage citizens, interest groups, and State, local, and regional government officials to take active roles in developing the State strategy.

- The State/EPA Agreement - This element of the continuing planning process is especially important to the public since it sets forth the timing and level of detail of the water quality management tasks which the State will undertake. It is, in effect, the work plan for the State water quality management effort. Interested citizens and local government officials must be partners in the development of this work plan. Besides timing and level of detail, specific public involvement programs to be followed will be decided during formulation of the State/EPA Agreement. Citizens may have strong opinions about these issues. They should be included in the decision-making process.

- State Water Quality Management Effort - The State is responsible for the entire State water quality management effort, including plans prepared by designated areawide agencies, plans prepared by the State, and activities delegated to State, local or Federal agencies. A program for public involvement must be an integral part of the State water quality management process, and should outline specific methods for obtaining public participation at each step.

An important element of the State water quality management program is the review of water quality standards. At least once every three years, the standards are reviewed and, if appropriate, revisions to the standards are adopted by the State. The State is required to hold public hearings during the review and revision process. Since the standards help establish water quality goals, citizens should be given full opportunity to participate in the review and revision process. To ensure an active citizen role in setting water quality standards, other participation opportunities such as workshops and meetings should be provided to supplement the required public hearings.

In nondesignated areas, the State should structure public participation activities to do the following:

- Increase public understanding of the water quality management process,
- Encourage citizens and State and local officials to participate in water quality decision-making so that plans will reflect the needs, values, and political realities of the area, and
- Build support for implementation of the final approved plan.

The State water quality management effort must be evaluated by the State and EPA. One of the three main evaluation criteria is a proposed plan's acceptability to the general public and elected officials. If these groups have been active in the decision-making process, the Plan's acceptability will be enhanced.

2. Annual State Program

The Annual State 106 Program is a place where public input can have a tangible impact, since the most important part of this Program includes allocation of resources to solve water quality problems. If the public is not able to affect decisions about how State time and money are spent, their hours spent helping to make planning and policy decisions could be wasted.

The Annual State Program will have at least five parts:

- A summary of water quality problem areas in the State.
- A description of individual State program elements (i.e., management of municipal facilities, permits, compliance schedules, planning, public participation, etc.).
- A five year projection of resources needed to conduct the State program as estimated in the State Strategy. This projection will provide a basis for continuous water quality program planning and budget justification. It will include general financial and man-year resource requirements for each year of the five year cycle.
- A table showing projected outputs for each program element during the next fiscal year.
- A detailed resource summary sheet showing specific financial and man-year allocations for each program element during the next fiscal year.

The preliminary State Program will be submitted by the State to EPA on May 1, along with the State Strategy and any revisions to the continuing planning process. These will be considered and modified, with a final State Program worked out by September 1. Active citizen involvement in the modification process should take place during this time.

If public input into the Annual State Program is to be useful and realistic, then citizens must be informed about past and current State efforts to improve water quality. The State's annual water quality inventory, the 305(b) report, gives a basin by basin analysis of current water quality assessment and water quality trends. As such, it is an ideal background document for citizen education. Since this report is often lengthy and highly technical, State agency staff should produce a fifteen to twenty page summary written for the public in lay terms.

During the four month review and revision period for the Annual State Program, certain key groups or individuals should be sought out for input. These should include State and local elected officials, appointed officials who make water quality related decisions, and those groups or individuals who express a special interest.

C. Major Methods to Achieve Public Participation

Two major formal mechanisms for assuring public input are required by the Act -- a Policy Advisory Committee and public meetings or hearings. Other methods are described in detail in Section IV of this handbook.

1. Public Meetings or Hearings

Public meetings or hearings provide an opportunity for citizens to state their views. Meetings and hearings should be held before decisions are made so that citizen input can be incorporated. However, they cannot by themselves satisfy the mandate of Section 101(e) and 40 CFR 35.564 to encourage active citizen participation in decision-making.

Hearings or meetings must be held whenever there is sufficient public interest in a matter, and also at key points in the planning cycle. For instance, the State Continuing Planning Process design must be reviewed by citizens before revisions are submitted to EPA for approval. As part of the Continuing Planning Process, the State/EPA Agreement on timing and level of detail should also be open for citizen comment and modification.

When a State Water Quality Management Program has been devised, after an active program of public involvement, a public meeting or hearing must be held. This enables citizens to state their views one last time before the Plan goes to the Governor and EPA for approval. According to 40 CFR 35.562(b), modifications made on the basis of public testimony, must still be possible.

A special opportunity exists for the public to influence the Annual State Strategy. As part of the Annual State Program, the Strategy is open to review and revision between May and September of each year. A public meeting or hearing during this time would encourage citizens and local officials to review this important section of the State Program.

2. Policy Advisory Committee(s)

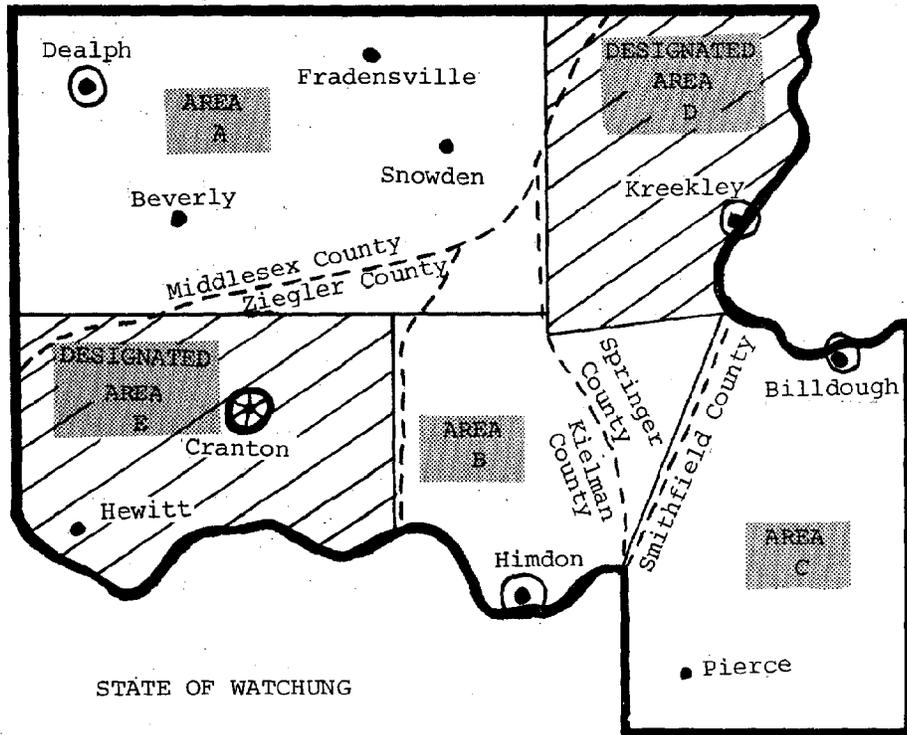
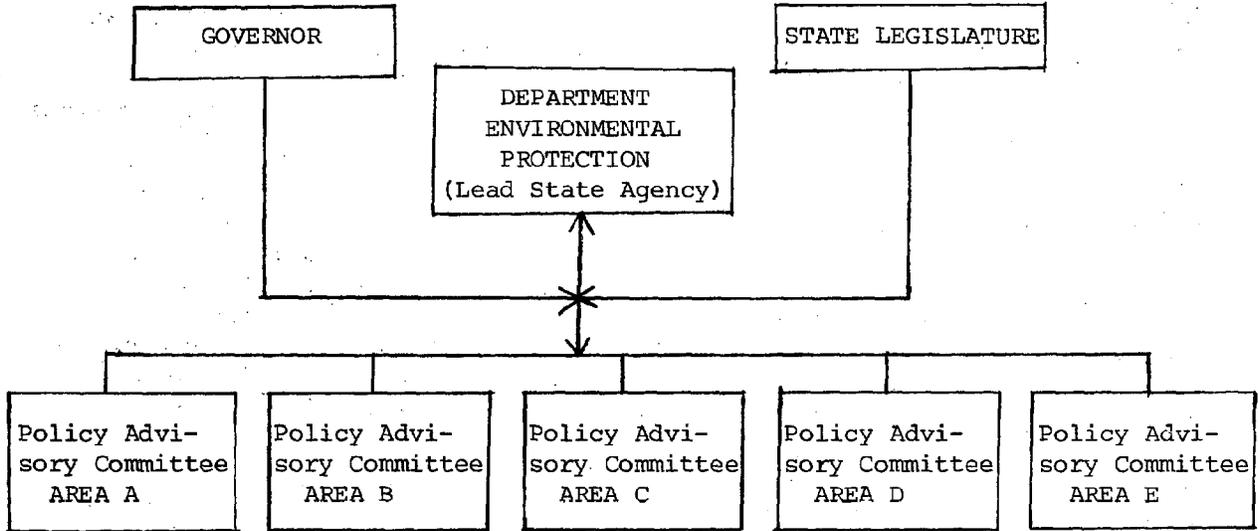
Requirements and specifications for Policy Advisory Committees at the State level are set forth in 40 CFR 130.16(c). These are summarized in Section I of this handbook. It is strongly recommended that policy advisory committees be set-up for each State planning area, or group of areas.

Advisory committees or special task forces may be helpful in particular water quality problem areas such as silviculture, urban storm water, mining etc. In all cases the use of existing advisory committees is recommended. This provides stability and continuity for public input during the continuing planning process. Committees can be a primary vehicle for obtaining citizen input, but should not be the only vehicle. Input from the advisory committees should be received and coordinated by the lead State agency responsible for the State Water Quality Management Plan.

The purpose of advisory committees in the State is to critique and aid planners in determining the best, fairest and most practical means of dealing with water quality problems. A major function for advisory committees members is informing and motivating the groups they represent to participate in the water quality management process. Recommendations made by an advisory committee should be responded to and considered for incorporation into the State Water Quality Management Plan.

Advisory committee membership should include balanced representation of key individuals and groups. Chairpersons or members of key State legislative committees (i.e., Budget, Public Works, etc.) should be included. Powerful State level private interest groups cannot be allowed to dominate the public input. If advisory committees are allowed to take active roles in the decision-making process, a final State Water Quality Management Plan, acceptable to the majority of State citizens, will be more likely.

Advisory Committee Structure



STATE OF WATCHUNG

Committee Membership

Policy Advisory Committee, Area A

1. Mayor, Beverley
2. City Councilwoman, Snowden
3. County Councilman, Zeigler County
4. Chairman, Board of Supervisors, Kielman County
5. Staff member, Planning Board (representing Town Council, Beverley)
6. Town Manager, Fradensville (representing Mayor)
7. City Attorney General Dealph
8. County Councilmember, Middlesex County
9. City Councilmember, Dealph
10. Representative, Ziegler County Board of Supervisors
11. Administrative Aide (representing County Executive, Middlesex County)
12. Deputy Director, Department of Planning, Middlesex County Public Schools (representing elected School Board)
13. Town Councilwoman, Fradensville
14. Representative, Snowden Mayor
15. Representative, Middlesex County Delegate to State House of Delegates
16. Representative Federal Bureau Land Management
17. Deputy Director State Department of Health
18. Member State Budget Committee, State Legislature
19. Representative, League of Women Voters
20. Vice President, Association of Manufacturers
21. Representative, Trout Unlimited
22. Representative, Sierra Club
23. Manager, Stanfield Chemical Company
24. Representative, Homebuilders Association
25. Representative, American Forestry Association
26. President, Beverley Citizens Association
27. Kielman County/Municipal Engineer
28. Representative, Farm Bureau

D. Benefits of Public Participation

Water quality planning is just one aspect of planning. The public decision to invest in improving water quality will affect other aspects of community life. For instance, building a large waste treatment facility may encourage more development, necessitate more roads and more public services such as schools. Public participation programs help citizens and State and local officials understand these interrelationships. If the public actively participates in trade-off decisions, they will be more likely to support those decisions and accept the impacts. An informed and involved citizenry will then be more likely to support other areas of State planning.

To achieve the 1983 goals, regulatory controls will undoubtedly have to be used. This may involve such things as land use controls, issuing permits and licenses, setting standards, and imposing fiscal policies such as metering or increasing taxes. An active State public participation program can educate citizens and build support for one or more of these controls. Without citizen support, such regulatory controls may be viewed as politically unacceptable, and a potentially effective State program may not be approved.

Active public participation may have other benefits. Groups such as the League of Women Voters are particularly effective at convincing State legislatures to support water quality programs. This may mean increased allocation of budget or passage of legislative measures. If appointed State and local officials have been encouraged to participate in water quality decision-making, their support and commitment to implementation will be enhanced.

A balanced and continuing Policy Advisory Committee, representing many groups and interests, with citizens, and State and local officials as members, can be a vehicle to reach many constituencies. Even after a State Water Quality Management Plan is approved, a full scale public participation program may have to continue especially when changing conditions or political shifts in priorities force changes to the approved water quality program. An established Policy Advisory Committee can provide the valuable continuing link between technicians and citizens so necessary to continuing effective water quality management in the State.

IV. MODEL PROGRAM DESIGN

While the water quality management process is complex and technical, the benefits of citizen participation in that process are very real. Advisory committee(s), the planning staff, the implementing agency, and citizen working groups, if coordinated in an atmosphere conducive to open exchange of views, will together produce high quality water resource management. This demands going beyond the minimum required. Encouraging active citizen involvement requires effort and imagination by both planners and implementors. There will likely be delays and inefficiencies as the general public comes to understand the implications and consequences of water quality management.

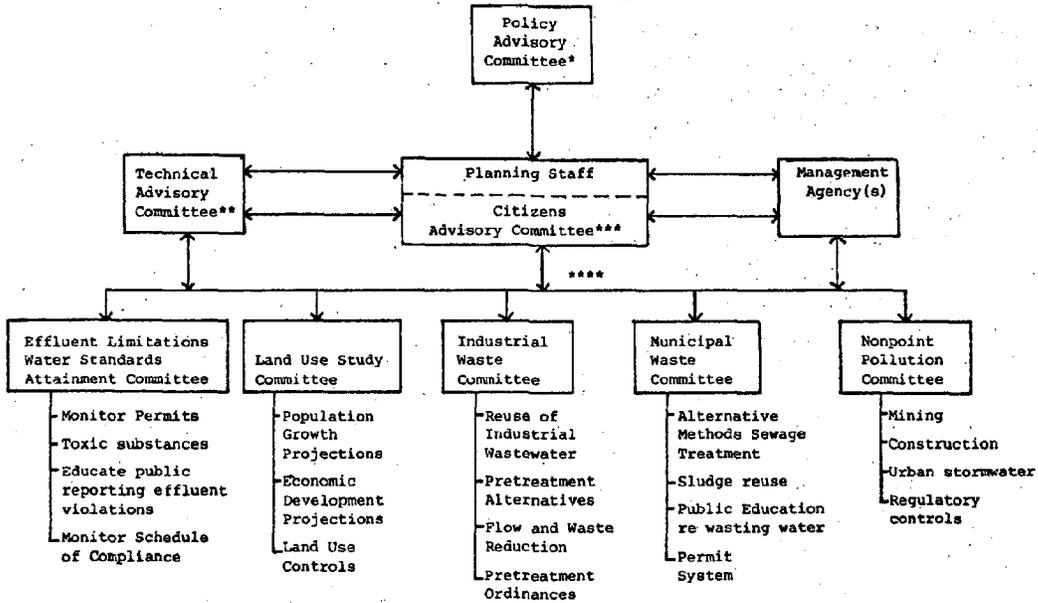
This chapter presents a wide variety of methods for obtaining citizen input. Public participation activities should be planned in advance, with budget allocated for the entire process. This long-range program must assure that citizens of all interest groups have the opportunity to participate. The program must also be flexible enough to incorporate changes in the timetable, unexpected costs, and new methods of factoring citizens into the decision-making process. The more involvement which citizens are encouraged to have throughout the planning and implementation phases, the better a final plan will fit regional needs, and fewer will be the objections to it.

A. Organization

Each agency will organize and implement its public participation program differently according to the talents or training of its staff, the complexity of its study, and the special character of its citizenry. Specific organization is up to the discretion of each agency, as long as the requirements are met, the principles actively applied, and channels established for citizens to contact both decision shapers (planners) and decision-makers (government officials).

Staff, directly responsible for public involvement, must be assigned as early as possible. Planning and operating an effective program will require the full-time efforts of at least one person. In addition, public participation responsibilities should be written into the job descriptions of staff members responsible for planning and implementation tasks. The designated person or people responsible for public involvement must be clearly identified to citizens throughout the process.

Organizational Structure



* Composed of Federal Representatives (in compliance with 304(j) agreement), State and local officials and 2 voting members of the Citizens Advisory Committee.

** Federal Representatives and local individuals with technical expertise.

*** This Committee may wish to divide itself along the lines of major areas of concern as illustrated.

**** All Committees relate areas of study to existing situation, the effect of predicted growth, and the environmental impact of possible alternatives. Community goals are kept in mind as well as the impact on affected publics.

A. Organization

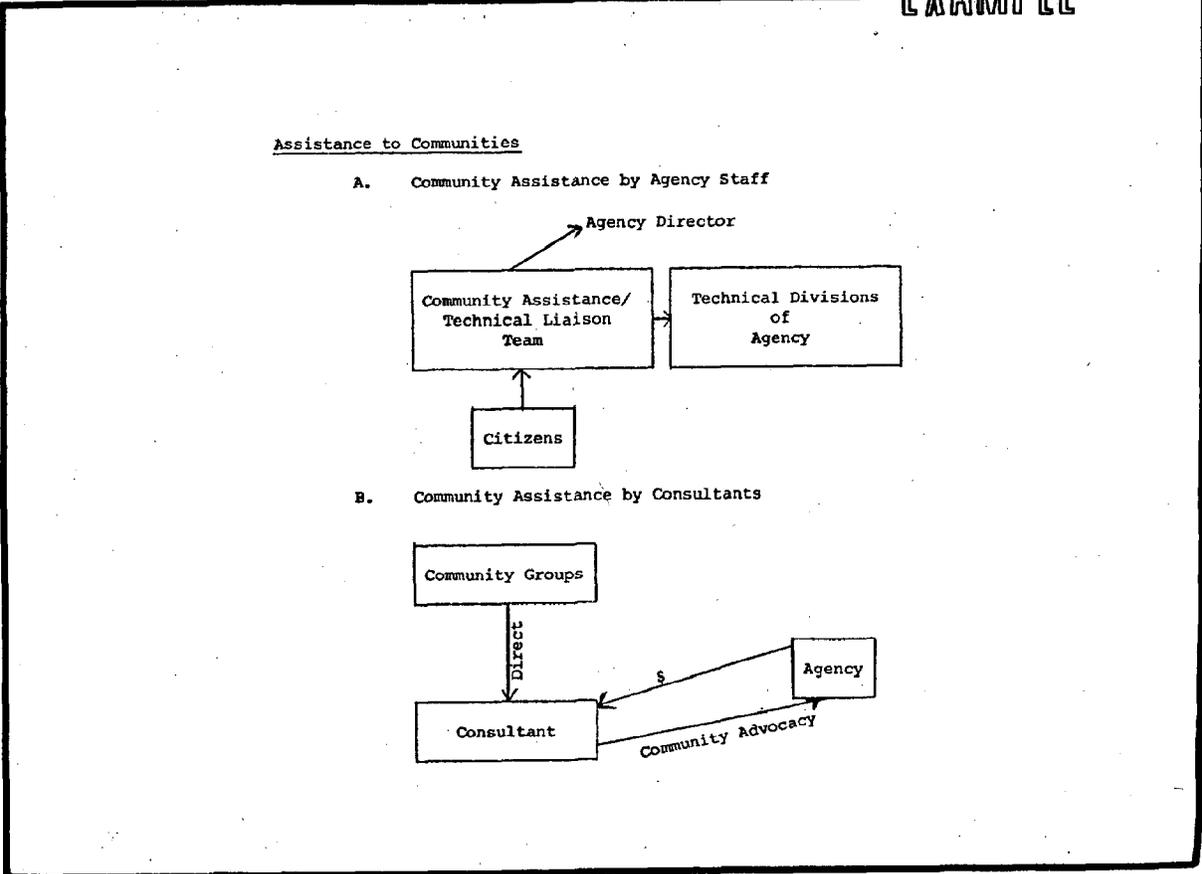
1. Staff Assistance

Some planning agencies have assigned a person (or group of persons on large studies) to be a regular liaison between citizens and the agency. Others have either assigned staff members to act as advocate planners for community groups or have allotted funds to employ consultants who act as advocate planners. Such assistance may be needed on both procedural and technical matters. Typical functions of such a team would be interpretation of citizen concerns to the technical planning team and follow-up on behalf of citizens to ensure that the concerns have been seriously considered.

Ordinarily, staff assistance of this type is of most use in developing alternatives and in assessing the impacts of these alternatives.

Organizational arrangements embodying this concept are shown in the accompanying examples.

EXAMPLE



A. Organization

2. Identifying and Contacting Publics

The public is not a unitary mass of people. It is composed of numerous subgroups, often overlapping each other, with each subgroup having its own concerns and outlook. Thus, we talk in terms of publics and seek to involve them in a way that maximizes the contribution of each, at the appropriate times to deal with their concerns, and that conveys information back to those publics. It is useful to regard all persons outside the planning agency as publics. Local elected officials, organized citizen groups, impacted individuals, businesses, professional societies, labor unions, farm organizations, etc., are all examples of publics that should be involved in the planning process. Obviously, a list of publics must be prepared for each planning study.

Just as there are many publics, there are also various levels and ways of participating. It is neither necessary nor desirable to expect the same things from all. Some wish to be informed, some will serve on advisory committees, some will come to workshops or testify at public meetings. Elected officials and civil service employees of government agencies have certain decision-making responsibilities that require an active formal involvement.

As planning begins, when broad goals and objectives are being set, public participation is likely to be limited. However, as issues become more defined, concrete alternatives are proposed, impacts are assessed, and different publics have more at stake in the outcome, participation will increase. After selection of the plan, during implementation and revision, public interest usually shifts to other more pressing issues, and participation will decrease.

The accumulated information must allow late starters to become aware of what has already been decided. They must also be satisfied with the prior extent of participation and with the previous impact of citizen input on decision-making. Otherwise, unnecessary time will be expended rehashing previously settled issues. It is therefore important to keep up-to-date depositories with clear summaries of committee reports, citizen input, and agency studies. Lists of who has participated, when, and what their input was, are helpful. Those should also be summarized periodically in the newsletter.

A mailing or correspondence list is an essential part of establishing and maintaining contact with the individuals who represent various public segments. There are three basic approaches to developing these lists:

- Self-identification. Persons and groups make themselves known to the agency. This may be facilitated by using name/address/interest cards at public meetings, by providing a telephone number to call (including a free WATS incoming line, if necessary), and by wide advertisement of the agency address, etc.
- Third-party identification. A person or group is asked to identify persons and groups that should be involved in the study. This is an especially good function for an advisory committee. It may also be accomplished by periodically assembling persons knowledgeable about both the region and the study and asking for names and addresses of groups.
- Staff identification. There are many approaches to doing staff identification. Telephone directories, use of lists from other studies in the region, discussion among staff members, field investigations, map study, are all ways to do the job. Some groups are identifiable as directly affected by a proposed facility. Others are known from past experience to be interested.

Mailing lists are developed in the earliest stage of planning and continually updated throughout the study. The first list would likely be based on an existing list obtained from planning agencies in the region.

Partial List Identified Publics and Individuals

Environmental Groups

Kenneth Marshall
President, Area Audubon Society

Cappie Morgan
Friends of Cabin John Creek

Trade Association

Rufus Harris
Executive Director, Monroe Manu-
facturers Association

Richard Hallberg
Chairman, Cobb County Home-
builders Association

Labor Groups

Carl Matson
Executive Director, Area Labor
Council

Business Interests

David Reid
Manager, Tuna Packing Plant

Isobel Fishman
Public Relations Director,
B.L. Coal Mining Company

Farm Groups

Sandra Lewis
Government Affairs Chairman, Douglas
County Farm Bureau

Theodore Donnatelli
Soil Conservation Service

Public Utilities

Samuel Ferrucci
Wilton Electric and Power Company

Community Service Groups

Judith A. Ferries
President, County Teachers
Association

Joyce Abbott
Architect, representing Hills
Citizen Association Mohican

Diane Kellogg
Heritage Valley Homemaker
Association

Anna D. McGaffin
Minister, Herman Grove Pres-
byterian Church

Professional Groups

Peter Bryant
American Society of Civil
Engineers

Ed Norton
Chairman, American Institute
of Planners

Robert Gambrill
Attorney-at-Law, Land Use and
Zoning

Special Purpose Groups

Carlos Perez
President, Taxpayers Association

Lydia Hawkins
Environmental Quality
Chairperson, League of
Women Voters

Elected Officials

Laura Johnston
Mayor, Glen Echo

Elizabeth Kielman
Chairwoman, Wayne City Council

William Creene
Delegate, Stat House of Delegates

Appointed Officials

George Nix
Asso. State Foresters

Irving Weinstein
Monroe City Manager

Wille Mae Jackson
American Public Health Association

B. Funding

Adequate funding is a critical element in maintaining an effective public involvement program. Keeping a budget in mind, the goal is to give a wide range of interested and affected publics useful information so they may provide input and help create a better plan. This effort should command about 10% of the total planning budget.

Achieving that goal may require reimbursing citizens for out-of-pocket costs. In a large region, citizen representatives to the Advisory Committee may have to take time off from work, travel long distances, or pay for food and lodging just to attend scheduled meetings. Courses, sometimes taught by agency personnel, are offered at local vocational or technical schools which can greatly increase a citizen's working knowledge of water quality management. However, the costs of attending such a course are usually an obstacle. Agency consideration should be given to paying citizen expenses, recognizing their valuable input donated over the course of many non-paid hours.

By providing funds to support public participation in State and areawide water quality management, State and areawide agencies can open up the decision-making process to the citizens. Agencies which give only lip service support to meaningful public involvement, which generally view citizens as obstacles to efficient planning or are defensive about their work, will not make good use of these funds. If, however, an agency actively encourages citizens to participate as competent working partners, their funds will purchase from the public, a higher level of ingenuity, expertise and activity than has been affordable in the past.

EXAMPLE

Budget

Total grant for 2-year study	\$1,200,000
Amount allocated Public Participation	120,000
Amount spent first year (approximately)	75,000
Amount allocated second year	\$ 45,000

A greater proportion of the total public participation budget was spent during the first year due to the costs inherent in setting up such a program. With mailing lists established, materials conceived and produced, publics identified, and routine established, a second year will be able to build upon the groundwork of the first.

The agency intends, during the second year, to hold two citizen training programs. These will train and enable participating citizens to go back to their non-participating counterparts with clear, non-emotional, effective presentations of the final alternatives. It is hoped that this training will substantially affect general understanding of the plan, and contribute to citizen support of the process.

The budget in brief is as follows:

	<u>Total Amount</u>
PERSONNEL	
Agency Staff, Training, Consultants	\$50,255
NOTIFICATION	
Lists, Notices, Mailing	3,105
INFORMATION	
Newsletters, Brochures, Audio-Visual, Tours, etc.	14,750
CONSULTATION	
Meetings, Interviews, Conferences, etc.	5,500
ASSISTANCE TO PUBLIC	
Depositories, Out-of-Pocket Costs	<u>1,475</u>
TOTAL AMOUNT SPENT	<u>\$75,085</u>

An elaborated budget is also included on the following page

Budget Breakdown 1974-1975

	<u>Time Spent</u> <u>Hours or %</u>	<u>12 Months</u> <u>Amount</u> \$
PERSONNEL		
<u>Staff</u>		
Deputy Project Director (Public Involvement Specialist)	90%	
Program Administrator	20%	
Senior Planner	15%	
Graphics Staff (2 members)	40%	
Secretarial Staff (3)	40%	
Planning Staff (4)	125 hrs.	
Technical Staff (4)	65 hrs.	
Student (2)	350 hrs.	
Total Amount Spent		\$47,500
<u>Consultants</u>		
Undertook Identification of publics, mailing list, citizen requested technical data, designed values questionnaire		1,500
<u>Training</u>		
2 courses: Public Meeting Techniques and Conflict Resolution		
- Involved 10 staff total	300 hrs.	
- 2 Consultants, Materials	60 hrs.	
Total Amount Spent		<u>2,500</u> \$51,500
INFORMATIONAL COSTS		
<u>Brochures</u>		
Graphics Supplies and Printing, 2 editions, 8-10 pages each, 2000 copies each		600
<u>Newsletter</u>		
Graphics Supplies and Printing, 10 editions, 6 pages, 1000 copies		1,250
<u>Radio, TV</u>		
Newspaper ads - production and placement of spot announcements		2,000
<u>Audio-Visual</u>		
Tape recorder for meetings, 5-minute automated slide show, photographs & graphics for exhibit, Xerox machine rental & supplies, rental 15 min. movie (6 times)		9,000
<u>Exhibits</u>		
Construction, staff manning time 3 exhibits mounted (material reused for briefings and meetings)		400
<u>Familiarization Tours</u>		
Bus rental, supplemental material, including tape cassettes, food for 3 tours		500
<u>Supplies</u>		
Binding Machine for bulky Adv. Comm. Reports, easel for presentations, tape, paper, etc.		<u>1,000</u>
Total Amount Spent		\$14,750

Budget Breakdown 1974-1975

	<u>12 Months</u> <u>Amount</u>
	\$
<u>CONSULTATION</u>	
<u>WATS Line</u>	\$41,900
<u>Meetings</u>	
Rental of facilities, Materials, Refreshments, Outside Speakers or Specialists	700
<u>Delphi Panel</u>	
Materials, Mailing, Consultant in devising format	300
<u>Interviewers</u>	
5 days face-to-face, 10 days telephone	600
<u>Evaluation</u>	
Materials, consultant time in designing format	1,000
<u>Conferences</u>	
Advisory Committee, 3 conferences, 2 devising brochures, 1 resolving conflicts; Includes: retreat facility when not using Agency, food, materials, etc.	<u>2,000</u>
Total Amount Spent	\$ 5,500
<u>NOTIFICATION</u>	
Identification of Publics, Compile Mailing List (Listed Above)	
Mailing 10 newsletters (5000 copies @ .13 each)	650
4 brochures (5000 copies @ .45 each)	2,250
Committee reports to Advisory Committee	175
Advertisement public notice (3)	<u>30</u>
Total Amount Spent	\$ 3,105
<u>ASSISTANCE TO PUBLIC</u>	
<u>Technical Staff Time</u> (Listed elsewhere)	
<u>Consultants</u> (Listed elsewhere)	
<u>Maintaining Depositories</u>	
Training personnel at Depository locations, Copying material, Periodic staff review of contents	700
<u>Citizen Out-of-Pocket Costs</u>	
Attending Courses, 5 citizens at \$75 per course	375
Travel, Food, Telephone	<u>400</u>
Total Amount Spent	\$ 1,475

C. Information Dissemination

The public cannot productively participate in the water quality management process if information about that process is either difficult to obtain or too technical to understand. Conversely, if the public is deluged with material, sorting through it to find a basis for opinions will be impossibly time-consuming. Since the information generated in the water quality management process is voluminous and highly technical, the question becomes: What amount and type of information will enable meaningful participation?

There are several sections to the answer. Agencies should allow citizens open access to all information. Technical documents should be translated into terms which are meaningful to citizens and their concerns. Information should be published in a newsletter, and organized in the depositories, in such a way as to allow a conceptual overview. This lays an educational foundation for later phases when choices between technical alternatives must be made. Finally, citizens should be provided with information well ahead of a meeting date so as to allow adequate time for review and understanding.

While it is necessary to raise the level of public awareness, announce schedules and provide data, public information should not be confused with public participation. Consultation and exchanging views are essential. Relevant information is simply the catalyst to knowledgeable and meaningful participation of citizens. There are a variety of ways to disseminate information:

1. Depositories

Depositories for reports and technical information should be established and open to the public. Aside from fulfilling a major legal requirement, this collection of background material will enable the public to become better informed and more productive in the decision-making process.

To provide depositories which are "easily accessible to interested or affected persons", location, convenience and cost must be considered. Spreading the depositories throughout the region, and placing them in various types of facilities (libraries, schools, government buildings, community centers) makes them readily available to all citizens.

Convenience relates to a citizen's available time. Some people find free time at noon, some in the evening, and others during the weekend. The hours of depository availability should be coordinated to provide a good selection in each area. The agency should try to avoid the situation where the depository is locked up when the office closes while the building itself remains open.

The cost of copying facilities at depositories is important. Since citizens don't always have time to study complex data on location, low or no cost copying facilities should be available.

Information is even more accessible if people in the depository locations are familiar with the files and can provide assistance in finding materials. However, finding the correct information is not helpful if the citizen then cannot understand it. An accompanying text or summary should be provided with a description of technical data, its implications, and its relevance to regional water quality problems.

Depositories should be regularly updated so that the latest material, even if in draft form, reaches the citizen with time for proper consideration. While each region will have documents particular to its set of problems, some material can be suggested for inclusion in a depository, and are listed in the accompanying example.

Sample of Data in Depositories

- All reports emanating from study groups are considered project records and placed in depository. Each is assigned a sequential number. Report with number ATL208-7-18-75-5 is the 5th report assigned a number on July 18, 1975.
- Within two days after each public involvement activity, the public involvement specialist either:
 - a. Receives written summary from person or persons in charge of and present at the activity; or
 - b. Interviews person in charge and obtains information to write summary of pertinent information.
- Approved minutes of Policy Advisory Committee meetings.
- Grant Application plus interpretive text.
- Efficiency analysis of regional wastewater facilities and future flow capacity.
- Information on discharges through NPDES.
- Up-to-date list of subcontracts let to consultants and public agencies.
- Compliance schedule reports for reducing industrial effluent discharge.
- Inventory of land use related to water quality including solid waste disposal sites, flood plain survey, soil series classification, septic tank areas, zoning laws and other regulatory measures.
- Projections of population, economics, and land use over 20 year period.
- Draft studies and final report on each of the alternatives.
- Detailed technical checkout and impact assessment for the three most acceptable alternatives.
- Up-to-date summary of citizen comments and evaluations from a general survey, meetings, telephone calls, comment cards, briefings, letters, etc.

Sample of Data in Depositories

- Photographic records. Copies of slides and prints from field trips are kept at the planning agency depository only. These materials are useful in preparing slide presentations and exhibits.
- List of citizen identified community values and goals ranked according to priority.
- Prior plans relating to Water Quality or Water Resources (Level B, Phase I State Water Quality Management Plans, 201 Facilities Plans).

Depositories (Partial List)

- Agency Office
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Free copy machine, telephone
- Three public libraries
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. - 9 p.m., Sat., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Coin operated copier, telephone
- Institute of Technology library
Hours: Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m. - 11 p.m., Sun., 12 noon-8 p.m.
- City Hall, City Manager's Office
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Paid copy service, telephone
- Two community resource centers
Hours: Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
No copy facilities, telephone

C. Information Dissemination

2. Newsletter

A low-cost, regular newsletter serves as a constant reminder to the public of water quality issues. Through the newsletter, information about the State and areawide water quality management program is disseminated to many publics, both participating and not. Included are: elected and appointed officials, government agencies, environmental and other public interest groups, schools and libraries, utilities, appropriate professional, business, and labor organizations, civic associations, consumer groups, media, committee members, consultants, clubs, and other individuals or groups on the mailing list.

The newsletter should at least -

- Facilitate and encourage public participation by advertising its opportunities and relevance;
- Educate the public about the complex problems of water quality management;
- Create an awareness of and support for the planning process needed in the acceptance and implementation of the final plan.

To increase public awareness of water quality management, the newsletter should include: a calendar of meetings, clear identification of the public involvement contact person for obtaining speakers, slide shows, and information reports on citizen involvement - who is participating in workshops and committees, what citizen input has been given and how it has been used. Publication of both supportive and critical letters to the editor is indicative of an open non-defensive attitude.

Theme articles should help the public make informed decisions and evaluations. For instance, a cost/benefit analysis, plus an understandable but technical description of a proposed industrial pretreatment facility, should enable citizens to better weigh that alternative against others. Space should be given to relevant parties (in this case, industry) for their points of view.

Newsletter

A 6-page (11"x17" folded once with 11"x8½" insert) monthly newsletter is mailed on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Circulation: 5000 (75 outside the region).

Contents:

- Calendar of meetings.
- Theme Article - in depth discussion of various topics.
 - Citizen requested study of area lake re: current and potential recreation and tourism, current water analysis, projected property values and industrial growth, how development will affect water quality.
 - Nonpoint sources of pollution and how they affect regional water quality.
 - Stream Classification, how evaluated and when. Classifications of area streams and projections re: 1983 goals.
 - Early description of each alternative being considered in the planning process.
 - Explanation of State and areawide water quality management. Who has what responsibilities, how they fit together, who make the final decisions, and how the public can be involved and affect decision-makers.
- Pre-addressed clip-out card for self-identification and comments.
- Letters to editor.
- Identification of staff responsible for public involvement.
- Public Involvement report.
- "Technically Speaking", a definition of terms and "jargon".
- "Need-a-Speaker?" and 15-minute slide show advertised.
- Contract awards to consultants for studies.

Newsletter

- Agency personnel write-ups (biographies).
- Committee, workshop and seminar reports.
- List of depositories, times they are open and map of locations.
- Partial but representative list of types of documents and data found in depositories.
- Advertisement of familiarization tours.
- Hand drawn graphics.

C. Information Dissemination

3. Brochure

In considering the production of a brochure, an agency should be careful of the cost. Expensive "professional" brochures can give the impression of a public relations campaign, and might not be read. It is better to think of publishing several brochures which are short and treated as working documents. Diagrams and maps can be drawn freehand, saving expensive set-up and layout costs. Offset printing is fine.

Text and supporting data should be brief, understandable, and include all relevant data. For instance, the brochure might be describing an alternative plan, selected for detailed impact assessment, which involves moderating the effect of nonpoint agricultural pollution. Data regarding such things as stream analysis near source and best management practices (soil tilling techniques, feed lot organization, analysis of fertilizers) should be included. While citizens need technical data to form opinions, they must also be able to understand that data. The services of an interpretive writer might be purchased to assure adequate translation of complex concepts into lay terms.

Brochures are most effective at key points in the planning cycle -- the beginning, as goals are being set, when final alternatives are being selected for impact assessment, and as planning concludes. At these points, a brochure can stimulate interest and prepare citizens for a public meeting. The name and address of the person responsible for public involvement, the WATS number, and a tear-out card for self-identification and comments should be prominently displayed. One page should list groups and individuals who helped compile the brochure. This identifies the participating publics and also those who are not. Citizen and agency activity and input should be summarized. In addition to being mailed, the brochure should be distributed at briefings and available to citizens who attend the public meeting.

The first brochure should be printed immediately describing the goals of the 1972 Act, the schedule and process of planning and implementation, and encouraging citizen involvement. It should make clear that this is the time to express personal and community goals and to consider water quality among them. The design of an Alternatives brochure is depicted in the example. The Impact Assessment and Recommendation of Final Plan brochures could follow similar formats.

Brochure

A brochure is published just prior to a large public meeting at the end of the Design of Alternative phase. It is designed jointly by the staff and the Citizens Advisory Committee, taking into account citizen input from letters, telephone calls, workshops and meetings. The function of this brochure is to describe clearly each alternative, compare it to other alternatives, show its impacts, and list previously stated public comments.

Three alternatives have been selected out of the seven originally set-up by the agency for consideration. One additional alternative, suggested by a councilwoman is added. The public meeting will influence which alternatives get detailed technical checkout for impact assessment. Because the brochure will be used as a working document at the meeting, space is left on all pages for comments.

There is a general table in the beginning highlighting the differing elements in the four alternatives. This table also compares the alternatives with respect to citizen expressed goals and impacts.

CITIZEN GOALS	KEY			
	High Attainment Goal or Negative Impact	Moderate Attainment Goal or Moderate Impact	Low Attainment Goal or No Impact	
	●	○	○	
	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4
	Construct new sewage treatment plant open for use 1982, Area A Sewer Moratorium until 1982, Area A Immediate regulations for industrial pretreatment facilities, Area B	Indefinite Sewer Moratorium Change zoning to encourage satellite cities around urban areas Re-use industrial wastewater Enforce grading, seeding, sodding regulations in new development	Build storage capacity for peak loads Close out septic systems in Area A Pass ordinance banning certain fertilizer Use sludge for construction of wildlife refuge, Area D	Separate sewage and storm collection systems Begin program repaving, Area B, with permeable paving material Use sludge for agricultural land Land drainage modification
Improve Immediate water quality	○	○	○	○
Meet 1983 goal	●	○	○	○
Increase open space	○	●	●	○
Encourage future growth (population and economic development)	●	○	○	○
Recycle waste	○	○	●	●
IMPACTS				
Cost to consumer Utility rates Bond issues	●	○	○	●
Neighborhood disruption	○	○	○	●
Cost to industry	●	○	○	○
Increased noise, air, visual pollution	○	○	○	○

Brochure

The main body of the brochure is devoted to a detailed description of each alternative, using a map or sketch if necessary. Facing the description is a page divided into two columns -- pro and con arguments. The opinions printed carry the name of the individual or group espousing that position. Giving credit recognizes participation and makes opinions public. The publicity tends to reduce emotional statements and lessens conflict between groups.

ALTERNATIVE 1	COMMENTS
<p>A - Site Proposed Sewage Treatment Plant B - Proposed Pretreatment Facilities Area C - Existing Sewage Treatment Plant D - Proposed Wildlife Refuge (Alternative 3) E - Existing Farmland F - Proposed Landfill Site</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will have greatest impact meeting 1983 goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isaac Walton League - Darby City Council - Sierra Club 2. Will encourage balanced future development. Taxes from Area E help amortize bonds for new sewage plant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board of Real Estate Agencies 3. Burning waste saves cost of fuel. Care taken to assure no air pollution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ted Baer, President, Society of Professional Engineers 4. Cost to consumer high-increased taxes, no new urban housing Cost to industry high <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chamber of Commerce 5. Industries may close due to high cost of pretreatment. Possible job loss. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AFL/CIO Chapter 6. (etc.)
<p>Alternative 1 selects A for new sewage treatment plant, construction begun immediately. Use date 1982. Operating energy produced by burning combustible waste. Immediate sewer moratorium all areas except E. Immediate steps to mandate construction of industrial pretreatment facilities in Area B. Public education campaign to halt unauthorized dumping. Plan trash separation at landfill site F. Adoption of local sediment control ordinances. Localities agree to tie zoning ordinances to plan. Passage of law to increase State assistance. Existing general purpose governments and special purpose sewage agencies designated management agencies. Public Cost - 15 million (Federal + local). Private Cost - 5 million.</p>	

C. Information Dissemination

4. Briefings and Speeches

Briefings should be called when the staff wishes to give an up-to-date agency action report to a particular group. On a regular basis (monthly or bi-monthly) briefings should give background material on issues to the press, coordinate antipollution efforts with local planning agencies, and inform elected officials and governmental agencies. The latest technical reports should be available (land use projections, cost-effectiveness studies of expanded sewage facilities, legal effect and technical requirements of possible zoning ordinances, impact assessments, etc.) and the staff should describe in detail what use has been made of them. The public participation program should be described and reports given of how citizen input has been used. Briefings are more lively and productive than a printed report since there is always an opportunity for dialogue.

The agency should hold additional briefings if citizens seem misinformed or if there is citizen agitation on issues. Careful briefings, conducted with an open non-defensive attitude can clear up misconceptions, thwart rumors, and foster an attitude of cooperation between groups. In addition, the agency might learn something about public values not before taken into account. All citizen comments should be recorded and copies given to appropriate staff members.

Briefings enable the agency to spend extra time with those citizens and organizations most potentially responsible for financing, construction, operations, oversight, local ordinances and regulations. Elected officials should be frequently briefed and encouraged to participate in the process. The required local approval will be encouraged if officials are involved and aware of their constituents' role in the planning. During the plan implementation and revision, briefings can help stimulate citizen action to change zoning, pass referenda, raise revenues and foster progress toward the 1983 goal.

Briefings give information about the planning process and outputs, while speeches are more topic oriented. Agencies should maintain and vigorously advertise their speaker bureaus since organizations and meetings often are looking for interesting speakers. Besides informing the public, a good speaker can spark interest and precipitate involvement.

Summary of Briefings and Speeches

- All State and local elected officials and government agencies invited to a monthly briefing at 1:00 p.m.
- Quarterly briefing for local governments in adjoining region re: pollution control
- "Brown Bag" lunch time briefing on first Tuesday every month for interested citizens. After 20 minute presentation, informal discussion takes place
- Specially called Briefings include:
 - Two evenings during assessment of Goals and Objectives (Civic Association and PTA)
 - Five (three in evening) to discuss alternatives (Real Estate Board, AFL-CIO Chapter, Sierra Club, Regional Tourism and Recreation Association, Isaac Walton League)
 - One on impact assessment (Area Chamber of Commerce)
 - Four to discuss final plan (County House of Delegates, City Council, County Executive's Office, State Legislative Public Works Committee)
- Ten speeches given at request of groups, 4 luncheon speakers, 3 keynote speakers in evening, and 3 program initiators for groups. Speech titles included:
 - "Water Quality and Rate of Growth"
 - "At What Price Clean Water"
 - "Pollution and Farming"
 - "Revising Water Quality Standards"

C. Information Dissemination

5. Media

The media -- radio, newspapers, and TV -- are used to get information out to a large general audience to spark interest and motivate participation. By exposure to information prepared by the agency staff, the public can more clearly understand the planning goals and process as well as the ramifications of present water quality. Media use is the best way to convince the most people that the water quality management process will affect them and that they should get involved.

A media calendar should be established at the beginning of the planning process. After dividing the region into equally covered media areas, water quality topics pertinent to the region and to the scope of the study are selected. These topics are timed for area media release on a calendar schedule, in order to achieve a well-balanced presentation of issues throughout the region.

Training for agency staff in how to use media effectively is valuable and sometimes offered by the local media itself. Here are some tips for using media well.

- Don't rely on listing public notices in the classified section. Buy space in the news section.
- If a newspaper is deluged with press releases, they will all be ignored. Select important topics, issue a release, and follow-up with a personal contact with a reporter, to encourage a story.
- Keep the media budget flexible to allow for coverage of unexpected "hot" issues.
- In all media releases list the incoming WATS number and/or the name and address of the person responsible for public involvement to encourage citizen feedback.
- Invite media representatives on all field trips.

Summary of Media

- Set up Media Calendar
 1. Analyzed market areas, number and type of readers, viewers, or listeners of all area newspapers, radio and TV stations. Selected manageable number with broad coverage.
 2. Obtained address, phone number, territorial coverage of all selected daily and weekly newspapers. Keep names of news and feature editors on file as well as their deadlines.
 3. Obtained address, phone number, format, audience size and characteristics, and territory of all selected radio and TV stations. Keep names of news analyst, special events editor, program director on file.
 4. This region breaks down into 4 major areas with a good balance of radio, TV and newspaper coverage in each one. Topics the agency wants to cover include municipal wastewater flow and treatment industrial wastewater flow and treatment, other point sources, nonpoint sources, and storm sewer discharges.

Area 3 has a major problem with urban storm water overflow, posing a future health hazard. In-depth media coverage of the subject is planned there beginning as soon as goals and objectives are set. All alternatives are described; for instance, banning overnight city parking so as to allow street cleaning, passing strict pet control laws, and increasing taxes to pay for an expensive storage system for peak loads. While storm sewer discharges are a pressing issue, the media calendar for Area 3 schedules coverage of all the topics in order to give residents there a balanced picture, and more data upon which to select regional alternatives.

- Feature story in Weekly Journal on nonpoint run off from farms.
- Project director appeared on radio talk show during evening commuter hours. Subject: commuter tax to buy new street cleaning equipment.
- Reporters for local papers invited and usually attend Advisory Committee meetings. Frequently meetings reported in the press. Minutes of meetings sent to reporters.

continued....

Summary of Media

- Monthly briefings held for all media with half the time allotted for questions. News conferences scheduled as needed.
- Area 1 TV station expressed interest in undertaking documentary on landfill run off. Requests agency help.
- Area 4 radio station scheduled panel discussion of State and area water quality management process, emphasizing the public participation program. A WATS line provided opportunity for public comments.
- Designed and executed project logo used as tag on all public service TV announcements.
- Prepared 30 second public service spot for radio.

30 SECOND RADIO SPOT

The good life is brought to you by ... water. That's right water ... we wash with it, swim in it, bathe in it, float in it, boat on it, drink it, sprinkle it, irrigate our crops and navigate our streams ... and never give it a second thought.

But we can't just go on taking water for granted. You can help decide the future of water resources in this area.

For information call ...

- Media representatives invited on familiarization tour of outdated sewage treatment plant. Extensive newspaper coverage and film clip shown on 6:00 p.m. TV news.
- The agency subscribes to a clipping service for all area newspapers. Editorials, reports, letters to the editor, and items about the water quality management process are clipped, as well as articles on related issues. Those have included reports of citizen participation in efforts to improve air quality, proposed zoning changes in the county, and editorials dealing with adverse environmental effects of a local abandoned strip mine.

C. Information Dissemination

6. Exhibits

Most citizens will not seek involvement in the public participation program, even to the extent of getting on a mailing list. The opinions and values of these same citizens, however, will surface in opposition to a final plan which they may misunderstand or deem inequitable. Therefore, it is important for the agency to check back with the non-participating public at key points in the planning and implementation process. Bringing information to the citizens in the visual way of exhibits, at locations which are frequented by large groups of people, provides for ad hoc public participation and may even encourage citizens to take a more active role.

Exhibits provide an opportunity to inform citizens about the nature and purpose of the Federal Water Pollution Act, and its relevance to the particular region. Citizen involvement can be stressed with specific ways to become involved suggested. Cards to fill out to get on the mailing list should be available; the WATS number and name of person responsible for public involvement should be clearly identified. Committee meeting schedules are listed.

Agency staff should be present to hand out brochures and newsletters, offer use of the speakers bureau, answer questions, and receive citizen input. A short questionnaire might be used asking for opinions concerning community priorities, most pressing pollution problems, or impact of possible alternatives.

If the budget allows, 3 or 4 exhibits can be organized by agency staff and citizens. In the beginning, awareness of existing water quality problems can be heightened through exhibit graphics. Slide shows or photographs can show land fill run-off, debris from sewer overflows, construction site erosion and industrial scum. Heat sensitive aerial photographs depict the density of land use development as well as thermal pollution. Maps can identify areas of poorest water quality. The accompanying example describes an exhibit during the Design of Alternatives stage. After a detailed final plan is selected, understanding can be greatly increased by taking an informational exhibit into the area(s) most affected. Misconceptions can be erased, benefits described, and opposition reduced.

Meeting citizens through exhibits provides a check for the agency that all opinions are being adequately represented through the participating publics. Citizens who normally might not be involved become more informed about water quality, and their concerns can be taken into account.

Exhibit

Two weeks in the summer are set up as "Water Quality Weeks". Press releases to local newspapers throughout the region, and public service announcements on the radio advertise the event in advance. Agency staff, including the person(s) responsible for public involvement are assigned to compile information and graphics for an exhibit, to arrange for locations where it can be set-up, and to travel with it. A substantial amount of staff time should be spent on developing active citizen involvement in preparing successful illustrations of the issues.

It is close to the time when alternative plans must be narrowed down to two or three for more detailed study (end of Design of Alternatives phase). Locations for the exhibit are chosen where impacts might be most keenly felt i.e., areas where a sewer moratorium might be enforced, an area where septic tanks might be banned and hook-up to an expanded sewer line mandated, areas where businesses might have to make radical discharge changes or construct a pretreatment facility, or an area where a new sewage treatment plant might be built.

During the two weeks, the exhibit is set up at four shopping malls, advertised on the malls' entrance signs, and manned during days, evening shopping hours and weekends. It also travels to a county fair, the lobbies of two town halls, a community center, and to the Student Union of the State University. There, the exhibit coincides with a summer school course on "Environmental Resource Planning" and is the focus of a day long seminar.

The exhibit space is divided into three categories according to possible future growth -- slow growth (population, industry, tourism, facility needs), growth at the current rate, and intensified growth. A large map in each section is colored to show development in the year 2000. Growth statistics are translated into wastewater loads and flows. Below each map are described three alternative ways to assure swimmable and fishable water with that amount of growth. Arrows to the map and clearly written text describe the measures (best management practice for nonpoint sources, zoning changes, increased waste treatment facilities etc.) to be considered. Citizen reaction sheets have been printed to allow for pro and con reactions to each plan, to suggest other alternatives, and to evaluate the growth predictions. The staff take care to explain that these sheets are not votes, but expressions of opinion which will be taken into account.

The date of the public meeting to receive additional citizen input is announced, and names are taken for inclusion on the mailing list. Brochures describing the 7 alternatives are available for citizens to take back to community groups.

C. Information Dissemination

7. Familiarization Tour

Field trips enable a group of citizens to become familiar with and understand the nature of specific problems. They are especially useful at the beginning of the planning process. This is when the public needs to fully understand the problems in order to set goals and objectives. Agency staff should accompany the tour both to answer questions and to listen to citizen reaction. Familiarization tours provide an opportunity for the implementation agency to be involved with the public participation program. Media representatives are always invited.

Usually 3 or 4 tours over the course of the study, will cover the major problem areas. However, if the planning region is large, similar tours should be arranged in different areas so that affected publics are made aware of their local problems. If the problems are very complex, staff should select critical areas for tours rather than attempt coverage of every pollution source. If the general public is disorganized or unaware of pollution problems and in need of basic information, the tours should be educational surveys.

A more specifically selected or sophisticated public will want technical information as well as visual awareness. Supplemental written material should be distributed at the beginning of the tour, and be available at a later date.

Familiarization tours have benefits for the planning process. Participants get immediate exposure to water pollution problems without the filter of someone else's written interpretation, and go back to their groups or constituents with a vivid sense of the problem. The tour groups can be focused on specific problems with immediate opportunity for questions and feedback and without getting side-tracked. Tours also provide an informal atmosphere where rapport can be established between the agency staff and the different participating publics.

Show Me Nonpoint Pollution

One agency successfully operates a "Show Me Nonpoint Pollution" tour for elected officials, administrators of various agencies, citizens, and the news media. Upon arrival at local headquarters, the participants find coffee available, and models of various terrain conditions to examine. They are welcomed and an introductory briefing is held. The WQM process is explained, especially its relationship to other agency operations. The tour is discussed and a slide show illustrates what will be viewed during the tour. The participants then board busses including two agency representatives for each bus.

During the morning session, urban and industrial sources of nonpoint pollution are emphasized. The first stop at a housing development under construction allows participants to personally view soil erosion and careless spillage of materials. Best management practices -- sediment trapping, stage grading, seeding and sodding procedures, and structural measures -- are explained and demonstrated. The particular problem of ground water intrusion from septic tanks (which these houses will not have) is discussed.

Next, the tour stops at a municipal wastewater facility. The plant manager conducts a 45 minute tour, answering questions and familiarizing participants with the concepts of combined sewers, sludge, and waste load allocations. Industrial wastewater and pretreatment methods are discussed as they relate to local conditions. The often ignored polluting impact of storm water runoff is particularly emphasized.

The bus then moves to a roadside park where box lunches are provided. Agency staff members answer questions and continue the discussion of nonpoint pollution.

After lunch, the tour continues away from the city. An abandoned mine upstream from the metropolitan area, exemplifies a different nonpoint source of pollution. A short walk brings the participants to a nearby tributary. The effect of the mine's runoff on that stream's water quality can be easily seen.

Back on the bus, during the drive home, agency staff discuss specific water quality management programs. Again the relationship between 208 and the 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program, the Clean Air Act, HUD 701, and other legislation is explained. Methods of becoming involved in the agency's areawide water quality management process are discussed. The need for and value of input from citizens and local officials is emphasized.

Tour time including the briefing is only 6½ hours, and the impact is substantial.

IV. MODEL PROGRAM DESIGN

D. Consultation

In the State and local water quality management process, citizens cannot be simply recipients of information. The 1972 Act intends that they be part of the decision-making process. The agency staff must take the initiative in asking for advice or opinions and should consult with the public about upcoming decisions. When citizens and officials are consulted about costs, benefits and impacts, and when they consult with the agency staff about technical data, feasibility, and procedures, balanced and practical water quality management can then occur.

1. Using Citizen Input

The first step in consultation is ensuring that citizen views reach the planners. Not only does this mean providing opportunities for input, but it also means recording the comments and getting citizen suggestions passed on in a usable form to the appropriate staff member. Examples of citizen input include comment cards filled out at public meetings and workshops, telephone call records, correspondence, letters to the editor of newspapers, meeting summaries, minutes of advisory committee meetings, etc.

At least three things need to be done with citizen input. First, the comments must be written down. Second, a response must be made. In the case of telephone calls, the response may be immediate and oral, unless questions are raised that require follow-up correspondence. In general, whenever questions are posed, whether in public meetings or in correspondence, some kind of written response to the questioner must be made. Third, a communication to the general public must be made that summarizes inputs received and the disposition of those inputs. That disposition should contain both an answer to the issues raised and what the agency is doing with that issue. The communication to the public could be made through project newsletters and brochures, and in reports summarizing public input for the depositories and for public meetings and hearings.

A common complaint about citizen input is that the persons providing the input have special interests. Ordinarily, those citizens who speak up are most affected by or interested in the water quality management planning process, and should be expected to make issue-oriented comments. If the agency feels some segment of the public is not being adequately represented in citizen comments, it may wish to take steps to encourage those segments to participate or to assign staff to represent the interests of those segments.

Since it is important to answer citizen questions quickly, staff should not wait until firm, fully analyzed positions are taken by the agency before making a response. Rather, agency staff will need to be able to make tentative responses based on what is known and decided up to that point, with the proviso that those tentative responses may need to be changed later on.

Receiving and Responding to Citizen Input

- The agency has established an incoming WATS telephone line covering a territory about twice as large as the planning area. The phone number is carried in the newsletter and all other project brochures and news releases. During working hours, an incoming query is referred to the public involvement specialist or the deputy study manager. If answer cannot be given, the call is returned within 48 hours. If incoming call is a comment, it is recorded, typed up, and passed on to an appropriate member of planning or implementation team. During non-working hours, a telephone answering device is used to record name, telephone number, and nature of query. Call is returned the next day.

- Six months after beginning the study, an ombudsperson was appointed. This action was taken in response to a request from the Citizens Advisory Committee. The ombudsperson, Mary Wilson, is former president of the League of Women Voters. She serves without pay, but receives reimbursement for expenses. She investigates any complaint forwarded to her, reports on the disposition of the case, and seeks to resolve the problem. Five such complaints have been received in the first four months since the position was established. Three concerned access to information. One of the depositories had an early policy against removing documents from library so that copies could be made on a copying machine in an adjacent building. This policy was revised. In the other two cases, information thought to be available did not exist. Two complaints concerned membership on the advisory committee. All were resolved to the satisfaction of both the complainant and the agency.

D. Consultation

2. Meetings

Consultation may be undertaken on a one-to-one basis, as in interviews. Usually, however, exchange of information and opinions happens in groups. Meetings of some kind are the most common public participation activity. Merely bringing people together doesn't guarantee a useful, effective meeting. In general, there needs to be a realistic expectation of what is to be accomplished at the meeting, an agenda, and some means for handling the group.

The first two points are straightforward, though often neglected. More will be gained from a meeting if the organizers set objectives about what is to be covered and how far afield they're willing to let the discussion roam. For instance, if the meeting's subject is Urban Storm Water Run-Off, discussion should be expected about structural alternatives (increased treatment facilities, peak load storage, etc.) However, a lengthy debate about what type of anti-litter campaign to employ would not be productive. An agenda helps planners set objectives and stick to a meeting schedule.

The third factor in running effective meetings, finding a way to handle a group, is more difficult. One approach to handling a group meeting is explained here, both as a technique to be used as is, and bring out some principles of group behavior.

Details are very important in having a successful meeting. The time, place, meeting rooms, and other arrangements cannot be left to chance.

One Technique for an Effective Meeting

People tend to generate more ideas when they work independently. On the other hand, they tend to make better decisions when they work together and engage in discussion. To capitalize on these two observations, a meeting may be organized as follows:

- Explain to the group the purpose of the meeting and the expected outcome.
- Ask each person, working silently and alone, to write down his ideas on paper (preferably on cards, one idea per card or page).
- Going around the room, ask each person to give one of the ideas he or she has written down. As it is given, the leader/recorder writes it on a flip chart pad in view of the entire group. This process is continued until all ideas are listed.
- Clarify the meaning of any listed ideas by discussion.
- Discuss the listed ideas for usefulness and relevance to the purpose of the meeting.
- If it is desired to get priority ranking among the ideas, ask each person to assign ranks for each idea and write them down.
- Tabulate and report the rankings to the group.
- Keep the flip chart sheets as part of the record of public input.

E. Consultation

3. Advisory Committee(s)

Advisory committees should perform several functions in a citizen participation program. Members of ongoing committees can become more fully informed than most citizens on the planning process as it develops. They can assist in suggesting who is likely to be affected by or should be involved in water quality management planning. Committee members are often able to provide information relevant to planning. They are a bridge to and are advocates of the interests of their constituencies. As such, a major function of each advisory committee member is to motivate his or her constituency to discuss, study, or otherwise get involved in the water quality management process.

There are a number of problems with advisory committees. Some of those problems and ways of dealing with them are:

- Who shall serve on the committee? Regulations require that State Policy Advisory Committees contain a majority of elected officials. On technical committees, the choice of people is not usually too difficult; those who have competence and are respected professionals and who have no conflicts of interest are chosen. For other committees, the "who" question is addressed initially by defining the interests that should be represented, such as agriculture, local industry, local government, recreation, environmental, downstream, etc. Existing committees should be used whenever possible.
- The committee may be too large and not function well. One solution is to use an executive committee. Another approach is to avoid use of large committees. A third is to use subcommittees.
- Committees may not understand their role or, alternatively, may understand the role differently than does the agency. The solution is to set ground rules and clearly state roles early. No committee should be appointed without understanding its role and being prepared to follow through with that role.
- Committee members might not communicate with their constituencies. One solution is for the Agency staff to ask members for opportunities to speak with committees or mass meetings of that constituency.
- Committees may become too specialized and isolated with little or no communication among themselves and with agency staff members. The solution is to establish procedures (reports, a steering committee etc.) for regular communication. Be sure planners and potential implementors serve as members of all committees, and have committee reports be part of agency staff meetings.

Committees:Areawide Policy Advisory Committee

This committee is composed of the four Chief Executives of the involved jurisdictions. They receive advice from the Technical Advisory Committee, and the Citizens Advisory Committee, as well as the Planning and Management Agencies. They will approve, modify, or reject the final plan. Representatives of the Army, Agriculture, and Interior are ex officio members, and may or may not serve.

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee provides expertise in various technical aspects of the study. It advises the planning and implementation agencies and the Areawide Policy Advisory Committee as well as providing technical assistance to the Citizens Advisory Committee. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee may also serve on a Citizen Advisory Committee dealing with their area of expertise. A partial list of members includes:

Walter Dence
President, State Society
of Professional Engineers

Elizabeth A. Haley
State Planning Director

Harry S. Ferries
President,
Bankers Association

Benjamin Green
Director, County Department
of Public Works

Inez Rodriguez
Biologist
Warner Laboratories

Donn Springer
Asst. Director, State
Geological Survey

Brenda Eddy
Executive Director,
Bi-County Chamber of
Commerce

Joshua Finkelstein
American Forestry Asso.

Citizens Advisory Committee

The Citizens Advisory Committee coordinates citizen sub-committees and advises the Planning and Management Agencies, as well as the Areawide Policy Advisory Committee on citizen ideas, suggestions and preferences. Since this is the most active committee, some local elected officials serve here, so as to keep more in touch with citizen participation. A partial list of members includes:

Donald Fisher
City Mayor

Joseph Higdon
Council of Governments

Mary Wetzel
Deputy Director,
City Urban League

Karen Loveland
WZIP-TV News

Emily Smith
State President,
League of Women Voters

Judith Toth
State House of Delegates

Paul Sanchez
County Services Association

Edmund Frost
State Executive Director
Conservation Association

Rev. Donald Brown
Director, Fair
Housing Commission

Erika Rogala
Deputy Director
Recreation Planning Commission

D. Consultation

4. Ad Hoc Committees and Task Forces

Committees may be permanent and broadly representative like the Citizens' Advisory Committee. They may also be established to deal with an issue or group of issues. On a one or two time basis during the Impact Assessment Phase for instance, a committee may attempt to resolve conflicts by bringing different points of view together and encouraging negotiation and compromise. Public education about particular topics (nonpoint pollution, implementation procedures, finance) may be the reason for forming a committee. These committees may meet regularly for the duration of the study or, more likely, they will meet for just part of it.

Committees can be small (2-10 people) to allow for the discussion necessary in conflict resolution or consultant selection. While an agenda for a small committee meeting should be prepared, it should also be flexible to maximize opportunities for discussion.

Committees which are formed to investigate an issue, or to receive a balanced input of citizens views on a topic, are usually of moderate size (10-50 people). In this size meeting, discussion is more limited, and a meeting agenda is necessary if the work at hand is to be done.

The agency requests members to participate on committees, trying to maintain a balance of viewpoints and special interests. However, a citizen request for membership is always granted, and no one individual or group is excluded.

B. Consultation

5. Workshops

A workshop is a learning and discussion meeting, usually part of a series. The time, place, and topic(s) to be discussed should be advertised in the newsletters, the media, and by mailing a notice of scheduled workshops to the mailing list. It is open to all citizens, but there is no effort to achieve attendance of publics representing all points of view. Usually, a workshop is focused on a few topics. It is not a meeting at which agency decisions are to be made. Information is given, there is substantial discussion, usually in small groups, summaries of the issues and points raised in discussion are prepared, and points requiring further analysis are delineated. Workshops may be used at any stage of planning.

EXAMPLE

Workshop Agenda

Water Quality Management Alternatives

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 7:00 p.m. | Exhibits--Cafetorium |
| 7:30 | Description of alternatives--George Venice, Planning Director, Norwalk COG |
| 7:50 | Workshop Procedures--Nancy Bartlett, Norwalk LWV |
| 8:00 | Small group discussions--classrooms |
| 9:30 | Reconvene in Cafetorium for group reports--Nancy Bartlett, Moderator |

Notes: Please look at the exhibits in the Cafetorium. They include maps of service areas and treatment facilities for each of the 6 alternatives. Write any comments you have either on the comment cards in the exhibit area or directly on the plastic map overlays. Staff members of the Norwalk COG will be there to discuss these alternatives with you. The next workshop will be two weeks from tonight, same place. Nonpoint sources of pollution will be considered at that workshop.

D. Consultation

6. Seminars

The seminar is a useful mechanism for discussion of issues by agency or elected officials and by non-agency experts, such as economists, biologists, engineers, planners, etc. The seminar is rather sharply focused on some issue or set of issues. It may be sponsored either by the agency or some other organization, such as a university or professional society or group such as the League of Women Voters. Presentations are made by one or more of the officials and experts. These presentations may then be critiqued and discussed by one or more other experts and opened for discussion to all attendees.

EXAMPLE

Seminar Agenda

Pollution from Nonpoint Sources in the Warwick Metro Area

Seminar jointly sponsored by the Warwick Metropolitan Planning Commission and Central State University

Welcome -- Joshua Zinner, Chairman, Warwick MPC

Introduction -- Marian Council, Professor of Regional Planning, CSU

Topic -- Nature, Magnitude, and Impact of Nonpoint Source Pollutants,
Bradley Johnston, Planning Director, Warwick MPC

Discussion Panel -- Edward Chen, Ag Experiment Station, CSU
Rudy Marginot, County Engineer, Steuben County
Ronald Winkel, Winkel & Associates, Consulting
Engineers;

Topic -- Economics of Nonpoint Source Control
Judith Sperry, Dept. of Economics, CSU

Discussion Panel -- Franklin Prather, Prather & Sons, Developers,
Nicholas Sage, Clementine Mining Co.
Elizabeth Darmstaeder, Warwick League of Women Voters

Topic -- Metro Water Quality Management Planning Process
Andrew McGaffin, Executive Director, Warwick MPC

Lunch

Topic -- Legal and Political Aspects of Nonpoint Source Control
Professor Stephen Lewis, College of Law, CSU

Discussion Panel -- Thomas Colosi, City Attorney, Warwick
Steven Dealph, State Senator, District 48, Warwick
Kathy Richardson, Coalition for Environmental Quality

Topic -- Tentative Alternatives for Control of Nonpoint Source Pollu-
tants
Caroline Tuchs, Director Environmental Alternatives, Warwick MPC

Seminar Summary -- Joshua Zinner, Chairman, Warwick MPC

D. Consultation

7. Public Meetings and Hearings

Public meetings and hearings are usually held to meet legal requirements. A hearing is more formal; only the moderator or staff asks questions. A public meeting allows questions from the floor and some dialogue. Both are structured to obtain on-the-record statements from citizens, citizen groups, elected officials, appointed officials, and representatives of other agencies about an issue before a final decision is made. Both should be heavily advertised to attract large audiences.

While there are limitations on what can be expected from public meetings and hearings, they perform a valuable function in allowing opportunity for anyone to make a statement for the record. There should be few if any surprises. If the agency has been doing a good job of public involvement prior to the meetings, it should be aware of the positions of each public segment.

One cannot expect to get discussion at public meeting unless it is very carefully provided for. Usually, there are a relatively small number of statements even when there is a very large attendance. Statements are frequently short, especially when attendance is large. A public meeting is not the place to cover new ground. There isn't time and there isn't a good opportunity for dialogue.

Despite the legal status of the hearing, agencies have rarely been bound to abide by the statements made at a hearing. The conflicts of testimony would likely preclude such a requirement. However, the agency is bound to take into consideration the statements made at a public meeting or hearing in making subsequent decisions. Moreover, the agency should publicly say what the disposition of those statements was and how they entered into agency decisions. The input made by citizens prior to the public hearing should also be considered when decisions are being made.

Some common pitfalls to avoid in structuring public hearings, and ways to deal with them are given here.

- Too few people get to speak and the meeting takes a long time.

Solution: Break up the meeting into smaller groups, each with its own leader and recorder. This multiplies the number of people who can speak, increases the possible length of statement, and shortens the meeting.

- The proponents or opponents of some alternatives get to make their case early and the other sides have to wait a long time.

Solution: Schedule the presentations, according to desired presentation time so that persons do not have to be present for the entire meeting. Also, randomize the presentations to some extent so that each side can make part of its case early.

- The opening presentation is too long. Citizens get little time to be heard.

Solution: Shorten the presentation. After all, the meeting is being held to hear citizens. Also, one may prepare exhibits that are open before the meeting and have agency staff there to explain points. Another approach is to precede the meeting or hearing with briefings held a week or so before the public meeting. That briefing series is entirely for the purpose of explaining material to be considered at the public meeting.

- Citizens don't believe the agency will use the statements.

Solution: Promise and deliver replies to statements and questions raised at the public meeting and tell how it affected decisions.

EXAMPLE

Public Hearing

This public meeting is scheduled at the end of the Impact Assessment Phase. Exhibits are set up with maps, projections, photographs, and descriptions of each of three regional alternatives. There also is a simplified description of the goals and legal requirements of the 1972 Federal Water Pollution Act Amendments.

Following this meeting there will be a decision made on which plan to recommend for acceptance by local officials and governmental representatives. In order to hear as many testifiers as possible, four rooms have been equipped to receive testimony simultaneously.

AGENDA

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 6:30 p.m. | Exhibits |
| 7:30 | Moderator -- President, League of Women Voters, or
Chairman, Regional Planning Commission. |
| 7:40 | Opening statement (Purpose, explanation of progress to
date)
Planning director of agency |
| 7:55 | Divide into 4 groups -- Rooms A, B, C, D |
| 8-10 p.m. | Statements made in groups, each of which has trained
agency staff person and a statement and discussion
recorder |

D. Consultation

8. Delphi Panels

The Delphi Panel is a group of experts selected to reach consensus on a problem through the completion of a series of questionnaires. These experts may either be technical experts, or persons knowledgeable about the interests of some segment of the public. There might be four questionnaires in the series: the first to explore the problem, the second to seek understanding and clarity, the third to explore disagreements, and the fourth to resolve the disagreements. The first questionnaire is mailed; responses are received, and the results are analyzed and reported in the second questionnaire. Panel members are asked to answer the questions again in light of the responses from others. The process is repeated two more times. Participants are given the opportunity to support their responses, and the results are reported. Experience with the Delphi Panel has shown that a remarkable degree of consensus can be reached from very diverse interests.

Delphi Panels might be used to develop goals and objectives for a study. They might be used to assess the likely success of proposed implementation strategies (management plans) or to assess the impacts of some alternative.

Delphi Panels can be composed of as many as 100 people. They remain anonymous and may be expected, therefore, to give more frank opinions. This also prevents personality dominance such as frequently occurs in conferences and allows each panel member to work out his answers to the questions independently.

A word of caution is necessary. A Delphi Panel is not a group representative of the entire citizenry. The findings and consensus from a Delphi panel should not therefore be taken as the last word on the subject. It should be treated as an additional analysis, useful for clarifying and diagnosing a problem.

Delphi Panels are appropriate when

- The participants are busy and frequently cannot attend meetings (they complete the questionnaires at their leisure).
- The study has limited funds (planner time is involved in preparing, analyzing, and distributing questionnaires, but not in travel and meetings).
- The planner is not under tight time pressures (completion of the series of questionnaires may take up to six months).
- There is a history of ineffective communication and alienation among the participants.

D. Consultation

9. Interviews

Interviews are used to communicate in-depth with a small number of individuals. Interviewees would normally correspond with the identified publics. Such communication in-depth is often necessary to fully understand the needs and desires of a group and to understand how that group is affected by some aspect of the water quality management plan.

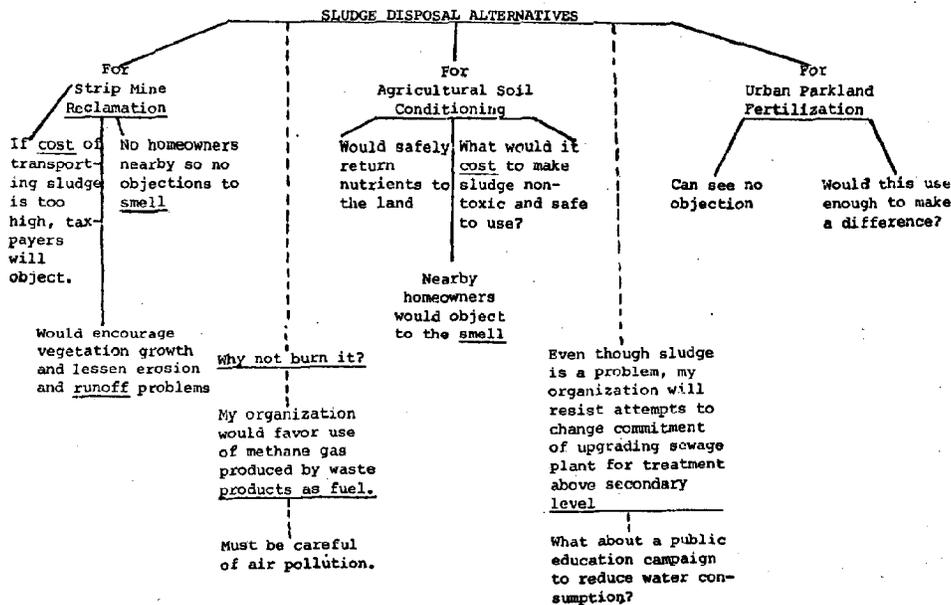
Ordinarily, an interview would be conducted according to a plan. The plan would indicate the general range of topics on which discussion is desired. The interviewee usually will add other topics he or she feels are relevant to the discussion.

EXAMPLE

Interviews

These topics are being used for lengthy interviews. The last one is diagrammed to show those areas (----) initiated by the interviewee. (Vice President, local chapter, Sierra Club)

- What are the issues that should be addressed in water quality management planning?
- How should water quality facilities be financed?
- How should the management agencies be structured?
- How is your constituency being affected by poor water quality?
- • How do you feel about the following three alternatives for the disposal of sludge in this area?



D. Consultation

10. Surveys

Surveys are useful tools to obtain information, but must be used carefully and sparingly. Two kinds of situations provide appropriate conditions for using a survey. Early in a study, when it is desired to assess general public attitudes and opinions about broad issues, a survey can be used to accurately and quickly perform such an assessment. Great precision is not needed in such a survey; thus, sample sizes can be small. Another favorable situation arises when a very specific question has been identified for which an assessment of public opinion is desired, and for which there is some reason to consider the public well-informed on the issue. From a public attitude/opinion standpoint, these are perhaps the only two situations where surveys can be profitably used. If information is desired on, e.g., recreation behavior or other behavioral information, a survey can be used at any time and will be the most reliable and inexpensive way to obtain the information.

Design and execution of a survey is a task for someone trained and experienced in doing it. If such persons are not on the staff, the design and supervision should be done by someone outside the agency. A poorly executed survey is of little use and can be counter-productive. The three general survey approaches are face-to-face interviewing (usually the best and most expensive), telephone interviewing (good for short interview and much less expensive), and mail surveys (difficult to do well, but useful and inexpensive).

E. Obstacles to Public Involvement

Various situations can occur in the planning and implementation process which will limit effective public involvement and hinder the atmosphere of open dialogue.

- Citizens believe their input won't be considered in making decisions or that decisions have already been made.

Solution: Promise and deliver replies to input. Publish reports of input in newsletter and include specific agency response. When possible, show how citizen input affected decisions. Keep updated report of citizen participation in depositories.

- Agency staff are reluctant to make all planning data and draft reports available to the public.

Solution: Stress agency attitude of openness and encourage staff to regard citizens as working partners. It is easier to amend a draft study following citizen input than to change a final report. Just as the agency hopes to encourage compromise among citizen groups, so must agency staff be open to criticism and able to change positions.

- Reports and data are so technical that citizens lose interest and stop participating.

Solution: Assess public technical sophistication by reading local newspapers. Have agency reports read by newspaper editor or uninvolved citizens to make sure they're understandable. Hire interpretive writer or train agency staff member to write comprehensive summaries of technical data.

- Agency staff feel they are "wasting time" in dealing with the public, and that the time schedule should not be delayed.

Solution: Stress mandate to encourage, assist and provide for public participation. Train staff in effective communication skills.

- Money for public participation runs out before study is completed.

Solution: Provide adequate (10% of total planning budget) funds and schedule expenditures. More money should be allocated for the beginning when the program is set up and for later phases when the most publics are involved.

- Citizens are frustrated by not knowing whom to contact or by being shuffled from person to person at the agency.

Solution: Clearly designate at least one individual to be responsible for the public involvement program. This person should be knowledgeable about the entire study. Make sure all staff members are aware of the value of citizen participation and are willing to spend time answering citizen questions.

- One group monopolizes agency time. Other groups are intimidated or feel closed out of the decision-making process.

Solution: Notify all interested or affected publics of meetings, committees, and other opportunities to participate. Follow up with personal contact to encourage participation. Assign staff to look out for non-participating public interests. Train staff in group management skills.

- Agency reluctance to include strenuous opponent in the planning process.

Solution: Include the opponent, giving him/her public credit for input. Opponents are much more liable to subvert the process and unduly influence decision-makers when they're not part of the planning effort. The opponent may be overemphasizing, but accurately stating a wider viewpoint of which the agency should be aware.

- Public participation isn't happening, despite agency efforts.

Solution: Conduct full scale study of the program including staff and citizen evaluation. Hire outside consultant to identify problem areas.

F. Evaluation

The amount and quality of public participation during the formulation of a regional plan must be reviewed and evaluated before state certification is given. The approving officials may reject the plan, suspend action, or require further public input if the degree of participation is found to be inadequate. In order to avoid jeopardizing approval of the final plan in this manner, monitoring and evaluation should be integral parts of the entire planning and implementation process. Evaluation should be undertaken by the agency staff, by the public, and, if necessary, by outside consultants on a continuing basis. Changes and adjustments to the public participation program can then be made to provide for and encourage a more active citizen role.

1. Agency Evaluation

Agency staff should set aside specific times for evaluation of the public participation program, but also should be ready to review the program whenever problems arise. One appropriate time for evaluation is at the end of each planning phase, when the staff can review what has taken place, and set goals for the next phase. While numbers, such as how many names are on the mailing list and how many people come to meetings, are not adequate yardsticks to evaluate public participation, they are one indication of public interest and agency effectiveness. A better method of evaluation is to pose questions and answer them completely. Each agency will likely have its own questions. Some of them might be similar to those below.

- Were the public participation objectives for the phase just past fully attained? If not, why not? Can they be attained during the next phase? Are the objectives for the next phase demanding but realistic?
- Has the agency provided information to the public which is understandable, complete and accessible? Has the information received from the public been useful? What type of input is needed now? How have citizen comments influenced planning alternatives and tentative decisions?
- Which publics have been participating? Are there others which ought to be and are not? Are certain publics assuming a dominant role? Are citizens initiating contact with the agency? Are contacts generally negative? Or productive?
- In public hearings, how many different groups come to testify? Does the testimony generally agree with input from the participating public? Or is new information given there for the first time?

This type of periodic assessment is critical to the success of a public participation program, which might otherwise slip into inactivity or superficiality. If deficiencies are found, corrective steps should be taken. Only then can the final plan reflect local preferences, be supported by citizens, and will the standards for public participation be met, facilitating local approval.

2. Public Evaluation

The public should be asked to evaluate the participation program. Participating publics have the most complete knowledge of how encouraged to participate they feel, and how easy that participation is made to be. Ongoing committees, such as the Citizens Advisory Committee should undertake periodic evaluation, similar to that described for the agency. Ad Hoc committees or workshops should distribute cards requesting evaluation of public involvement to date. Participants might be asked: Do you have difficulty understanding the information provided to you? Is it easy to obtain? Are the established ways of participating convenient and effective? Are there publics being left out? How could they be encouraged to participate? Has the agency been responsive to citizen input? Do you feel that citizens can affect the final decisions?

These evaluation cards can also be mailed out, enclosed in the newsletter, or distributed at exhibits and briefings. More formal evaluation in the form of a survey might be undertaken either by the agency staff or an outside specialist.

3. Outside Evaluation

Analysis of the media coverage given to the water quality management process will provide a form of outside evaluation. While specific questions have not been asked or answered, editorials, articles and letters to the editor provide clues as to how the wider public is evaluating the participation program. Discontented publics can be identified and brought into the process. Previously unexpressed community values may become media issues, and indicate a lack of effort in obtaining or supporting all points of view. Unresponsiveness to citizen input will not go unnoticed by the media. It is helpful to maintain a thorough collection of all relevant topics covered by the media, and much can be learned from their analysis.

If the public participation program is not going well -- apathy exists, hostile contacts are numerous, conflicts are impossible to resolve, outside consultants may be needed to evaluate the situation. Consultants have special expertise in designing surveys, analyzing program characteristics, and providing a neutral point of view.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bishop, Bruce A. Structuring Communications Programs For Public Participation in Water Resources Planning. Utah State Univ., Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Logan, Utah, and U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, May 1975. (NTIS AA - A012 280)

This report describes communication in water resources planning as the exchange of values information from the public and factual information from the planners. Techniques and methods for communication with the public are examined such as public meetings, community contacts, briefings, workshops, advisory committees, "show-me" tours, exhibits and more. There is a detailed chapter on the use of mass media. The report concludes with several examples of public participation programs which relate to environmental impact assessment and water quality management.

Brinch, Jeannette, Uses of Media: The Distribution System. The Conservation Foundation, 1717 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, 1975.

This paper gives a general review of the use of newsletters, newspapers, information brochures, radio, cable, public and commercial television, films, slides, and tapes to inform and motivate citizens to get involved in governmental decision-making. Examples of water related programs which have used media effectively are given. The evaluation of media effectiveness is emphasized.

Creighton, James L. The Use of Values: Public Participation in the Planning Process Synergy Consultation Services, 21341 Columbia Ave.: Cupertino, Calif., 95014.

Since a goal of public participation is to ensure that the full range of public values be incorporated in the planning process, planners must learn to recognize and deal with emotional value-laden contribution from the public. This paper explains the techniques of developing alternatives based on all major values positions held by the public. This approach ensures that the planner is not an advocate for some groups, and an adversary of others. It is also a clear communication to the public that the agency is responsive and accountable to all the publics.

Creighton, James L. Designing a Public Involvement Program Synergy Consulting Services, 21341 Columbia Ave.: Cupertino, Calif., 95014.

This four page paper describes seven basic planning phases, For each it lists tasks for planners, possible techniques to use, and the scope and nature of public involvement.

Hanchey, James R. Public Involvement in The Corps of Engineers Planning Process. U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources, Kingman Building, Fort Belvoir, Virginia, 22060 (NTIS AD A017 946)

The approach to public involvement program development suggested in this report relies on the concept that planning should consist of several sequential stages, each with definable decision points, and that explicit consideration of public viewpoints must be undertaken before decisions are made. Two chapters are especially useful; using meetings to obtain public input, and how to establish effective public information and education programs.

Old Colony Planning Council, Citizen Involvement in OCPC 208 Planning. A Progress Report. OCPC 232 Main Street, Brockton, Mass. 02401 Apr. "76.

This very detailed progress report discusses the OCPC public participation program to date. Fifteen mechanisms used by OCPC to get the public involved are explained including citizen committees, discussions with town/city officials, technical assistance to town governments, involvement of local schools, visits to problem areas with local citizens and others. Obstacles to 208 public participation, significant local issues and areawide problems as well as staff response to them are analyzed. Finally, the OCPC 208 public participation program is evaluated against its stated objectives.

Ragan, James F., Public Participation in Water Resources Planning: An Evaluation of the Programs of ISS Corps of Engineers Districts, U.S. Army Engineer Institute for Water Resources, Kingman Building, Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060 (NTIS AD A019 966).

This report examines the public involvement programs of fifteen Army Corps of Engineers field offices. First, the programs are described, and two are used as detailed case studies. The bulk of the report divides planning into five basic stages, gives guidance as to what could be done to involve the public at each stage, and finally describes what is being done by the Corps. An interesting last chapter describes the constraints on effective public participation both from the bureaucratic system, and from citizens themselves.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Guide to Public Involvement in Decision-Making, Inform and Involve, 12th and Independence, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20250 April 1974.

This booklet is written in a direct style and contains some especially useful sections. "Guides to Successful Public Involvement" stresses attitudes which planners must adopt if an atmosphere of cooperation with the public is to be established. "Analysis of Public Comments" outlines various methods of assembling and summarizing information from the public so that it is useful to the agency staff. Other sections include "Techniques for Obtaining Public Involvement", "Planning the Public Involvement Process", "Development of Alternatives" and "Evaluation".

Warner, Katharine P., Public Participation in Water Resources Planning: A State of the Arts Study of Public Participation in the Water Resources Planning Sector, Michigan Univ. Environmental Simulation Laboratory, Ann Arbor, Michigan, and US Natl Water Commission, Arlington, VA. July 1971. (NTIS PB204 245)

The Report reviews public participation activities and procedures utilized in governmental planning studies, particularly those dealing with water resources. Key dimensions include: identification of the public; functions and objectives for participatory activities; mechanisms for securing public involvement, and timing of participation within the planning process. A model for a participatory planning process is also proposed. A series of recommendations for agency program and institutional arrangement changes are included in the final chapter.

Willeke, Gene E., "Identification of Publics in Water Resources Planning", Journal of the Water Resources Planning and Management Division, Vol. 102, #WRI, April 1976, pp. 137-150.

This paper focuses on the identification of publics throughout the water quality management process. Some categories of publics are suggested, techniques for uncovering others are described, and the importance of reaching all groups is stressed.

NTIS address:

National Technical Information Service
U.S. Department of Commerce
5285 Port Royal Road
Springfield, Virginia 22161

WH 554

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Water Planning Division

401 M St., S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20460

Official Business



**COASTAL ZONE
INFORMATION CENTER**

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
EPA 335
FOURTH CLASS MAIL



If your address is incorrect, please change on the above label; tear off and return to the above address.

