

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
BUILDING STRONG COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS FOR A
SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES FUTURE**

Study Framework

GOAL

To describe how States approach their water planning for the purpose of identifying needs, challenges, gaps and opportunities for enhanced Federal support to States and regional entities for more integrated water resource management (IWRM).

CONCEPT OF PLAN

- **STUDY AND REPORT.** Conduct an objective study of State water plans and related documents and interviews with state water officials. Report findings in a summary report and present findings at regional conferences with key stakeholders.
- **COLLABORATE WITHIN FEDERAL FAMILY TO BUILD SUPPORT TOOLBOX.** Engage with partnering Federal agencies in a review of the resources each has to offer States and regional entities in enhancing their water planning and management, especially toward more integrated water resources management (IWRM). Summarize findings in a report and in a Support Toolbox that can be offered to States and others and voluntarily used.
- **PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS AND FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITIES BY STATES AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO USE TOOLBOX AND BUILD NATIONAL WILL TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND EMERGING WATER ISSUES.** Engage in discussions with State, Federal, regional, and non-governmental representatives and others at three regional and one national conferences on how to enhance water planning within and across States and regionally. Issue a collaborative report of each conference that summarizes the voices of participants for attention to improved water management regionally and nationally.

SCOPE OF EFFORT

1. Review and summarize the process and focus of State planning for the management of their water resources through an objective study. Create summary reports of State water plans and pertinent documents, including common themes and regional trends and needs. The results of this study will be submitted as a separate report to Headquarters, US Army Corps of Engineers.
2. Review and summarize in a report major water management activities, especially toward integrated water resources management, of Federal agencies with water management responsibilities. Collaborate with partnering Federal water agencies to continue a dialogue about

developing a “Federal support toolbox” to assist the States in their water planning and management and to reduce duplication of Federal efforts across agencies. Work with Federal agencies to build a toolbox of support mechanisms to foster enhanced State water planning. This toolbox may contain authorities, policies, programs, tools, methodologies, lessons learned, data, and current funding mechanisms that Federal agencies may leverage to provide planning assistance and technical support to States who desire planning and technical assistance. Study findings may also illuminate best practices of States that can be added to the toolbox to enhance water resources planning and management within and across states and regionally.

3. Report on findings of the study of State water planning at regional conferences where stakeholders – State water officials, Federal water agencies, regional water management entities, and non-governmental organizations – will have the opportunity to discuss the findings, to identify opportunities for collaboration, and perhaps to identify gaps and opportunities for enhanced Federal support to states’ water planning and management. Discussions of study findings at regional conferences may help the States and regional entities identify challenges, gaps, and opportunities for water management in the future and ways in which the Federal family may better support States in their water planning and management. State and Federal agencies will be able to develop strategies for collaborative problem solving and strategic communications that elevate water infrastructure and water resources sustainability to a national level of imp

The results of the study will help to address the following:

1. Summarize States’ visions for addressing their water challenges.
2. Describe how States use their state water plans to manage their water resources and how their state water plans incorporate or strive for IWRM.
3. Illuminate unmet water resources needs that suit enhanced Federal assistance opportunities (i.e., gaps in planning, sharing of models and data, etc.) both within States and across regions. Deserving special attention are water resources problems suited to application of systems approaches to promote integrated water resources planning and management.
4. Identify opportunities for Federal agencies to play different roles (facilitator, integrator, etc.) in supporting State and regional IWRM and recommend appropriate governmental roles and responsibilities to address water challenges.
5. Develop contacts and identify opportunities for future collaboration among States, regional entities, Federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations that facilitate a strategic national discussion about IWRM and that identify educational opportunities in support of IWRM at all governmental levels.

KEY OUTCOMES

1. **PROVIDE A BIG PICTURE OF WATER PLANNING IN THE U.S.** Describe the processes, focal areas, challenges, and successes of States in their water planning and management based on an objective reporting of their information and interviews with selected State water officials. This will provide a comprehensive picture of water resources planning throughout the United States.

2. **LISTEN TO STATES VOICE THEIR KEY WATER NEEDS.** Identify areas in water resource planning and management where States and regional entities report that their priority water needs are not being met.
3. **HIGHLIGHT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORE INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.** Identify areas where more integrated or comprehensive water resources planning and management within and across states is possible and advantageous.
4. **HIGHLIGHT FEDERAL CAPABILITIES TO SUPPORT STATES TODAY.** Develop a list of areas where the Federal government might provide enhanced support to States and regions, especially for more integrated water resources planning and management.
5. **IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE COLLABORATION.** Identify opportunities for partnerships among States, regional entities, Federal agencies, and NGOs to more effectively address comprehensive and integrated state-wide and regional water resource and planning needs. States may opt to collaborate with others as desired.
6. **PRODUCE INFORMATIVE REPORTS.** Develop reports (1) summarizing how States plan for their current and future water resources management, (2) how the Federal water agencies address water management and can enhance water management through aligned efforts and a robust Toolbox of Support, (3) how key stakeholders propose enhancing attention and support for addressing regional and national water challenges – perhaps in more integrated ways -- based upon discussions at three regional conferences and one national conference.