



State Agency Participation in 1W1P

A key element of BWSR’s vision for One Watershed, One Plan is to align local water planning with state strategies. This requires both meaningful participation by the state as well as a local responsibility to invite, include, and incorporate state agencies and their feedback into the planning process. This guidance document provides a general overview of the roles and responsibilities for local partnerships and state agencies including BWSR, DNR, MDA, MDH, MPCA, and the Met Council.

The value of state agency involvement

Comprehensive watershed management plans are locally led, locally owned plans. While the state’s role is advisory, it is not optional (see [One Watershed, One Plan Operating Procedures 2.1](#), Section IV.A.1.c.iii). Involving state agencies can benefit local governments by directing state implementation actions in a way that helps achieve local priorities (and vice versa). State agency involvement will also ensure the most recent and applicable data and information are used to develop the plan. Finally, aligning with state priorities will also help local governments tap into state funding.

Roles and responsibilities for state and local government

State agencies are involved in One Watershed, One Plan in two primary ways: as members of the Advisory Committee and as a plan review authority**. The table below summarizes roles for state and local participants when it comes to including state agencies in the locally led planning process.

A note about workloads: The ability of a particular state agency to participate in a given watershed may vary according to a variety of factors including agency budget, proximity of staff, and the staff person’s primary job responsibilities. Agency staff should work with their supervisors, who may coordinate across executive branch agencies, to manage expectations and maximize effectiveness of agency participation.

	Plan Element or Step	Local Partnership roles for including state agencies	State Agency roles for participating
Advisory Committee Role	Establish Advisory Committee	Invite state agencies to participate as a full advisory committee member.	Assign one person to be the initial/main point of contact for your agency.
	Advisory Committee meetings	Include agencies in discussions where plan content is being developed or deliberated. Set clear agendas, distributed in advance, so members can prepare and bring the right people along.	Participate meaningfully in advisory committee meetings and discussions. Bring agency subject matter experts in as appropriate/needed.

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Advisory Committee Role		Planning Work Group: The planning work group (local partners and consultants) meets regularly to discuss process and logistics . Discussion should focus on “what needs to happen next” to move the planning effort forward.	Interagency Watershed Core Team: State agencies may meet independently to improve the state’s participation. Teams should clarify state priorities and resolve confusing or conflicting language or points of view. They may also submit “shared” comments from multiple agencies reflecting a single point of view from the state. BWSR convenes the core team during plan development.
	Prioritization and plan development	Consider state priorities as local priorities are being developed. When state and local priorities do not align, clearly communicate why not. Consider acknowledging the priority (or difference) in the plan. Select strategies and actions that will result in multiple benefits toward both local and state goals.	Be knowledgeable about state strategies* with which the local plan can/should align. Clearly communicate state data, tools, and priorities in a way that is relevant to local concerns and implementation actions. Submit comments in a timely way to avoid costly back-tracking or delays in the process. Clarify and commit to the state’s contributions as part of a local/state implementation partnership (could include projects, programs, policies, and financial/technical help). Focus on helping shape and identify how locally-selected implementation actions can be measured and will achieve multiple benefits (rather than whether your agency’s priority issue(s)/concern(s) were ranked highly).
	Policy Committee and public hearings	Use agency staff as resources to communicate data, issues, and goals to the public and policy makers.	Be available to present data, issues, and goals to the public and policy makers so that participants base their decisions on a solid understanding of the issues and the science.
Plan Review Authority Role	Initial Comment Letter	Invite agency to provide initial comments.	Clearly communicate what data and information your agency has and how it is relevant to the local process, your priority issues and concerns, and your commitment to participation.
	60-day Comment Period	Respond to comments in a timely manner.	Clearly communicate practical and constructive comments that will help strengthen the plan.***
	Final Plan Review**	Commit to an ongoing partnership for plan implementation	Clearly communicate your agency’s recommendation to BWSR for plan approval. Commit to an ongoing partnership for plan implementation.

*See [Using WRAPS Reports in Local Water Planning](#) and [State Strategies Summary](#).

**Note that the EQB is a Plan Review Authority but is only expected to participate in the final plan review step.

*** See [Best Practices for Agency Comments on Water Plans](#) for more details about the best way to provide comments.