

Jordan Lake Targeted Watershed Project Study Charter

1.0 Overview

The Mid-Carolina Council of Government (MCCOG) and the Cape Fear River Assembly (CFRA) received a U.S. EPA Targeted Watershed Grant to conduct a study and demonstration project of innovative approaches to watershed management. The project entails developing, demonstrating, and evaluating an innovative water quality trading program for the Cape Fear River Basin in North Carolina. The project will be focused on the Jordan Lake watershed and will provide an example of integrating urban stormwater management into a credit trading and watershed permitting program.

The project will explore and demonstrate whether water quality trading options in the Jordan Lake watershed could help meet watershed goals more quickly and cost-effectively than through traditional approaches alone. This project will build on the diverse partnerships the CFRA has already established and will result in a program that will protect the Cape Fear River Basin's valuable water resources while allowing for continued economic growth.

The project will be conducted in six steps including:

1. Visioning and Project Chartering
2. Designing the Trading Program
3. Developing an Implementation Framework
4. Evaluating and Enhancing the Existing Monitoring Program
5. Demonstrating the Trading, Implementation, and Monitoring Frameworks
6. Expanding a Trading Program into other portions of the Cape Fear River Basin

2.0 Chartering Process and Components

This charter serves as the project framework and was developed under step one: Visioning and Project Chartering. The Jordan Lake Watershed stakeholders group, made up of representatives from various government agencies and the private sector, was formed and serves as the public outreach body.

Two chartering meetings of the stakeholders groups were held to introduce and receive feedback on the project; develop vision, goals, and objectives, and identify interest in participating in the pilot study. The meetings were attended a by diverse group of stakeholder representatives, and participants provided significant feedback and support for the project. The meetings were facilitated and stakeholder input was documented in written

summaries. Input from each of the two meetings was used specifically to refine the charter components and design the trading program development process. Consensus was obtained on the project vision, goals and successful project outcomes.

3.0 Chartering Components

The primary components of the charter include:

1. Project Vision
2. Project Goals
3. Successful Project Outcomes
4. Project Roles and Responsibilities
5. Project Structure
6. Project Communications
7. Project Schedule

3.1 Project Vision

To develop, demonstrate, and evaluate an innovative water quality trading program for the Jordan Lake watershed that will enable more cost-effective water quality restoration, protection and implementation of the TMDL. This program will provide a model that can be evaluated for application in other watersheds within the Cape Fear River Basin, in North Carolina, and other areas of the country.

3.2 Project Goals

- Develop a trading and watershed permitting framework for the Jordan Lake watershed that builds on past successes in North Carolina and around the nation;
- Improve and protect water quality in the Jordan Lake watershed;
- Develop a trading and watershed permitting framework that provides point source and non-point source discharges with options for implementing the TMDL in a more cost-effective manner;
- Include all point and non-point sources in the trading and watershed permitting framework including urban stormwater and highway runoff;
- Demonstrate the utility of the trading and watershed permitting framework in selected watersheds; and
- Evaluate this trading framework and document lessons learned for application in the remainder of the Cape Fear River Basin and other watersheds around the country.

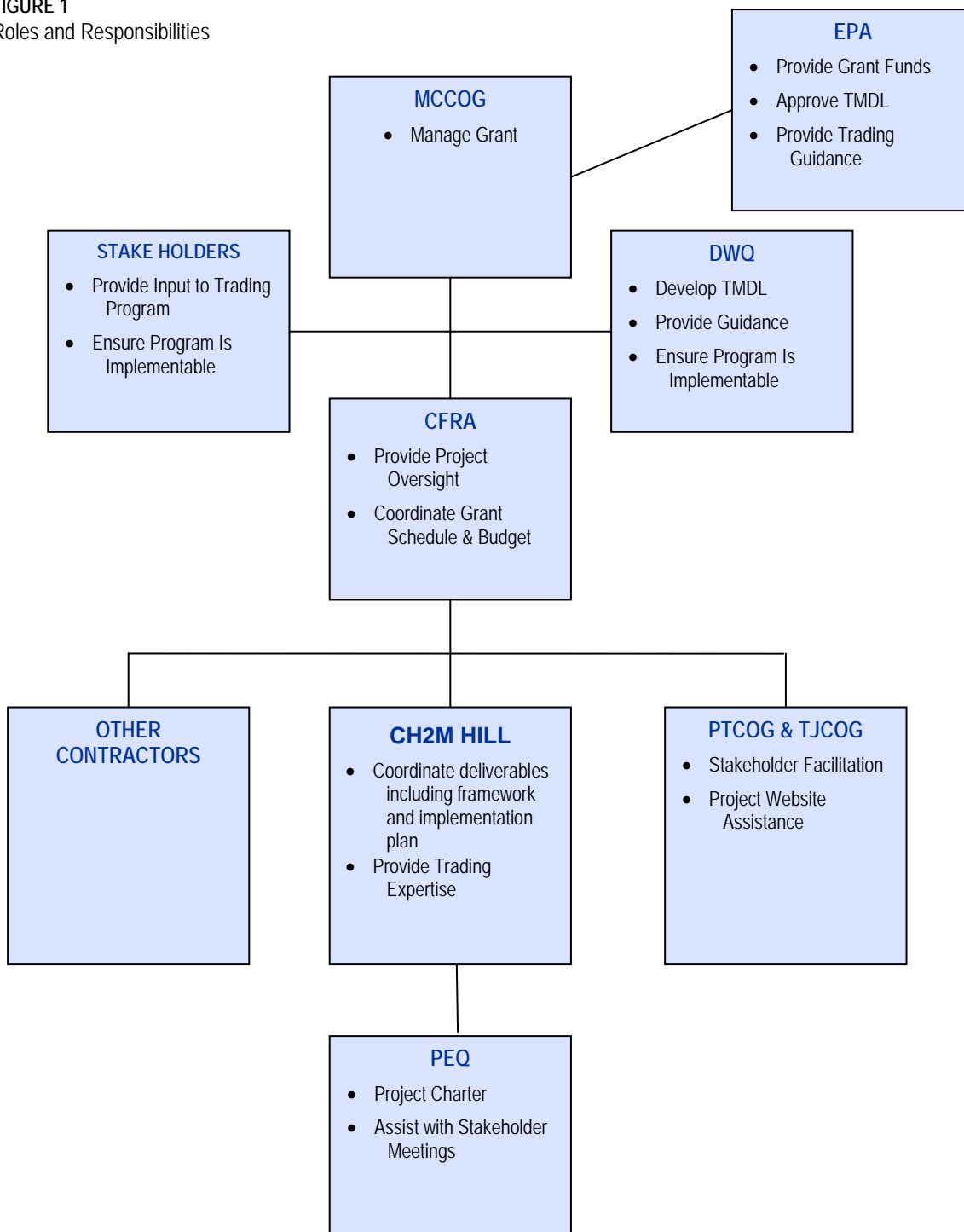
3.3 Successful Project Outcomes

- Development and inclusion of a tool which enables the regulated community to evaluate options for meeting the TMDL requirements;
- Trading framework provides more flexibility for the regulated community within the Jordan Lake watershed than conventional TMDL implementation;
- Acceptance by NCDWQ, USEPA, and the public;
- Protection, maintenance, and enhancement of water quality;
- Inclusion of process for documenting trades and tracking each participant's pollutant credits;
- Stakeholder participation in pilot program development and watershed trades; and
- Project completion within the schedule and budget established by USEPA.

3.4 Project Roles and Responsibilities

Defining the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the process is very important to the achievement of the vision and goals. The following organizational chart (Figure 1) identifies the role of each stakeholder involved in the trading program.

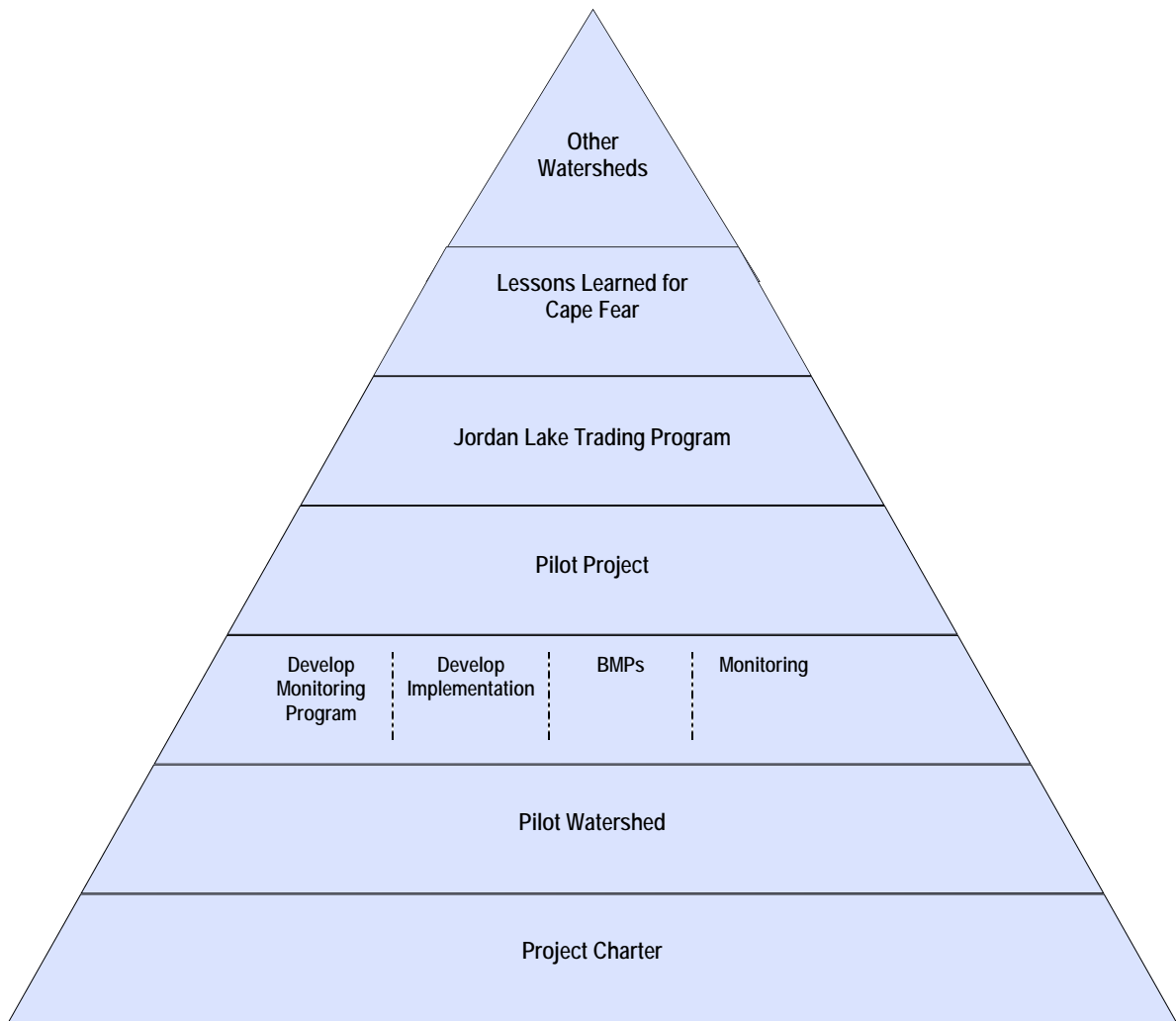
FIGURE 1
Roles and Responsibilities



3.5 Project Structure

Figure 2 summarizes the project structure. This project charter will provide the basis for the project and guide future decisions. For example, the project vision, goals, and successful outcomes will be used, in part, to guide the pilot sub-watershed(s) selection. They will also be used to guide the development of the pilot project while being cognizant of the larger goals of applying the trading tools and program to the entire Jordan Lake watershed and eventually documenting the lessons learned for application to other areas of the Cape Fear River Basin and other watersheds.

FIGURE 2
Project Structure



3.6 Project Communications

Communications is a very important component of the trading program’s process and is the key to its success. Since acceptance by USEPA, NCDWQ, and the public is vital, it is important that communication to all stakeholders on project progress be provided and a forum be established for feedback on the project approach and products. A series of stakeholder group meetings will be conducted during the study period. In addition, smaller group meetings with pilot participants will be held (these meetings are open to other stakeholders), and a project website will be used to post all meeting announcements, and project related information.

3.7 Project Schedule

The project schedule covers a 17-month period and the study elements are highlighted in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3
Project Schedule

