

NORTH DAKOTA NONPOINT SOURCE POLLUTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



**Guidance for Writing Watershed & Support
Project Implementation Plans (PIPs)
July 2026**

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
PIP Outline	5
I. Cover Page	6
II. Location Map	7
III. Background & Purpose.....	8
1. Geographical Context.....	8
2. Community Value.....	9
3. Beneficial Use Impairment.....	9
4. NPS Program Goals.....	10
5. Project Context.....	12
IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources.....	13
V. Pollutant Load Reductions.....	14
VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks.....	15
VII. Personnel Needs & Responsibilities.....	17
VIII. Schedule	18
IX. Evaluation Criteria.....	19
X. Budget & Budget Narrative	20
1. Budget Tables.....	20
2. Budget Narrative	21
3. Project Collaboration.....	22
XI. Monitoring.....	23
1. Water Quality Monitoring.....	23
2. Photo Point Monitoring.....	23
Appendix A: Nine-Element Requirements.....	24
Appendix B: 2003/2026 PIP Guide Crosswalk.....	26
Appendix C: Cover Page Template.....	28
Appendix D: Task and Output Schedule	29
Appendix E: Budget Tables.....	30

Introduction

The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) Nonpoint Source (NPS) Pollution Management Program distributes grant funds to local projects that facilitate the implementation of North Dakota's NPS Pollution Management Program Management Plan. To apply for these funds, project sponsors develop detailed Project Implementation Plans (PIPs) to submit for review and approval by NDDEQ, the NPS Task Force and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This document provides guidance on how to complete the PIP and the information that is required.

PIPs are focused planning documents developed to guide restoration and/or protection activities within a defined project area. PIPs are intended to identify priority water quality concerns, describe management measures needed to address those concerns, and provide a framework for implementing watershed or support projects that achieve measurable water quality improvements and protect designated beneficial uses.

It is recommended that applicants communicate regularly with NDDEQ NPS Program staff during the PIP development process.

Applicability of this Guidance

This PIP guide replaces "Specific Criteria to Address in Watershed Project Implementation Plans" dated 3/26/03 and is intended for watershed implementation projects and support projects funded under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. These projects must contribute to the restoration and protection of water quality through watershed-based planning, implementation of best management practices, technical support activities, or other actions that advance nonpoint source pollution management objectives.

Watershed projects are the primary focus of the Section 319 Program and are designed to achieve measurable water quality improvements and/or reductions in pollution loading to waterbodies through the installation of conservation practices, restoration activities, and other watershed-based management measures. Alternatively, Section 319 funds can fund Support projects which are designed to assist with technical assistance activities including watershed planning, modeling, development of technical tools, training, demonstrations, and other efforts that strengthen the state's ability to implement effective watershed restoration and protection activities.

This guide is not intended for Information and Education (I&E) projects whose primary purpose is public outreach, awareness, or education. A project whose primary scope is I&E and generally does not involve implementation of watershed restoration measures or watershed-based planning elements are required to have a work plan. Required elements of a work plan differ from a PIP and separate guidance is available for those projects. Conversely, Watershed and Support projects will include I&E components to communicate the benefits of adopting BMPs and encourage participation. These components will be included as tasks supporting the overall implementation strategy.

Incorporating Existing Information

PIPs are based on the 9 key elements of a watershed-based plan (see box at right). Depending on the project, these elements may be developed directly within the PIP or incorporated by reference from existing watershed planning documents and resources (See Appendix A).

The following documents may be available:

Watershed Characteristics

- ❖ Developed by NDDEQ staff, generally at the HUC-8 watershed scale.
- ❖ Provides background information on watershed conditions, land use, hydrology, and natural resource characteristics.

Water Quality Summaries/Lake Factsheets

- ❖ Developed by NDDEQ staff for the specific waterbody or watershed of interest.
- ❖ Based on recent water quality data.

Integrated Report

- ❖ Developed by NDDEQ and updated biennially in accordance with Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.
- ❖ Provides assessment unit information and serves as a primary source for identifying water quality concerns and restoration priorities.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or Advance Restoration Plans (ARPs) (where applicable)

- ❖ Provide pollutant source assessments, pollutant loading information (where available), pollutant reduction targets or restoration goals, and implementation strategies to restore or protect water quality.

Previous Phase PIPs

- ❖ For subsequent phases of ongoing projects most if not all the elements are addressed in the previous PIP. If the previous PIP was organized under the 2003 PIP guide, the crosswalk included in Appendix B shows where the sections are found in this guidance.

Nine minimum elements to be included in watershed plans

1. Identify causes and sources of pollution
2. Estimate pollutant loading into the watershed and the expected load reductions
3. Describe management measures that will achieve load reductions and targeted critical areas
4. Estimate amounts of technical and financial assistance and the relevant authorities needed to implement the plan
5. Develop an information/education component
6. Develop a project schedule
7. Describe the interim, measurable milestones
8. Identify indicators to measure progress
9. Develop a monitoring component

Together, these resources may provide some or all the information needed to address certain PIP elements. Project sponsors may incorporate existing information by reference where appropriate, supplement available information as needed, or develop new analyses where no suitable information exists.

Reminder: Consult NPS Program staff early and often during PIP development.

PIP Outline

All PIPs should include the following sections, in this order:

- I. Cover Page (Template)
- II. Location Map
- III. Background & Purpose
 1. Geographical Context
 2. Community Value
 3. Beneficial Use Impairment
 4. NPS Program Goals
 5. Project Context
- IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources
- V. Pollutant Load Reductions
- VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks
- VII. Personnel Needs and Responsibilities
- VIII. Schedule
 - Task and Output Schedule Table (Template)
- IX. Evaluation Criteria
- X. Budget & Budget Narrative
 1. Budget Tables (Template)
 2. Budget Narrative
 3. Project Collaboration
- XI. Monitoring
 1. Water Quality Monitoring
 2. Photo Point Monitoring

Appendices: Additional documents such as water quality summaries and letters of support.

This guidance steps through each section and includes:

- ❖ what information must be included,
- ❖ where existing information may be obtained (if applicable),
- ❖ required templates, and
- ❖ examples, which can be expanded upon.

I. Cover Page

The template provided must be used. See Appendix C and

www.deq.nd.gov/publications/WQ/3_WM/NPS/Grants/Watershed&SupportPIP_Template.docx

- ❖ Customize the document header. Example: Green Creek Souris River Watershed Project Implementation Plan
1. Provide a descriptive unique project title.
 - a. Examples: Green Creek Souris River Watershed Implementation Project or Green Creek Riparian Area Grazing Improvements Project.
 - b. Contact the NPS Program staff to determine if “Phase II” etc. is appropriate to include in the title.
 2. Include the lead project sponsor organization name and address.
 - a. Include the project coordinator name, phone and email. The coordinator will be the primary point of contact for the project.
 3. Indicate the river basin the project is in.
 4. List the HUCs that make up the project area.
 - a. For most watershed-scale projects this will be a single HUC-10 or multiple HUC-12s. This will match the Location Map (Section II)
 5. List the Waterbody ID(s) (Assessment Unit(s), or AU(s) which are being targeted for water quality protection and/or restoration with this project.
 6. Select the NPS Management Program goal(s) this project will address.
 - a. This will match Section III.4
 7. Provide a concise description of the project.
 - a. Maximum 400 characters. Focus on the top line takeaway: what will be accomplished as a result of successfully completing all tasks.
 8. Budget Summary

- a. FY_____ 319 Funds = (a) on budget tables
- b. Match Funds = (b) + (c) + (d) on budget tables
- c. Total Project Cost = (e) on budget tables
- d. Other Federal Funds = (f) on budget tables

NOTES: COVER PAGE

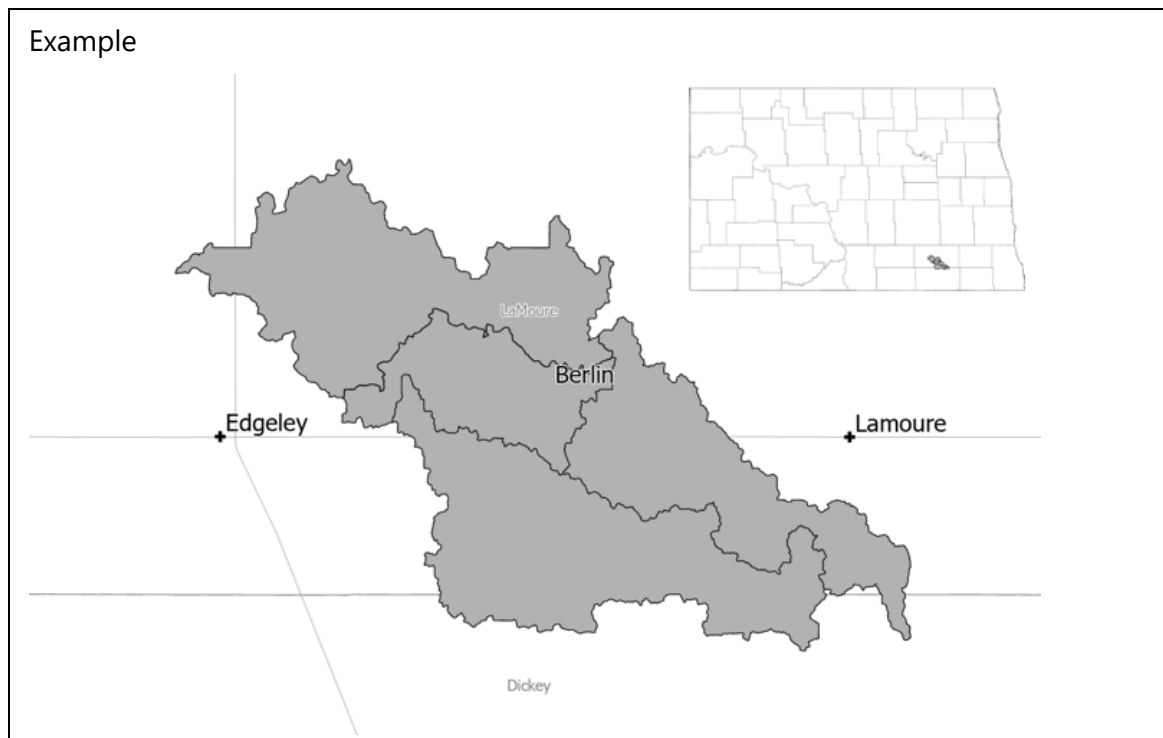
- ❖ The cover page template must be filled in completely.
- ❖ Do not edit the template. Do not use more than one page.
- ❖ Insert a page break before Section II.

II. Location Map

The location map should directly follow the cover page. It should be oriented (portrait or landscape) in the manner that best fits the document and illustrates the project area.

It may be presented as a projection, inset or similar format to show where the watershed or work to be done is located within the state. It should be relatively simple, clean, and readable. Features illustrated on the location map generally should be limited to the boundary of the project area, delineation of the HUC-12 boundaries, and highlighting landmarks such as county lines or cities.

More detailed maps specific to the pertinent subject matter (e.g., topography, soil type, facility locations, stream systems) may be inserted elsewhere in appropriate sections of the document. It is important that all maps be clean, readable, and understandable. It is encouraged to provide additional maps rather than clutter one map with too much information.



NOTES: LOCATION MAP

- ❖ The location map should fill the whole page – use landscape page orientation if needed.
- ❖ Insert a page break before Section III.

III. Background & Purpose

This section provides the necessary background information to put the project in perspective of what actions are needed, what has already been done, and how the project supports the North Dakota NPS Management Plan. Information to provide includes the following:

1. Geographical Context

Provide a narrative description of the geographical extent (drainage area) of the project. Add additional maps if needed. Include size, land cover/land use, topography, and any other landscape features of note.

Example: *The Green Creek Watershed encompasses approximately 125,000 acres in north-central North Dakota and drains to the Souris River near the City of Town. The watershed consists of a*

mixture of cropland, pastureland, rural farmsteads, and scattered wetlands. Topography ranges from gently rolling uplands to steeper stream corridors adjacent to Green Creek and its tributaries.

NOTES: GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

- ❖ Much of this information comes from the Watershed Characteristics report and can be incorporated by reference.

2. Community Value

What value or interest does the waterbody/watershed provide to the local community and/or the intended use? (Recreation, flood control, habitat, economy, etc.) Use local knowledge and information gathered during stakeholder engagements to provide 1-2 paragraphs.

Example: The Green Creek Watershed provides important environmental, recreational, and economic benefits to local residents and landowners. The watershed supports agricultural production, which serves as the primary economic driver in the area, while also providing habitat for fish, wildlife, waterfowl, and pollinator species. Green Creek and its associated wetlands help store runoff, reduce downstream flooding, and contribute to groundwater recharge. The creek corridor is also used for recreational activities such as hunting, wildlife viewing, and seasonal fishing opportunities.

Example: Lake Holiday is an important recreational and natural resource for the local community, supporting boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and wildlife viewing opportunities throughout the year. During stakeholder meetings, residents consistently identified the lake as a community asset that contributes significantly to local quality of life and regional tourism. Stakeholders also identified harmful algal blooms (HABs) as a growing concern affecting the long-term health and usability of Lake Holiday. Residents reported that recurring blooms have reduced recreational opportunities, diminished aesthetic value, and raised concerns regarding potential risks to human health, pets, and livestock.

NOTES: COMMUNITY VALUE

- ❖ Much of this information will come from stakeholder engagement and local knowledge.

3. Beneficial Use Impairment

In this section, summarize the current impairment status of the waterbody or watershed based on the most recent Integrated Report or potential concerns indicated in the Water Quality

Summary. The purpose of this section is to identify the beneficial use(s) that are impaired, threatened, or targeted for protection and provide a current snapshot of water quality conditions.

Example: Green Creek (Assessment Units ND 10160003-032-S_00, ND 10160003-034-S_00, and ND 10160003-035-S_00) is listed in the North Dakota Integrated Report as impaired for recreation use due to elevated E. coli bacteria concentrations. Monitoring conducted between 2002 and 2007 documented a geometric mean fecal coliform concentration of 179 CFU/100 mL, with 32 percent of samples exceeding the applicable water quality criterion. Recent monitoring conducted in 2024 and 2025 indicates that E. coli exceedances continue to occur during portions of the recreation season. Additional information regarding assessment results and water quality conditions is provided in the Water Quality Summary (Appendix X).

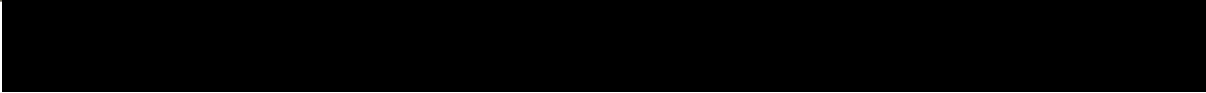
Example: Lake Holiday is currently listed in the North Dakota Integrated Report as fully supporting its designated beneficial uses and is not identified as impaired. However, recent water quality monitoring conducted between 2022 and 2025 indicates increasing concentrations of total phosphorus and chlorophyll-a during the summer recreation season. In addition, Lake Holiday is a frequent subject of Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) reports, averaging approximately four public reports annually between 2020 and 2025. While most microcystin samples collected during this period were below the recreational standard, in 2024 samples with microcystin concentrations exceeding the recreational standard were collected, indicating a situation potentially harmful to human health. These findings suggest that although the lake currently supports its designated uses, nutrient enrichment and recurring HAB activity present an increasing risk to recreational use and water quality. Additional information regarding water quality trends and assessment findings is provided in the Water Quality Summary (Appendix X).

NOTES: BENEFICIAL USE IMPAIRMENT

- ❖ Reference the applicable Integrated Report, Water Quality Summary, TMDL, or other assessment document as applicable.

4. NPS Program Goals

In this section, clearly tie this project to the NPS Program Management Plan. At minimum, list each of the goals “checked” on the Cover Page Box 6 (see box next page) and provide one or two sentences of how this project supports each goal.



Goals of the North Dakota NPS Program

Goal 1: Water Quality Restoration and Protection. North Dakota's surface and groundwater resources are restored and protected so that designated beneficial uses are fully supported and resilient to the impacts of nonpoint source pollution.

Goal 2: Watershed Planning and Management. Nonpoint source pollution in North Dakota is identified, understood, and addressed using assessment, monitoring, modeling, spatial analysis tools and data-driven watershed planning.

Goal 3: Local Capacity and Partnerships. Local partners, watershed organizations, conservation professionals, and communities have the capacity, technical support, and resources needed to successfully plan and implement watershed-based or impact focused nonpoint source pollution management projects.

Goals 4: Public Awareness. Producers, landowners, communities, and the public understand the causes and impacts of nonpoint source pollution and actively participate in protecting and improving water quality.

Goal 5: Nutrient Reduction and Landscape Management. Nutrient management and landscape practices across North Dakota are improved to reduce nutrient losses to surface and groundwater and to support the objectives of the North Dakota Nutrient Reduction Strategy.



Example: This project directly supports NPS Program Goal 3: Local Capacity and Partnerships by increasing the capacity of local watershed organizations, Soil Conservation Districts, and other conservation partners to address streambank erosion and riparian degradation by providing technical assistance and site-specific bioengineered designs for restoration projects throughout North Dakota. Engineering plans developed through this project will help project sponsors overcome technical and financial barriers that often limit implementation of riparian restoration practices.

Example: This project directly supports NPS Program Goal 1: Water Quality Restoration and Protection. Water quality monitoring conducted between 2002 and 2007 identified elevated fecal coliform concentrations in Green Creek, resulting in development of a fecal coliform TMDL in 2009.

Recent monitoring conducted in 2024 and 2025 indicates that bacteria impairments persist, particularly during June and July. This project will work with livestock producers to install livestock exclusion fencing, alternative watering systems, and rotational grazing infrastructure. These practices are expected to reduce direct deposition of manure to streams and decrease bacteria transport during runoff events, supporting long-term restoration of recreational beneficial uses in Green Creek.

Example: This project directly supports NPS Program Goal 2: Watershed Planning and Management by utilizing the North Dakota PTMApp to identify and prioritize areas within the Spring River Watershed that have the highest potential to contribute sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus runoff to surface waters. PTMApp outputs will be combined with local stakeholder input to identify priority areas for conservation practice implementation.

5. Project Context

This section describes similar projects that have been (or are being) implemented in the area that relate to this project. Briefly summarize other related projects discussed during stakeholder engagement or acquired from other local knowledge sources.

REQUIRED: If this project is a subsequent phase of an ongoing project, the status and accomplishments of the previous project phase(s) must be summarized.

Example: The Green Creek Phase II project builds upon previous restoration efforts completed with the Phase I project from 2020-2025. Phase I practices installed included 135 acres of cover crops, 6 acres of critical area planting, 4,500 feet of fencing, 22 acres of forage and biomass planting, 625 feet of livestock use area protection, 204 acres of prescribed grazing, 66.7 acres of riparian buffers, 8 waste management systems, and 1 livestock watering facility. According to EPA's Grants Reporting and Tracking System (GRTS), these conservation practices were estimated to reduce annual nutrient loading by approximately 27,894 pounds of nitrogen and 8,833 pounds of phosphorus.

IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources

This section identifies the pollutants, stressors, and source areas that will be addressed by the project. This section is the “bridge” between the current condition of the watershed and the water quality improvements that will result from the project.

Discuss the following:

- ❖ What pollutant(s) or stressor(s) will the project address?
- ❖ What are the likely sources of those pollutants or stressors?
- ❖ What land uses, activities, or watershed conditions contribute to those sources?
- ❖ Summarize pollutant loading estimates, source assessments, PTMAApp analyses, TMDL findings, or other technical information used to identify and prioritize sources.

Example: The primary pollutant of concern in Green Creek is E. coli bacteria, which has resulted in impairment of recreational beneficial uses. Likely pollutant sources include livestock access to streams, manure application areas, and runoff from farmsteads and agricultural lands. Agriculture is the dominant land use within the watershed, with approximately 70 percent of the area in cropland and an additional 20 percent in pasture and hayland, creating multiple pathways for bacteria transport during runoff events. Water quality monitoring has documented frequent E. coli exceedances during the recreation season, particularly following precipitation events, identifying agricultural runoff and livestock-related sources as priority areas for project implementation.

Example: The primary pollutants of concern in the Little Sage Creek are sediment and E. coli bacteria, which contribute to degraded water quality during runoff events. Likely pollutant sources include streambank erosion, direct livestock access to streams, and manure deposited in riparian areas. Approximately 90 percent of the watershed is managed as rangeland and pasture, and cattle grazing activities near streams have been identified as important contributors to these sources. Field assessments and discussions with stakeholders have identified several stream reaches with unstable banks and concentrated livestock use that have been prioritized for treatment due to their potential to deliver pollutants directly to surface waters.

Example: The primary pollutant of concern in Lake Holiday is phosphorus, which contributes to nutrient enrichment and recurring harmful algal blooms. Likely pollutant sources include nutrients released from aging or failing onsite wastewater treatment systems located near the shoreline. Numerous seasonal residences, many of them original cabins from when the area was developed in the 1970's, rely on aging septic systems, increasing the likelihood that nutrients may reach surface waters through groundwater pathways.

NOTES: POLLUTANTS AND POLLUTANT SOURCES

- ❖ The examples should be expanded on.

V. Pollutant Load Reductions

This section quantifies the pollutant load reductions expected from implementation of the project, as calculated by the specific BMPs to be implemented. Where an EPA-approved plan establishes pollutant load reduction targets (such as an approved TMDL), summarize the applicable targets and explain how the project contributes toward achieving them.

- ❖ BMPs listed must be selected from those practices described in the NPS BMP Guide.
- ❖ Amounts of BMPs to be implemented should be reasonable and justified.
- ❖ Note the tool used to estimate load reductions (e.g. PLET, PTMApp). If you need assistance in selecting the appropriate tool or quantifying the pollutant load reductions contact NPS Program Staff. Any load estimation tool or methodology that has not been previously approved for use by the NPS Program must be reviewed and approved by NPS Program Staff prior to use.

REQUIRED: Conclude this section using the required statement for either a waterbody with an approved load reduction target or a waterbody without an approved load reduction, as appropriate:

Option 1 (Waterbody with an EPA-Approved Load Reduction Target)

The practices proposed in this project are expected to reduce [pollutant] loading by approximately [XX units/year], representing approximately [XX%] of the pollutant load reduction target established in the [name of applicable EPA-approved plan]. This project supports implementation of that plan and contributes measurable progress toward restoring beneficial uses and achieving applicable water quality standards.

Option 2 (No EPA-Approved Load Reduction Target)

No EPA-approved plan has established pollutant load reduction targets for this waterbody. The estimated [pollutant] load reductions presented above represent the reductions expected from implementation of the proposed practices and provide a measurable basis for evaluating project accomplishments. These reductions contribute toward improving or protecting water quality and may support future watershed planning or development of watershed restoration goals.

Example: The proposed project will implement 300 acres of cover crops, 150 acres of nutrient management, and 50 acres of riparian buffers within priority source areas identified through watershed assessments and PTMApp analyses. Based on [pollutant reduction estimation method], these practices are expected to reduce total nitrogen loading by approximately 1,850 pounds per year, total phosphorus loading by 620 pounds per year, and sediment loading by 240 tons per year. The [name of applicable EPA-approved plan] has established pollutant load reduction targets necessary to restore the beneficial uses of this waterbody. The practices proposed in this project are expected to reduce total phosphorus loading by approximately 620 pounds per year, representing approximately 7.5% of the applicable load reduction target. This project supports implementation of the approved restoration strategy and contributes measurable progress toward restoring beneficial uses and achieving applicable water quality standards.

Example: *The proposed project will replace 15 aging onsite wastewater treatment systems located within 300 feet of Lake Holiday. Based on [pollutant reduction estimation method], these replacements are expected to reduce total phosphorus loading by approximately 35 pounds per year and total nitrogen loading by 140 pounds per year. No EPA-approved plan has established pollutant load reduction targets for this waterbody. The estimated total phosphorus and total nitrogen load reductions presented above represent the reductions expected from implementation of the proposed practices and provide a measurable basis for evaluating project accomplishments. These reductions contribute toward improving or protecting water quality and may support future watershed planning or development of watershed restoration goals.*

NOTES: POLLUTANT LOAD REDUCTIONS

- ❖ For land-use BMPs not reported in acres (e.g. fence) convert units such as “feet” or “each” to acres improved by installation of the BMP. Contact NPS Program staff for assistance.
- ❖ If the project boundary encompasses more than one HUC-12, break the BMPs and expected load reductions into each HUC-12.

VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks

This section describes what the project intends to accomplish and how those activities will be completed. Project activities should be organized into a hierarchy of Goals, Objectives, and Tasks.

- ❖ Goal: A broad project outcome or desired condition. Goals describe what you ultimately want to achieve.
- ❖ Objective: A measurable component of a goal. Objectives describe what must be accomplished to achieve the goal.
- ❖ Task: A specific activity completed by project staff, contractors, and/or partners. Tasks describe how the objective will be accomplished.

*Goal = Why
Objective = What
Task = How*

If an item can be physically completed, counted, or tracked, it is probably a task. If it groups multiple related tasks together, it is probably an objective. If it describes the overall outcome the project seeks to achieve, it is probably a goal.

REQUIRED: Information & Education are essential components of Watershed and Support projects. Be sure to include how landowners, stakeholders, partners, and/or the public will be engaged throughout the project to encourage voluntary implementation, communicate project accomplishments, and promote long-term operation and maintenance of BMPs (See Goal 3 in the example below.)

You **MUST** also include a grant administration goal (see Goal 4 in the example below).

Examples:

Goal 1: Restore and protect water quality in Green Creek through implementation of BMPs that reduce pollutant loading and improve support of recreational beneficial uses.

Objective 1.1: Reduce pollutant runoff from agricultural lands and riparian areas.

Task 1.1.a: Develop or assist with developing conservation plans/practice plans.

Task 1.1.b: Implement BMPs including no-till, cover crops, riparian buffers, livestock exclusion fencing, and alternative watering systems.

Objective 1.2: Monitor watershed conditions.

Task 1.2.a: Implement the Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP).

Goal 2: Strengthen local capacity and partnerships by assisting landowners with watershed restoration activities.

Objective 2.1: Provide technical assistance and project support to participating landowners.

Task 2.1.a: Conduct on-site landowner consultations.

Task 2.1.b: Assist landowners with practice certification.

Objective 2.2: Increase project staff knowledge and technical capacity to support effective watershed implementation.

Task 2.2.a: Attend technical conferences and training events related to watershed management, conservation practices, monitoring, or nonpoint source pollution. (2 per year)

Goal 3: Increase producer awareness of watershed issues and promote voluntary adoption of conservation practices.

Objective 3.1: Engage stakeholders and communicate project accomplishments.

Task 3.1.a: Attend quarterly water board meetings and provide project updates.

Task 3.1.b: Host 1 workshop or field tour per year of the project.

Task 3.1.c: Develop and distribute quarterly project-specific newsletter articles.

Task 3.1.d: Present project accomplishments at local meetings and events.

Goal 4: Successfully administer project in accordance with Section 319 grant requirements.

Objective 4.1: Meet project management, reporting, and reimbursement requirements.

Task 4.1.a: Submit annual progress reports.

Task 4.1.b: Submit reimbursement requests on a timely basis.

Task 4.1.c: Maintain project records and match documentation.

Task 4.1.d: Submit a final project report.

VII. Personnel Needs & Responsibilities

This section should describe the personnel, administrative support, and/or contractual services needed to successfully complete the Tasks outlined above. The purpose of this section is not to identify specific individuals, but rather to describe the types of duties, expertise, and services needed to complete project activities. Where multiple organizations are involved, briefly

NOTES: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, TASKS

- ❖ Each project goal should directly support one or more NPS Program Goals identified in Section III.4. and be illustrated in each goal statement.
- ❖ Objectives should describe measurable accomplishments that must be achieved to fulfill the goal. Objectives should group related tasks and should typically result in a quantifiable output, milestone, or outcome.
- ❖ Tasks should describe specific activities that project staff, contractors, or partners will complete. Tasks should be measurable, trackable, and capable of being reported as completed during the project period.
- ❖ Tasks will be listed on the Schedule (Section VII)

describe partner roles and responsibilities and any significant coordination arrangements (e.g. MOUs) necessary for project implementation.

Example: This project will employ a Watershed Coordinator (1.0 FTE) with expertise in watershed management, conservation planning, outreach, project administration, and water quality monitoring. They will coordinate project implementation, conduct landowner outreach and site visits, assist with conservation practice planning and implementation, conduct monitoring activities, and prepare required reports and reimbursement requests.

Administrative support from the District Clerk will be used for newsletters, mailings, outreach event logistics, assisting with water sampling, and general office tasks. Contractual services will be utilized to conduct septic tank inspections.

VIII. Schedule

This section describes the timeline for implementing tasks previously identified in the PIP and the parties responsible for each task. This should be presented in table format using the

NOTES: PERSONNEL NEEDS & RESPONSIBILITIES

- ❖ This section will support the Personnel, Fringe, Contractual, and/or Administration categories in the budget and budget narrative section.

required Task and Output Schedule template (see Appendix D and www.deq.nd.gov/publications/WQ/3_WM/NPS/Grants/Wshed_PIP_Template)

Example:

Green Creek Riparian Project Task and Output Schedule

Tasks	Responsible Party	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
			2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Task 1.1.1: Install riparian buffers.	1, 2, 3	10,000 ft	-	2,000 ft	5,000 ft	3,000 ft	
Task 1.2.1: Implement the Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP).	1	1 time					1
Task 2.1.1: Conduct on-site landowner consultations.	1, 2, 3	50 ea	5	25	10	5	5
Task 2.1.2: Develop riparian buffer practice plans.	1, 3	15 ea	3	5	7		
Task 2.1.3: Assist landowners with practice implementation and certification, Task 4.1.1: Submit reimbursement requests on a timely basis.	1	Ongoing					
Task 3.1.1: Host 1 workshop or field tour per year of the project.	1	4 ea		1	1	1	1
Task 3.1.2: Develop and distribute quarterly project-specific newsletter articles.	1	18 ea	2	4	4	4	4
Task 4.1.1: Submit annual progress reports.	1	3 times		1	1	1	
Task 4.1.2: Submit a final project report.	1	1 time					1
Task 4.1.3: Maintain project records and match documentation.	1	Ongoing					
Responsible Parties							
1- Watershed Coordinator, 2- Landowners, 3- NRCS.							

NOTES: SCHEDULE

- ❖ BMP units will match Section V.
- ❖ Each task will be quantified in measurable, reportable units.
- ❖ Use "ongoing" sparingly.

IX. Evaluation Criteria

This section describes the criteria that will be used to measure progress in meeting the milestones toward completion of the project tasks. Specific criteria should be described for each unique task. Tasks to which similar criteria apply may be grouped together.

Example:

Task	Milestone Evaluation Criteria
Task 1.2.1 – Implement the Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP)	Documentation of activities completed according to the approved SAP (e.g. Sample logs, mileage records, lab results).
Task 2.1.1 – Conduct on-site landowner consultations	Number of consultations completed; documentation of site visits including potential conservation opportunities identified and discussed with landowners (e.g. Producer profiles entered into NPS database, pre-implementation photos).
Task 2.1.2 – Develop riparian buffer practice plans	Number of practice plans developed; plans meet applicable technical standards and are approved for implementation.
Task 1.1.1 – Install riparian buffers Task 2.1.3 – Assist landowners with practice implementation and certification; Task 4.1.1 – Submit reimbursement requests	Feet of riparian buffer practices installed compared to project goals; acres or linear feet treated; signed certification forms; reimbursement documentation submitted and approved.
Task 3.1.1 – Host annual workshop or field tour	Workshop or field tour attendance records; agendas, presentations, or outreach materials documented.
Task 3.1.2 – Develop and distribute quarterly project-specific newsletter articles	Documented through newsletters, websites, social media, or partner communications.

Task	Milestone Evaluation Criteria
Task 4.1.1 – Submit annual progress reports	Annual reports submitted by required deadlines and accepted by DEQ.
Task 4.1.2 – Submit final project report	Final report completed and submitted by project closeout deadline.
Task 4.1.3 – Maintain project records and match documentation	Project files maintained and organized throughout the project period; match contributions documented; records available for review or audit.

X. Budget & Budget Narrative

The budget should clearly break down each source of funding, how numbers were calculated, and describe specifically the use of funds for all funding, cash-match and in-kind sources.

1. Budget Tables

- ❖ You must use the Budget Tables Template (shown in Appendix E and at www.deq.nd.gov/publications/WQ/3_WM/NPS/Grants/Budget_Tables.xlsx)
- ❖ Do not modify the budget tables except where noted.
- ❖ Enter full dollar amounts into the green cells only. The spreadsheet will calculate subtotals and totals in the white cells.

Part I Budget Table

1. Add the Project Title in the header row. Example: Green River Watershed Budget Table
2. For each of the expenditure categories, enter the total of both cash and match funding.
 - Personnel – Wages/salary for personnel to complete Tasks
 - Fringe Benefits – Fringe benefits for personnel time
 - Travel/Food/Lodging – Travel to field visits, meetings, trainings. Mileage (Federal rate), food and lodging (State rate)
 - Supplies – Supplies, tools, equipment (under grant guidance defined threshold) needed to complete Tasks.
 - Rent/Utilities – Office space overhead needed for this Project (if charging directly)
 - Communications – Postage, phone service
 - Equipment – Will nearly always be \$0 (contact grant manager if this is an anticipated expense).
 - Consultant/Contractual — If services will be provided to the project sponsor for assistance with completing project deliverables.

- BMP – Contracts to producers/landowners/homeowners to implement approved best management practices
- Other – Items that don't explicitly fit into one of the other categories
- Administration – Can be direct expenses for bookkeeping (personnel) or Indirect costs (this line item is capped depending on grant). To charge indirect, the project sponsor is required to have documentation of what expenses are indirect vs. direct. Contact NPS Program Staff to determine eligible percentage and discuss necessary documentation before budgeting this line item.

Part II Funding Sources

1. Add the Project Title in the header row. Example: Green River Watershed Funding Sources
2. Replace the words "Year" with the actual years of the project. If the project is less than five years, delete the word "Year" as needed and do not enter anything in the columns below.
3. Add the appropriate year to FY__ under "Section 319 Funds". Contact NPS Program Staff for assistance.
4. Under "Project Sponsor", "Other Non-Federal" and "Other Federal" customize Column B as needed to reflect Technical Assistance (TA) and Financial Assistance (FA) that is included in the budget in Part I. Landowners will nearly always be "FA" as their cash portion of the BMP cost-share. Contact NPS Program Staff for assistance.

2. Budget Narrative

The budget narrative describes how the values in the budget tables were calculated or otherwise derived. This should also cite the sources of information that are used to inform cost estimates (i.e. a direct quote from supplier, NRCS Cost Tables, state rate policy for travel, etc.)

Example:

Personnel - Watershed Coordinator: \$99,840. Based on 4,160 hours over two years at \$24.00/hour.

Fringe Benefits - 35% of salary and include FICA, retirement, health insurance, and leave costs. Based on the organization's approved fringe benefit rate.

Travel/Food/Lodging - Travel costs are estimated at 10,000 miles at the current state mileage reimbursement rate for landowner visits, monitoring activities, project meetings, and outreach events. Lodging and per diem costs are based on estimated attendance at two watershed-related conferences per year using current state travel reimbursement rates.

Supplies - Workshop supplies are estimated from costs incurred during similar outreach events and include printing, handouts, and educational materials.

Rent/Utilities, Communications - Office space costs are based on a 50% cost allocation plan and represent the portion of office rent and utilities attributable to project personnel. Telephone and internet costs are also based on a 50% allocation methodology.

Consultant/Contractual - A licensed septic pumper will be hired to conduct septic tank inspections at \$200 each.

BMP - Livestock watering systems are estimated using current NRCS payment schedules for tanks, pipeline, and associated infrastructure.

3. Project Collaboration

This section should describe the technical assistance (TA), financial assistance (FA), and/or in-kind support for parties listed in Table II.

Descriptions may include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Technical assistance for conservation planning, practice design, practice certification.
- ❖ Financial assistance provided through other cost-share programs, grants, or cash match.
- ❖ In-kind contributions such as staff time, equipment use, meeting facilities, outreach support, monitoring assistance, or other non-cash contributions.

Example: NRCS staff will provide assistance with conservation planning activities to ensure plans meet NRCS specifications. The County Water Board will provide cash in the amount of 10% match for BMPs, reducing the landowner cash match to 30%. The Wildlife Club members will provide cash match for grassland establishment on their parcels. The local café will provide their meeting room at no cost for the two field tours. Letters of support describing the technical assistance and cash match are provided in Appendix X.

NOTES: PROJECT COLLABORATION

- ❖ Documentation of each type of partner support listed in the budget tables is included in an Appendix.
- ❖ Documentation may include letters of support, memorandums of understanding (MOUs), memorandums of agreement (MOAs), cooperative agreements, or other written commitments.

XI. Monitoring

1. Water Quality Monitoring

This section should describe the water quality monitoring, if any, that will be done under this PIP. If no data will be collected, please state, "No water quality data is scheduled to be collected at this time, but need for data to support future project continuation, decision making or planning will be re-evaluated throughout the life of the project." If the project does include water quality monitoring, a Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) must be developed in collaboration with NPS Program Staff.

The description of water quality monitoring activities should include the following:

- ❖ What data will be collected as part of the project.
- ❖ Methods that will be used to collect samples.
- ❖ How the data will be utilized.

Example: Water quality monitoring will be conducted in the final year of the project in accordance with an approved Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP) developed in collaboration with the NPS Management Program. Monitoring will be conducted at the same five stream locations that were used during the pre-project assessment (and included in the Water Quality Summary, attached in Appendix X). The results of the monitoring will be used to evaluate existing water quality conditions and measure watershed improvements associated with implementation of the Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Water quality samples will be collected by the SCD throughout the monitoring season and analyzed for nutrients, including total nitrogen, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, nitrate-nitrite, ammonia, and total phosphorus, as well as total suspended solids (TSS) and E. coli bacteria. Field observations, such as flow conditions, water clarity, algae presence, and other site characteristics, will also be documented during each sampling event.

Samples will be collected using NDDEQ-approved sampling procedures and quality assurance protocols. In addition, macroinvertebrate sampling will be conducted at selected stream locations to assess biological health and provide an indicator of aquatic life use support and long-term watershed condition. Macroinvertebrate sampling will be done by NDDEQ Staff.

2. Photo Point Monitoring

Photo Point monitoring provides a simple, cost-effective method for documenting watershed conditions, BMP implementation, and visible environmental changes over time. This section should include how photo point monitoring will be conducted for this project.

Example: Photographs will be collected and photo points established during BMP planning to document baseline conditions. Additional photographs will be collected during implementation, as appropriate, to document project progress. Following BMP installation, photographs will be taken to document completed practices and any immediate site changes. Repeat photographs will then be collected periodically throughout the project period from the same locations and orientation to document changes in vegetation, streambank stability, habitat conditions, or other observable watershed improvements. Photos will be included in annual and final project reports.

Appendix A: Nine-Element Requirements

EPA Nine-Element Requirement	PIP Guide Section(s)	May Be Incorporated by Reference	How the Requirement is Addressed
Element A Identify causes and sources of pollution	III. Beneficial Use Impairment; III. Project Context; IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources	Watershed Characteristics report, Water Quality Summary, Integrated Report, TMDLs/ARPs	Documents existing water quality conditions, identifies pollutants and stressors, summarizes pollutant sources, land uses, source assessments, and priority source areas.
Element B Estimate pollutant load reductions	V. Pollutant Load Reductions	TMDLs/ARPs, pollutant loading models	Quantifies expected pollutant reductions, identifies estimation methods, and relates reductions to restoration goals or load reduction targets where applicable.
Element C Describe management measures and critical implementation areas	IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources; V. Pollutant and Load Reductions; VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks	TMDL/ARP implementation recommendations	Identifies BMPs, explains why they were selected, identifies priority implementation areas, and describes how management measures will be implemented.
Element D Technical and financial assistance	VII. Personnel Needs and Responsibilities; X. Budget & Budget Narrative; Project Collaboration		Describes staffing, funding sources, partner contributions, technical assistance, and financial resources needed to implement the project.
Element E Information and education	III. Community Value; III. Project Context; VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks		Describes stakeholder involvement, outreach activities, education efforts, and continued engagement throughout the project.
Element F Implementation schedule	VIII. Schedule		Provides implementation timeline, responsible parties, annual outputs, and project schedule.

EPA Nine-Element Requirement	PIP Guide Section(s)	May Be Incorporated by Reference	How the Requirement is Addressed
Element G Interim measurable milestones	VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks; VIII. Schedule; IX. Evaluation Criteria		Establishes measurable objectives, annual milestones, and reportable project outputs used to track implementation progress.
Element H Evaluation criteria	IX. Evaluation Criteria		Defines measurable criteria used to evaluate implementation success, restoration progress, and adaptive management decisions.
Element I Monitoring	XI. Monitoring	Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), Photo Point Monitoring SOP	Describes water quality and photo point monitoring activities, monitoring objectives, and how data will be used to evaluate project effectiveness.

Appendix B: 2003/2026 PIP Guide Crosswalk

2003 PIP Format	Changes	2026 PIP Guide
1.01 Project Proposal Summary Sheet	Similar in concept. Re-formatted template required.	I. Cover Page
2.1 Water Quality	Split across multiple sections	III.3 Beneficial Use Impairment (primarily), also III.4 NPS Program Goals, and III.5 Project Context, IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources
2.2 Waterbody Description	Now in Watershed Characteristics report, which may be incorporated by reference	III.1 Geographical Context
2.3 Maps	Simplified location map requirement. Additional maps may be added where needed.	II. Location Map
2.4 Watershed Description	Now in Watershed Characteristics report, which may be incorporated by reference	III.1 Geographical Context
2.5 Pollutants and Sources	Similar in concept, split across sections	IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources, V. Pollutant and Load Reductions.
3.1 Goals, 3.2 Objectives and Tasks	The distinction between environmental and programmatic goals has been removed; Goal->Objective->Task hierarchy simplified. Milestones, outputs, parties, and costs move to different sections. Grant administration goal added. Task and Output Schedule template use required.	VI. Goals, Objectives, Tasks, VIII. Schedule, IX. Evaluation Criteria, X. Budget
4.1 Sponsor & Cooperator Roles	Split across sections.	X.3 Project Collaboration, VII. Personnel Needs and Responsibilities

2003 PIP Format	Changes	2026 PIP Guide
4.2 Local Support, 4.3 NPS Program Coordination	Split across sections.	X.3 Project Collaboration, III.2 Community Value, III.5 Project Context
4.4 Project Uniqueness	Focus is shifted to describing complementary activities	III.5 Project Context.
5.1, 5.3, 5.3 Monitoring and Data Management	Realigned to describe support for project implementation and evaluation.	XI. Monitoring.
5.4 Models	Split across sections.	IV. Pollutants and Pollutant Sources, V. Pollutant and Load Reductions, throughout document as appropriate.
5.5 Operation and Maintenance	Moved outside the PIP and into program implementation documents (eg. Subawards, NPS Program BMP Guide, Conservation Plan of Operations)	N/A, but may be included in descriptions of project activities.
6.1 Budget	Split across sections, use of template required.	X. Budget & Budget Narrative
7.0 Public Involvement	Split across sections.	III.2 Community Value, VI. Goals, Objectives, and Tasks, and X.3 Project Collaboration, throughout document as appropriate.
Attachment 1 - Project Proposal Summary Sheet	Use required template.	Cover Page Template
Attachment 2 - Milestone Table	Use required template.	Task and Output Schedule
Attachment 3 - Part 1: Funding Sources	Use required template.	Part II: Funding Sources
Attachment 3 - Part 2: Funding	Budget categories reflect NPS Database. Objectives line item removed. Use required template.	Part I: Budget Table

Appendix C: Cover Page Template

Project Implementation Plan

Project Proposal Summary

1. Project Title					Project Type: Watershed/Support
2. Lead Project Sponsor	Name				
	Address				
	City, State, Zip				
	Coordinator Name				
	Phone(s)				
Email					
State: North Dakota	3. River Basin:	Missouri	Souris	James	Red
4. HUCs					
5. Waterbody ID(s)					
6. NPS Management Program Goals Addressed	☐ Water Quality Restoration and Protection ☐ Watershed Planning and Management ☐ Local Capacity and Partnerships ☐ Public Awareness ☐ Nutrient Reduction and Landscape Management				
7. Project Description					
8. Budget Summary					
FY___ 319 Funds		\$			
State/Local Match Funds		\$			
Total Project Cost		\$			
Other Federal Funds		\$			

Appendix D: Task and Output Schedule

{Project Title} Task and Output Schedule

Tasks	Responsible Party	Total	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
			<i>Enter date(s)</i>				
<i>List each task described in Section VI. Combine tasks if appropriate.</i>	<i>Note (from list below)</i>	<i>Output (Total)</i>	<i>Output (per year)</i>				
<i>Add rows as necessary</i>							
Responsible Parties <i>List the parties responsible for completing tasks.</i>							

Appendix E: Budget Tables

I. [Project Title] Budget Table

Expenditure Category	Section 319 Funds	Project Sponsor*	Other Non-Federal*	Landowners*	Total	Other Federal**
Personnel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Fringe Benefits	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel/Food/Lodging	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Rent/Utilities	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Communications	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Equipment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Consultant/Contractual	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
BMP	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Administration	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)

319 funds % of total	#DIV/0!	Cannot exceed 60%
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II. [Project Title] Funding Sources

	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Total
Section 319 Funds						
FY_ Funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Local Sponsor*						
TA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other Non-Federal*						
[Name 1] TA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[Name 1] FA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[Name 2] TA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[Name 2] FA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Landowners*						
FA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
					Total Project Cost	\$ -
Other Federal**						
[Name 1] TA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[Name 1] FA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[Name 2] TA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
[Name 2] FA:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

*Non-federal

TA: Technical Assistance

**Federal

FA: Financial Assistance