

How to

Implement Watershed Projects, a report from



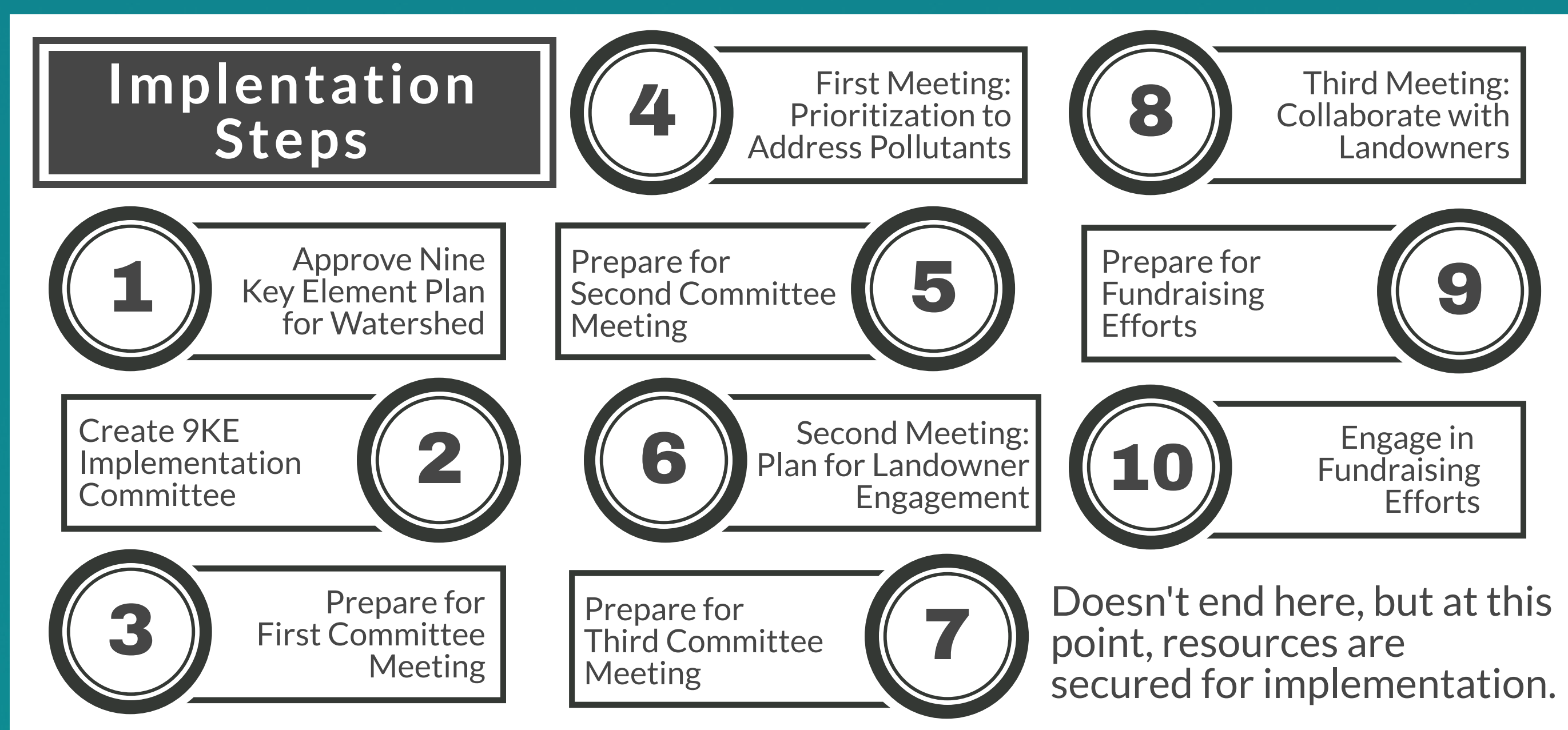
sweet water

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN WATERSHEDS TRUST, INC.

with input from

the Sweet Water Science and Policy Advisory Committees

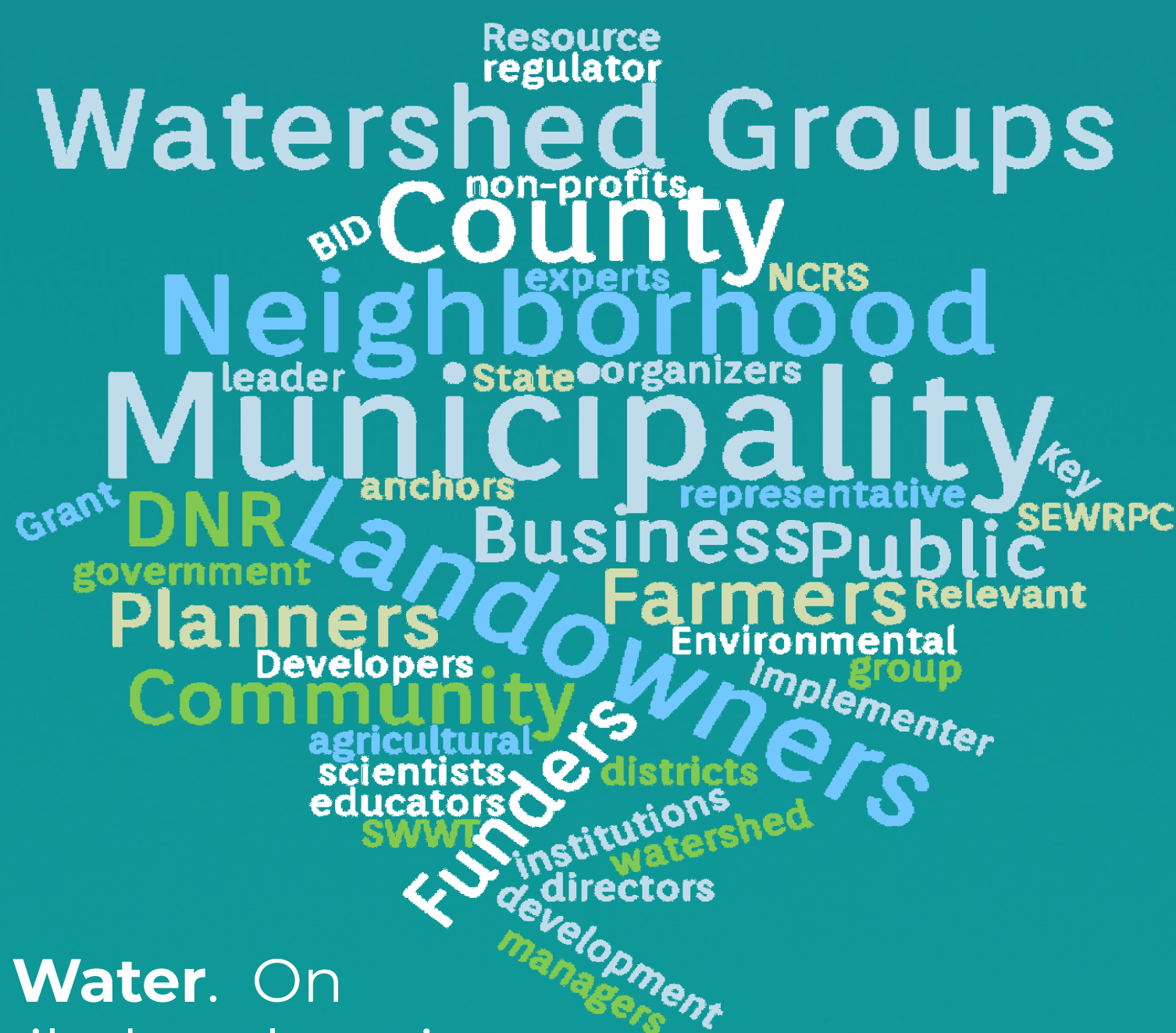
For successful collaborative watershed project implementation to occur, there needs to be an easy to follow process for identifying potential, impactful projects and finding support for the project. Without defining important steps in this process, efforts at collaboration can fall apart due to a lack of direction and difficulty in assigning tasks to involved stakeholders.



The goal of this process is to develop a list of shovel ready projects from the recommendations of Nine Key Element (9KE) plans that will allow stakeholders to be proactive in the searching for funds to support and implement these actions.

This approach seeks to delist local waterways efficiently by identifying the strengths of stakeholders and build on existing efforts. Stakeholders will be recruited to fill vacant roles and meet un-delegated responsibilities, improving the pace and scale of project implementation.

To the right, there is a word cloud of stakeholders to include in a 9KE Implementation Committee. For steps for forming this committee (step 2 in above graphic) see **How to Facilitate Collaboration, a report from Sweet Water**. On the following pages, find a more detailed explanation on steps 3-8 of the process.



Steps

3-4

Primary Goal:

Develop a list of **parcels** in **critical areas** where implemented **best management practices** might best address **major pollutants**

Step 3: Preparing for the first stakeholder meeting

Create a charter for the committee that includes

- Agreed upon and clear definitions of success for everyone involved
- Agreed upon a timeline for implementing Playbook process
- Commitment to stay involved

Identify major pollutants and critical areas

- Use 9KE plans and TMDLs
- Prioritize areas where there are clusters of critical areas

Verify current land use & identify parcels susceptible to change

- Identify land use recorded in 9KE plan
- Verify land use (depending on availability):
 - Nutrient Management Plus
 - Physical inspection
 - Snap Plus
- Parcels susceptible to change in ownership or in land use by consulting
 - Planning office
 - Local organizations

Identify upcoming and existing project & activity areas

- Consult 5-year capital plans, neighborhood plans, sub-watershed specific plan
- Consult MS4 permits
- Consult organizations and entities (not on committee) working in area
- Record recent, current, and interest areas
- Identify additional opportunities for adaptive management

Set date for first meeting

- Send invitations to committee members and guests
- Potentially make meeting accessible to all stakeholders
- Find a centralized location (if not virtual)
- Pull together agendas, exercises, etc.

Step 4: Meeting 1: Prioritization to Address Pollutants

Match parcels in critical areas where BMPs best address major pollutants

- Identify parcels that could be addressed by other actions besides 9KE BMPs
 - parcels that overlap with upcoming project areas
- Prioritize potential areas for BMPs based on
 - Critical Area "Clusters"
 - "Understood/Assumed/Potential" interest from landowners
 - Create list of preliminary prioritized parcels
- Record meetings so that those who can not attend can review

Steps 5-6

Primary Goal:

Develop a **strategic landowner engagement plan** to bring landowners to the table to develop supported projects from 9KE plans

Step 5: Preparing for the second stakeholder meeting

Identify residents of prioritized parcels

- Note if they are known water quality improvement champions, or are at least receptive to new practices
- Note if they are already queued to receive assistance for practices
- Note if they are land owners or renters

Begin developing messages for landowner engagement

- Messages should be able to educate landowners who may not be familiar with 9KE plans or BMPs
- Solicit for willing local participants to help engage other landowners
- Do not start contacting until **after** second meeting

Set date for second meeting

- Send invitations to committee members and guests
- Find a centralized location (if not virtual)
- Pull together agendas, exercises, etc.

Step 6: Meeting 2: Develop Strategic Landowner Engagement Plan

Develop strategic landowner engagement plan

- Designate organizations to conduct engagement
- Designate organization to track engagement
- Create a timeline for engagement
- Decide on mechanisms & messages for engagement (ie mailers, events, etc.)
- Record meetings so that those who can not attend can review

Steps 7-8

Primary Goal:

Collaborate with landowners to develop a list of supported priority projects from 9KE plans

Step 7: Preparing for the third stakeholder meeting

Follow strategic engagement plan to identify willing landowners

- Use agreed upon outreach mechanisms
- Visit prioritized landowners to gauge interest
- Invite willing landowners to third meeting (no commitment)
- Ask landowners to come prepared with property improvement priorities

Identify feasible BMPs that could address major pollutants

- Consult 9KE plan for cost, effectiveness, & other considerations of BMPs
- Consult 9KE plans and other sources for funding mechanisms for BMPs
- Compare BMP's ability to make reductions to major pollutants
- Conduct any additional modeling necessary
- Identify additional benefits of BMPs for residents/landowners/ communities

Identify BMPs currently in place & evaluate

- If they are being maintained
- If they are adequate
- If there is community buy-in

Set date for third meeting

- Send invitations to committee members and guests
 - Stress to guests that the meeting will be informational and exploratory and that future participation is voluntary
- Use centralized location (if not virtual)
- Pull together agenda, exercises, etc.

Step 8: Meeting 3: Collaborate with Landowners

Match desires of residents of parcels in critical areas with BMPs that address major pollutants

- Facilitate discussions about the needs and priorities of the residents and needs of local waterways
- Discuss prioritized BMPs that could best fit, including price

If there is preliminary agreement, develop list of projects and continue to Step 9

If no agreement is reached, return to Step 4

Stay tuned for more steps and details in the draft Watershed Playbook, out for review in 2021