OWOW FY92
National Program Meeting

May 5 - 7, 1992

Washington, DC

OWOW

Proceedings

Proceedings

Office of Wetlands, Oceans & Watersheds

Office of Water, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting

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About the Meeting

The Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (OWOW) FY92 National Program Meeting was held May 5-7, 1992 in Washington, D.C. This was the second meeting of OWOW program divisions and Regional counterparts since the Office of Water reorganization in April 1991 (see Attachment 1 for the list of participants). The meeting consisted of two distinct phases: (1) Joint Sessions and (2) Divisional Sessions. The Joint Sessions (see Attachment 2 for agenda) provided a chance for OWOW-wide discussions on topics that were important to all participants. The Divisional Sessions provided an opportunity for OWOW Division Directors, along with their Branch Chiefs and Regional program managers, to discuss specific program issues and plans for the upcoming year.

Welcome
Bob Wayland

Bob Wayland, OWOW Director, opened the meeting by highlighting its importance and objectives. He emphasized the Office's need to evaluate its customers and allies. He also discussed the importance of putting the "E" back in EPA by revitalizing the goal of ensuring ecological protection.

Bob indicated that the featured topic of the meeting would be agriculture and its impact on the environment, particularly in terms of nonpoint source pollution, or "wet-weather runoff." Many agricultural industrialists are good stewards in their area, and can shed light on this increasingly important aspect of water pollution.

Meeting Objectives

Specific objectives of the meeting were to:

- Review the results of the OWOW Customer Survey, and provide an opportunity for the Regions to comment;
- Discuss program-specific issues;
- Share a future vision of OWOW programs, and look at the programs as more than the sum of the parts;
- Provide an opportunity for all program managers to be heard;
- Establish and maintain good Regional relationships; and
- Discuss both new and ongoing OW initiatives.

Bob introduced LaJuana Wilcher, Assistant Administrator, Office of Water (OW). Bob pointed out LaJuana's contribution to EPA's role in the Exxon Valdez settlement as an example of her active leadership in OW and her desire to confront controversial issues directly.

Keynote Address
LaJuana Wilcher
Assistant Administrator for Water

LaJuana discussed the current status of OW along with existing and upcoming issues in OWOW. She stressed the importance of integration resulting from bringing together OWOW divisions into one office.

LaJuana's presentation focused on the significance of interconnections in the environment. This discussion served as a natural precursor to the keynote speech concerning the watershed approach to environmental protection. She quoted John Muir, who stated, "When we try to pick anything out, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." This should be the motto for how OW and the rest of EPA does its work.

In the field of environmental protection, connections abound. LaJuana proceeded with a few examples. All waters, living resources, and humans, she stressed, are interdependent. Forty percent of surface water comes from ground water. Water quality parallels water quantity -- there is an intrinsic connection. Realizing the importance of protecting watersheds by using a holistic approach will greatly help OW achieve its goals in the new year.

Needs for OWOW /OW

LaJuana outlined three primary needs for OWOW and OW:

1. Identify Progress, Barriers, and Opportunities
By making a realistic appraisal of progress, barriers, and opportunities within a watershed, EPA can create a better foundation of understanding upon which to make decisions. Historically, programs driven by "priority pollutants" tended to obscure important information about where multiple sources and pollutants assault an ecosystem, and impaired our ability to see the locally critical source, pollutant, or impacted resource.

2. Develop Partnerships
Involving the appropriate players in policy formulation and program implementation decisions helps build trust and broaden perspective. EPA must continue to cooperate and share information with interested parties in order to learn more about potential solutions and impacts.

3. Integrate Programs and Goals with the Public Sense
Working together, especially with the general public, to identify problems and potential actions will help create a common vision for the future. This vision will help EPA define goals and objectives and measure success.

Given these needs, EPA should continue to strive for the four basic goals it has set for the Watershed Protection Approach:

- Work in selected areas to demonstrate the watershed protection approach (i.e., lead by example);
- Integrate Federal and State programs to support watershed protection;
- Promote a broad understanding of watershed protection; and
- Continue to provide new tools and training and measure success.

LaJuana also complimented OWOW on some particularly noteworthy events, including:

- Recent uses of the ANDERSON to help implement Studds Superfund assessment requirements, make key discoveries, and advance technologies such as sonar and underwater video;
- The release of a much improved 305(b) Report;
- The efforts of Region II and the Marine Pollution Control Branch at HQ in implementing the Ocean Dumping Act requirements;
- The management of Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA) guidance development; and
- Continuing commitment, from both staff and the Agency Administration, to the wetlands program, including field investigations, creative wetland action strategies, and public outreach (e.g., American Wetlands Month).

Overview

LaJuana concluded her presentation by emphasizing the tremendous progress that the Office of Water has made from 20 years ago. Conservation requires the proper blend of ecological development and ecological protection; however, development and land use do not equate with waste or robbery. We need real world answers in a short time. As columnist and World Resources Institute staff member Jessica Mathews recently wrote, protecting the environment can *lead* to protecting the economy; they are by no means incongruous. We have great power and influence over our future and that of our children. In order to exercise these capabilities properly, we must keep in mind that "all things are connected."

Questions

LaJuana made the following points in response to questions:

- The Administrator will probably not take a position on the Clean Water Act (CWA) reauthorization this year. Even so, it needs only minor modifications. The Agency is trying to determine the best balance of costs and protection. Other issues are more important to the American public right now. In a recent poll, only 15% of the nation put environment in the upper tier of priorities; the economy ranks first.
- The postponement in the CWA reauthorization will give the Agency more time to prepare and capitalize on some existing opportunities. EPA needs creative ideas in order to be bold (e.g., trading programs, market-based incentives, risk-based approaches to ecological protection).
- When asked about the greatest threat to the future, 53% of American citizens responded that the environment was a major problem. Also, 89% of those polled consider themselves environmentalists (a great improvement from previous decades), but 11% remain reluctant to prioritize environmental protection — those groups are very powerful.
- In addition to continuing partnerships with more traditional agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, we should broaden our constituency by approaching groups like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, gaming industry representatives, and others. Programs like Coastal America and Partners in Flight are excellent examples of such attempts.
- Headquarters will continue to provide significant GIS support. OWOW is receiving an increasing flow of requests for data management money and is trying to facilitate an integrated system for the Great Lakes Program (GLNPO), the Gulf of Mexico Program (GOMEX), and the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- The FY93 budget process for OW is not going well so far; the only improvements since April 1989 are in the area of construction grants. The allocations to OAR/OPTS are about twice the size of those to OW. We need to raise budget concerns, especially FTEs. The FY94 budget hearing recently held on the Hill was a genuine budgeting process due to Regional input; it is a high priority in OW this year.

Regional Customer Survey
Regions/Louise Wise

Louise Wise, Director of OWOW's Policy and Communications Staff, presented the results of the OWOW FY92 Customer Survey. She noted that all the Regions participated except Region V and that there was less involvement from Environmental Services Divisions. Overall, the survey indicated that OWOW had improved in nearly every category since FY91. The "OWOW-Wide Average Rankings by Service," on the other hand, indicated that there is room for improvement.

The only area of significant decline was that of legislative strategies and Congressional liaison. A copy of the survey questionnaire, results, and comments and suggestions was included in the meeting notebooks.

Regional Comments and Suggestions

Communications: General improvement -- OWOW has listened and been responsive to Regional needs and suggestions.
Organization: Structure is sound and roles and responsibilities are generally clear. Some concerns with great waterbody programs.
Planning and Budgeting: Could still make improvements on an integrated budget.
Program Agendas: Improvements in engaging Regions in these discussions -- keep it up.
Legislation: Regions still have concerns. Re: CWA effort and wetlands.
Enlisting Assistance of Others: Need to focus particularly on other agencies.
National Meetings: Good work! Generally well planned and facilitated, responsive to Regional comments.
Conference Calls: All three Divisions have responded -- these are very useful for information exchange.
Informational Materials: Good informational packages from OWOW and better distribution. Legislative updates must be continued.
Regional Reviews: Three have been completed thus far -- and were well planned -- but could have been more focused on issues of Regional concern.
Requests for Comment: Improvements in comment periods.

Program-Specific Highlights/Comments

<u>Budget Planning and Funding Processes</u>

- Money is there faster
- Still need to be more proactive in budget planning
- 319 travel money is a significant issue with respect to the ability to oversee projects
- 403 budget decisions should be made sooner
- NEP money distribution has been well balanced between accountability and flexibility

- Need direction from HQ on prioritization for spending FTE/monitoring resources
- To Regions, $25K in contract expenditures is a lot of money
- For AWPD programs (e.g., Clean Lakes, NPS), it is hard to know what kind of money to access; there is also less money for the watershed protection initiative (since much of the monitoring money went away, we could reinvest in other areas)
- Need more money for watershed protection to establish infrastructure
- We need to ensure a good balance of Regional and HQ accountability
- Although much OW money has been redirected to OWOW, we should leverage Regional budget decisions with ORD and others

Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison

- PCS has opportunities to improve, including the addition of a staff liaison person
- OW should get on the ASIWPCA mailing list
- The Legislative Affairs Office is holding more regular calls with Regional counterparts
- OW can be much more proactive
- Regions want to be more involved in strategy formulation and information input; need more information on implications of each legislative action
- Many state questions are difficult to answer without more info from HQ
- Send Regions only what would be useful — don't just inundate with paper; the states, environmental groups, and the public often know more than Regional staff; heads-up insights are vital to a better partnership
- Need to be alert about turnover in Congress — freshmen will be inexperienced. CWA bill would risk Wetlands this year; we should start thinking about strategies for the 1993-94 Congress.

National Tools

- No sense of efficient ways of communicating spontaneous needs which arise (e.g., watershed/engineering needs)
- Need more NPS/403 guidance
- Need less NEP guidance

Enlisting Assistance

- Positive interaction with NOAA, especially in NEP/NCW
- Need more NPDES help in coastal municipalities

Technology Transfer and Outreach

- Need more of it, especially with NEPs
- Rave reviews for *Nonpoint Source News Notes*
- Need more focused strategy to overcome fragmentation of target communities

Overall Administration

- Improvements in working relationships and other areas

General

- Need to work with other groups (e.g., OST, OWEC) on state issues
- States would rather build things internally rather than hiring and training contractors who will not be around in the future
- States would rather build in-house than have EPA do the work

Value of Survey

- Some anomalous comments
- There are drawbacks to preserving Regional anonymity -- hard to test comments; we can get candor and negative feedback without using a contractor; we need more basis for bar scores
- Survey should be more narrative (less win/lose), and more discussion of solutions
- Be more program specific -- categories are too broad
- Might get better results through a questionnaire process -- bigger audience because it's less resource intensive -- in combination with focus groups
- Facilitates communication within the Regions
- OWOW should be applauded for conducting the survey and receiving criticism

Keynote Speaker
Margot Garcia
Water Quality 2000

Margot Garcia, the keynote speaker, discussed the need for the Water Quality 2000 program. Despite progress in the past two decades, she explained, U.S. water quality goals are still not being met. 1972 approaches may not be adequate to address 1992 problems. The current system for establishing water quality policies and setting priorities is characterized by conflict between competing interests and a traditional focus on short-term and single media concerns. The vision we should keep in mind is "Society living in harmony with healthy natural systems." The key elements of that vision are that it:

- Views water as part of a total management plan
- Links water quality, land use, and economics
- Recognizes global links

The Mission Statement (Adopted May 1989)

Representing a broad range of interests in America, Water Quality 2000 proposes and promotes national policies and goals for the 21st century that will protect and enhance water quality, with a specific agenda for action.

Water Quality 2000 Participation

- Collaboration of approximately 80 groups
- Membership provides different perspectives
  - 20% industrial/private sector interest
  - 20% environmental groups
  - 15% federal agencies (non voting members)
  - 10% academic/research organizations
  - 10% state governments
  - 10% local governments
  - 15% professional/technical societies

Four Phases of Water Quality 2000

1. Feasibility and Plan Development
2. Problem Identification
3. Development of Recommendations
4. Implementation

Key Concepts of Phase 1

1. Broad representation
2. Long range, visionary and holistic perspectives
3. Maximum consensus on "national principles"
4. Balanced view of surface, ground, and atmospheric water
5. Avoidance of cross-media problem transfer (solutions of one problem (e.g., land) should not create a problem in another area (e.g., water))
6. Water quality and land use are linked, a critical fact that is often not recognized

Problem identification was achieved by ten workgroups composed of 150 water quality experts. The workgroup topics were agriculture, aquatic ecosystems and habitat, community, energy and resource extraction, industry, legislation, recreation, transportation, watershed, and water supply. At the end of Phase 2, the workgroups produced an Interim Report which identifies:

1. water quality conditions today
2. root causes of water quality problems
3. impediments to water quality solutions
4. water quality challenges for the future

Water Quality Conditions Today

While significant progress has been made, the national goal of "fishable, swimmable" waters has not been attained in many areas. Data gaps and inadequate monitoring make it difficult to draw clear conclusions about progress. Nonpoint sources (runoff from agricultural, urban, and other lands) are now the predominant cause of impairment in surface waters. Impairment results from current activities and past practices. Sources of impairment include agricultural pollutants, community wastewater, deposition of atmospheric contaminants, industrial pollutants, land alteration, stocking and harvest of aquatic species, transportation, urban runoff, and water projects.

Root causes of water quality problems are attributed to:

- how we live
- how we produce and consume
- how we farm
- how we transport people and goods
- how we plan
- how we have acted in the past

As the report states, "Focusing attention on these societal causes of water quality problems is essential if we are to articulate long-term solutions in which societal goals are compatible with clean water."

Impediments to improving water quality include:

1. Narrowly focused water policy
2. Institutional conflicts
3. Legislative and regulatory overlaps, conflicts, gaps
4. Insufficient funding and incentives for water quality improvement
5. Inadequate attention to the need for trained personnel
6. Limitation of research and development
7. Inadequate public commitment to water resource quality

Challenges to WQ 2000 consist of a combination of goals, current conditions, causes, and impediments.

Technical/environmental challenges

- controlling runoff from urban and rural lands
- focusing on toxic constituents
- protecting aquatic ecosystems
- protecting ground water
- providing safe drinking water

Policy/cross-cutting challenges

- preventing pollution
- coping with multi-media pollution
- increasing scientific understanding of water quality issues
- promoting wise use of resources
- setting priorities
- managing growth and development
- financing water resource improvements

Approach to Phase 3

Recommendations were developed by setting up challenge groups to consider cross-cutting issues:

1. providing safe drinking water
2. protecting aquatic ecosystems
3. controlling urban and rural runoff
4. protecting ground water
5. focusing on toxic constituents

The challenge groups submitted 117 "solution statements". After grouping the solutions, the steering committee reviewed solutions one-by-one. (Groupings are consistent with the major headers in Chapter III) As a result, 26 accepted as is, 94 edited, and 7 rejected. In the end, 17 solutions were written by the steering committee.

The Phase 3 Report distilled solutions in Chapter 2. The major thrust of the report calls for a new water policy of total resource protection based on three principles:

- Multimedia, multi-sectoral pollution prevention.
- Watershed-based planning and management must be sensitive to the hydroshed unit. Evaluating a national system is a problem with the watershed approach. Plans must define spatial boundaries, involve the public, and address point and nonpoint sources of pollution in an organized way. Primary benefits of watershed protection are increased accountability and management for environmental results.
- Individual and collective responsibility — product stewardship in industry leads to voluntary substitution of products to capitalize on market forces that focus on environment.

For ground water protection, we must call on Congress to create a new management institution to go beyond state boundaries. Local plans reflect unique characteristics. We must take an ecosystematic approach to incorporate land and air issues.

Actions ensure individual responsibility in education, government, trade, and financial institutions. Regulation is necessary to be fair to all. The goal is to develop and implement an integrated policy for the nation to protect and enhance the water quality that supports a society living in harmony with healthy natural systems.

<u>Implementation modes:</u>

- legislation
- regulation and enforcement
- funding and incentives
- research and development
- education and pubic awareness
- basic societal change

Implementation actors:

- federal government
- states
- local government
- private sector
- academia
- news media
- individuals

Major financial contributors:

- Water Environment Federation
- U.S. EPA
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
- George Gund Foundation
- Johnson Foundation
- Water Quality 2000 Member Organizations

Plans for document:

1. Ratify by organization
2. Lobby to Congress
3. Report should be widely read and discussed

Watershed and Ecosystem Protection
Gregory Low
The Nature Conservancy

Gregory Low, Vice President of Program Development for The Nature Conservancy (TNC), presented some innovative approaches taken by his organization toward protecting watersheds and ecosystems. He emphasized TNC's desire to share its work in protecting the biosphere reserve and its ideas on how TNC and EPA can form solid partnerships. Greg added that TNC, 40 years old, is the largest conservation organization in the U.S. with 650,000 members and offices in 48 states.

There has been a consistent mission throughout the life of the organization. TNC was formed by scientists concerned about habitat loss in order to protect the "living museum of primeval America." 1975 was the first time that "preserving biodiversity" was specifically stated as part of its mission. The primary conservation tool was direct identification, acquisition, and management of critical habitats. Partners include state and local governments, and environmental organizations.

A turning point in organizational thinking came with the realization that saving biological islands was not enough, as threats and outside forces infiltrate protected areas. The source of all problems is not restricted to land, but includes water as well. The mission of preserving biodiversity was revisited and, as a result, a new three-part concept for dealing with the sources of problems and threats emerged:

1. Engage in protection efforts
2. Look at the whole ecosystem
3. Think about large threats

TNC began by protecting small 200-acre plots of land, but is now protecting large naturally functioning ecosystems. Approximately 40-60 large scale projects resulted from the new initiative to protect the whole landscape and biosphere.

Especially in regards to protecting water quality, the missions of TNC and EPA have converged. Seventy-five percent of projects involve protecting significant aquatic systems (large watersheds). Examples include: Florida Keys, Eastern Shore of Virginia. Poconos Plateau, Cobs Cook Bay in Maine, the Great Lakes, Big Darby in Ohio, Cash River in Southern Illinois, Edwards aquifer in Texas, Upper Colorado River Basin, and Horselick Creek in Kentucky.

Greg also explained TNC's approach to protecting watersheds. He stated that there are "Five S's" which characterize the plan for protection. Those are:

1. Systems that comprise the geographic area (including components of the system, components of species, common conservation requirements, and stresses)
2. Stresses on the system (e.g., nutrient enrichment, massive petroleum input)
3. Sources of stress. Isolate stresses. Focus on sources of a single stress and perform a risk analysis. (TNC has identified 27 sources; the primary source is high density development)
4. Strategies to address threats. Each stress requires its own strategy:
   - Improve public policy (regulation)
   - Demonstrate the "right kinds" of uses
   - Direct outreach — build long-term community support
5. Success of protection efforts. Determining success requires long term measurement of the biosphere and conservation. The Good Zoning Ordinance (Virginia Coast Reserve Project) is an example. "Down zoned" community is synonymous with protecting the quality of life. In a city with approximately 15,000 residents, poor

neighborhoods were included in areas targeted for protection. An affordable housing project — which had the support of the farm bureau, the NAACP, the local community, and other groups — was part of the plan.

Greg concluded his discussion by outlining ways in which TNC and EPA can come together:

1. Get to know staff.
2. When identifying priority watersheds, urge EPA not to look for poor examples which are the most degraded, but to look for good examples to use as models of success.
3. Share knowledge.
4. Actively strive for partnerships and joint projects.
5. Leverage resources — TNC has (1) the ability to get private resources in the form of matching funds and (2) the flexibility of a private non-governmental body.

<u>Questions</u>
Greg made the following points in response to questions from Headquarters and Regional staff:

Q: How was work on the Virginia Coastal Reserve project received by the state government agencies?
A: Partners in the project included the Division of Parks and Recreation and Fish and Game. There is no history of cooperation with the Water Quality Control Board because historically water was not a focus in our mission.

Q: What is the role of water quantity?
A: Water quantity supports the importance of doing a stress analysis. The best example is along a river corridor. When you look at a river system, you examine the flood pattern (i.e., when, how much). The volume of flow is an important requirement for preservation.

Q: What future roles will TNC play in "restoration" activity?
A: TNC doesn't look at it as a mitigation strategy, but rather from a site bioreserve perspective. Restoration works well with simple systems.

Q: How significantly do you consider economics? Many system approaches address economic issues.
A: Yes, we are in the economic and social development business. Threats have economic and social forces driving them.

Q: Has the "Five S's" approach been applied to urban areas?
A: It is certainly possible to think globally. So far, we haven't considered the urban level.

Sharing of Common Program Goals
Mike Cook
Tudor Davies
Ramona Trovato

Mike Cook (OWEC), Tudor Davies (OST), and Ramona Trovato (OGWDW), offered their perceptions of ways in which the various offices within OW can all share common program goals effectively.

OWEC
Mike Cook

Mike Cook highlighted OWEC's approaches to sharing common program goals:

- Within the framework for the watershed initiative, provide a series of requirements for pretreatment.
- Capitalize on results made from enforcement efforts and the permitting process.
- Seek help in communicating various problems.
- Seek ways to improve outside relationships.
- Develop tools to protect the watershed (this requires a different set of priorities).

OST
Tudor Davies

High profile activities in OST have included:

- Great Lakes Initiative
- Contaminated Sediment Strategy
- National Toxics Rule
- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)

<u>Great Lakes Initiative</u>
The Great Lakes Initiative is required by the Great Lakes Critical Programs Act of 1990. It provides EPA guidance for minimum water quality standards, antidegradation, and implementation procedures in the Great Lakes System. States must adopt standards consistent with the guidance within two years. The Initiative contains major innovations in science and policy. Examples include:

- Tier II criteria
- Wildlife criteria
- Focus on bioaccumulative chemicals
- Strict antidegradation procedures
- Uniform TMDL procedures

In December 1991, the 8 Great Lakes states approved the guidance for EPA to propose in the Federal Register. OW has more than sixty people in Headquarters and the Regions developing preamble and regulatory language. A proposal is scheduled to be published in the Federal Register in September 1992.

Current issues include:

- Implementation and antidegradation guidance focuses primarily on point sources; separate subsequent proposal for nonpoint sources
- Economic costs and benefits need to be analyzed
- Degree of support within Great Lakes States
- Potential for application elsewhere in the United States

Contaminated Sediment Strategy
The overall goals of the strategy include:

1. Prevent future contamination of sediments
2. Manage existing sediment contamination using:
   - pollution prevention
   - source controls
   - natural recovery (where appropriate)
   - remediation of high-risk areas

Recent and ongoing activities include:

- Administrator briefed in February 1992
- "Proposal for Discussion" distributed to over 1000 groups/individuals representing environmental agencies/groups, industry, and consultants in March 1992
- Public forums held on extent and severity, building alliances, and public awareness

Next Steps

9/92	Revise outline/develop complete draft strategy
11/92	Agency red border review
12/92	OMB review
4/92	Proposed in Federal Register
FY94	Final strategy

National Toxics Rule
The rule is currently being reviewed by OMB. There is a pending lawsuit to force publication of the final rule. It contains numeric criteria for 98 toxic pollutants (91 human health, 30 aquatic life). The criteria are applied to State adopted use classifications (including wetlands). Dioxin is included in the rule. The risk level is 10^{-6} unless the State establishes a level of 10^{-5}. It was drafted under CWA §303 (c)(2)(B), which requires States to adopt numeric criteria for priority toxic pollutants. There are 126 priority toxic pollutants. Significantly, this is the first time that Congress

explicitly directed States to address specific pollutants by a specified deadline. EPA has taken action by promulgating water quality criteria for all priority toxic pollutants (the most significant promulgation action in the program's history). The goal is to set standards for pollution control programs to protect human health and ecology.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL)/WLA
CWA §303(d) establishes the TMDL process to provide more stringent water quality-based controls when technology-based controls are inadequate. Responsibilities for the TMDL program are shared between OWOW (programmatic) and OST (technical support).

Stronger technical guidance is needed for the TMDL process, as well as more screening level models for TMDL estimates. Existing models are difficult to use and require considerable data input. Few existing models work on a watershed scale.

The Exposure Assessment Branch is developing in-house TMDL modeling capability and user-friendly interfaces for difficult-to-use models (SWMM). It is also investigating the potential to develop a screening level, watershed-based model for TMDL use. OST is also planning a technical guidance document for the TMDL process.

Improvements in the technical side of the TMDL process will complement OWOW's programmatic TMDL goals. Continued coordination between the Exposure Assessment Branch and the Watershed Branch will help maintain consistency in the guidance and a well working program.

OGWDW
Ramona Trovato

Substituting for Jim Elder, Ramona outlined some of the key focuses of OGWDW:

1. CSGW Protection Program
   The strategy was developed last year with a focus on ecosystems. The approach is similar to the Watershed Protection Approach (i.e., identify area, sources of contamination, and solutions). Currently, OGWDW is writing national guidance on how to implement the program.

2. Wellhead Protection Program
   This program has a narrower focus. There are currently about 20 approved programs. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for nonpoint sources are important to ground water. There is a recognition that you can not separate

ground water and surface water protection efforts (e.g., don't want to shift pollution from surface water to ground water).

3. Drinking Water
   As of December 31, 1992, EPA will have 72 chemicals and 55 organic compounds in the public water supply (PWS) to monitor every five years.

Watershed Protection Approach
Louise Wise

In these breakout sessions, participants had the opportunity to choose from one of the following four areas of discussion pertaining to the watershed protection approach:

- Integrating targeting schemes
- Developing and implementing integrated action plans
- Funding flexibility
- Measurement and monitoring

Each breakout group focused on the following questions:

- What is happening now?
- What needs to happen?
- How do we make it happen (what/who)?

See Attachment 3 for a more detailed description of each breakout session.

Agriculture and the Environment: An Introduction
Dave Davis

Dave Davis, Deputy Director of OWOW, introduced Bill Richards, Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, by highlighting the cross-cutting issues involved in the agriculture industry and the field of ecological protection:

- Agriculture is the founding sector of the economy.
- Within EPA, it is one of the few areas with a holistic approach to solutions.
- The approach has been taken with the cooperation of USDA (an MOA was signed by Jim Mosely (USDA Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources) and Linda Fisher (EPA/OPTS)).
- It complements EPA's concern over nonpoint sources/wet-weather flow/irrigated agriculture.
- It is applicable to wetlands and coastal protection.
- It provides interesting opportunities
  - Habitat/biodiversity issues abound
  - Many private areas are not regulated
  - Much depends on individual stewardship

EPA also needs to:

- Hear local experts and lobbyists who have offices in Washington;
- Understand the different approaches taken by farm lobbies with respect to nonpoint source issues and wetlands issues;
- Establish broader and different kinds of contacts with representatives of the agriculture community; and
- Consider their perspective of EPA and other government agencies, especially their fear of regulators.

Geoff Grubbs, Director of AWPD, added:

- The commodity groups and others were great at the recent trading conference in North Carolina about finding non-federal sources of funding.
- The Agricultural Pollution Prevention Strategy is definitely on the Administrator's mind; however, the key element will be the question of whether to attack all items to a moderate extent or to focus on four or five flagship items and address them intently.
- Bill Richards (SCS) and Barbara Osgood (USDA's EPA liaison) have helped make great strides in this area, but the various roles and responsibilities between EPA and SCS in this particular effort are not clear yet.

Keynote Speech
William Richards
Chief, SCS

Bill Richards, Chief of USDA's Soil Conservation Service (SCS), discussed the agricultural community's role in protecting the environment. He also presented the perspective of the Department of Agriculture as another government agency in cooperation with EPA. Bill, a one-time farmer with a background in residue management, explained that the typical farmer believes he has a "duty to be responsible." In addition, business and environment are unquestionably compatible. He thanked Jim Mosely, his former supervisor, for bringing EPA and SCS together. There is an unwavering commitment within the agricultural community to meet its environmental responsibilities.

Bill introduced his discussion about the 1990 Farm Strategy by emphasizing the importance of curbing erosion to protect water quality. The 1985 bill called for plans on highly erodable land and will be implemented between 1991 and 1994. It has been an unpopular rule with many farmers; it is difficult to overcome a hesitant constituency. In 1991, farmers realized that they had no choice but to strive to adhere to the requirements of the bill.

Bill stated that the highest degree of progress in this area will come from doing a better job of conditioning users. It is indeed happening; there is lots of interest and acceptance. A change of attitude in the farming community has occurred. Still, conservation practices need to be implemented as soon as possible.

Bill pointed out that the efforts to tackle the wetlands issues are sapping the strength of SCS, just as they require so much work from EPA. Unfortunately, such intense efforts are inevitably inhibiting real progress. SCS and EPA will work together to find solutions (including better ways to administer programs).

The next bill will be of tremendous importance. It will probably be the CWA reauthorization. On this note, as SCS Chief, Bill thanked EPA for its request for SCS input on the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) rule formulation. He added that a voluntary approach for the CWA bill will be essential. In other words, as the last five years of experience exposes the difficulty of forcing farmers to modify their culture, we must build consensus through the proper channels. The state water associations and district associations are undoubtedly the best places to start.

Bill suggested that government agencies and agricultural producers shift their energies toward total resource planning. Although this concept has been the focus of SCS for the last thirty to forty years, it is a shame that the 1985 Farm Bill focused almost entirely on highly erodable land. Hopefully the next bill will be a "total" plan. SCS and EPA need to cooperate; a real opportunity exists now. As backers of agricultural producers, SCS needs to be proactive. That is, SCS and EPA must articulate what they are *for* — not *against*.

Questions

Bill made the following points in response to questions fielded from staff from the Regions and from Headquarters:

- Farmers don't understand the complexity of issues involved with wetlands, especially the marginal wetland definitions; instead of leaning so intently in one direction, we would be better off to simply enhance the "wet ones" and leave the "dry ones" alone.
- Section 404 issues need much discussion, especially in terms of understandings of exemptions in the community. Some land is currently in a "locked" state. We must clarify the implications of Swampbuster.

- The primary regions where people are afraid to farm new or wet areas lie in the midwest and the west, especially in states like Illinois and Iowa.
- The problems with the Farm Bill began when the circles on the map started affecting land values and property rights.
- Based on the direction provided in §404, SCS instructs its customers that they should check with COE on drainage issues.
- Regarding the issue of land value, it is true that there is confusion with regard to Swampbuster, that in some states (e.g., Nebraska) there has been a misrepresentation of land value decline, and that EPA consequently had no vehicle to respond; however, SCS was causing unnecessary problems. If a farmer calls about drainage, SCS will come out and help him.
- A voluntary approach for nonpoint source controls will only work if we can change attitudes; economy, philosophy, etc. are the real issues. We need to emphasize the right thing to do.
- The Secretary of Agriculture will have to have to classify marginal wetlands which are "wet enough for ducks" and "dry enough for farming."
- Some Regions (e.g., Region IX) have forged very strong partnerships with districts and other community organizations. However, SCS priorities seem to be shifting away from water quality and other issues; the level of hands-on technical assistance once provided is increasingly less available. SCS needs EPA to keep voicing concern about this problem. Also, it needs more budgetary help since it now has more customers than resources.

Panel Discussion
Agriculture: Will voluntary approaches work and how?"

Four panelists led a discussion about the role of the agricultural community in protecting the environment. Much of the discussion focused on the responsibility of EPA and other federal agencies to work through states and local governments to provide farmers with the tools to implement environmental programs successfully. In addition, given the genuine willingness of farmers to cooperate with these agencies, EPA, USDA, and COE must create a positive perception of themselves and their respective roles.

The panelists were: Dale Darling, Manager Agricultural Associations, DuPont; Roland B. Geddes, National Association of State Conservation Agencies; Donald Spickler, National Association of Conservation Districts; and Ralph Grossi, Director of American Farmland Trust.

Dale Darling
DuPont

Dale Darling of DuPont emphasized that voluntary approaches would work, if EPA is viewed by production agriculture as a *regular*, not a *regulator*. At these meetings, EPA and others must talk with farmers, not about them. Dale presented a flipchart which estimated the current universe of agriculturalists:

- 2.1 million farmers
- 340, 000 farmers — income
- 8 organizations who produce crops (e.g., corn, rice)
- 200,000 memberships
- 3,000 farmers at national level
- **350 spokespersons for farmers**

This is key. We can reach 70-80% of the key people by communicating directly with these 350 spokespersons.

USDA and EPA should be congratulated for signing the recent MOA. Doing so signifies the new leadership in terms of proactive planning in agriculture.

ROLE AROUND SOCIETY

"We" means every key group. As a society, we are questioning the cost of doing agriculture. We must listen and do quality thinking with fewer dollars. Currently, government is perceived very negatively — almost strictly as regulators. Farmers think of environmental policymakers as an "activist minority" who spend too much time reacting instead of solving problems.

The key to overcoming these perceptions lies in *relationship marketing*. That is, replace the perception of control and fear with one of trust by placing relationships before issues and tasks.

R(elationships) *Before* I(ssues) and T(asks)

This also can be viewed through the Joe-Harry Principle:

	Known to Self	**Not Known to Self**
Known to Others	Free/Spontaneous Interaction Trust	Blind Spot
Not Known to Others	Mask Hidden Denial	Unknown Potential/Creativity Limitless

We need to avoid the bottom right corner!

We should also:

- Give advice to local governments
- Ask farmers to protect the environment voluntarily
- Assist farmers with metrics/measurements
- Assist farmers with remediation
- Educate farmers
- Ask farmers for solutions

Roland Geddes
NASC

Roland Geddes, Washington representative for the National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASC), stressed the need for top-down and bottom-up approaches to government to meet at the state level. State associations are very interested in EPA activities and the watershed approach. We should strive to focus on land management, not water quality. Currently, there are 17 projects in this area, subdivided into 491 different tasks. NASC has been following the watershed approach for years. If you look especially at §319, you will see that the base grant should be divided between water quality and watershed protection. To implement the holistic view, NASC has launched a $2.5 million investment in geographic information systems.

Roland agreed with Bill Richards and Dale Darling that the voluntary approach will work, adding that he was somewhere in middle. Having a total resource management plan is the key. Farmers must implement legislative requirements by 1994. That is very tough for them to do, considering that they need approaches to erosion, nutrients, and pesticides. To do so, the following six elements are essential:

1. Conduct research and development; get answers for farmers and spend money to define the problem in each area;
2. Target Best Management Practices (BMPs);
3. Educate farmers -- this is incredibly long-lasting;
4. Provide technical assistance (e.g., planning, design, and testing methods);
5. Develop financial incentives (e.g., cost share programs, tax credits to buy equipment {which is in incredibly short supply}); and
6. Continue regulatory work -- an entirely voluntary program won't work -- we can attempt to do "regulation by exception."

With §319/208, the mistake was not to set aside the extra money for successful farmers. We need to simply do what is right, and do it at the state and local level, not federal! We're moving in the right direction now.

Don Spickler
NACD

Don Spickler, Northeast Representative and member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD), discussed the importance of timing in a voluntary approach. Don focused his discussion on three major points: the district's role in solving ag-related water quality problems, NACD's view of the problem, and potential solutions to the problem.

District Role in Water Quality Programs
Districts are special purpose unit, created by state law, nationwide diversity, charged with the responsibility of coordinating and carrying out national resource management programs in specific areas. The programs addressed include:

- Agricultural and urban erosion control
- Flood control and water management
- Forest, range, and wildlife management
- Water quality protection
- Wetlands restoration
- Water quality protection

Don clarified that NACD is not part of SCS — it is SCS's local partner. SCS and state conservation agencies deliver their programs through districts. Guided and directed by locally elected/appointed officials, NACD members try to help discern the needs of the community. They are mostly farmers and ranchers who voluntarily assess problems, set priorities, and oversee the implementation of programs. Effectively, districts provide a mechanism for local involvement and control.

Assessment of Agriculture's Impact on Water Quality, Wetlands, and Other Renewable Natural Resources
The districts recognize and understand that agriculture activities can and do have adverse impacts on the resource base. If not properly managed, nutrients, sediments, animal waste, chemicals, and other elements can cause off-site problems. Consequently, now that districts have accepted the responsibility, the key is proper management. With good management practices and wise use of natural resources, a good life is possible without degrading the environment.

In NACD's fifty year history, we have learned that the most effective and long-lasting solutions are directly tied to a land manager's overall understanding of the problem and how he can take steps to avoid or mitigate problems.

Solutions and Incorporation of the Voluntary Approach
We must be wary of the credibility issue as well as the use of scientific evidence -- it gets used everywhere. The voluntary will work, as long as it is specific and purposeful. We need to clarify our position; too often the solution to ag-related environmental problems is presented as either a voluntary or mandatory approach. The correct approach lies somewhere in the middle. The **primary** approach should be based on education and technical and financial assistance, with regulation as a backup mechanism.

Don highlighted the need to focus on the following specific actions:

- Section 319 should remain the primary vehicle because it places states in the lead and allows for local implementation
- USDA should play a major role in helping states implement their programs
- EPA and states have failed to fully utilize the district delivery system
- EPA and states must learn to communicate *with* the people they want to solve NPS problems
- Federal agencies should involve more people (e.g., state conservation agencies, farm organizations, industry)
- Since this approach is working at the state level, we need to assist other states in developing better programs
- EPA and SCS must know their customers and partners, and see the farm community as the solution, not the problem

Ralph Grossi
American Farmland Trust

Ralph Grossi agreed that there are many different perceptions of "voluntary." American Farmland Trust attempts to look at issues from the farmers perspective. There are a fixed number of people and a rapidly changing landscape. Over the years, more expectations have been superimposed in addition to food (i.e., the issue of wetlands watersheds). Economic and social values (e.g., farm worker housing) also have an impact. We are trying to find ways to narrow the gap between farmer value social value.

Ralph pointed out that 900 million acres of farmland has a big impact on the environment depending on land management. The voluntary approach will work given an appropriate regulatory framework (e.g., good zoning). Only five percent of farmers are expressly opposed to any environmentally protective measures whatsoever. We must achieve a good mixture of the three basic motivators: profit (survival), fear, and altruism.

A solely mandatory approach will not work because:

- Enforcement is virtually impossible
- Enforcement has a huge political impact and is too often accompanied by misuse of the media and over-reliance on good will by farmers
- Long-lasting regulation is both difficult and expensive

The voluntary approach is cheaper, more agreeable, and longer lasting. Ralph had two major suggestions to facilitate this approach:

1. Education (e.g., wetlands, prior conversion rule, spotted owl)
2. Fundamental reform in farm policy:
   - Define objectives and change subsidy system to be based on stewardship and value;
   - Reallocate money to stewardship objectives (we have to compete with crop subsidies — $30 million per year — when we argue on the Hill);
   - Forge new partnerships — involve public interest groups, identify common agendas (e.g., flexibility in farm programs);
     - ex. Marin County partnership between Environmental Action Committee and Farm Bureau (much protected land)
   - Capture profit motivation and public support
   - Leave all the tools on the workbench (e.g., holistic approach, BMPs)

Comments

The panel concluded its discussion by providing comments in response to questions from Regional and Headquarters attendees:

- Many farmers are already practicing sustainable agriculture (e.g., BMPs), especially on demonstration farms. SCS is considering approaching only those customers with problems; SCS doesn't need subsidies, but it does need help before entering the common market.

- EPA and all other interested agencies must adopt the role of salesmen in order to help provide a clear direction.
- There is indeed a real concern that this rhetoric is not perceived well by environmental groups. Many of these groups perceive the marketing and assistance role as a threat to traditional regulations and a mark of moving toward "collaboration."
- It is reasonable for EPA to be cautious in sharing information with the farm lobby and NACD because of their past perceived roles; however, we must continue to move in the current direction of cooperation.
- §319 gave states — not EPA — the responsibility for delivering these programs; that is the source of this balance.

Stormwater / NPS / CZARA Strategic Integration
Geoff Grubbs
Cynthia Dougherty

This session focused on issues related to stormwater discharges, nonpoint source pollution, and the strategic integration of CZARA provisions. Geoff Grubbs, Director of AWPD, made a presentation entitled "*Opportunities for Working Together: The Stormwater Permit and Nonpoint Source Programs.*" The presentation began with an outline of the key environmental risks posed by stormwater discharges:

- About 30% of remaining water quality (WQ) impairment is attributable to stormwater discharges from urban areas.
- According to state submissions to the 1990 S 305(b) Report:
  - Of impaired river/streams, 60% are impaired by agriculture — the 3 leading causes were siltation, nutrients and organics;
  - Of impaired lakes/reservoirs, 57% are impaired by agriculture, 28% by storm sewers/urban runoff — the 3 leading causes were metals, nutrients and organics; and
  - Of impaired estuaries/coastal waters, 30% are impaired by storm sewers/urban runoff, 18% by agriculture — the 3 leading causes were nutrients, organics and pathogens.

This introduction was followed by an explanation of the background of existing stormwater and nonpoint source programs. The 1987 Amendments to CWA resulted in a two-phase storm water program under 402(p). The two key regulations are:

1. November 16, 1990 Phase I Application Rule for medium-size cities (municipals over 100,000) and industrial activities
2. August 16, 1991 Proposed Storm Water General Permits

HQ is currently processing 1,200 group applications for 58,000 facilities from industry. Twenty-nine states were approved and general permits were granted in twenty states. HQ must define who is covered under Phase II (small cities). On October 1, the moratorium expires. Future activities include:

- Assist the 27 NPDES states
- Execute the implementation rule
- Sponsor workshops
- Prepare guidance documents
- Develop a tracking system

In accordance with Section 319 of CWA Amendments of 1987, Program Guidance was published in December, 1987 and Grants Guidance was published in January 14, 1991. (There is specific language in the guidance to prohibit grants for large cities; we need to look at this closely to ensure that this is policy is appropriate.)

Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 (CZARA) consisted of two major parts:

- Management Measures
- Program Approval Guidance

NPS is currently in the third round of 319 grants, continuing work on the Final Report to Congress; program evaluation; and completing CZARA guidance. Future activities include awarding 92 grants and producing the final CZARA guidance.

Opportunities

The session concluded with a summary of the key opportunities regarding eight aspects of stormwater and nonpoint source programs:

1. Permit Coverage

- Stormwater permits focus has been on Phase I: industries and municipals over 100,000; some emphasis on selected municipals under 100,000 (Phase II).
- Feedlot permits: currently evaluating NPDES requirements; a task force led by Mike Cook is charged with developing a strategic direction for feedlots.
- NPS: continuing to focus on point sources up until permit activity begins.

Issues and limitations related to coverage address legal questions, timing, and funding. The questions for NPS are the following:

- Do the statutes allow/support the current use of the §319 program (i.e., using NPS grant dollars on point sources)?
- Practically speaking, is this strategy feasible?
- Does such a strategy make the best use of available funding?

2. Criteria and Standards

- No national criteria exist for nutrients. Jointly press OST for speeding up development of wet-weather standards and criteria, especially sediment and nutrients.
- Technology and tolls is site specific. We need to develop models relating controls to water quality standards.

3. Technical Guidance

- CZARA management measures pertaining to urban areas are targeted at coastal areas, but are generally applicable everywhere.
- WASHCOG (Washington Area Council of Governments) manual provides detailed guidance on prevention and mitigation of urban NPS pollution in developing areas. Expected date of availability is FY93.
- WASHCOG manual on urban retrofit.

4. Funding

- Section 319: approximately $5-10 million annually for technical assistance, controls implementation, I/E, technology transfer/training, development of ordinances/regulations.
- SRF — press for additional funding by expanding intended uses.
- Generally, there is a need to look at total resources and how they are devoted to the right priorities.

5. Outreach

We may be overextended in the outreach area. We need to focus on the message we want to promote.

Outreach activities include:

- National technical conference in Fall 1992 (joint sponsorship.
- CZARA workshop(s) — Fall 1992 — invite Regional permit staff.
- Ongoing permit workshops.

6. Construction/New Development

- Controlling new development is the key to curbing urban runoff. Municipalities provide detailed site review.

7. Point Source/Nonpoint Source Trading

- A focused initiative to identify more candidate waterbodies and provide seed money may be the way to free capital needed for cost sharing and BMPs.

8. Data Needs/Analyses

- Better data on wet-weather impacts.
- More cost-efficient ways to evaluate performance of wet-weather controls.
- Continued evaluation/identification of innovative non-structural approaches (transportation planning, master plan development, etc.).
- Strategy for incorporating monitoring at reasonable costs.
- Characterization of potential benefits.

Next Steps

Develop National Leadership Initiative:

- Hold one-day retreat in late May for new staff from both programs along with appropriate staff from OCPD/Wetlands to educate them about "other" programs.
- Hold one-day retreat in June for managers to draft an implementation strategy for joint activities.
- Discuss draft implementation strategies in August with EPA Regions and ASIWPCA and formulate a national initiative.

OWOW Staff Meeting Session
Bob Wayland
Dave Davis

Bob Wayland welcomed all OWOW staff, stressing the significance of this opportunity for Regional colleagues to participate in this session. He outlined the recent highlights of OWOW, currently in its second growing season:

- Success of and continuing potential for interagency task forces
- Interagency Federal Task Force on Water Monitoring (IFTM)
- North Carolina Pollution Trading meeting — new ways of tackling difficult problems
- NPS Issue of *EPA Journal* with article by Bill Richards, SCS Chief
- ANDERSON Chief Scientist Certification Program
- NCW Program Guidance
- NEPs and outlook for CCMPs
- Greenbook implementation/bioassay tests
- Ocean dumping and role of OWOW at London Dumping Convention
- Marine debris initiatives
- *Audubons America*
- Wetlands defense/Congressional hearings; science of restoration
- CZARA guidance/NPS Issues
- Grant guidance/Agency operating guidance will be released in the near future
- Many watershed projects are underway

Bob stressed that OWOW concepts and definitions have begun to take shape. Particularly, he noted the watershed approach and the *Water Quality 2000* keynote speech by Margot Garcia. The Nature Conservancy has also realized the value of a holistic view and partnership, based on the natural downstream flow of water. Recent CEQ reports include a chapter on biodiversity. The fundamental point is that each program has opportunity to draw strength from a pervasive approach to ecological protection.

Bob noted that the OWOW Quarterly Highlights report discussed how we are at the forefront of putting the "E" back in EPA. The report discussed progress in the habitat cluster initiative and the action plans for agriculture pollution prevention, including measures to avoid both water pollution and wetlands loss. With the reorganization behind us, OWOW and EPA now have an excellent opportunity for integration and broader focus. OWOW will continue to conduct customer/employee surveys to identify needs and improve communication. The CZARA guidance, for example, revealed the value of improved openness. At the same time, staff commitment and involvement are essential to overcome the potentially "dangerous opportunities" that lie ahead:

- Very new Congress in the fall — less knowledge about our programs
- Hard economic times
- Grassroots organizations/property rights movement
- OMB preoccupation with costs — moving away from environmental concerns
- State/local partners under fiscal stress
- A new Administrator will probably be appointed in January 1993 — simultaneously an opportunity and a loss

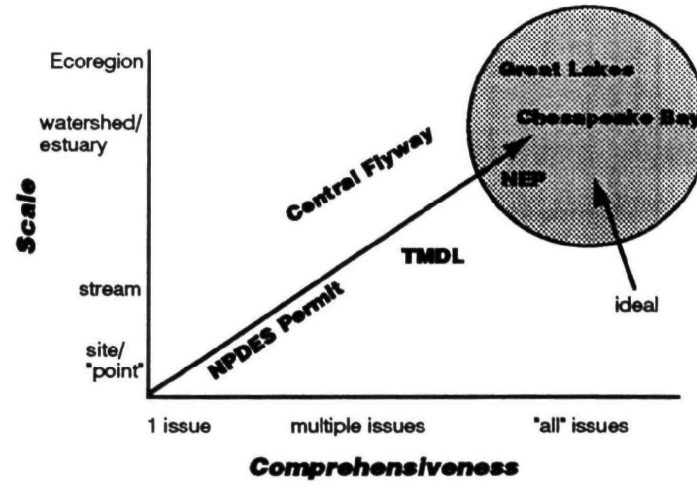
Bob stressed that the challenge for each of us, individually and as a team, is to build on the momentum we are beginning to develop and exploit the opportunities while minimizing the dangers. A brief question-and-answer session followed.

Strategic Plan

Dave Davis provided an overview of the development of OW's strategic plan. The next plan would still be resource-oriented, but would be more strategic. Also, it would consist of greater staff involvement and input to the Management Advisory Group. Using Region I's work in this area as a benchmark, the development of the strategic plan will be more of a TQM process, including involvement by outside partners.

Dave also discussed the graph below, depicting the Agency's watershed protection approach:

WATERSHED PROTECTION APPROACH



He stressed the need to move toward the top right — to address more ecosystematic issues over broader geographic areas.

Habitat Cluster

Dave also outlined the nature of the habitat cluster initiative established in the fall of 1991. The habitat cluster is a forum for discussing one of many cross-cutting issues in the Agency. With nearly fifty members, it also serves as a task force for EPA to confront these problems. Currently, the group is formulating a long-term strategic plan to present to the Administrator by the fall. The cluster effectively encourages a habitat ecosystematic or "bird and bunny" focus, not unlike many existing migratory bird population protection programs. It is clear that EPA is moving into new areas.

Research

Dave concluded by discussing the Agency's new research planning process. EPA recently dissolved the old committees in the Offices of Air, Water, and other areas. Those committees have now been replaced by a single "issue-based research committee" conducive to ORD central management. Activity will be planned for every research area, instead of on an ad-hoc basis. Much of this change stemmed from the success of the ORD wetlands research plan.

Currently, there are 41 categories or "issues," each of which has a lab director and a three-page research outline reviewed by the Science Advisory Board, among others. These outlines will be translated into 41 individual research plans. At this time, OWOW's issues are classified in twenty of those categories, but we are trying to capitalize on as many as possible; we have established contacts and/or Regional ORD liaisons for each one. It is important for Regional staff to identify and work with their ORD liaisons; OWOW is not in control. We are hoping to finalize all ORD issue plans by May 29th. This is a valuable resource which has not yet been tapped. [NOTE: Martin Brossman is the Headquarters ORD contact. He can be reached at (202) 260-7040.]

Recently formulated categories include habitat biodiversity and nonpoint sources. Many new categories, such as terrestrial ecosystems, are being forged and merged. Geographic targeting is the most appropriate mechanism for seeing how all the issue areas fit together. [NOTE: Headquarters will distribute a matrix of all issue areas currently being researched.]

Regional Involvement

Bob reaffirmed that OWOW will continue to involve Regional people from the beginning in the decision process. The Water Management Division Director's Meeting in Tampa was a good example. We will also involve more staff-level people.

Wrap-up Session
Regions

The meeting concluded with the following comments from the Regions about the meeting itself and activities within Headquarters and the Regions:

- The Regional perspective is that OWOW HQ is listening.
- The panel discussion was excellent.
- The breakout discussions were productive and useful.
- The format of the meeting was great; it included a useful cross-section of OW and OWOW instead of having just one division at a National meeting.
- The outside speakers were excellent and provided a good balance of internal and external people.
- The fact that the meeting did not result in a "laundry list" of Regional action items reflects very good conceptual planning.

Attachment 1

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting

List of Participants

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting
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Attachment 2

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting

Agenda

Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds

FY92 National Program Meeting

The Washington Plaza Hotel
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May 5-7, 1992

Day One
Tuesday, May 5

8:30 - 9:00am	**Welcome/Introduction**	***Bob Wayland***
9:00 - 10:00am	**Keynote Address** **Questions and Answers** *LaJuana Wilcher,* *Assistant Administrator for Water*	
10:15 - 12:00	**Regional Customer Survey**	***Louise Wise***
12:00 - 1:00pm	**Keynote Speaker:** *Margot Garcia, Water Quality 2000*	
1:00 - 2:00pm	**Panel Discussion** **Watershed and Ecosystem Protection** *"How can we strengthen the connection?"* *Gregory Low, The Nature Conservancy* *Scott Feierabend, National Wildlife Federation* *Margot Garcia, Water Quality 2000* *Moderator: Dave Davis*	

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting Agenda (cont'd.)

2:00 - 3:30pm	**Sharing of Common Program Goals**	*Mike Cook* *Tudor Davies* *Ramona Trovato*
4:00 - 5:30pm	**Watershed Protection Approach** • *Integrating Targeting Schemes* • *Funding Flexibility* • *Developing and Implementing Integrated Holistic Action Plans* • *Measurement and Monitoring*	*Louise Wise*

Day Two
Wednesday, May 6

8:30 - 9:00am	**Review Agenda/Introduction**	*Dave Davis*
9:00 - 9:30am	**Keynote Speech** *William Richards,* *Chief, Soil Conservation Service*	
9:30 - 11:00am	**Panel Discussion -- Agriculture** *"Will voluntary approaches work and how?"* *Dale Darling, DuPont* *Roland B. Geddes, National Association of State Conservation Agencies* *Donald Spickler, National Association of Conservation Districts* *Ralph Grossi, American Farmland Trust* *Moderator: Dave Davis*	
11:15 - 12:00	**Stormwater/NPS/CZARA Strategic Integration**	*Geoff Grubbs* *Cynthia Dougherty* *Marcella Jensen*

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting Agenda (cont'd.)

1:00 - 4:00pm	Division Breakout Session	
4:00 - 5:00pm	OWOW Staff Meeting with the Regions	
5:15pm	OWOW Staff/Regions Social Event	

Day Three
Thursday, May 7

8:30 - 9:15am	Resource Allocation Process for FY93	*Bernie Mason*
9:15 - 10:30am	OWOW Wrap-up Session	*Bob Wayland* *Dave Davis*

Attachment 3

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting

Watershed Protection Approach
Breakout Session Notes

MEASUREMENT AND MONITORING

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Headquarters

- Coastal bioassessments
- Environmental indicator effort
- Information management problems
- Not enough integration between compliance and ambient monitoring

Region 1

- Merrimack River Basin and Blackstone
  - Using WPA
  - Using biological tools
- States Vermont and Maine established biological fixed stations
- Toxicity testing 2 species
- Sediment toxicity
- Nutrients
- EMAP – Fish Tissue Analysis (Archiving. Freshwater specimens)

Region 3

- Water Quality Assessments. Identify causes to extent possible used for other areas as well as WPA
- Technical Problems with Major Waterbasin Approach
- 305(b) not being used to full potential
- 2 projects under way with no monitoring (planning: USGS – chemical; EPA – biological)

- Red Clay Creek (PA/DE). Biological indicators used to identify problems (PS and NPS). Working with SCS.
- SAB Report – Emphasis moving to biological monitoring; particularly good for WPA

Region 7

- Platte River Basin Project
- Indicators Workgroup within Region
- Fish Tissue Monitoring (not just watershed)
- Working with USGS and Agriculture for WPA planning

Region 8

- Taking comprehensive look at what's happening; strategy for technical tools and integration
- Problems – small→large. The problem helps to define the boundaries of watershed.
- Biological Integrity and beyond. Measures raise (additional) concerns such as flow; physical habitat; clean and contaminated sediment

Region 9

- Going beyond compliance monitoring
- Over $17 million being spent on monitoring
- Southern California Coastal Water Research project (regionalize POTW monitoring)
  - same protocols
  - same management system

Gulf of Mexico

- Struggling with boundaries of watershed
- Use assessments and data
- Information management problems
- Shellfish growing water as an indicator (number of acres). More relevant indicator not presently available.
- Bathing beach monitoring problems. (Lack of State standards)
- EMAP data potential misuse

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

- Need Monitoring Plan and Program Design
  - Use existing sources
    - NEP Guidance
    - Region 10 Forestry Monitoring Guidance
- Integrate EMAP/REMAP efforts
- Intergovernmental Task Force on Monitoring Water Quality needs effective
  - Monitoring Framework
  - Environmental Indicators
  - Data Collection
  - Data Management Information Sharing
- Evaluate use of regulatory mechanisms for monitoring
- 305(b) consistency and use (how it fits into WPA)
- Interim Policy and Support Data Management (i.e., STORET modernization)
- Headquarters Reviews of Regional Watershed Initiatives – Careful review of monitoring design so that success can be documented.
- Training – For designing
  - monitoring plans
  - evaluation and assessment (biological)

FUNDING FLEXIBILITY

DEFINE:

- Early direct multiple sources of funding to watershed with multiple activities.
- Need opportunity to make argument and arrangements for funding
- Funding elibibility – variable match
- Cross-Office funding
- Focus on EPA sources

EXPERIENCE WITH FLEXIBILITY

Region I

- Merrimac River Basin
  - Reg. AC&C $
    Wetland
    Ground water
- LOE contracts a limit
- Stakeholder participation upfront needed – workshops – for watershed approach – EPA responsible
- Can't use OWEC $
- Tools we have vx. over start-up
- Need seed money – lack eligible activity; i.e., watershed conf.
- Can do w. NEP – need flex in other pots.
- Can't use 319 – not implementation
- Regional cross-media review teams
- State serve as convenor

Region IV

- NC/AG Cost Share
- Nutrient Trading
  - Use 319 funding
- Technical assistance/data management
- Tar-Pamlico

Region V

- GL/LAMP Lake Superior (also Lake Michigan and Upper Mississippi)

CEM	$3.0M
GL	$1.0M
104(b)	Storm water
WL	

- WI/MN/MI joint venture
- Negotiated STARS commits
- Avoid project-of-month problem

Region IX

- Southern California Bight
- Regional monitoring
  - 404(3)(c)
  - 301(h)
- Implement existing plan
  - EMAP
  - NEP — Santa Monica Bay NEP Authority
  - NPDES
- San Francisco Bay

$10-$12M
COE – 50%
EPA – NEP + MPRSA
California – Penalty $
Port funding
} 50%

- State WL Plan
  - Coastal funds
- Wasteload Allocation
  - S. SF Bay
  - NPDES + NEP + Demo project
- AG strategy
- Wetlands
- Contracted States
- Use 319 for high priority areas – national set-aside in FY 1991
- Forced 60% state match
- Need to know where $ are and what requirements/limits
- Will Headquarters earmark $ to support WPA?
- Earmark steps in WPA
- Sources of funding
  - match requirements?
  - All OW (WDD meeting)

} gaps

Region X

- Restoration of Basin
  - Near Coastal Waters
  - 319 could have been used
- Coastal America
  - NCW $10K
  - Water Division $10K
  - Part of Puget Sound NEP project
  - Other Federal cooperation in-kind

} + $296K

Developing and Implementing Integrated Action Plans

What's Happening Now?

- Maryland's Coastal Bays – NCW
  - plan development in progress
- Arkansas River Initiative
  - Canaan Valley, West Virginia
- Pocono Watershed Approach
- Remedial Action Plan – G.L.
- N.W. Indiana
- Cumulative Impact Studies – Region 6
  - Texas
  - Tangihpohoa
- Puget Sound Early Action Watershed
- Savannah River
- Truckee River
- Merrimack River

What Needs to Happen and What are the Key Problems?

- Who takes the lead?
- Resources
  - Commitment across programs
    - easier within 1 Division
    - Region 5 successful – high priority from top for G.L.
    - Regional Champions
- Can't approach as "projects" – need long-term view

ACTION PLAN BARRIERS

* Resources
* Timing
* Need to involve "stakeholders" – Stakeholders involved vs. Nature Conservancy

HOW DO WE MAKE IT HAPPEN?

→ Provide Resources
  - dedicated resources – tap all? Separate program elements?

→ Highlight in program guidance of others

→ Pro-active planning among programs
  - Agree on criteria to shift $

→ Build upon "history"

→ Local recognition of problem

→ Buy-in by upper management in Headquarters and Regions

→ Tools to organize data/information

→ Incentives: States, local, others

INTEGRATING TARGETING SCHEMES

WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

Models

Region 3

- Participating in Ongoing State Effort
- Capitalize on Ongoing Efforts
- Coastal America

Region 6

- Regional Risk Assessment
- Multi-media
- 24 eco-regions→12 watersheds→1 priority
- Criteria – public health and ecology
- Time consuming, Resources

Region 9

- GW, PP, Wet, NCW, Pest, NEP
- Developing State Guidance
- Developing Regional Priorities
- Botton-Up Approach
- Multi-media I nvolvement
- Other agencies help with review

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN?

	What	Who
→	Consistent Framework	HQ, Regions
→	Engage States	Regions, HQ
→	Capitalize on Existing Efforts/Infrastructure	
→	Senior Management Buy-In	HQ, Regions, States
→	Publicize Successes	HQ
→	Clarifying Models	
→	Executive Order for WPA	Admin
→	AOG	HQ
→	Opportunities for Managers' Support	HQ
→	Use State Priorities	Regions
→	Realistic Expectations	All
→	Involving Other Groups	All
→	Evaluate Existing Tech Tools	HQ/Regions
→	Test Assumption/Evaluate Success	HQ, Regions
→	Re-emphasize Flexibility	HQ
→	Identify Local Support	All
→	Guidance, Regulation Language – WPA Support	HQ
→	Carrot/Stick Approach	HQ

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting

Action Items

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting
ACTION ITEMS

OWOW-WIDE ACTIONS

What	Who	When
Customer Survey ✍ Continue survey ✍ Develop focus group/questionnaire ✍ Make improvements to survey contents	PCS	Before next National Program Meeting
Watershed Protection ✍ Financing Options Matrix ✍ Survey of projects	 BPMS PCS	 July 31 July 31
Grants Administration ✍ Cooperate with GAD on training	BPMS	Ongoing
Research ✍ Provide Regions information on the new EPA research planning process	Dave Davis	July 31

DRAFT: 6/27/92

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting
ACTION ITEMS (cont'd.)

ASSESSMENT AND WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

What	Who	When
✍ Fall meeting in Chicago	AWPD	Fall
✍ Involve Regions in NPS strategy	AWPD/NPSCB	Starting now through winter
✍ 319(n) follow-up (really IPA funding issue)	BPMS - lead AWPD - make sure Regions get answer	ASAP
✍ Hold NPS coordinators meeting	AWPD/NPSCB	Fall - with branch chief meeting

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting
ACTION ITEMS (cont'd.)

OCEANS AND COASTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

What	Who	When
✍ Complete ocean dumping workload model input for MPRSA; send out memo	OCPD - memo Regions - input	Input by June 4
✍ Development of Regional greenbook implementation menus	Regions	July 31 +
✍ Complete NEP evaluation criteria and select pilot NEPs	OCPD/UI	Pilots - done Evaluation criteria - June 30
✍ Identify Carribean activities for budget initiative	Regions II, IV, VI, and GOMP	May 18
✍ Send materials on technology transfer strategy development (i.e., RESOLVE)	OCPD	May 29

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OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting
ACTION ITEMS (cont'd.)

WETLANDS DIVISION

What	Who	When
✍ Create checklist of considerations for §404 cases	WD	June 30
✍ Provide more information to Regions on Congressional wetlands activities - in teleconference and the reports	WD	Immediately
✍ Coordinate reprinting of major outreach publications with the Regions	WD	July 31
✍ Structure future Headquarters/Regional meetings for Wetlands	WD	Fall

Attachment 5

OWOW FY92 National Program Meeting

Customer Survey Results

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OFFICE OF
WATER

MAR 26 1992

MEMORENDUM

SUBJECT: OWOW FY92 Regional Customer Survey

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Office of Policy and Communication

TO: Addressees

As Bob indicated in his February 27, 1992 memorandum, we are conducting a followup customer survey to see whether our services to you have improved since June 1991 and to invite new suggestions for improvement. We will discuss the results with you during the OWOW National Program Meeting scheduled for May 5, 1992.

I have enclosed the new survey instrument as well as a copy of the results of the last survey for your review and reference. Ms. Ginger Webster, our consultant who conducted the last survey, will once again be conducting the telephone interviews. She will be calling to schedule an interview time with you between April 6 and 17, 1992.

We appreciate your time and cooperation in participating in the survey and look forward to a full and open exchange of the results in May.

Enclosures:

Survey instruments
Results of FY91 survey

Addressees:

Reg 1	Ron Manfredonia, Chief, Water Quality Branch Carol Wood, Chief, Monitoring/Environmental Study Branch
Reg 2	Mario Del Vicario, Chief, Marine and Wetland Protection Robert Vaughn, Chief, Water Standards and Planning Branch Richard Spear, Chief, Surveillance and Monitoring Branch
Reg 3	Jon Capacasa, Depute Director, Chesapeake Bay Program Richard Pepino, Chief, Environmental Assessment Branch, Victoria Binetti, Chief, Program Support Branch Joseph T. Piotrowski, Chief, Permits Enforcement Branch Robert Kramer, Chief, Environmental Monitoring Branch
Reg 4	Stallings Howell, Chief, Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds Doug Lipka, Director, Gulf of Mexico Program Office
Reg 5	Ken Fenner, Chief, Water Quality Branch Jim Giattina, Deputy Director, GLNPO Valerie Jones, Chief, Monitoring and QA Branch
Reg 6	Norman Thomas, Chief, Federal Activities Branch, Richard Hoppers, Chief, Water Quality Management Branch Jim Steibing, Chief, Surveillance Branch
Reg 7	Kerry Herndon, Chief, Environmental Review Branch, Office for Policy and Management Larry Ferguson, Chief, Water Compliance Branch Thomas Hollowway, Chief, Enviro. Mon. and Surv. Branch
Reg 8	Dale Vodehnal, Chief, State Program Management Branch
Reg 9	Loretta Barsamian, Chief, Wetlands, Oceans and Esturaies Cat Kuhlman, Chief, Water Quality Branch
Reg 10	Ron Lee, Chief, Environmental Evaluation Branch Jack Gakstatter, Chief, Office of Coastal Waters Tom Wilson, Chief, Office of Water Planning Bienvenido Eusebio, Chief, Ambient Mon. and Analysis Br

OWOW CUSTOMER SURVEY

In preparation for the May Branch Chiefs meeting, OWOW is conducting a followup customer survey to determine our responsiveness to the concerns identified in the June 1991 survey, as well as identify new areas where improvements are needed. A copy of the results of the June 1991 survey is enclosed.

Interviewees should include Regional Branch Chiefs responsible for the wetlands, ocean and coastal, nonpoint source and water monitoring programs. Branch Chiefs can include other managers and staff in the interviews as appropriate.

I. Improving Services to the Regions:

a. Please rank from 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor) the following OWOW services in each major program area:

Budget planning and funding processes
Legislative strategies and Congressional liaison
National tools, such as policies, regulations and guidance
Enlisting assistance of other programs
Technology transfer and outreach
Overall administration, including administrative services, program priorities and working relationships

b. In your opinion, have OWOW services in each of these areas improved, declined or stayed about the same since the last survey?

c. Do you have any suggestions for improving OWOW support in any of these areas?

II. Improving Communications between OWOW and the Regions

a. Please review the suggestions made in the last survey on pages 17-19 of the summary report. Has OWOW been responsive to these suggestions?

b. Do you have any new suggestions that OWOW should consider?

III. Responsiveness to other Regional suggestions

Please review the suggestions and comments from pages 20-26 of the summary report? Are there suggestions or comments that you would like to re-emphasize?

IV. National Priorities

What two or three issues should OWOW be addressing that could have the most impact on continued enviromental progress in your Region? Please be fairly specific.

Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds National Program Meeting

May 5-7, 1992
Washington, D.C.

Customer Survey Results

EPA

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Appendix: Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds Customer Survey

Regional Participants

Region I

Ron Manfredonia
Carol Wood

Region II

Dan Forger
Dan Montello
Janice Rollwagon
Robert Vaughn

Region III

Victoria Binetti
Chuck Kanetsky
Robert Kramer
Richard Pepino

Chesapeake Bay Program

John Capacasa

Region IV

Dan Ahern
Bob Howard
Stallings Howell
Carol Terrace
Tom Welborn

Region VI

Beverly Ethridge
Richard Hoppers
George Horvath

Gulf of Mexico Program

Doug Lipka

Region VII

Larry Ferguson
Kerry Herndon
John Houlihan

Region VIII

Dale Vodehnal

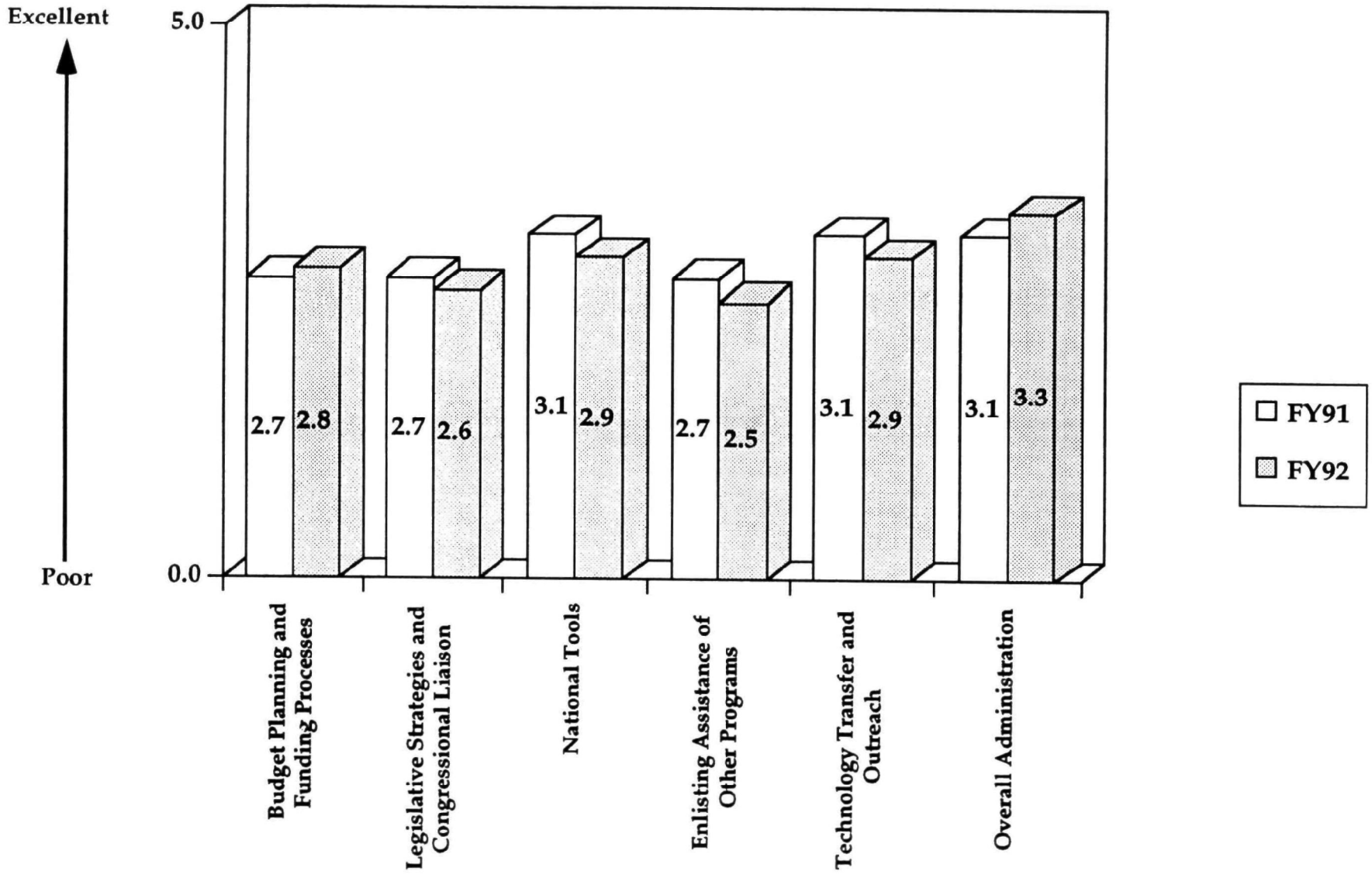
Region IX

Catherine Kuhlman
Amy Zimpfer

Region X

Jack Gakstatter
Ron Lee
Kerrie Schurr

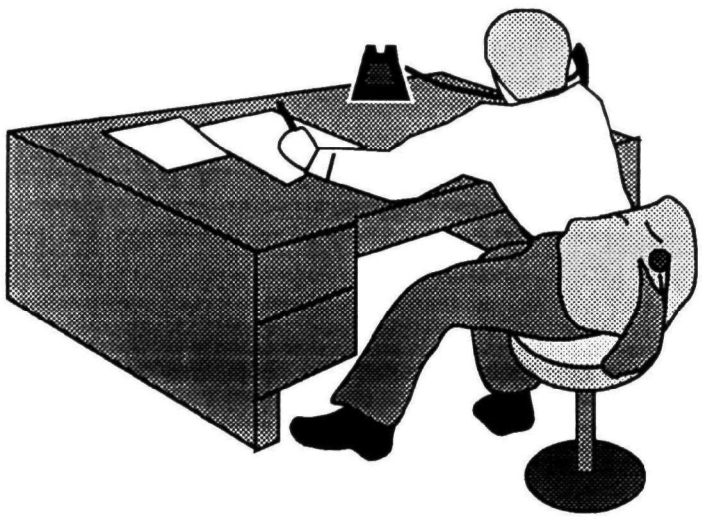
OWOW-Wide Average Rankings by Service



OWOW-Wide
FY92 Survey Results

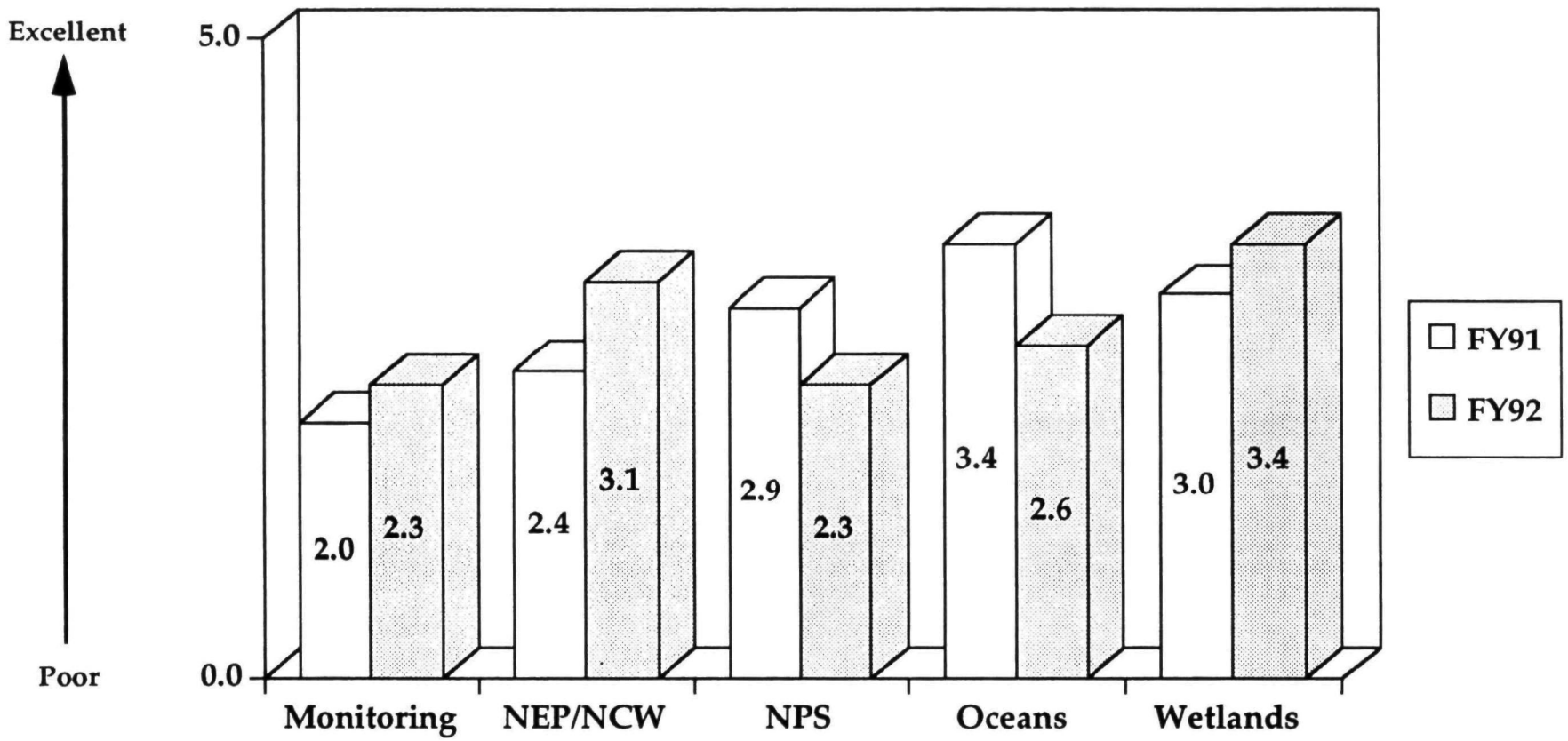
Since FY91, Have Services Improved, Declined, or Stayed About the Same? (# of responses)

Service	Improved	Declined	Same
Budget Development and Funding Processes	14	5	19
Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison	4	10	23
National Tools	14	8	15
Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs	8	4	26
Technology Transfer and Outreach	11	2	24
Overall Administration	14	2	22



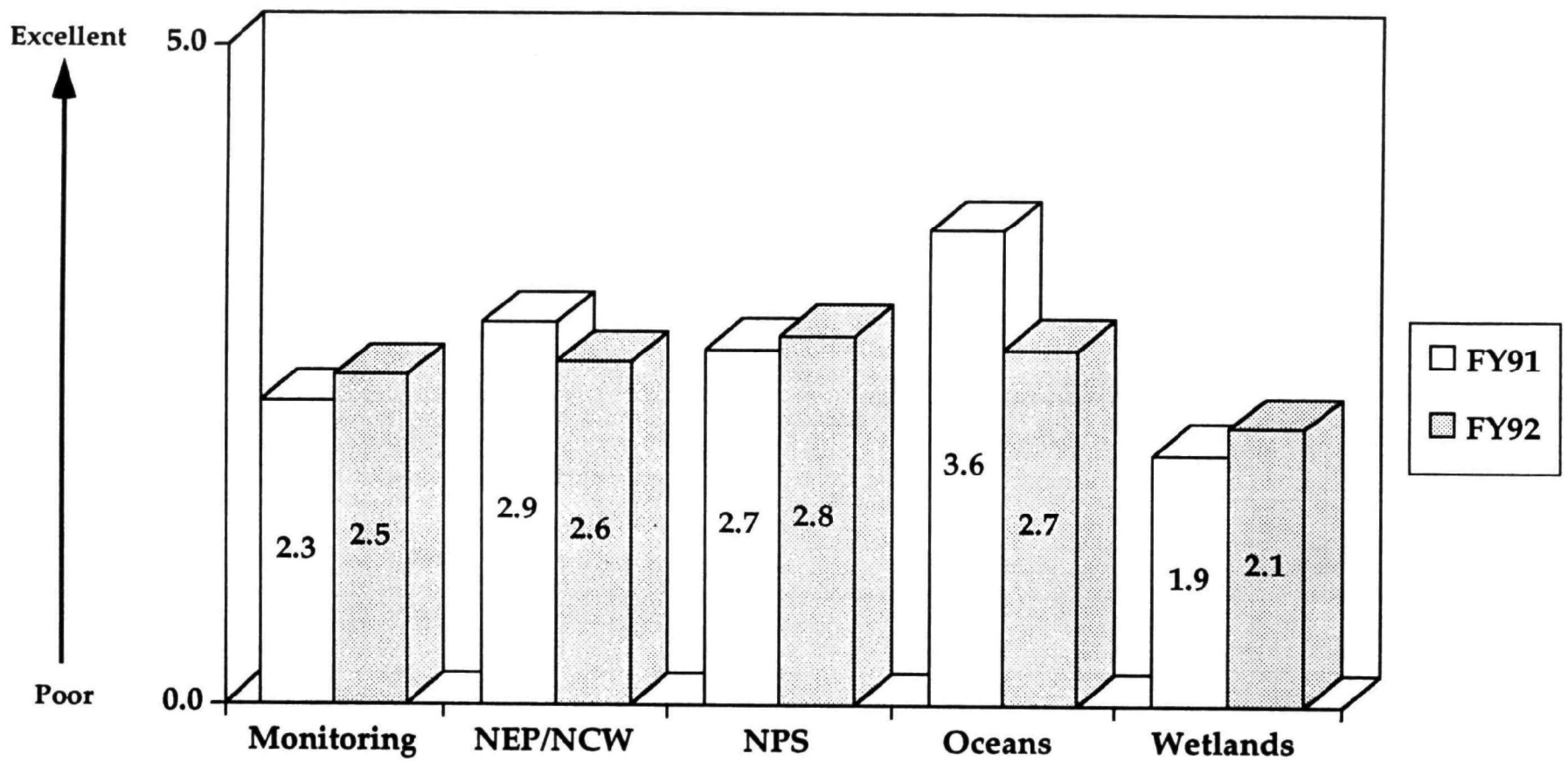
Program-Specific Rankings by Service

Budget Planning and Funding Processes



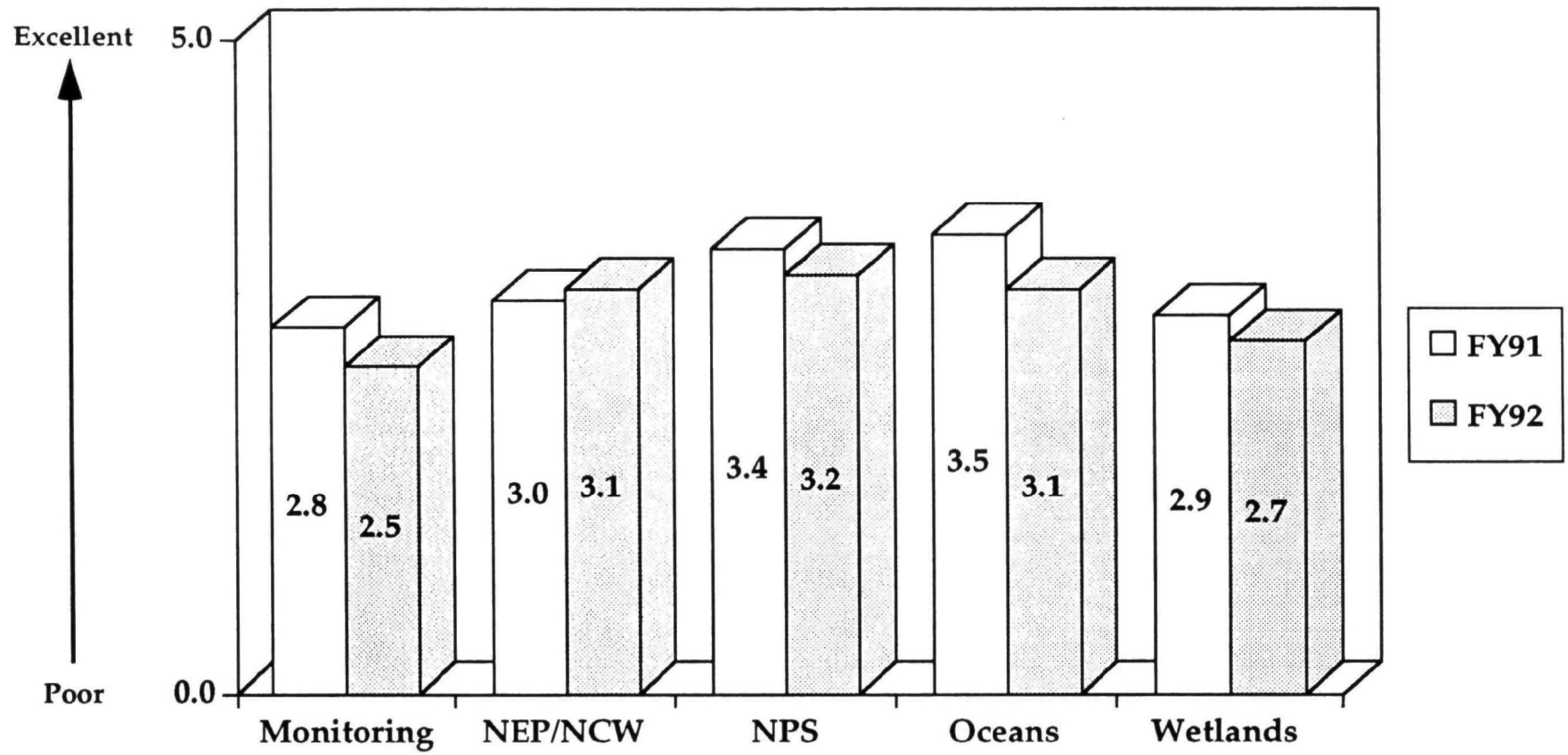
Monitoring	NEP/NCW	NPS	Oceans	Wetlands
■ Resource losses continue ■ Concern about merger with NPS program ■ Still unclear about FY93 $	■ Some improvements in getting $ to the Regions ■ Need to show resource allocations to specific areas ■ Would prefer to receive $ early and let Regions hold till workplans approved ■ Workplan reviews still late	■ Good $ flow to Regions ■ 319 travel $ is significant issue re ability to oversee projects; HQ management should play stronger role	■ Workload model rework underway ■ 403 $ very late decisions	■ Better $ flow to Regions ■ Still need to be more aggressive and show leadership in budget development process

Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison



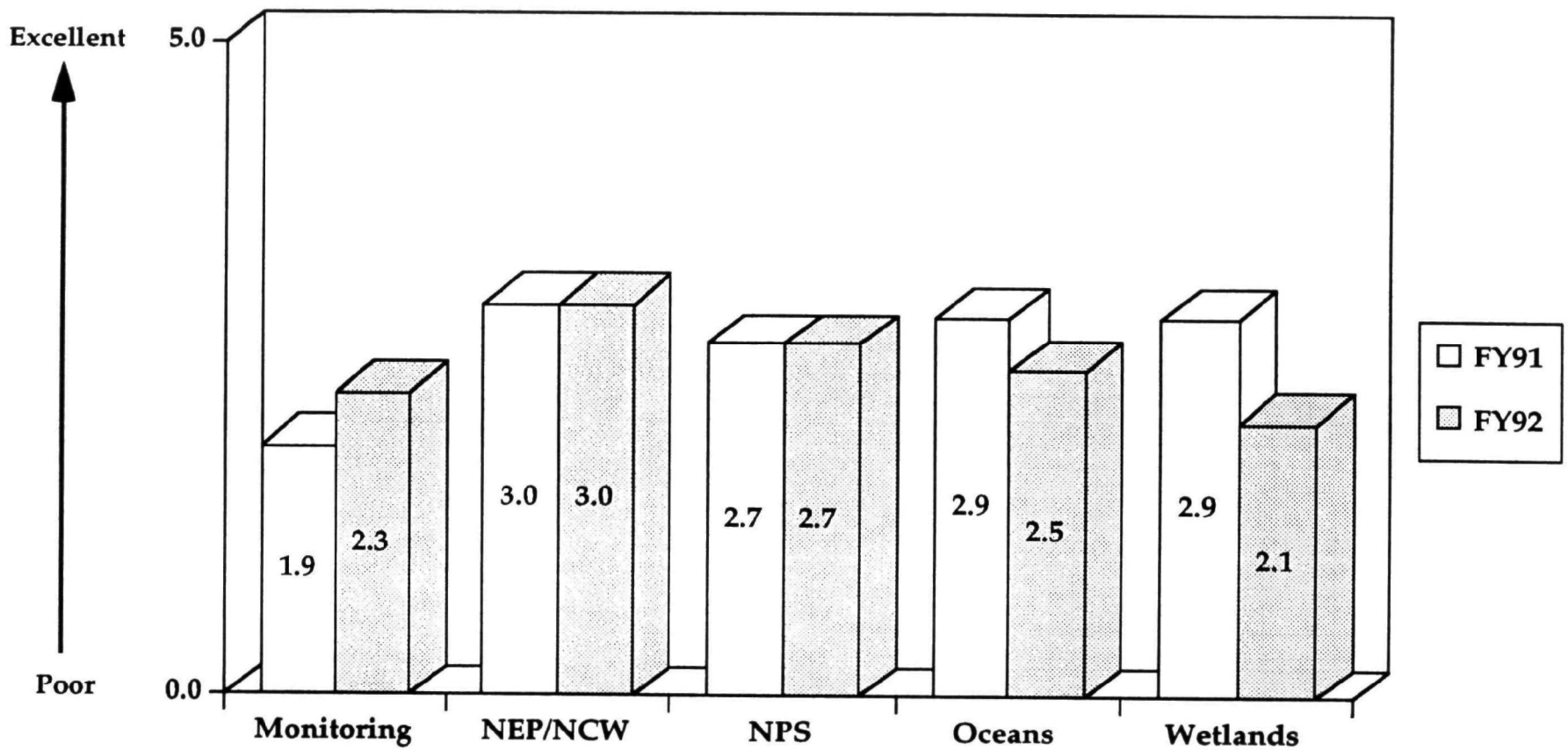
Monitoring	NEP/NCW	NPS	Oceans	Wetlands
■ Need more information about Hill activities, particularly re USGS	■ Need more regular information about Hill activities ■ Should be far more aggressive with CWA	■ Very little feedback	■ Lack of communication	■ Still lack strategy ■ Need to be more aggressive

National Tools



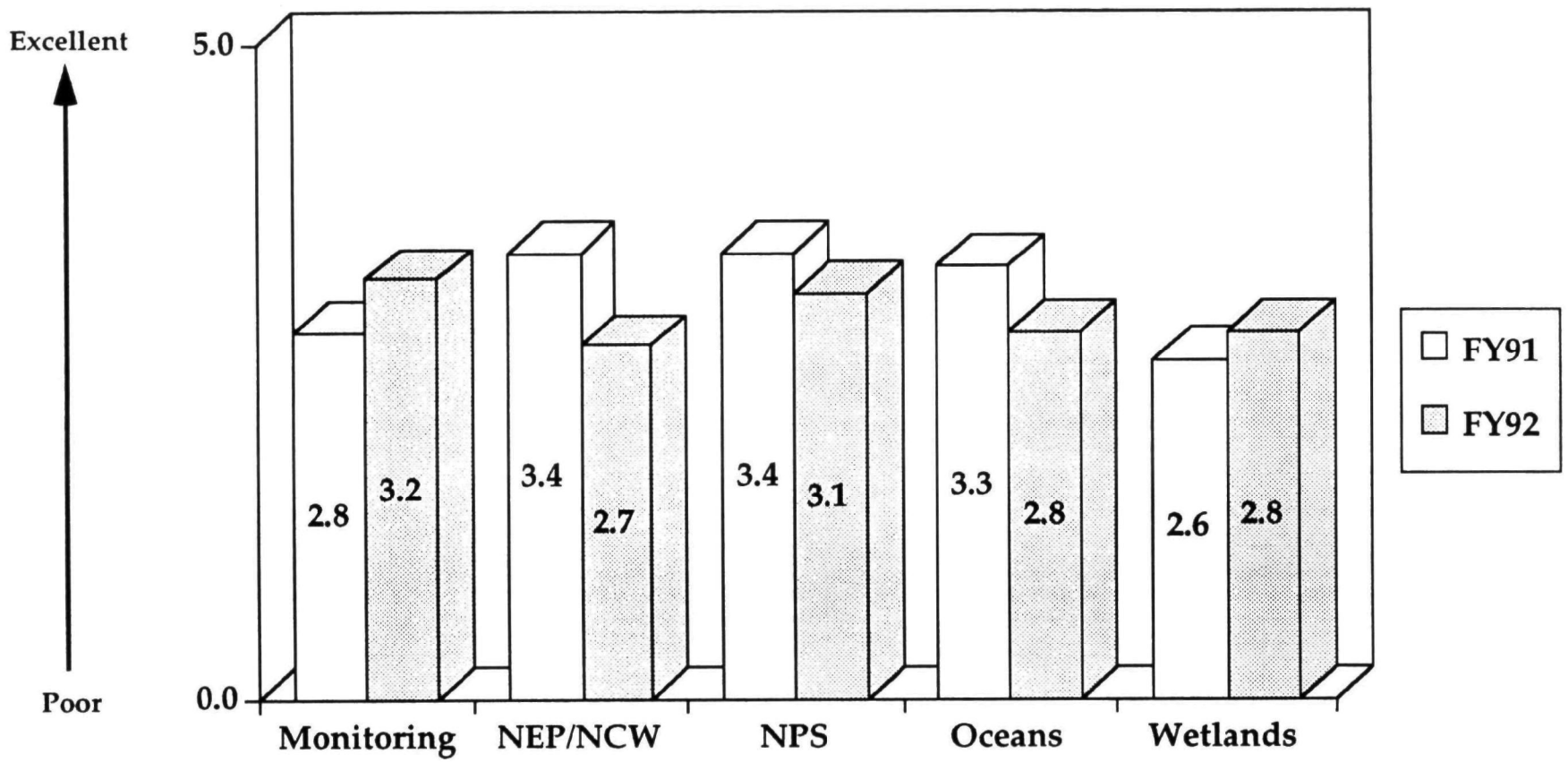
Monitoring	NEP/NCW	NPS	Oceans	Wetlands
■ Some progress ■ Still need mission statement ■ Problems with waterbody tracking system	■ NEP guidance too late for effective use ■ NCW still unclear	■ Need policy on grants/administrative issues ■ Good job with CZM guidance, but other areas neglected ■ Need to work with Regions on documenting success	■ 403 forgotten ? ■ Ocean dumping regs/COE MOUs underway but behind schedule	■ Not much has happened ■ Need to work more aggressively with COE and FWS and agricultural community

Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs



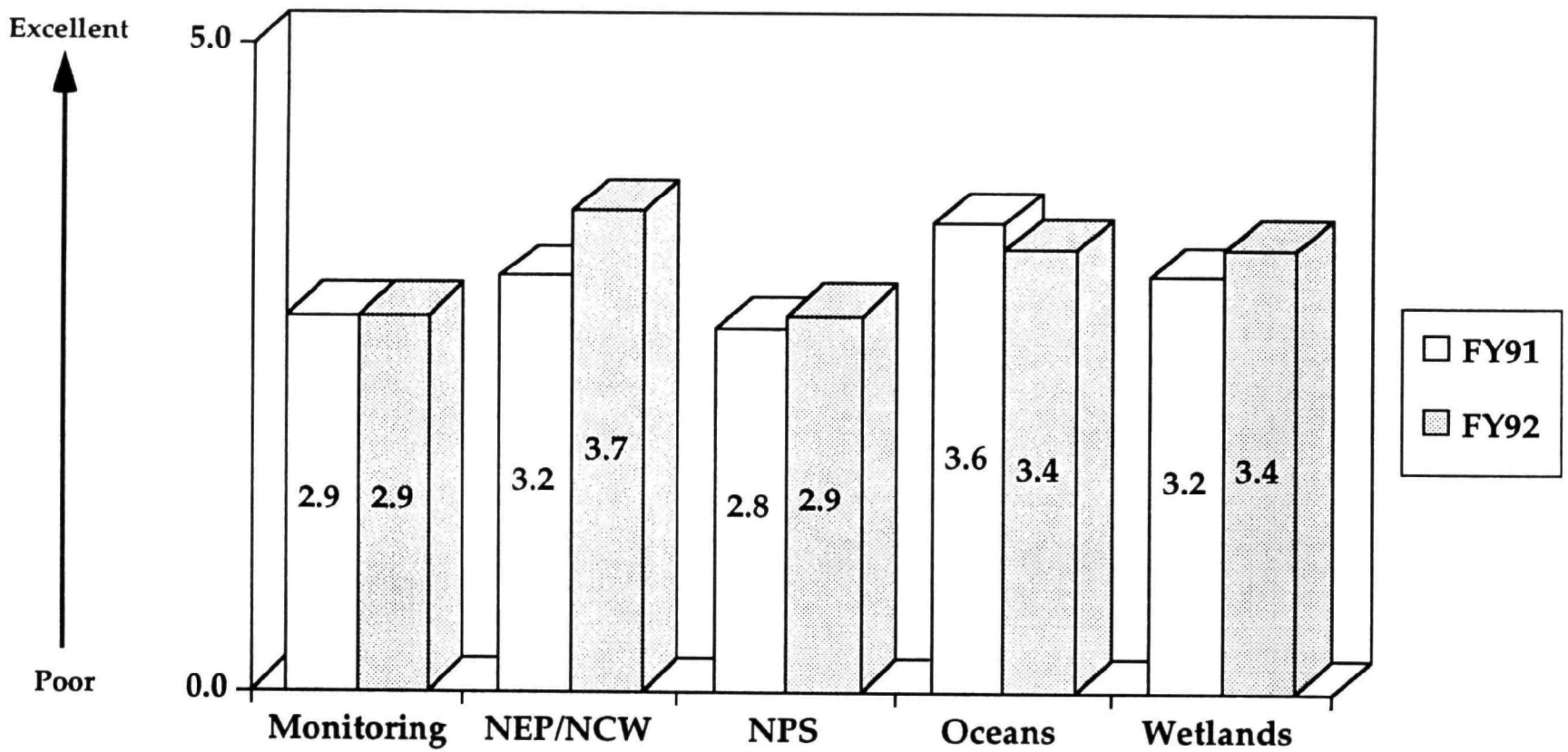
Monitoring	NEP/NCW	NPS	Oceans	Wetlands
■ Some work underway but need tools to be more effective ■ Many workgroups operating from D.C. so results not visible to all	■ Positives with NOAA ■ Try to reach out more ■ Could have used NCW/NCMP more effectively	■ Continue work on TMDLs with OST/ORD/monitoring ■ Work with NOAA on CZM ■ Need better integration with OPPE/OPTS -- agriculture initiatives	■ More interaction needed on EMAP, municipal NPDES with OWEC, sediment issues ■ Coordination with Wetlands better	■ Too internally focused ■ Should be networking more with local, state, and environmental organizations

Technology Transfer and Outreach

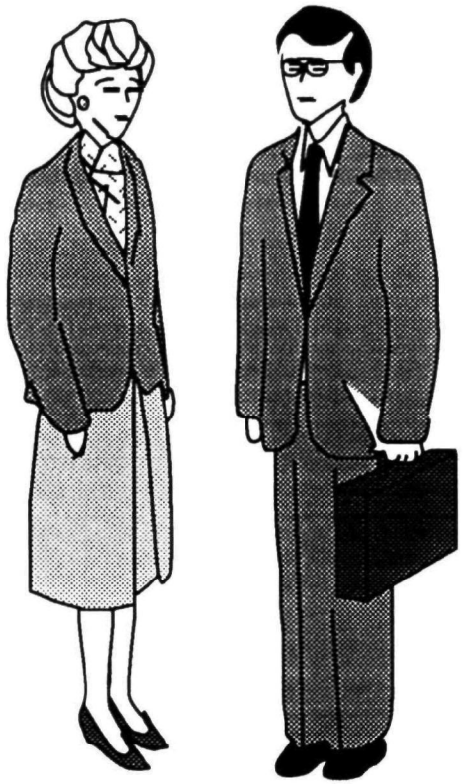


Monitoring	NEP/NCW	NPS	Oceans	Wetlands
■ Good interagency work and citizen monitoring efforts	■ More action and less strategies ■ Should lead in transferring success among NEPs, Chesapeake Bay, etc. ■ Need annual tech transfer meeting ■ More on action demonstration projects	■ Newsletter still great ■ Monthly updates good addition ■ 6217 efforts good ■ Lots more can be done	■ Needs more attention	■ Agriculture outreach paper is good ■ However, outreach in general needs more emphasis and discussion

Overall Administration

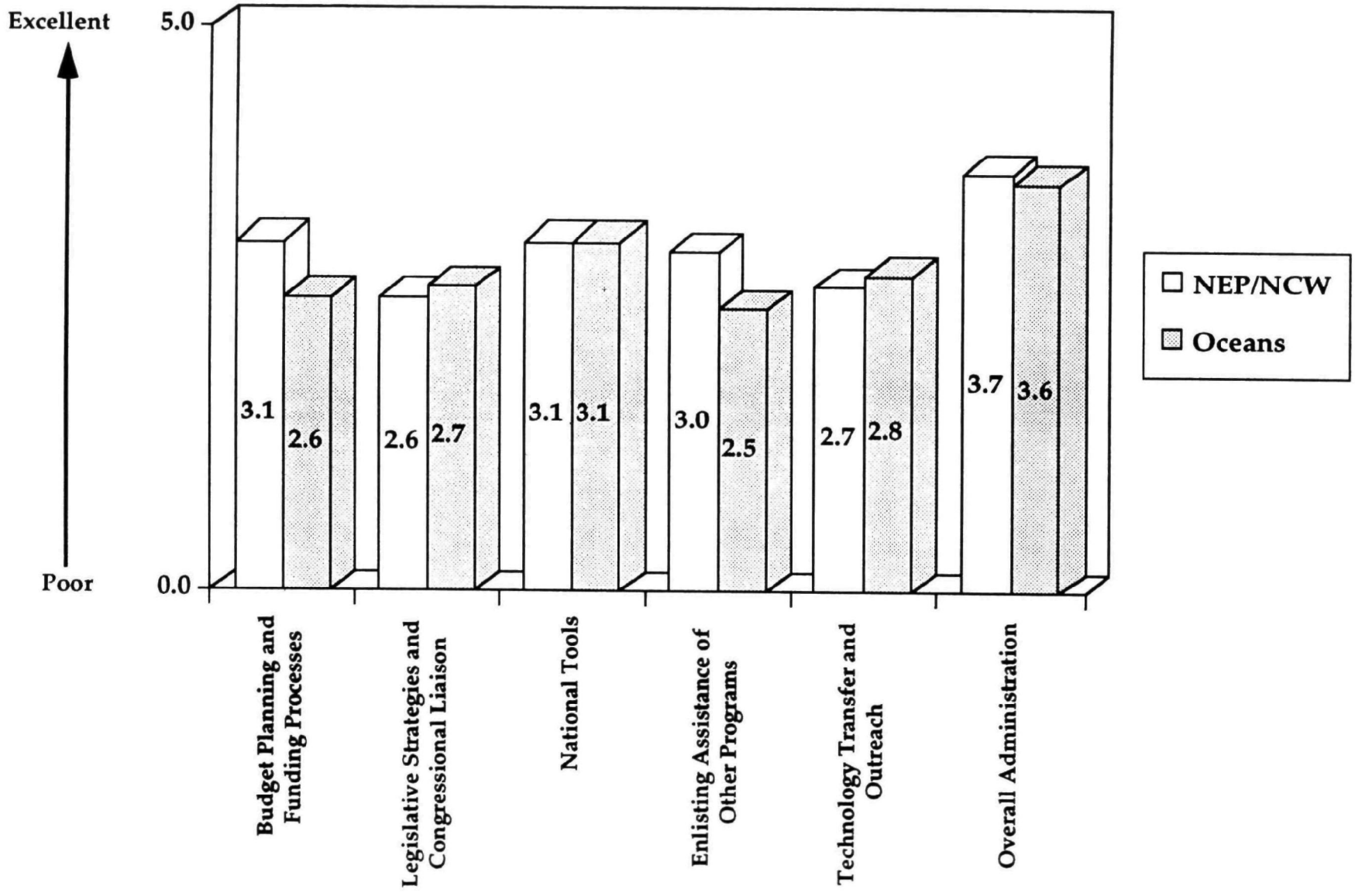


Monitoring	NEP/NCW	NPS	Oceans	Wetlands
■ Many new initiatives underway ■ Signs are encouraging	■ Excellent support ■ Good working relationships	■ Regional liaisons are very helpful ■ Still need to work on program priorities/ vision	■ Regions do a lot of initiating ■ Little HQ outreach	■ Trying, still need to get on top of administration priorities, become more of a force ■ Make better use of Regional expertise and make Regions integral partners



Division Rankings by Service

Oceans and Coastal Protection Division
FY92 Survey Results



Oceans and Coastal Protection Division FY92 Survey Results

Since FY91, Have Services Improved, Declined, or Stayed About the Same? (# of responses)

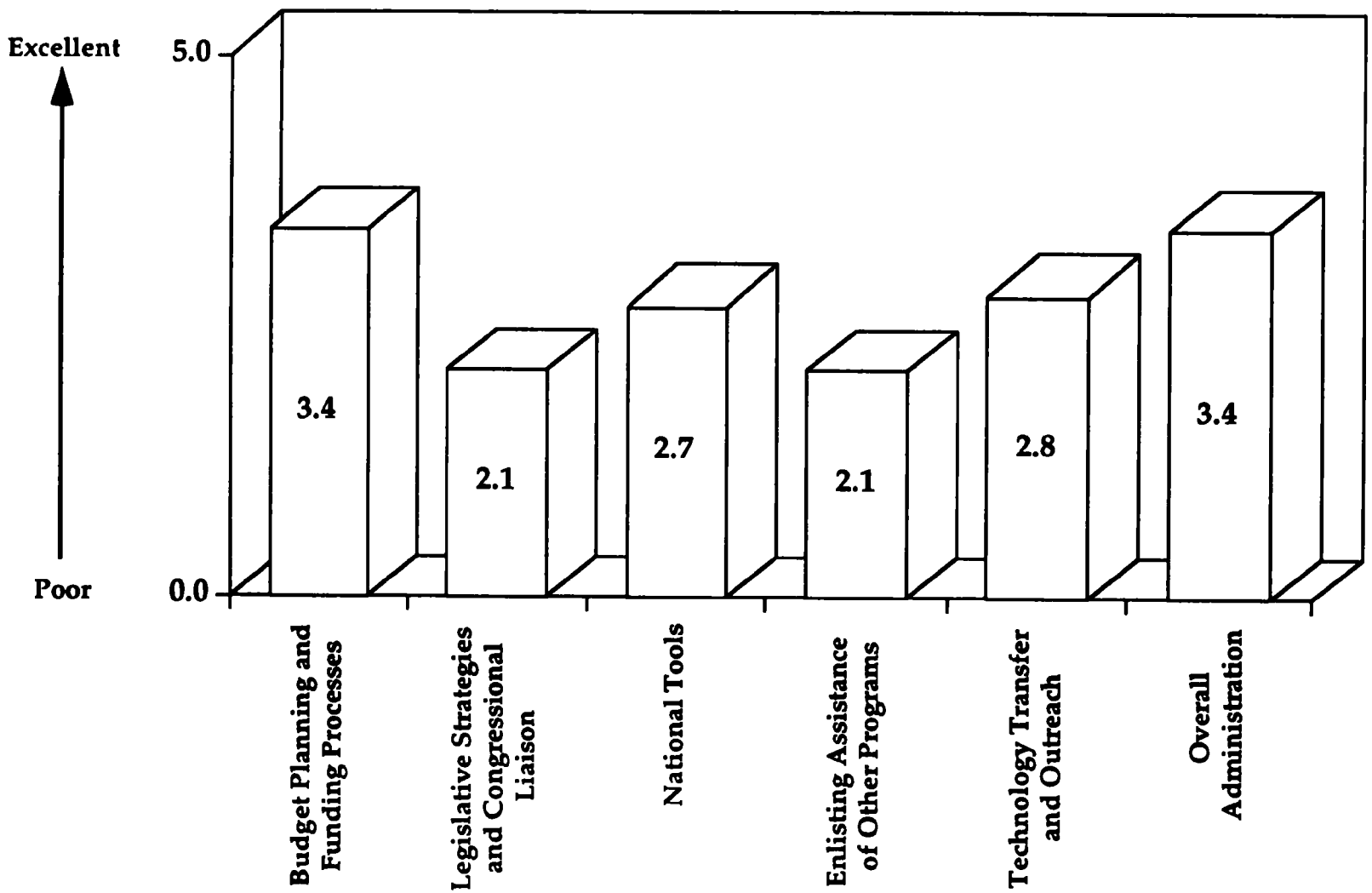
NEP/NCW

Service	Improved	Declined	Same
Budget Development and Funding Processes	6	0	2
Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison	0	4	4
National Tools	4	2	1
Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs	3	1	4
Technology Transfer and Outreach	1	1	6
Overall Administration	3	0	5

OCEANS

Service	Improved	Declined	Same
Budget Development and Funding Processes	3	3	1
Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison	0	2	4
National Tools	3	1	3
Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs	1	1	5
Technology Transfer and Outreach	1	1	4
Overall Administration	2	0	5

Wetlands Division
FY92 Survey Results

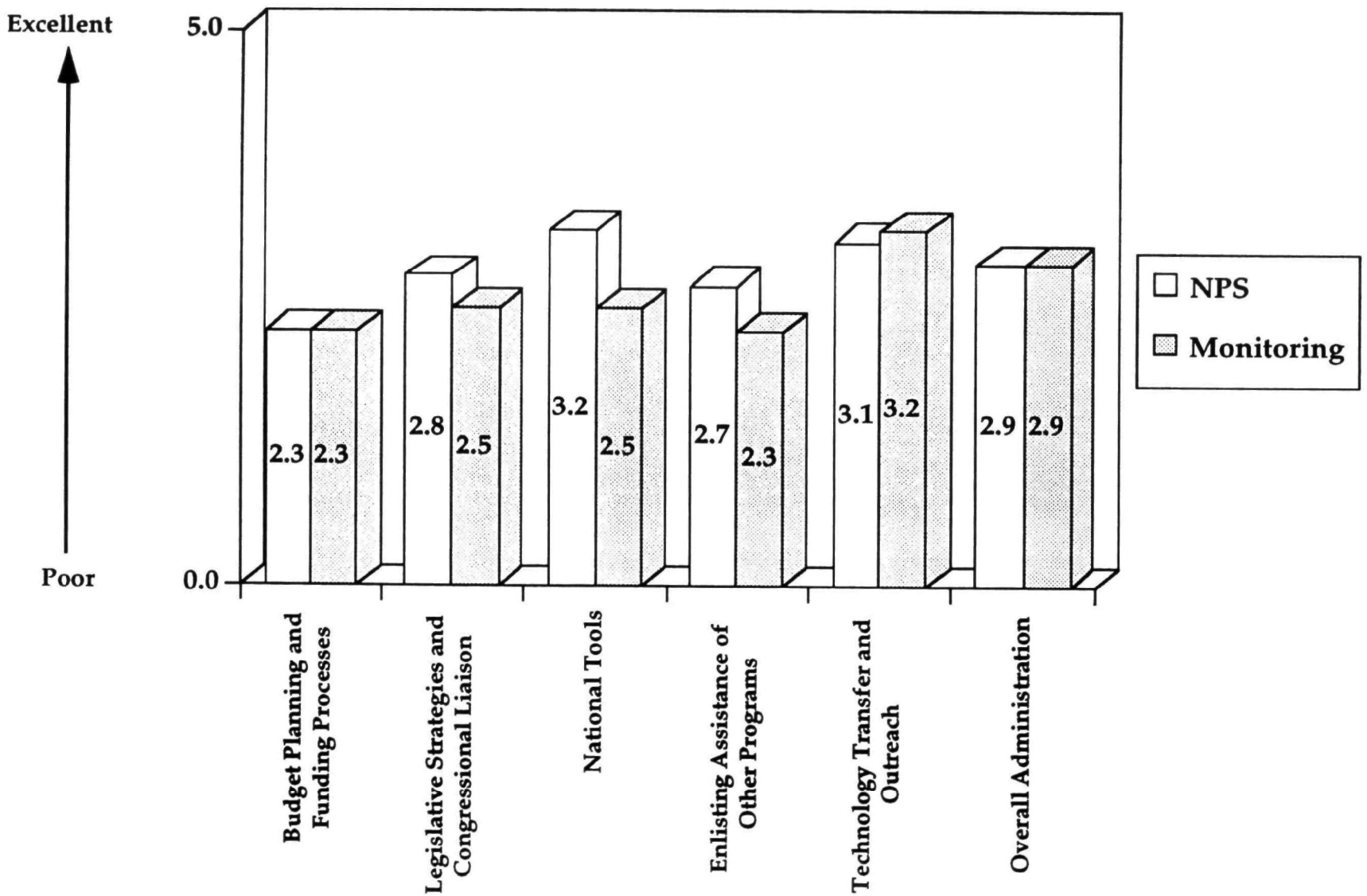


Wetlands Division
FY92 Survey Results

Since FY91, Have Services Improved, Declined, or Stayed About the Same? (# of responses)

Service	Improved	Declined	Same
Budget Development and Funding Processes	3	0	6
Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison	1	3	5
National Tools	0	1	8
Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs	0	1	8
Technology Transfer and Outreach	3	0	6
Overall Administration	2	1	6

Assessment and Watershed Protection Division FY92 Survey Results



Assessment and Watershed Protection Division FY92 Survey Results

Since FY91, Have Services Improved, Declined, or Stayed About the Same? (# of responses)

MONITORING

Service	Improved	Declined	Same
Budget Development and Funding Processes	2	0	4
Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison	2	0	4
National Tools	2	2	2
Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs	2	0	4
Technology Transfer and Outreach	4	0	2
Overall Administration	5	0	1

NPS

Service	Improved	Declined	Same
Budget Development and Funding Processes	0	2	6
Legislative Strategies and Congressional Liaison	1	1	6
National Tools	5	2	1
Enlisting Assistance of Other Programs	2	1	5
Technology Transfer and Outreach	2	0	6
Overall Administration	2	1	5

OFFICE OF WETLANDS, OCEANS AND WATERSHEDS RESULTS OF CUSTOMER SURVEY

April 1992

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON OVERALL OWOW SUPPORT

COMMUNICATIONS: General improvement — OWOW has listened and been responsive to Regional needs and suggestions. Signs are positive for continuing improvements.

ORGANIZATION: Structure is sound and roles and responsibilities, for the most part, are clear. A few issues still remain with TMDLs, WPA, environmental indicators. Great waterbody programs do not feel well represented, are not part of regular communication networks, and perceive conflicts between OWOW and OW on who is in charge.

PLANNING AND BUDGETING: Could still make improvements on an integrated budget — and use existing grants to focus more on environmental benefits.

PROGRAM AGENDAS: Improvements in engaging Regions in these discussions — keep it up.

LEGISLATION: Regions still have concerns. Be aggressive in CWA effort and keep pushing on wetlands — communicate and keep Regions involved.

ENLISTING ASSISTANCE OF OTHERS: Need particularly to focus on other agencies — more can be done here. Approaches like WPA should help. NCMP was making contributions. May take higher level involvement.

NATIONAL MEETINGS: Good work! Generally well planned and facilitated, responsive to Regional comments. Could focus more on cross-Division issues. Need Division-specific agendas earlier. Some preference for OWOW-wide meeting in fall and Division-specific meetings in the spring for budget planning. Some problems with coverage of breakouts.

CONFERENCE CALLS: All three Divisions have responded to this suggestion and these are very useful for information exchange. Would be even better with advance agendas — a little more planning — so Regions can determine appropriate participation. Should explore more use of videoconferences.

INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS: Good informational packages from OWOW and better distribution. Legislative updates must be continued. AWPD in particular provides good, useful information. Keep key contacts list up to date.

REGIONAL REVIEWS: A few have happened — and were well planned — but could have been more focused on issues of Regional concern. OST and perhaps others should have participated in certain sessions.

REQUESTS FOR COMMENT: Improvements in comment periods.

OPPORTUNITIES/ISSUES FOR OFFICE DIRECTOR ATTENTION

BUILDING A COMMON VISION

- Watershed Protection Approach could be used more effectively to provide an OWOW identity as well as integrate programs within OWOW, EPA, and other federal agencies. WPA is not currently being pursued with equal vigor across OWOW.

CLEAN WATER ACT REAUTHORIZATION

- Consider needs for implementation resources, such as NEP capitalization projects; flexibility; support for WPA.

BUILDING STATE CAPACITY

- Need to find innovative ways to build relationships and build capacity for OWOW programs, Wetlands in particular.

- Review current resource allocations under 106 and ensure appropriate guidance is developed for use of these funds.

- Watch for duplicative efforts on initiatives — Coastal America, NCW, etc.

MONITORING

- Continue efforts to use data and assessments to drive other program decisions. Need to produce the monitoring mission statement as well as work out interagency agreements.

- Continue work on bioassessments/ecoregions.

NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM/NEAR COASTAL WATERS

- Continue commitment to federal role in the NEP, post CCMP. Open dialogue with the NEPs on how to sustain momentum beyond just resources. Look for CWA opportunities.

- Assure sound criteria/justifications for new NEP projects.

- NCW still needs work — a definition and how this program fits within the overall coastal protection framework. Perhaps it should be used to target specific themes like SAV, coral reefs, etc.

- Coastal America must also be defined within an overall coastal protection framework. If this continues to be a viable program, must work to streamline selection and budgeting process.

NONPOINT SOURCES

- Needs a national framework to define roles and responsibilities among federal agencies — EPA, Agriculture, NOAA, etc., areas of emphasis and implementation strategies.

- Develop a budget strategy to support the above.

OCEANS

- Renew attention to 403 issues.

WETLANDS

- Must maintain viable presence in this program — COE is becoming more assertive about their role and too little coming from EPA HQ. Develop plans/options for implementing current policy.

- Outreach is critical — to build alliances with state and local governments and the environmental community and to convey information to the public.

DIVISION AGENDAS: OCEAN AND COASTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

NEP/NCW

- Continue working on support to NEPs, post CCMP. Look for creative ways to sustain momentum, like customer/supplier agreements.
- Work with NEPs and other geographic programs to foster support for improved water quality standards and criteria to protect living resources.
- Provide more technology transfer and hands-on learning opportunities for NEPs and other geographic programs.
- Provide more support for Action Demonstration projects and look at tech transfer needs.
- Analyze overall data management needs and access to data and information.
- Work on definition and direction for NCW program — currently too weak and vulnerable to taps.
- Work more closely with the Regions on the need for new strategies/workshops and other new initiatives.
- Very helpful in Gulf of Mexico legislative support

Oceans

- Continue work on ocean dumping regulations and national MOU with COE.
- Continue efforts on ocean dumping enforcement.
- Continue work on sediment strategy.
- Review recent ocean dumping coordinators meeting — need better planning.
- Renew attention to the 403 program, both issues and budget allocation process.
- Clarify role of Coastal Technology Branch.
- Encourage details/rotations of 403 staff to get better understanding of permit issuance process
- Continue 403/301h national meetings
- Need monthly updates on 403/301h

DIVISION AGENDAS: ASSESSMENT AND WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

NPS

- Work on NPS and monitoring budget issues — resource allocations between the two programs, NPS travel $ for appropriate oversight, diversion of 319 $ to CZM and Gulf of Mexico.
- Need a NPS mission statement/program integration strategy with clear roles and responsibilities.
- Continue work on NPS national grants tracking system.
- NPS grants management and audit training is still needed.
- Continue work with ORD on rapid bioassessments.
- Continue working on support and appropriate linkages for mining and agriculture NPS issues.
- Continue work on a national strategy for integrating stormwater program with NPS.
- Develop better and more outreach materials for NPS.
- Consider holding joint meetings with States and Regions, similar to the Clean Lakes meeting, once every year or two.
- Continue to support Regional NPS contacts — these contacts are very important to Regions.
- National monitoring program within NPS — need to keep a close watch on success.
- Need to discuss with Regions the issue of federal consistency in the NPS program.
- Need to continue pushing clean sediment criteria.
- Gulf of Mexico Program needs points of contact if they are to be a national demonstration program

Monitoring

- Monitoring mission statement (including program guidance and interagency activities) is still very important.
- Continue work on standard 305b reporting by states.
- Continue work on training opportunities for STORET and other related programs. Concerns about 5-year schedule for modernization effort — that states will develop own systems within that time.
- Continue work on TMDLs with OST and ORD, particularly TMDLs for NPS.
- Need to address recent issues to make waterbody tracking system operational.
- Continue to work with USGS on NAQWA, and continue to strengthen ties with EMAP.
- Stay on top of other related Agency initiatives, like OPPE Environmental Statistics group.
- Monitoring Branch is focused on improving relationships with ESDs — don't forget about appropriate communications with Water — need shared ESD/Water vision.

DIVISION AGENDAS: WETLANDS DIVISION

- Need immediate information on opportunities to work with Federal Highway Administration on new resources for wetlands mitigation.
- Need to build linkages with related agency initiatives on landscape approaches and the habitat cluster.
- Need to look for opportunities to build relationships with states and work on state capacity for the program.
- Continue work on mitigation banking.
- Continue outreach efforts to the farming community.
- Some progress on clearinghouse idea — still need materials on wetlands values geared to a public audience.
- Still need enforcement training.
- Is anyone addressing seagrasses?

NATIONAL PRIORITIES

What two or three issues should OWOW be addressing that could have the most impact on continued environmental progress in your Region?

1. Demonstrate that OWOW is a credible force and can work as an organization — effective use of some integrator like the Watershed Protection Approach.
2. Promote the WPA among AA's and other Agencies. Provide the flexibility and resources to make the program work.
3. Aggressive activity on the Clean Water Act reauthorization in conjunction with the Regions.
4. Revive the National Coastal and Marine Policy.
5. Continued promotion of volunteer monitoring programs and other public participation activities to develop local stewardship.
6. Support for agricultural pollution prevention work and technology transfer of NPS and 319 funded projects.
7. Identification and use of environmental indicators to measure program success. Completion of the monitoring mission statement.
8. Integrate the Wetlands programs within an overall landscape approach.
9. Develop technology to appropriately categorize wetlands — other than on-the-ground surveys — like remote sensing, NWI data base overlays.
10. Develop a policy framework for NPS.
11. Flexibility in addressing stormwater-related NPS issues.
12. Develop a greater awareness of state fiscal problems and build capacity.
13. Work on NPS mining, agricultural and hydromodification issues, coupled with an attention shift away from the coast.
14. Living resources protection through WQ standards.
15. Integration of coastal programs.
16. Define a uniform assessment and priority setting system across OWOW.
17. Get the Wetlands program out of politics.
18. Budget process improvements, $ out sooner and delegation of appropriate programs to the Regions.
19. Continuing support — resources and other — for NEP implementation.
20. Policy on disposal options for contaminated dredge material — near shore versus offshore.