

Chapter 5 Program Implementation

5.1 Source Water Protection Guidance

The state intends to develop guidance for PWS system owners to use in developing source water protection programs. This guidance will be accessible from the Internet and available in written form when the Phase II assessments are distributed (May 2003). The state will encourage PWS system owners to incorporate source water protection information in their Consumer Confidence Reports as appropriate.

The state will encourage all PWS system owners to implement efforts to manage identified sources of contamination in a manner that will protect drinking water supplies. The goal is to reduce or eliminate the potential threat to drinking water supplies through locally implemented and supported regulatory or statutory controls or by using voluntary measures supported by an involved local community. These efforts may include expanding the PWS system's control over a larger portion of land identified as the delineated source water assessment area. This expansion of control could include zoning, easements, or land acquisition implemented by the local government.

5.2 Technical Assistance to PWS System Owners

Through future Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) set-aside accounts the state plans to offer technical assistance to local governments and other PWS system owners for development of source water protection strategies. The plan for providing funding for source water protection under "Local Assistance and Other State Programs" set-aside accounts will be included in future Intended Use Plans. Current DWSRF funding provides for three technical assistance positions. A Hydrogeologist II position is funded in the PWS Section for management of the state's Wellhead Protection Program. Two ground water technician positions with the North Carolina Rural Water Association, and funded by the DWSRF, provide support for wellhead protection activities.

5.3 Coordination With Other State SWAP Efforts

States that border North Carolina with common watersheds and aquifers include South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia. North Carolina does not have any formal agreements with these states concerning SWAP efforts. However, during discussions held in July 1998, at an EPA Region IV sponsored SWAP development meeting and also in Dallas, Texas at the National SWAP convention in April 1998, it was informally agreed that all states would make source water assessment data available to adjoining states for completion of the required SWAP plan. This includes the necessary information for delineation, contaminant inventory, and susceptibility determination for each state's SWAP plan from available databases. This agreement should be sufficient to accomplish the program objectives.

5.4 Proposed Schedule of Completion for SWAP Activities

Because of the scope of the SWAP plan requirements and the number of PWS systems requiring assessment in North Carolina, the state is requesting an extension beyond the prescribed 2-year period. Therefore, the following schedule details proposed milestones for implementation of North Carolina's SWAP plan:

February 1999	Submit SWAP plan for EPA approval Initiate SWAP Pilot Study Activities Initiate Phase I Assessment Activities
October 1999	Complete Pilot Study Activities
November 1999	SWAP plan approval by EPA
December 2001	Complete Phase I Assessments Initiate Distribution of Draft Phase I Assessments to PWS systems for verification Begin Phase II Assessments
April 2002	Receive verification information from PWS systems
June 2002	Initiate Distribution of verified Phase I Assessments
January 2003	Complete Phase II Assessments
May 2003	Initiate Distribution of Phase II Assessments

5.5 SWAP Development and Implementation Progress Reporting

North Carolina intends to incorporate SWAP development and implementing progress reporting to EPA with the Intended Use Plan Annual Reporting process. North Carolina will develop a GIS database for the data used in the source water assessments. A goal is to develop this GIS database to facilitate future revisions and updates to the assessments. Subject to funding availability, the PWS Section will maintain the database such that updated source water assessments can be completed.

It is hoped and expected that the database links and ease of attaining digital information will lead to improvements throughout DENR regulatory programs to allow the impact on drinking water supplies full and priority consideration in agency decision-making. It is also expected that changes in data gathering, management, and availability may be recommended.

5.6 Source Water Petition Program in North Carolina

Section 1454 of the Safe Drinking Water Act establishes a new authority for a Source Water Petition Program. This is a voluntary, self-directed program for states to use to support grass-roots efforts for initiating source water protection activities. These source water protection activities would address the reduction or elimination of contaminant sources identified in the source water assessment procedure. The intent of a petition program would be to facilitate efforts to protect source waters by providing financial or technical assistance to PWS system owners. This assistance would be used to develop voluntary, incentive-based strategies for the long term protection of sources of public drinking water supplies. North Carolina plans to develop a source water petition program within the budgeted time and resource constraints.