

# Summary of the Vision Breakout Discussions

2020 National CWA 303(d) Training Workshop

May 29, 2020

# Overarching Concepts and Ideas

- Maintain the stability of the current Vision
- Implementation is a driver of the Vision
- Flexibility is key
- Messaging needs improvement
- Accountability and evaluating progress are important

# Prioritization

## **Lessons Learned:**

- Overall, it provides a good framework, strategy, and process.
- It can guide restoration activities across administrations.
- It allows programs to choose quality over quantity.
- It has enabled flexibility; encouraged long-term planning, collaboration, and integration; and increased engagement.
- The opportunity for periodic corrections is important.

## **Opportunities Identified:**

- Other programs and stakeholders could be more engaged in the development of priorities.

# Assessment

## **Lessons Learned:**

- It is helpful to communicate TMDL monitoring and assessment needs in time for initial monitoring efforts.
- Staff need to understand the models when done externally.

## **Opportunities Identified:**

- Expand the goal in ways to better tell the story, tying actions to long-term water quality goals.
- Strategic coordination on monitoring data collection should extend beyond the assessment of impaired waters.

# Engagement

## **Lessons Learned:**

- Engaging early and often throughout the entire process helps.
- It works well when others serve as intermediaries.

## **Opportunities Identified:**

- Tools, methods, and strategies are needed for better communicating with different audiences.
- The EPA and states should be educated on tribal entities and include them in planning efforts. Regardless of TAS status, tribes need to hold a place in the work of the program.

# Integration

## **Lessons Learned:**

- Success depends largely on agency organization structure.
- Continued integration efforts are needed with not only other programs but also other agencies.

## **Opportunities Identified:**

- Explore using WQM plans/CPP to support integration.
- Align commitment processes under CWA 319 and 303(d).
- Better communicate the importance of TMDLs to other agencies.

# Alternatives

## **Lessons Learned:**

- Some jurisdictions have found the option helpful, while others are unclear of the benefits or purpose, or what an “alternative” would look like.
- “Alternatives” can provide a way to get support from stakeholders in cases where TMDLs are not favorably viewed.

## **Opportunities Identified:**

- Improve the clarification of and consistency in the review and acceptance process.
- Create a repository of accepted plans to provide examples and promote knowledge transfer.

# Protection

## **Lessons Learned:**

- Many jurisdictions believe the concept is important and like the flexibility offered to do protection work.
- The development of protection plans is still at a relatively early stage.

## **Opportunities Identified:**

- Better clarify the options and expectations related to protection.
- Knowledge transfer from jurisdictions further along in the process would be helpful.