# TASK 7: SPECIAL PROJECTS

## Contents

**Introduction** 7-2

**Nonpoint Source Projects** 7-3

Watershed Protection Plans 7-3

# TASK 7: SPECIAL PROJECTS

## Introduction

Special projects may be developed to address water quality concerns identified by CRP Partners and Steering Committees as priority issues for the basin. These special projects differ from special studies that involve water quality sampling activities outlined in Task 3.

Some types of special projects that may be considered under this task include:

- support of watershed protection plans and other nonpoint source pollution prevention related activities
- source water protection and assessment
- defining groundwater geology in reference to its potential impact on surface water quality
- water conservation planning efforts to help increase flow during low-flow periods
- investigation and evaluation of existing data to help define sources and/or causes

If more than one project is planned, each one should be defined as a sub-task (Task 7.1, Task 7.2, etc.) with separate plans, deliverables, and budgets. CRP Partners should work closely with their TCEQ Project Manager since most of these projects will require meetings to discuss and scope out project plans. At a minimum, project activities should be described for each quarter and provided with the Progress Report. If CRP funds are used to match activities under a federal grant, the amount of match and related activities need to be reflected in each Progress Report for Task 7.

**Note:** Certain special projects may not be considered allowable based on their outlined activities and ultimate function. As in the past, implementation projects are not allowable. It has also been determined that projects used to define instream flow needs for water supply functions do not fall within the focus of the CRP.

CRP Partners should involve local stakeholders in a collaborative effort to develop project plans and to secure additional resources. Existing forums, such as, the CRP Steering Committees, TMDL Watershed Committees, Source Water Assessment and Protection Committees, and Basin Water Planning Committees can be used to initiate and advance the water quality projects. Relevant issues should be made available to the public for review and comment through the CRP Partner's Web site, e-mail and letter distributions, and news releases.

Below are three options for how a CRP Partner may get involved in a water quality project in their basin:

**Option #1:** (Least intensive) Partners support the water quality project taking place in their area and are present at the planning meetings. They provide their insight, knowledge, and recommendations for a more successful project.

**Option #2:** Partners go beyond the general support at planning meetings by providing one-time assistance in the field and some general guidance to aid in defining potential sources and causes.

**Option #3:** At this level of participation, partners become the coordinating entity and follow the steps for the creation of a water quality project, while the TCEQ is in a supporting role. Partners organize the planning meetings, conduct source inventories, update and submit the information to the TCEQ, and complete an evaluation report. The report includes a description of the assessment results, maps and descriptions of the identified potential sources and causes, a monitoring plan, and a list of the most appropriate best management practices to address concerns identified during the project. The funding of this level of participation may be through TCEQ or other external funding sources.

## Nonpoint Source Projects

Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) authorizes the distribution of federal funds for implementation of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution prevention and restoration activities. The CWA 319(h) grant program supports three basic types of activities: assessment, implementation of best management practices (BMP), and development of Watershed Protection Plans. CRP funds may be used to support activities related to assessment and the development of Watershed Protection Plans, but not implementation. Eligible **assessment** activities involve the collection and analysis of information about NPS pollution, its effect on water quality in specific bodies of water, and the results of BMPs used to reduce NPS pollution. Special studies involving monitoring should be addressed in Task 3.

### Watershed Protection Plans

Watershed Protection Plans are comprehensive plans designed to protect unimpaired waters and restore impaired waters. Grants for CWA 319(h) projects are subject to a 40 percent local match on the part of the implementing entity and CRP activities related to the project can be used to help fulfill this match requirement.