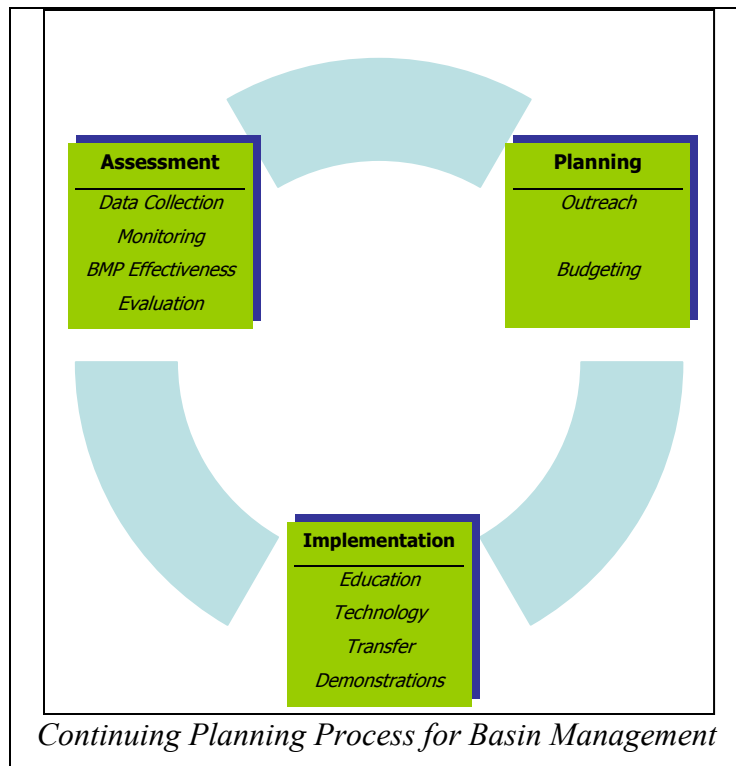


## 8.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this Basin Management Plan for the Alabama River requires funding, time, motivated people, and eventually, a hard look at the plan so that it can be updated and revised. The process of creating this plan began with an assessment of current conditions. Information and data from the assessment phase was used to develop management measures to address key basin issues. Implementation will occur when the appropriate financial and human resources are targeted and specific management actions are taken. After implementation begins, monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes (positive or negative) will mark the beginning of another round of assessment. The assessment leads to plan changes and consequently, changes to implementation, and so on.



This iterative process of **ASSESSMENT – PLANNING – IMPLEMENTATION** is characteristic of a *continuing planning process* that constitutes basin management planning. This basin management plan is not an end, it is more of a beginning. Once it is adopted by the sub-basin stakeholders, the Alabama Clean Water Partnership and the Alabama Tombigbee Steering Committee it will become a “living” document that shall be revisited annually to check progress according to the plan’s milestones.

The progress of plan implementation is evaluated by monitoring the performance of management measures. Performance is measured by tracking the appropriate indicator or outcome of the specific action. These performance indicators or measures, as set forth in the previous section, are the benchmarks for plan progress. Through regular monitoring a determination can be made if certain plan strategies need to be altered, abandoned, or continued. This dynamic approach is referred to as ‘adaptive management’ because stakeholders (i.e.,

agencies, watershed managers, farmers, general public) adapt our management activities based on what we learn from evaluating past actions.

There are several strategies to implement this basin management plan. These ‘next steps’ are discussed below and are followed by references to funding options to support implementation.

## **8.1 Strategic Next Steps for Basin Management Plan Implementation**

- ***Adopt and distribute the Alabama River Basin Management Plan.*** The basin management plan can be used as an outreach and education tool. It shall first be presented to the sub-basin stakeholders throughout the Basin and then adopted by the Alabama and Tombigbee Steering Committee and the State ACWP as the central planning document for the basin.
  
- ***Expand stakeholder involvement in the sub-basins and Alabama-Tombigbee Steering Committee.*** These steps may help the ACWP and the Alabama-Tombigbee Steering Committee increase the number of its participants over time.
  - Plan stakeholder meetings based on the convenience of the target participants. Consider these following factors: Time of day vs. schedule of target audience; travel time/distance to meeting.
  - Avoid the “just another meeting” syndrome by building meetings around a provocative program including special speakers/presentations, actual work assignments, etc. Always meet with a purpose!
  - Work with stakeholders to establish the most effective meeting frequency.
  - Find local sponsorship of the meetings. Are their local businesses or organizations that have a strong and/or influential following in the community that will attract a crowd?
  - Instead of forming a new group, try to fit a watershed sub-group or standing agenda item into an existing business, social or faith-based group. Unless there is a groundswell of activity, then it will be difficult to sustain a group on a singular “watershed” based agenda.

- Coordinate the distribution of information through the regional or state headquarters of the many organizations that send representatives to the sub-basin meetings. Quarterly meetings focusing on grassroots issues and implementation could occur in Montgomery or other central population centers. Organizational representatives may be charged with the distribution of information, documents, etc.
- ***Focus state and federal grant funding on targeted sub-watersheds.*** This plan sets priorities for action in that the modeling provides a scientific basis to direct management activities.
- ***Increase the number of water quality monitoring sites throughout the Basin.*** The most effective way to get people involved in managing the basin *and* to collect much-needed water quality data is to Alabama Water Watch. Additional state and federal governmental resources for staff to expand existing monitoring is also imperative. Lastly, when private landowners can play a role, they, too, should be asked to participate in assessing local waters. The Category 2 and 3 waters shall be the top priority for these efforts.
- ***Teach the Watershed Language.*** The value of educating people about water quality issues and watershed protection is beyond limit. At some point in the learning process people realize that they play a part in the management process. Water Festivals, television-based watershed education (“Storm Team Reports”), and classroom programs are necessary parts of a comprehensive watershed education campaign.
- ***Focus conservation and restoration efforts on threatened and endangered aquatic ecosystems.*** This Plan was written to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the *Recovery Plan for the Mobile River Basin Aquatic Ecosystem*. There are several stream segments delineated in the Basin that harbor imperiled species. These segments are priorities for protection.

## **8.2 Sources of Funding**

Without financial resources, many of the recommendations in this plan will not be implemented. On the following pages a summary table (Table 8.2) of funding options is provided that will serve as reference to move this plan forward. Many of these sources are already at work in the basin. Several others will require further research and coordination on behalf of the ACWP to obtain these funds and direct them to plan implementation.

Table 8.2 - Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
<b>Federal</b>				
Section 319	Clean Water Act non-point source implementation competitive grant program funding; education and outreach, technical assistance, BMP demonstration projects, water quality monitoring, and watershed protection projects.	40% non-federal match	Phase I and II permitted areas and confined animal feeding operations generally not eligible.	<a href="http://www.adem.state.al.us">www.adem.state.al.us</a>
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	Provides financial assistance to state and local governments for projects that reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from the effects of natural hazards.	75% Federal 25% Local	State and Local Governments	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Tea3 Funds - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and Transportation Equity ACT (TEA)	Provides funding for transportation enhancements including; wetland mitigation, highway runoff pollution control, and roadside landscaping.	80% Federal 20% Local	Local Governments, profit and non-profit entities, and colleges and universities	State DOT
Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)	Provides technical assistance, cost-sharing, financial incentives, and producer education related to soil, water, air, wildlife and other related natural resource concerns.	40% property owner cost share	Alabama ranchers and farmers	Local NRCS

Table 8.2 continued - Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
Section 206 - Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration	Provides funding to improve, protect, and restore aquatic ecosystems including streambank restoration and planning and construction activities.	35% non-federal match	Local governments	<a href="http://www.sam.usace.army.mil">http://www.sam.usace.army.mil</a>
Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)	Provides funding to develop viable affordable communities. Eligible activities include; construction or reconstruction of water and sewer facilities, management infrastructure development or improvement, public works improvement, property acquisition, or to support feasibility studies related to development.	Match Required	Local governments in non-entitlement areas	ADECA Office of Community Services 334-242-5100
Direct Federal Funding	Supports projects with national significance.	NA	Open	State Representative or Senator
Direct State Funding	Supports projects with state significance.	NA	Open	Local Representative
<b>Grant Programs</b>				
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	Awards challenge grants for natural resource conservation projects.			<a href="http://www.nfwf.org">http://www.nfwf.org</a> .
Southern Rivers Conservation Initiative	Provides funding to restore and enhance habitat in southern states, including; stream restoration, freshwater mussel conservation, and management of imperiled fishes. Projects must demonstrate a community-based approach, benefit water quality, and involve specific on-the-ground activities.			<a href="http://www.nfwf.org/programs/grant_apply.htm">http://www.nfwf.org/programs/grant_apply.htm</a> .

Table 8.2 continued - Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
Flood Hazard Mitigation and Riverine Ecosystem Restoration Program	Also known as Challenge 21, this program focuses on identifying sustainable solutions to flooding problems.			<a href="http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/pubs/cf-challenge21.htm">http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/pubs/cf-challenge21.htm</a> .
Environmental Education Grants	Supports environmental education projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed decisions that affect environmental quality.			<a href="http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html">http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html</a>
Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program	Program provides technical and financial assistance to address resource and related economic problems on a watershed basis.			Local NRCS
Water Quality Cooperative Agreements	Support the creation of unique and new approaches to meeting sanitary sewer, and combined sewer outflows, biosolids, and pretreatment requirements, as well as enhancing state capabilities.			<a href="http://www.epa.gov/owm/cwfinance/waterquality.htm">http://www.epa.gov/owm/cwfinance/waterquality.htm</a> .
Watershed Assistance Grants	Supports organizational development and capacity building for watershed partnerships with diverse membership.			<a href="http://cfpub.epa.gov/fedfund/program.cfm?program=63">http://cfpub.epa.gov/fedfund/program.cfm?program=63</a> .
Five-Star Restoration Program	Competitive projects will have a strong on-the-ground habitat restoration component that provides long-term ecological, educational, and/or socioeconomic benefits to the people and their community.			<a href="http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/5star">http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/5star</a> .
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund	Assists in the development of programs for the conservation of endangered and threatened species. There are four program areas; Conservation Grants, Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants, Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants, and Recovery Land Acquisition Grants.		States and territories that have entered into cooperative agreements with the FWS	<a href="http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html">http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html</a> .

Table 8.2 continued - Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost-share Grant Program	Grant awards are based on recommendations by The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council.			<a href="http://www.treelink.org/nucfac/ccs_info.htm">http://www.treelink.org/nucfac/ccs_info.htm</a>
Legacy, Inc., Partners in Environmental Education	Statewide organization that provides grants to support programs that aim to help educate people to become environmentally responsible citizens.	\$10,000	No match required	<a href="http://www.legacyenved.org">http://www.legacyenved.org</a>
Private Foundation Grants and Awards	Private foundations are potential sources of funding to support watershed management activities. Many private foundations post grant guidelines on websites. Two online resources for researching sources of potential funding are provided in the contact information.			<a href="http://www.fdncenter.org">http://www.fdncenter.org</a> <a href="http://www.foundations.org">http://www.foundations.org</a>
<b>Other</b>				
Membership Drives	Membership drives can provide a stable source of income to support watershed management programs.			
Donations	Donations can be a major source of revenue for supporting watershed activities, and can be received in a variety of ways including: individual donations, family foundations, community foundations, corporations, federated funds, and church and civic groups.			
User Fees, Taxes, and Assessments	Taxes are used to fund activities that do not provide a specific benefit, but provide a more general benefit to the community; the user may not be able to avoid paying the tax. Assessments must show a benefit to the property owned by the user. There are various forms of taxes and assessments. It is important to note that, while taxes can create a solid funding base that can be used to fund annual capital and operating costs, there is often political pressure to keep taxes low and intensify competition for these resources.			

Table 8.2 continued – Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
Rates and Charges	Alabama law authorizes some public utilities to collect rates and charges for the services they provide. Because watershed management programs provide benefits to water and wastewater systems by protecting water supply sources and providing receiving water for wastewater effluent, water and wastewater utility systems often provide funding for watershed management programs.			
Miscellaneous Fees and Incentives	Fees and incentives are used in Alabama. For example, the Water Works and Sewer Board of the City of Gadsden, which is in the Coosa River Basin, charges a sewer surcharge fee for restaurants that do not have a grease trap. For those, that do have a grease trap, it must be pumped monthly or have a system installed that drips a bacteria feed to prevent grease build up. Therefore, to avoid the additional fee, the restaurant operators have an incentive to use BMPs for grease management.			
Impact Fees	Impact fees, which also are known as capital contribution or facilities fees or system development charges, among other names, typically are collected from developers or property owners at the time of building permit issuance to pay for capital improvements that provide capacity to serve new growth.			
Special Assessments	Special assessments are created for the specific purpose of financing capital improvements, such as provisions, to serve a specific area. Once the special assessment has been created, special assessment bonds can be issued, which are secured by liens on the properties benefited by the improvements.			
Sales Tax/Local Option Sales Tax	Local governments, both cities and counties, have the authority to add additional taxes. Local governments can use tax revenues to provide funding for a variety of projects and activities.			
Property Tax	These taxes generally support a significant portion of a county’s or municipality’s non- public enterprise activities. However, the revenues from property taxes also can be used for public enterprise projects, and to pay debt service on general obligation bonds issued to finance system improvements.			
Excise Taxes	These taxes require special legislation, and the funds generated through the tax are limited to specific uses. Examples include the lodging, food, and beverage tax, which generates funds for promotion of tourism; and the gas tax, which generates revenues for transportation–related activities.			

Table 8.2 continued – Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
Bonds and Loans	Bonds and loans can be used to finance capital improvements. These programs are appropriate for local governments and utilities that need to make improvements to improve and protect water resources. The cost of the improvements is borrowed through the issuance of bonds or a loan. Associated with the issuance of a bond or loan must be a source of funding for the payment of the resulting debt service on the loan or bonds.			
Investment Income	Some organizations have elected to establish their own foundations or endowment funds to provide long-term funding stability. Endowment funds can be established and managed by a single organization-specific foundation or an organization may elect to have a community foundation to hold and administer its endowment. With an endowment fund, the principal or actual cash raised is invested. The organization may elect to tap into the principal under certain established circumstances.			
<b>Emerging Opportunities for Program Support</b>				
Water Quality Trading	Trading allows regulated entities to purchase credits for pollutant reductions in the watershed or a specified part of the watershed to meet or exceed regulatory or voluntary goals. There are a number of variations for water quality credit trading frameworks. Credits can be traded, or bought and sold, between point sources only, between NPSs only, or between point sources and NPSs.			
PowerTree Carbon Company, LLC	Consortium of conservation groups and electric power generators in the southeast whose goal is to restore strategically located tracts of hardwood forests to increase carbon sequestration and other ecological functions. Power generators are credited for the carbon storage of the restored forests and conservation groups gain large tracts of protected forests which provide additional benefits such as; increased value for passive human use, wildlife habitat, maintenance of native species diversity, soil conservation and water quality buffering functions. Additional program and contact information is available online at: <a href="http://www.powertreecarboncompany.com">http://www.powertreecarboncompany.com</a>			

Table 8.2 continued - Watershed Management Funding Organizations and Opportunities; adapted from: CH2MHILL (2005)

Funding Source	Program Description	Match Requirement	Eligibility	Contact Information
Mitigation and Conservation Banking	<p>Mitigation and Conservation banks are created by property owners who restore and/or preserve their land in its natural condition; such banks have been developed by public, nonprofit, and private entities. In exchange for preserving the land, the “bankers” get permission from ADEM, COE, or other appropriate state and federal agencies to sell mitigation banking credits to developers wanting to mitigate the impacts of proposed development. By purchasing the mitigation bank credits, the developer avoids having to mitigate the impacts of their development on site. Public and nonprofit mitigation banks may use the funds generated from the sale of the credits to fund the purchase of additional land for preservation and/or for the restoration of the lands to a natural state.</p>			
<b>Options Often Overlooked or Unnoticed</b>				
Public and Private Partnerships	<p>Having both public and private stakeholders at the table when pursuing funding for the implementation of management strategies is vital. Public entities have advantages associated with public financing, and the involvement of these entities can bring key decision-makers to the table. Private entities sometimes can contribute significant financial support, needed expertise, and voluntary labor.</p>			
Redirection of Existing Programs and Funding	<p>For priority projects, one way to fund programs is to change the priorities or focus of existing activities to help achieve the objectives of the watershed management plan. This could entail reducing funding for other activities and making such resources available to fund the watershed management program.</p>			