**Mid-Coast Water Planning Partnership Prioritization Approaches For Consideration**

***Below are three prioritization approach ideas. Please feel free to provide comments in track changes, such as suggesting different criteria or different processes. Please send your input to Suzanne de Szoeke at*** [***sdeszoeke@gsiws.com***](mailto:sdeszoeke@gsiws.com)***.***

**Idea 1: Decision Support System beginning with Overarching Criteria**

The Decision Support System approach would be used to prioritize actions in the following order:

1. Overarching criteria (criteria applicable to all imperatives)
2. Imperatives specific criteria
3. Urgency and readiness criteria (elevates prioritization based on immediate opportunities)

For scoring criteria:

* Mostly use 0 = No, 1 = Yes
* For a few criteria, add weight to certain types of “Yes”
* Trying to keep it relatively simple
* Start with actions with Level 1 highest scores, then prioritize those using Level 2 and then Level 3

The process would result in criteria considered important across imperatives having a larger influence on the order of early implementation activities of actions than other criteria.

Following prioritization, the next step would be to develop work plans for the prioritized actions, which would involve identifying projects ready to implement, underdevelopment, and needing initiation. The work plans would help identify the type of support needed in these different cases.

Below is a table showing potential criteria of each prioritization level. Additional criteria could be weighted if desired.

| **Criteria** | **Criteria weighting** | **Public Awareness and Support** | **Regional Capacity and collaboration** | **Monitoring and Data Sharing** | **Water conservation, Efficiency and Reuse** | **Resilient Water Infrastructure** | **Source Water Protection** | **Planning for Water Supply Development Needs** | **Ecosystem Protection and Enhancement** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Prioritization Level 1: Overarching criteria |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improves water quantity | 3 = protects water instream  2 = conserves water  1 = benefits water quantity |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Improves water quality |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Multiple benefits (instream and out of stream) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Benefits a drinking water source  or  a stream with threatened or endangered species/species of concern |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Support (Multiple partners, active lead) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Prioritization Level 2: Imperative specific criteria |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Regionwide benefits |  | Regionwide benefits | Regionwide benefits | Enhances water system resiliency (addresses key infrastructure issues) | Permanent protection measure | Regionwide benefits | Habitat benefits: connectivity |
|  |  | Improves municipal water management, builds technical capacity |  | Improves municipal water management, builds technical capacity | Improves municipal water management, builds technical capacity | Improves municipal water management, builds technical and financial capacity | Improves municipal water management, builds technical capacity | Improves municipal water management, builds technical capacity | 2 = Identified as a priority in a watershed action plan or study  1 = Identified in a watershed action plan or study |
|  |  | Improves stakeholder understanding of water issues |  | Improves water customer water management | Improves water customer or landowner water management | Identified as a high priority in an infrastructure plan | Improves stakeholder understanding of water issues |  | Improves stakeholder understanding of water issues |
|  |  |  |  |  | Identified as a high priority in an infrastructure plan |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Prioritization Level 3: Urgency and readiness criteria |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Funding Urgency (Funding is available for immediate use) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Readiness (design or implementation) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other Urgency (e.g., natural disaster, infrastructure failure) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Idea 2: Decision Support System beginning with Urgency Criteria**

The Decision Support System approach would be used to prioritize actions in the following order:

1. Urgency and readiness criteria (prioritization based on immediate opportunities)
2. Overarching criteria (criteria applicable to all imperatives)
3. Imperatives specific criteria

This would be a similar process as Idea 1, but the urgency and readiness of an action would have a larger influence on the order of early implementation activities for actions than other criteria.

As part of Step 1, actions could be differentiated into the following phases (actions in earlier phases would be addressed first), which should align with scoring:

* Phase 1: Funding urgency present, action ready, other urgency present
* Phase 2:
  + Track A: Funding or other urgency present, action development needed
  + Track B: Funding or other urgency not present, action ready
* Phase 3: Funding or other urgency not present, action development needed

Then prioritization Steps 2 and 3 would occur.

**Idea 3: Champion Approach**

Under this approach, actions or projects would be prioritized based on their readiness. The approach could involve the following steps:

1. An organization with projects needing some type of support contacts the Partnership
2. During a meeting with the Partnership, the organization describes the project, identifies how the project fits under an action in the Water Action Plan, and describes the type of support needed
3. The Partnership decides how to support the project
   1. Potential types of support: Identifying potential funding sources, providing technical ideas, suggesting partners, providing letters of support
      1. For letters of support, a consensus decision would be required

This would likely be an initial approach for prioritization. Once the immediately ready projects are supported, an approach would then need to be developed to figure out how to move forward with supporting the various actions in the Water Action Plan, which could include an action that has individual projects already supported by the Partnership in some way (such as through the Champion Approach above).

Also, elements of this approach could fit under later stages of Idea 1 and Idea 2.