

**2009 Innovations Awards Program  
APPLICATION**

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 09-S-33TN

**Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:**

**State:**

Tennessee

**Assign Program Category:**

Natural Resources

**1. Program Name(s)**

Harpeth River Watershed Initiative

**2. Administering Agency**

Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC)

**3. Contact Person (Name and Title)**

Dr. David Duhl, Watershed Coordinator

**4. Address**

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**8. Web site Address**

<http://www.franklin-gov.com/engineering/hrwi.html>

**9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.**

The Harpeth River Watershed Initiative (HRWI) is part of a Memorandum of Understanding between three governmental entities, Department of Environment and Conservation, the City of Franklin and Williamson County government, which establishes a process for the identification and evaluation of projects that will impact the Harpeth River and its tributaries.

Under the agreement, the first of its kind in Tennessee, the staffs of the City, County, and TDEC meet quarterly to review, collect, and develop information concerning potential environmental projects that improve, remediate, or protect the Harpeth River Watershed.

**10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?**

The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in August 2007.

**11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?**

The Harpeth River Watershed includes over 1300 miles of streams, over 27% of which are impaired with environmental contamination. Williamson County houses over 52% of the total Harpeth River Watershed acreage. Williamson County is an affluent, suburban area with a population that is expected to increase 53% to over 304,000 people by the year 2020. The Harpeth is a priority for the TDEC based on the percentage of stream miles on the 303(d) list partially due to rapid conversion of agricultural land to sprawling residential development. (The 303(d) List is a compilation of the streams and lakes in Tennessee that are “water quality limited” or are expected to exceed water quality standards in the next two years and need additional pollution controls.)

The goal of the Harpeth River Watershed Initiative (HRWI) is to identify streams in Williamson County that can benefit from water improvement projects and to work with willing landowners toward that goal. TDEC hopes to replicate this model in other areas of the state.

**12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.**

- August 2007 – The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Williamson County, and the City of Franklin signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work cooperatively for the common purpose of developing an inventory of projects that have the potential to improve, remediate, or protect the Harpeth River Watershed.
- Fall 2007 – The proposed Eastern Flank Battlefield Park in Franklin was identified in 2007 as a viable project for the new initiative. It contains two highly degraded streams – Carnton and McGavock Creek. The City of Franklin is proposing to restore the historic Eastern Flank Battlefield site to approximate conditions present during the late 1800’s. The site of the Eastern Flank Battlefield Park was modified by development during the mid 1900’s, specifically the Franklin Country Club and the creation of an 18-hole golf course. The golf course development resulted in channelization of sections of the two streams, impounded Carnton Creek with three ponds used as water features for the golf course, and removed much of the riparian zone in long reaches. Furthermore, severe bank erosion was occurring throughout much of both creeks.
- Civil and Environmental Consultants, Inc (CEC) was tasked with preparing the stream restoration plan for Carnton and McGavock Creeks. The project involved complete channel re-construction in the areas of three former golf course ponds. Other areas of the project will have bank stabilization, instream habitat amendments, and riparian restoration.
- The restoration plan was reviewed and approved by TDEC, City of Franklin, and the historic architects to make sure the plan meets the need for stream restoration and the historic theme of returning the site to the near 1860’s era layout. Numerous stakeholder group meetings were conducted during planning to ensure that the restoration work met the goals of the over all project.
- Viking Environmental Construction was selected as contractor with CEC providing construction oversight.

- November 2008 – The first restoration project was completed. With funds from the Tennessee Department of Transportation, TDEC led the Stream Restoration Project which has restored the historic creeks at the Eastern Flank Battlefield to their original state. Impoundments were removed. Flow was increased through the creeks to the Harpeth. Riparian buffer zones along the streams have been established to reduce erosion and sedimentation reaching the creek. These buffers will ensure that the increased flow will also be carrying fewer pollutants when it reaches the main stem of the Harpeth River.

**13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?**

The Harpeth River Watershed Initiative is the first of its kind in Tennessee. Under the agreement, the staffs of the City, County, and TDEC meet quarterly to review, collect, and develop information concerning potential environmental projects that improve, remediate, or protect the Harpeth River Watershed. Projects are evaluated on a regional watershed basis as well as by individual tributary basis.

The partnership continues to evaluate other projects to benefit the Harpeth River Watershed. TDEC has a goal of utilizing this initiative as a model for other communities across the state.

**14. What were the program’s start-up costs?**

The start-up focused on communications through meetings, conference calls and emails to establish the partnership. There was no budgeted start-up fund and the start-up costs were minimal. (Franklin is a suburb of Nashville (the location of the TDEC Central offices) so only local travel was required for meetings.)

**15. What are the program’s annual operational costs?**

The program centers on quarterly meetings between the staffs of the partners to determine potential projects. That minimal staff time is the crux of the annual operational cost.

**16. How is the program funded?**

The implementation of identified projects has been supported by funds collected through supplemental environmental projects, which are a means of settling enforcement actions.

**17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations?**

No, it did not.

**18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?**

None.

**19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state?**

As far as we know, it did originate in our state.

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**20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?** If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

No

**21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? (Please update the info below)**

No, the partnership continues to meet and identify new potential restoration projects for the watershed. Also, TDEC is evaluating other areas of the state to initiate similar partnerships.

**22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.**

The program has been very effective in addressing the Harpeth River watershed as demonstrated by the Eastern Flank Battlefield project (discussed in item 12.) Two creeks were restored to their original state.

**23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?**

This effort is only a year old, so there have not been any changes since its inception.

**24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?**

The major limitation or obstacles are establishing the rapport and shared ideals with the community to develop the partnership and maintain their commitment to the goals. The formal MOU allows the partnership to survive political changes in the partnership representation.

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This application is also available at [www.csg.org](http://www.csg.org), in the Programs section.

**Deadline: March 23, 2009**