

Principles and Guidelines

The Federal objective of water resources planning is to contribute to national economic development while protecting the nation's environment.

The Principles and Guidelines, published in 1983 by the U. S. Water Resources Council and used during the study process, have a single Federal objective and provide flexibility to address other state, local, national and international concerns relevant to the planning setting ([See Step 3](#)).

The Principles and Guidelines prescribed the following six-step planning process to solve problems.

- Identify water resources problems in the study area.
- Collect data on the problems identified.
- Develop alternatives to solve the problems.
- Evaluate the effects of the alternatives.
- Compare alternatives.
- Select a plan for recommendation or decide to take no action. The alternative plan with the greatest net economic benefits consistent with protecting the nation's environment is normally selected. An exception may be granted by the Secretary of the Army.

Economic and environmental evaluation procedures have been incorporated into the Principles and Guidelines to provide water resources agencies the best current analytical techniques available.

On Nov. 17, 1986, President Reagan signed the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (PL99-662). In addition to authorizing scores of new water resource projects, this landmark law made numerous changes in the way potential new projects are studied, evaluated, cost shared and funded. PL 99-662 establishes a framework for a cost-sharing partnership between the federal government and non-Federal interests that affords the latter a key role in project planning and allows the Federal government to spread its resources over more water projects than would have been possible before. In December 1996, these policies were amended by the Water Resources Development Act of 1996. In addition, all projects are subject to severe budgetary limitations.

WRDA '86 & '96 Construction Cost Sharing

Purpose	Non-Federal Share
Navigation-Harbors	20%: depth < 20 ft. 35%: depth 21-45 ft. 60%: depth > 45 ft.
Navigation - Inland	50% from fuel tax
Flood Control Structural Non-structural	Min. 35% - max. 50% 25%
Hydroelectric Power	100%
M&I Water Supply	100%
Agricultural Water Supply	35%
Recreation Navigation Other	50% 50% of separable cost
Hurricane & Storm Damage	35%
Aquatic Plant Control	50%