



A UNIQUE ASSET FOR THE NATION

The Environmental Finance Center Network is the only university-based organization that creates innovative solutions to help manage the cost of environmental protection. The Network works with both the public and private sectors to promote a sustainable environment, supporting efforts to address difficult "how-to-pay" issues.

Core support for the Network is provided by EPA's Environmental Finance Program in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. The Network is comprised of nine Environmental Finance Centers, all of which attract additional funds through grants and contracts with other public and private clients. The Centers, each affiliated with an EPA Region, are located at the following universities:

The Network Is

- Innovative** The Network shares and integrates information, tools and techniques across the country to develop innovative solutions to difficult problems.
- Neutral** The Network is housed within nine Universities and is not governed by any one public or private agency or organization and so is neutral by its very nature.
- Multi-Disciplinary** The Network routinely employs staff from multiple disciplines including engineering, business, finance, planning, economic development, science, public administration, and law. For any project, the Network can access the expertise housed within the nine universities.
- Local, Regional & National** The Network has a proven track record of working at all project levels from local to national.

EFC Network Locations

- University of Southern Maine
- Syracuse University
- University of Maryland
- Cleveland State University
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of Louisville
- New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
- California State University at Hayward
- Boise State University

The Network Offers

- Financial Expertise** In solving environmental problems or addressing environmental issues, the Network brings a unique financial perspective.
- Technical Transfer** The Network has worked in forty-eight states and shares information and technical expertise among the states and within the Network to allow a national transfer of information.
- Multi-Media Capabilities** The Network addresses a full range of environmental issues, including: hazardous waste, air, water, wastewater, solid waste, brownfields, environmental technologies and pollution prevention.
- Partnerships w/ the Regulated & Regulators** The Network works with both the regulated community and regulators to promote efficient and effective environmental compliance.
- National Presence** The Network routinely partners with other public and private entities to complete projects throughout the US and beyond.

ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER NETWORK TOOLS

The Network provides education, technical assistance and analyses to state and local governments and the private sector through various tools, including the following.

- Finance Planning Strategies and Programs
- Local & Regional Economic Development
- Stakeholder Meetings

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- **Role-plays and Simulations**
- **Economic and Fiscal Impact Analysis**
- **Utility Accounting and Financial Reporting**
- **Informal Surveys**
- **Financial Policy and Practice Guides**
- **Information Clearinghouse**
- **Strategic Information Systems**
- **Conferences & Workshops**
- **Charrettes**
- **Process Facilitation**
- **Program Evaluation**
- **Research Publications and Reports, and**
- **Hand-On Assistance**

We have adopted these tools to help us navigate the numerous environmental media in which we work. Some tools apply across a broad spectrum of issues while others are limited to specific media.

Finance Planning Strategies and Programs include the provision of financial expertise in areas such as capital financing, operating cost management, loan programs, environmental risk management and strategies and approaches for the public and private sectors.

Local Economic Development support involves numerous areas including eco-industrial parks, recycling, open space preservation, brownfields, greenfields, and green business and environmental industry support and promotion.

Stakeholder Meetings and Charrettes are implemented in various situations where input from a variety of stakeholders and participants is necessary to resolve an environmental finance problem.

Role-plays and Simulations have been used in brownfields assistance where stakeholders learn what motivates and interests the other stakeholders with whom they need to negotiate, based on real circumstances.

Economic and Fiscal Impact Analyses are frequently performed for various projects including brownfields reclamation, rural land conversions and other forms of development.

Utility Finance models and financial management programs and software have been developed for water and wastewater infrastructure projects. These include: utility accounting and financial reporting, water conservation cost-benefit analysis, gap financing analysis, and water and wastewater system budgeting.

Informal Surveys are frequently used for a range of projects from determining small business incentives for green manufacturing, to assessing local needs for redevelopment.

Policy and Practice Guides have been developed to assist in shaping local land use and environmental policies and helping consumers choose and locate green businesses.

Information Clearinghouse services are provided by all Centers. The Network serves as a national repository and clearinghouse for environmental finance-related information, including information from the USEPA, the national Environmental Financial Advisory Board, and the national Environmental Financing Information Network.

Strategic Information Systems have been designed to improve financial and management capabilities of water systems.

Conferences & Workshops are offered by the Network throughout the United States on a range of topics from water and wastewater, to brownfields redevelopment and environmental technology transfer.

Process Facilitation is a broad tool designed to help take a project from concept to reality. Part of that facilitation may include Internal Partnering Meetings that promote inter-agency cooperation.

Program Evaluation services help to assess the outcomes of new environmental finance, economic development, and land use programs for local and state governments.

Finally the Network offers a wide range of research publications and reports, and hands-on assistance to national, state, and local agencies as well as tribes and private sector organizations and businesses.

SELECTED PROJECTS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

Since 1992, the Network has been working to promote sustainable development throughout the United States. The following is a selection of projects that best represents our talents.

Brownfields Remediation and Redevelopment. Network members have been involved in developing, operating and evaluating the impacts of state and local brownfield redevelopment efforts. Key features of state voluntary cleanup programs have been identified and their impacts on developer decision making examined. The private market risk transfer measures available through insurance and their impact on brownfield project valuations have been documented and technical assistance to public sector utilization of insurance continues to be provided. Network members have also been involved in training programs for potential brownfield redevelopers and financiers on how the markets and regulatory standards have been evolving.

Full Cost Pricing of Water and Sewer Services. Small communities struggle with the challenge of providing safe drinking water and effective wastewater treatment services to

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the public. Communities throughout the country have benefited from low or no-cost assistance from the EFCs in the areas of rate setting, capital replacement financing, financial management and assessing the impact of capital investments.

Multi-State Grants and Loans Database. Several Environmental Finance Centers compile and maintain funding resource databases. An environmental funding database currently exists that covers six southeaster states: North Carolina South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi. This database is available to local governments and citizens to help them identify low cost financing approaches for environmental projects. Similar tools for watershed financing are available in the Region 10 states of Idaho, Washington and Oregon and are under development in Region 1, as steps toward creation of a national database.

Environmental Finance Curriculum Development. A set of course materials on environmental finance, intended to bridge the gap between existing academic courses on public finance and existing training programs for government officials has been developed. The course is available for delivery throughout the Network and is presented as a series of modules that can work together for an extended course of study, or separately for focus on individual topics. A distance education course on environmental finance based on some of the materials and topics covered in the course material has also been prepared.

Business Planning Assistance to Environmental Non-profit Organizations. A business plan has been prepared to help guide non-profit environmental organization. The plan includes an analysis of existing services and pricing structures and makes recommendations on how an organization can implement improved business practices and become financially stable while achieving environmental and community service objectives.

Environmental Finance Policy Guides. Guides are being developed throughout the Network to be used by state local government officials, their associations, and organizations providing training to officials and community board members. Topics, readable by people with high school educations, include the issues of land value 'takings' by regulation, resources valuation issues in water and wastewater system mergers/acquisitions, the value of alternative brownfield subsidies, uses of environmental insurance, the economics of construction and demotion debris reuse, and the economic and environmental features of different policy responses to urban expansion pressures.

Unified Source Water Protection. As part of an EPA pilot initiative, five EFCs are working with groups of water systems in 8 states to develop unified source water protection plans. Unified source water protection plans incorporate the needs of many water systems that share a water source or potential contamination threats. The single or unified plan approach: reduces duplication of effort, allows for a more expansive look

at water resources, increases opportunities for particular protection measures to be used, and permits side benefits by bringing water system managers and operators together on an ongoing frequent basis

Funding and Needs Analyses. The Network frequently assesses performance of individual programs for funding environmental improvements or infrastructure development. A current study is underway to assess the water and sewer infrastructure needs in the Appalachian region of the United States and to examine whether existing funding programs and community practices will be sufficient to protect public health and the environment in the future. In addition, focus groups and informant interviews of program representatives and program beneficiaries or recipients have been conducted, and strategies recommended for cooperative funding to maximize opportunities for beneficiaries to obtain financing in the most cost-effective and politically palatable manner.

Brominated Flame Retardants in Electronics. In response to growing national interest, a Finance Center program, including a roundtable and conference, has been planned to facilitate dialogue between electronics manufacturers, plastics experts, and community and government stakeholders to explore alternatives to toxic flame retardant use in consumer electronics. The program is focused on designing electronics that are both fire resistant and protect human health and the environment while ensuring product performance.

Environmental Insurance for Brownfields. Center studies of environmental insurance products and their utility for brownfield redevelopment have provided data for provision of technical assistance to state and local brownfield programs. Continuing legal education seminars and other training for brownfields stakeholders has also been provided. Current efforts include work on designing model insurance programs for state-led redevelopment programs, UST cleanup funding, and an update on the environmental insurance market.

Financing Watershed Strategies. Training workshops have been developed which promote the coordination of funding and technical assistance programs with innovative financing techniques to support watershed management. Participants explore innovative solutions to multi-jurisdictional and multi-disciplinary issues encountered within a watershed. Network trainings have been held in EPA Regions 5, 8, and 10. Due to the popularity of the workshops, twenty were held in Region 10 in 2002-2003.

Green Business Program Facilitation. As part of the effort to promote Green Business throughout the United States, an EFC program has been established to help facilitate the creation of Green Business Programs and Recognition Projects. In addition to hands-on assistance, a website is being developed to compile information on planning, implementing, maintaining and growing a Green Business Recognition Program.

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Public Management and Finance Program. A unique technical assistance and training program has been developed in which EFCs collaborate with nonprofit, private, and government entities in the delivery of environmental services to primarily rural communities. The PMFP provides a forum that links technical assistance providers and local governments to enable holistic approaches to rural community problems.

Smart Growth Planning. Network Smart Growth projects include efforts to help an agricultural community preserve its rural heritage. Land protection financing initiatives have been explored through charrettes and comprehensive planning. Geographic Information System tools are being used to identify causes of urban spread and economically efficient public responses.

EnviroLoan & Strategic Goals Program. Projects for the National Strategic Goals Program included developing the Access to Capital EnviroLoan Program – a pollution prevention (P2) loan program for metal finishers. Other work focused on marketing the Goals Program statewide seeking legislation to implement a California Strategic Goals Program.

Million Acres Initiative - Open Space Preservation. In a state effort that may be replicable, support is being provided to the North Carolina legislature's Million Acres Initiative to conserve land for open space, farmland preservation, riparian buffers and other conservation purposes. Surveys and interviews were used to assess the amount of land already protected, the rate at which land would be protected over the next ten years at current funding levels, the size of the revenue gap needed to complete the million acre goal, and the funding alternatives potentially available.

Sustainable Infrastructure Development. This project will define a vision for a Great Lakes regional approach to prioritizing capital investments which sustain the regional system of infrastructure.

Multi-State Assistance to State Regulatory Departments. State Regulatory Departments were assisted in preparing and implementing Capacity Development strategies in ten different states. These strategies are intended to improve water system technical, managerial, and financial capabilities. The assistance ranged from facilitating the stakeholder-input process, to writing up strategies, to assisting with partnering between systems and various options in between.

Intergovernmental and Inter-Agency Cooperation. The first ever meeting on public funding or watershed restoration efforts was convened in the state of Idaho. This meeting included representatives of EPA, USFS, BLM, Bureau of Reclamation, USACE, USF&W, Bonneville Power Administration, NRCS, ID Dept of Ag, ID Dept of Fish and Game, ID Dept of Water Resources, ID Dept of Environmental Quality and other private foundations. The purpose of the meeting was to initiate a dialogue on the various funding sources and the match requirements associated with the various programs.

Land Trust Assistance. The first Patuxent Land Trust Exchange was conducted in partnership with the Maryland Environmental Trust and the Trust for Public Land. The goal of the Exchange was to develop a more coordinated land protection strategy in the Patuxent River watershed. Ten community conservation organizations attended the Exchange. A number of next steps were identified including developing joint marketing strategies, list serves, and special events. In addition, possibilities for organizational funding and capacity development will be explored.

Financing A Cluster Wastewater System. As part of a multi-region effort, a charrette was held in Yarmouth MA, to help locate financing for a "cluster" wastewater treatment system to replace septic systems that had been nitrogen-loading the local estuary and its ecosystem. This charrette helped develop a solution that may also be generalized to fit other similarly dense seasonal communities on Cape Cod and other tourist meccas. Additionally, several resource assessment needs were identified and are currently being addressed by the State of Massachusetts, and several groups have expressed interest in collaborating to create the new community wastewater system, using State revolving loan funds and other public and private funds.

WHERE HAS THE ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER NETWORK WORKED?

Haven't heard of us? If you haven't already, you probably will soon because the Network is continually expanding its range of services and the states it serves. To date, we've worked on at least one project in 48 different states, excepting North and South Dakota. We are looking forward to serving all 50, as well as our territories.

CONTACT US

Have questions? Please email any one of our members through our websites below. Any Center can help you connect to the EFC that can be the most help on your issue.

Maine	efc.muskie.usm.maine.edu
New York	www.maxwell.syr.edu/efc
Maryland	www.efc.umd.edu
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Kentucky	cepm.louisville.edu/org/SEEFc/seefc.htm
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