

The theory of the problem: Municipal governments throughout Pennsylvania need to address their stormwater runoff, wastewater management, aquifer recharge, and other water quality issues affecting their local waterways, particularly those within a municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) community or one with impaired waters subject to a total maximum daily load (TMDL). However, the budget and staff allocated to addressing point and non-point source water pollution in most municipalities is inadequate. This leads to permit violations and expensive fines that many municipalities cannot afford. Unfortunately, municipal leadership does not understand fully the need for multi-municipal collaboration to address stormwater on a watershed-wide level, which may help them avoid costly fines and can save money through cost-sharing. Therefore, many Pennsylvania waterways remain impaired, leading to pollution issues further downstream in the Chesapeake Bay.

The theory of change: Because of the current individualized efforts among Pennsylvania municipalities at managing stormwater runoff and other water quality issues, and the slow progress this method makes, a new way of thinking is needed. We propose a regional governance structure for the management of municipal water quality and quantity. By working collaboratively with other municipalities in the watershed, each municipality will be better able to address their issues and have a greater collective impact on the watershed, leading to lower costs for the municipalities and their residents, as well as marked improvement for the health of the waterways and its inhabitants. The pilot project will involve the University Area Joint Authority (UAJA), the Spring Creek Watershed Commission, RiverStewards, and the Social Enterprise Institute @ Elizabethtown College, to address water quality and quantity issues within the Spring Creek watershed, with the plan to expand to other municipalities across the state in subsequent years.

The theory of action: To build multi-municipal collaboration to address water quality and quantity in the Spring Creek watershed, we must provide opportunities for building understanding and opening a dialogue about the problem and solutions. Therefore, we propose a facilitated charrette based on the One Water Blueprint of the Water Research Foundation to take place in early 2018 that will bring together all interested stakeholders and develop real-world solutions for mutually addressing shared water quality and quantity concerns. The charrette will lead to the create of a One Water Blueprint for Spring Creek, developed by RiverStewards, with input from the stakeholders, that will outline how they can collaboratively address their issues and improve water quality and quantity in the watershed. RiverStewards will then use Spring Creek as a model for other municipalities in Pennsylvania to replicate the One Water Blueprint idea.

Budget and timeline to be determined.