The Working With Nature Task Sequence

The process of addressing the five *Working With Nature* components – and collecting the relevant information in the *WWN Workbook* – involves the following Tasks:

1. Project Initiated and Supported by Senior Leadership

The Working With Nature process could be initiated at any level: council, management, staff, community. Regardless, it needs to be taken on as a an official project of the municipality, and formally enabled. This will require a review of the WWN process in the context of the municipality, then:

- Development of a **workplan**
- Creation of a **schedule**
- Potential **team members** identified
- A preliminary **budget** created
- Leadership **support** formally secured

2. Natural Infrastructure Team Assembled and Team Leader Identified

An internal cross-departmental working group needs to be identified, made up of the key and/or senior people who have a stake in the use of natural infrastructure to mitigate flood and drought. Although departmental names vary between local governments, this might include parks, engineering, roads, GIS, planning, agricultural services, emergency response, water services, operations, etc. They must be empowered to speak for their department, and have the time/resources necessary to participate.

The WWN process needs a point person within the municipality who will expedite the process of filling in the workbook, scheduling the meetings, liaising between departments, etc. This person needs to have the support of the rest of the team, and of senior leadership.

3. Necessary Background Research Conducted

The initial tasks of the WWN Workbook require that the team articulate their goals, which is difficult to do without context. As described in the WWN materials, 'hazard' is the bad situation you are worried about, and 'risk' is the losses you would expect if that situation occurred. Your background research needs to give you a credible picture of those. This does not need to spiral into detailed climate modelling and to-the-penny assessments of at-risk property. These are questions that for the most part the team can likely answer with at-hand resources: Where are your flood and drought issues on the landscape? What circumstances make are worrisome? How are you assessing that?

The *Municipal Flood and Drought Acton Planning Primer* can help you characterize your hazards and your risks, and direct you to supporting resources.

As well, it is helpful if the GIS staff can be alerted as to the potential natural infrastructure elements the Team might want to include, so they can provide a preliminary assessment of what is available.

When the Team seeks to convert the draft action plan into policy, the question of fiscal implications will arise, so case studies showing the value of maintaining natural infrastructure can also be useful.

4. Workshop One Convened (Goals, Hazards/Risks, Natural Infrastructure)

The first workshop has two purposes: convene the team, and start populating the workbook. This can perhaps be done in a half-day, but better results are likely with a whole day.

The actual tasks of Workshop One include articulating the municipality's goals, clarifying the hazards/risks, and identifying the supporting natural infrastructure. See *Suggested Workshop Formats* for details on how this session should be structured.

5. Workbook Cleaned

After the first workshop is complete, there will many loose ends that need to be cleaned up and then reflected in the Workbook. These include:
- Update the goals and risk information based on the workshop feedback
- Ensure all Team Member worksheets have been collected and reflected in the WWN Workbook
- Collate the natural infrastructure information from the mapping exercise
- Circulate the now clean, but incomplete WWN Workbook to Team Members

6. Natural Infrastructure Represented in a GIS

[Optional] At this point, it can be helpful to convert the gathered natural infrastructure information and initiate conversion of that information into a spatial layer(s) within the municipality's Geographic Information System (GIS). This would involve engaging the municipality's GIS staff regarding what existing layers could practically be reframed as 'natural infrastructure' layers, or whether creation of a 'new' layer would be best. This task can range from relatively simple to very complex.

7. Workshop Two Convened (Action Planning)

Using the goals, risks, and natural infrastructure assets information from Workshop One, the second workshop develops a series of pragmatic actions for the municipality. This can fit into a half-day.

Team Members work through the Actions tab of the WWN Workbook. First, as an individual exercise, each Team Member uses the worksheets to brainstorm the actions they think are needed to retain, manage, restore, and/or create the municipality's natural infrastructure assets. Then those Actions are discussed as a group, and collectively added to the Working With Nature Workbook. Finally, the Team reviews the next steps that they must complete on their own (see *Suggested Workshop Formats* for details on how this session should be structured).

8. Actions Detailed

Workshop Two will not allow time for all the details of the various Actions to be captured. All Team Members have to commit to going back to their office, completing the details for the Actions assigned to them, and returning those to the Team Leader. Only once the details have been added can the Team move on to the Prioritization stage.

9. Actions Prioritized

Completion of the Action development stage leaves the municipality with a long aspirational list … and limited resources. Working With Nature comes with a separate Prioritization tool. There are two options here.

First, the Team can provide simple 1-4 priority scores when they articulate each Action. Second, WWN includes a more robust, calculated Prioritization Tool. In this case, the Team Leader coordinates this process, providing a separate worksheet for each person, then collating them to come up with a consensus-based prioritized action list. This task was designed to be done through email exchanges, but could be done in a workshop environment.

10. Workbook Finalized

The WWN Workbook becomes the living resource document for the Team. The Team Leader circulates the WWN Workbook for final comments, and makes the determination that the WWN Workbook is 'finished'.

11. Policy Development Meeting Convened

While it is critical that this task be scheduled and formally undertaken, it will look completely different for each municipality. The goal is for the Team to reconvene, and make determinations as to how the WWN Workbook will be integrated into the municipality's policies. This may be a stand-alone document, it may be a GIS layer output, it may be parsed out by department, it may become a cross-departmental work plan, it may be reflected in various bylaws and policies; each community will make this determination.