U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Open Government Plan 1.1

EPA@40: Healthier Families, Cleaner Communities, A Stronger America

June 25, 2010

Nothing in this plan shall be construed to supersede existing requirements for review and clearance of pre-decisional information by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, relating to legislative, budgetary, administrative, and regulatory materials. Moreover, nothing in this plan shall be construed to suggest that the presumption of openness precludes the legitimate protection of information whose release would threaten national security, invade personal privacy, breach confidentiality, or damage other genuinely compelling interests.

"The success of our environmental efforts depends on earning and maintaining the trust of the public we serve. The American people will not trust us to protect their health or their environment if they do not trust us to be transparent and inclusive in our decision-making. To earn this trust, we must conduct business with the public openly and fairly. ... In short, we will let more sunlight into our Agency."

Administrator Lisa P. Jackson, April 2009

A Message from the EPA Open Government Team

The Environmental Protection Agency is pleased to present the EPA Open Government Plan 1.1. With 40 years of experience in protecting the health of humans and the environment, EPA is more committed than ever to expanding the conversation on environmentalism, engaging communities, improving regulatory involvement, and continuing a "OneEPA" approach to accomplishing our environmental protection mission. Our Open Government Plan provides the details of these efforts and seeks continued engagement to evolve the EPA cultural legacy of transparency, collaboration and participation. Our definition of success for the EPA Open Government Plan is simple – we want to ensure that you are informed about information we have on environmental protection as well as ensuring that your voice is heard as we move forward in implementing our mission "to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment - air, water, and land-upon which life depends."

The very nature of this mission requires us to work effectively with our partners (state, local, and tribal governments) and a diverse group of stakeholders including the public, interest groups, industry, and Congress. EPA is unique - we simply cannot fully achieve our mission without the participation of all of you - our partners and stakeholders.

Consequently, this plan represents a response to a synthesis of issues and advice the Agency has heard from its stakeholders in the past and recently through our open government dialogue (www.epa.gov/open).This plan reflects our OpenEPA vision - to continue improving the health of humans and the environment though a significant broadening of dialogue with an ever-expanding community. We intend to actively pursue this dialogue with you; embracing the principle that it will lead to improvements in our nation's environmental decision-making through enhanced transparency, participation, and collaboration.

We are particularly proud to present in our plan EPA's Community Engagement Flagship Initiative. Although we introduce and continue numerous innovative actions in this plan to promote transparency, participation and collaboration, our Community Engagement Flagship

Initiative highlights activities that directly respond to our mission priorities and your comments. This includes efforts such as:

- Expanding the Environmental Conversation with Communities: Urban Waters Information Sharing, Simplifying Scientific Language, Improving Communication with Disadvantaged and At-Risk Communities, Sponsoring a Faces of the Grassroots Video Contest
- Expanding Public Awareness and Involvement in the Development of Rules and Regulations: Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Webinar Series, NPDES pre-proposal involvement, Rulemaking Gateway
- Developing EPA Mobile Applications to Empower Citizen's Environmental Decisions: Human Health Advisories Mobile Application, Easy-to-Find Consumer Product Information

Each project is focused on actively working with communities in a new way, with the goal of sharing best practices and lessons learned for future efforts. The details of the Flagship Initiative and our other innovations are more fully described in our plan.

We continue to welcome your thoughts on our Open Government Plan and projects at www.epa.gov/open, on the EPA Greenversations Blog, or via email at opengov@epa.gov. We want to specifically hear from you on how our plan can be improved, and on what data and information you want to see from EPA. We also encourage you to think of innovative ways to use the data we have provided in this document, on EPA.gov, and on Data.gov, and to provide us feedback on these innovations.

The EPA Open Government Team, represented by offices listed below, thanks everyone who participated in the effort to produce the EPA Open Government Plan 1.1, and we look forward to providing quarterly updates on our progress in implementing your ideas. EPA will also review our Open Government Plan every 180 days to assess our progress. Monitor our progress at www.epa.gov/open.

Sincerely,

Linda A. Travers
Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Environmental Information
on behalf of EPA's Open Government Team

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I. Introduction

Since our creation 40 years ago, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has embraced the basic tenets of open government – transparency, participation and collaboration. EPA was established and charged with the mission "to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment—air, water and land—upon which life depends." And the nature of the Agency's mission and statutory responsibilities require collaboration and effective working relationships with our stakeholders (the public, non-governmental organizations and industry), our partners (federal agencies, states and tribes) and others such as local governments and Congress. EPA has a solid foundation of effective working relationships to build upon, and we are now focusing on:

- Broadening our effort to include more stakeholders.
- Encouraging more two-way communication.
- Improving the EPA decision-making process.
- Providing citizens with better information.
- Expanding ways to collaborate with our partners and stakeholders.

How to get involved:

Learn more about Open Government at EPA and provide comments at www.epa.gov/open

We are committed to being open, fair and inclusive in conducting our daily business, leading to better decisions and greater collaboration to address today's environmental challenges.

A. Purpose of the Plan

We created this plan to respond to the Administration's Open Government Directive (OGD) (http://www.whitehouse.gov/open/documents/open-government-directive). While developing our plan, we incorporated public input, examined recent efforts that embody Open Government and identified new opportunities and innovations to further meet this challenge. We will measure and evaluate how our open government activities foster our mission and meet our strategic goals. This plan is a step in the process as the Agency continues to institutionalize a culture of transparency, participation and collaboration.

We will use this Open Government Plan to emphasize and expand on EPA's culture of openness within a mission-focused framework for engaging our stakeholders, especially the public. In many cases, EPA is leveraging technology to help us meet the principles of open government, but we recognize the existence of a digital divide that hinders communication with some stakeholder groups, particularly those who lack access to new and emerging technologies. We are committed to implementing multiple methods of engagement to bridge the digital divide. In this plan, we describe specific projects, both seasoned and new, that add to

EPA's experience in engaging with the public to accomplish our tasks. We expect to share this knowledge throughout the Agency, and we plan to make it available to other government entities for their use and application in joint efforts. Our plan also focuses on expanding the conversation on environmentalism to a broader audience.

Because we are evolving and plan to adapt to feedback, technology innovations and other influences, EPA's Open Government Plan will be a living document, published in an open format on our Web site, which we intend to update regularly to keep it current and relevant.

B. Administrator's Commitment to Open Government Principles

In her first communication to EPA employees, Administrator Lisa P. Jackson encouraged staff to adopt openness in all aspects of EPA's strategy and operations. In her January 2009 memorandum, she stated:

> *"Public trust in the Agency demands that we reach out to all stakeholders fairly and impartially, … consider the views and data presented carefully and objectively, and … fully disclose the information that forms the basis for our decisions. I pledge that we will carry out the work of the Agency in public view so that the door is open to all interested parties and that there is no doubt why we are acting and how we arrived at our decisions."*

Under this Administration, EPA is an active collaborator in advancing the Administration's open government direction.

- EPA is the federal co-lead for the Data.gov initiative. Data.gov (www.data.gov) provides the public one place to access, download and reuse federal government data. To date, we have posted over 500 data sets. Most importantly, outside organizations such as Forbes.com are using and leveraging these data for analyses.
- Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), federal agencies launched an effort in early 2009 to strengthen the American economy. We assisted the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board by adapting an existing EPA solution to implement FederalReporting.gov, a tool for funding recipients to report on the status of their contracts, grants and loans (e.g., award amount, number of jobs created or retained). Ultimately, this information makes the ARRA process transparent and accessible to the public (www.federalreporting.gov).
- EPA is the managing partner for the eRulemaking program, a federal government-wide effort that developed and operates Regulations.gov. This site (www.regulations.gov) provides the public with one-stop access to find, view and comment on all federal rulemakings and notices seeking public input. Currently, the public can access more than 2.2 million documents, including rules and proposed rules, Agency scientific studies and reports, and public comments.

Our legacy, recent accomplishments and the new actions included in this plan demonstrate that EPA is positioned to strengthen a culture where open government is part of our daily business.

C. Integration of Agency's Current Mission, Goals and Priorities

Today it is increasingly important that we collect and share reliable, quality data to help us carry out the Agency's mission. Our strategic plan (www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm) guides us and defines our five mission goals and three cross-goal strategies:

- Goal 1: Clean Air and Global Climate Change
- Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water
- Goal 3: Land Preservation and Restoration
- Goal 4: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems
- Goal 5: Compliance and Environmental Stewardship
- Cross-Goal Strategy 1: Results and Accountability
- Cross-Goal Strategy 2: Innovation and Collaboration
- Cross-Goal Strategy 3: Best Available Science

The cross-goal strategy of Innovation and Collaboration has contributed to a culture of openness as evidenced in our strategic plan update process. In the past year, Administrator Jackson worked with the senior policy team and listened to staff and stakeholder feedback to strengthen how we carry out our mission and incorporate relevant feedback into the formal revision of the Agency's strategic plan (to be issued by September 30, 2010). The Open Government Plan will be used to inform our strategic plan, and will be updated to help ensure open government principles continue to support our ongoing mission and goals.

The Administrator set seven priorities as part of this overall process, and these priorities have been factored into the new strategic plan and our Open Government Plan. Additional information on the priorities and a video message from Administrator Jackson can be found at (blog.epa.gov/administrator/2010/01/12/seven-priorities-for-epas-future/).

D. Leadership, Governance, and Measurement

Open government is about transformation and cultural change, which takes leadership above all else. EPA's leadership commitment to open government is unquestioned, as evidenced by Administrator Jackson's actions in April 2009 – when she issued a Transparency Memorandum to all Employees - and by integrating open government's most fundamental concept in our core values, which are science, transparency, and the rule of law. In response to the OGD, EPA swiftly took action to establish a governance structure to:

- Guide and conduct immediate activities.
- Capitalize on and enhance existing Agency policies and management controls.
- Look for ways to institutionalize open government within EPA's organizational structure.

We are also focused on evaluating the Agency's progress in meeting OGD mandates, as well as establishing measures of our progress and performance for EPA-specific initiatives and projects. We will evaluate how to best incorporate open government tenets into Agency processes, including Capital Planning and Investment Control, Budget Formulation, and Strategic Planning and our Enterprise Architecture. For example, we will work to tie our Strategic Data Action Plan to these processes.

We will review our Open Government Plan every 180 days and assess our progress.

1. Accountable Officials

Administrator Jackson charged Linda Travers, Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Office of Environmental Information (OEI), with leading the Open Government Executive Steering Committee. Ms. Travers also serves as the Agency's Deputy Chief Information Officer, and her office manages the lifecycle of information that supports mission objectives. OEI's responsibilities cut across the Agency, and OEI also supports many of the functions necessary to execute, monitor and report progress in meeting open government principles. More information on OEI, what it does, and how the office is organized is located at (www.epa.gov/oei/).

Administrator Jackson charged Barbara Bennett, the Agency's Chief Financial Officer (CFO), as the Senior Accountable Official responsible for assuring the quality and objectivity of, and internal controls over, publicly disseminated federal spending information. Ms. Bennett directs the work of the Open Government Spending Information Quality Work Group. OCFO's responsibilities are integral to ensure accountability and integrity - key tenets to EPA's approach to open government. For more information on OCFO, visit (www.epa.gov/ocfo).

2. Open Government Governance Structure

EPA established a governance structure with work groups and teams representing offices across the Agency to get the right experts in the room to figure out how to instill open government throughout the Agency. A diagram of our governance structure is shown in Figure I-1, and the work groups and teams are further described in the remainder of this section.

Figure I-1: EPA's Open Government Governance

a) Open Government Executive Steering Committee

The Open Government Executive Steering Committee is made up of Senior Executive Service employees from key responsible offices within the Agency. This group is charged with setting policy and direction while meeting legal requirements. The group also works to secure

III. Participation

Transparency informs the public, and participation informs the government.

EPA has historically engaged our federal, state, tribal and local partners, the public and other stakeholders. We are striving to reach a broader range of groups (especially those historically underrepresented) and understand their views. In order to hear from more diverse groups, EPA is using more diverse methods to receive input.

For example, EPA reached out to stakeholders using a variety of tools to develop this Open Government Plan. We provided a means to accept comments via our Open Government Web site, conducted a stakeholder meeting, and used the Greenversations blog, Twitter and Facebook (links provided in Section III.B.2).

Because EPA is a regulatory agency, enabling participation in the rulemaking process has a large impact on the public and is one of our top priorities. We have a number of active and successful public participation efforts in rulemaking and other areas, described below.

Superfund Community Involvement: Since the 1980s, EPA has actively promoted early and meaningful community participation during Superfund cleanups. Members of the public affected by a Superfund site have a right to know what the Agency is doing in their community and a say in the decision-making process. Our Community Involvement Coordinators go to communities to meet and talk directly to citizens.

The remainder of this section provides information about the Agency's:

- Participation history and baseline.
- Participation Innovations.

A. Participation History and Baseline

At EPA, we leverage technology as one tool to help us identify what information our partners and stakeholders would like to receive. In 2008 EPA held a National Dialogue on Access to Environmental Information (www.epa.gov/nationaldialogue) to determine the information needs of our stakeholders. The dialogue used blogs and wikis, as well as face-to-face meetings, to gather public input. This effort advanced the use of blogs and wikis at EPA as we found that they are secure and easy to set up. What we heard from most of our stakeholders is they cannot always find EPA information, even information they know exists, which is why we initiated the web site restructuring.

A compilation of all the recommendations from each group we met with during the National Dialogue can be found at http://www.epa.gov/open/NationalDialogue.pdf. We captured comments and suggestions during the dialog sessions and are currently reviewing any suggestions not already addressed to determine if we can feasibly and legally address them.

EPA has many active efforts to encourage and enable public participation. Several of these efforts are operational and have been previously noted, including our Open Government Web site (www.epa.gov/open), Regulations.gov Exchange (www.regulations.gov/) and a variety of social media technologies. These tools enable our partners and the public to provide input to EPA.

We also use Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) committees to obtain input on decisions; these committees include representation from academia, industry, the public and health professionals (www.epa.gov/ocem/faca). EPA also has the ability to charter new committees, as we did for a negotiated rulemaking on Airline Drinking Water (http://www.epa.gov/safewater/airlinewater/index.html).

Rulemaking provides a good example of EPA's continued innovation in enabling public participation. As a regulatory agency, we developed an automated tool to manage the public comment process mandated in the rulemaking process. That automated tool became the foundation of Regulations.gov, now used across the federal government to allow the public to track, review and comment on proposed regulations.

Many of our efforts and tools that provide transparency also have mechanisms for feedback and participation. Since we described these efforts and tools in Section II, we focus on improvements and new activities in the remainder of this section.

B. Participation Innovations

Although you can still send a letter to EPA or call us, EPA has launched several efforts to further public participation. We described several of these efforts in Section II, since many of our projects that foster participation also promote transparency.

National Lakes Assessment Report: We are working with partners to survey the nation's waters, report on conditions, improve monitoring and assessment, and apply technology to educate the public on the state of their waterways.

Some of the new ways we are enabling partners and stakeholders to participate in carrying out our mission include:

- Video contests, leveraging YouTube and the public to educate others on environmental issues and successes: We have launched a series of contests and envision continuing them indefinitely. As this report is being published, we currently have one video contest and one participatory video project running.
- Town hall meetings
- Greenversations blog at (http://blog.epa.gov)
- The MyEnvironment Web page (www.epa.gov/myenvironment/) features environmental shout outs, which give the public the opportunity to publicize good-for-the-environment activities that are happening within their communities, such as river cleanups and volunteer monitoring or e-cycling efforts, using MyEnvironment's mapping interface.

Faces of the Grassroots Video Contest: We are sponsoring a video contest asking the public to highlight an environmental justice activity, issue or topic. Submissions via YouTube of public service announcements or short documentaries may be used in future outreach and education. (http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/events/video-contest.html)

Within the Agency, we are identifying ways to coordinate and organize a formal network of EPA staff experts to connect and respond to public inquiries, encourage public participation and provide consistent service.

1. Examples of How Targeted Groups Get Informed

In addition to providing information geared to the public, we offer many ways for groups and communities with specific interests or concerns (target groups) to become informed and share ideas.

- EPA and the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) developed a forum (www.ChemicalRight2Know.net) to provide access for communities, industry and interested stakeholders to the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) and other environmental data.
- EPA is holding a conference, the 2010 National Training Conference on the TRI and Environmental Conditions in Communities, to support environmentally-informed decision making in communities.
- In the area of waste management and cleanup, EPA has held two video town halls targeted to citizens. These videos are described and viewable at: (www.epa.gov/oswer/videotownhall.htm). The first town hall was on the Superfund program, and the second focused on environmental justice as well as how citizens can reduce their carbon footprints through reducing, reusing and recycling.
- One EPA office posts a question for discussion at least once a month on their blog (http://blog.epa.gov/oswerforum/). A recent question was: How would you grade EPA's role in addressing environmental justice issues in disadvantaged communities?

Pet Spot-On Products Webinar: An increase in the number of reporting incidents for pesticides in pet spot-on products led EPA to evaluate the incidents and products. This free public webinar is a way to educate consumers and answer their questions. (http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/health/spot_on_webinar.html)

2. Links and Websites for Public Participation and Engagement

EPA will rely on several sites to announce opportunities for our partners and the public to participate in accomplishing our mission. For simplicity, the primary site for learning about these opportunities is (www.epa.gov/open). EPA is committed to keeping this site as current as possible and will strive to provide ample advance notice for upcoming activities. This site is also available from EPA's home page (www.epa.gov) by clicking on the OpenGov icon.

The advent of Web 2.0 offers new ways for the public to participate. For that reason, EPA is pursuing a variety of Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs and wikis. Currently, EPA is hosting more than 140 applications on the Internet and EPA's internal Web site. Some examples include:

- Metal Mining (https://blog.epa.gov/metalminingblog): A blog to obtain public and industry comments on pre-regulatory rulemaking related to the Metal Mining Industry.
- Thorium and Uranium Milling Facilities (http://blog.epa.gov/milltailingblog) (coming soon on the Internet): A blog to obtain public and industry comments on regulatory rulemaking action to 40 CFR192, Thorium and Uranium Milling Facilities.

Additional links and ways to speak out and participate include[1]:

- Greenversations blog: http://blog.epa.gov.
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/EPA.
- Twitter: http://twitter.com/epagov.
- Many more social media opportunities: http://www.epa.gov/epahome/socialmedia.html.

Another site where opportunities may be announced includes:

- http://yosemite.epa.gov/opei/RuleGate.nsf.

3. Partner and Stakeholder Feedback Methods

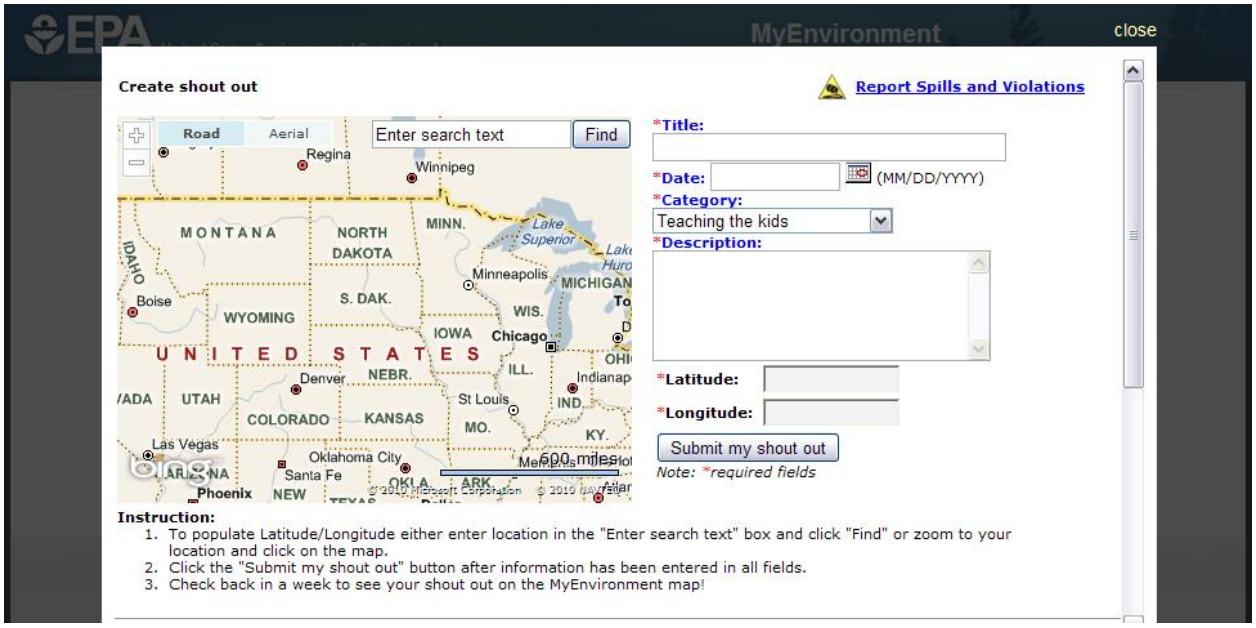
From EPA's open government Web site (www.epa.gov/open), the public can follow progress on flagship projects, select opportunities to participate, find data sets recently made available on Data.gov, and access the OpenEPA Web site to provide feedback. The OpenEPA Web site also allows us to solicit comments and provides partners and stakeholders a way to comment or vote on ideas submitted by others. In response to requests on the OpenEPA Web site, EPA plans to keep the site active after our Open Government Plan is published, which allows the public to continue providing feedback and learn about our progress. We will also evaluate and establish standards for the how often EPA will engage in dialogue with submitters.

We realize the tools and methods in our current toolkit are efficient means of communication for technology-savvy stakeholders, and we are committed to broadening our reach to involve those who are not technology-driven or who may not have easy access to technology. Our commitment to reach the public contributed to our selection of Community Engagement as our Flagship initiative. We will test other participation methods through the Flagship projects and continue adjusting the number and variety of tools we use.

In addition, we provide feedback to public comments related to open government on our OpenEPA forum. Please visit us at www.openepa.ideascale.com to view the current status of ideas.

Finally, we are always looking for great ideas in your community. We have established an interactive, web-based "Shout out Feature" that allows you to provide recognition for community efforts. The purpose of this shout out feature is to applaud the environmental efforts of local communities, but also to make neighbors aware of all the good that is being done right in their own backyard. We encourage you to show us where something was done to help your local environment and provide a short description. Your local activities are a key part of keeping our nation's water, land and air clean, and we believe in the motivational value of these actions in spurring similar action across the nation. You can find this feature at www.epa.gov/myenvironment by entering your zip code or location information, and then clicking on "Give A Shout Out" icon.

[1] No citation or illustration of any specific product, service or enterprise in this report should be construed as a Government endorsement.



III-1 EPA's My Environment Shout Out Feature

IV. Collaboration

Collaboration is ingrained in our operations and an important part of being open, fair and inclusive. We collaborate by working with our federal, state, tribal and local partners, with non-governmental organizations, academia and industry and with the public. EPA's partners implement many of the Agency's most critical environmental programs, including protecting water quality, reducing air pollution, safeguarding drinking water and mitigating hazardous waste. Almost all of the environmental data EPA collects comes from our partners and the regulated community. We collaborate on issues as wide ranging as data collection and sharing, enforcing regulations, setting standards of protection, voluntary programs (e.g. EnergyStar (www.energystar.gov), a joint EPA and Department of Energy effort), and how best to empower local communities to tackle local issues.

Producing widespread environmental and economic benefits:

Redeveloped brownfields sites reduce stormwater runoff between 44 to 88%, result in lower vehicle miles traveled between 33 to 58% reducing air pollutants, and return formerly contaminated property to re-use. Since inception, more than 61,000 jobs have been leveraged nationwide. Residential property values increased between 2 to 3% once a nearby brownfield was assessed or cleaned. Brownfield projects leveraged $18.68 per EPA dollar expended.

One of the most significant examples of collaboration with a broad spectrum of partners is the Brownfields program. This program is designed to empower states, communities and other stakeholders to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse Brownfields (sites with the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant). The idea for the program was presented by a state at an Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials (ASTSWMO) meeting in the early 1990s. Shortly thereafter, EPA funded Brownfields as a pilot voluntary program, and the program evolved based on feedback and lessons learned from early projects. Congress recognized the success and potential of the program and passed the 2001 Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act. Our Brownfields program empowers citizens to reclaim and revitalize properties in their communities.

EPA has well-established tools and procedures for collaborating with the public, and we are exploring new ways to collaborate with our partners and other stakeholders. The remainder of this section provides information about the Agency's:

- Collaboration history and baseline.
- Collaboration innovations.

A. Collaboration History and Baseline

Working in partnership with states and tribes is critical to protecting human health and the environment. Starting in 2001, we worked with states and tribes to establish the National Environmental Information Exchange Network (NEIEN) (www.exchangenetwork.net) to share over 240 regulatory reports. Sharing such information improves its quality, timeliness, accessibility and transparency while lowering costs and burden. All 50 states, 9 tribes and 1 territory currently exchange data over the Network, and the volume of data, types of data being shared, and unique ways of sharing it through cutting edge technology all grow annually. EPA also established a grants program to help the states and tribes exchange their data across the network. Through these grants, states and tribes are able to build the infrastructure and take other steps to move from submitting information on paper to sharing information electronically.

The collaboration on the Network extends to the governance structure as well. Our governance features shared ownership and responsibility among the partners and comprises EPA, state and tribal members who collectively make decisions about Network resources, strategy and technology. The Network's technology and approach have been so successful that we are extending them to support other important programs nationwide. Network technology is a backbone of the new International Trade Data System's efforts to improve the sharing of import security information among federal agencies; the Recovery, Accountability and Transparency Board used EPA's Network technology and approaches to develop FederalReporting.gov, which helps the Board monitor spending progress under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Total Coliform Rule (TCR):
To involve the public and experts earlier in the regulatory process, EPA established an advisory committee representing states, environmental groups, utilities and public health and public interest groups to recommend revisions before EPA started updating this rule.

Academia is another important group with whom we collaborate in meeting our mission. Scientists are an important source of information, and scientific data and studies are important as we make decisions affecting the environment. EPA recognized the need for our scientists to collaborate more freely with scientists in other agencies and in academia. To meet this need, we developed the Environmental Science Connector (ESC), a password-protected research and collaboration center that provides the capability to customize, coordinate and monitor the progress of science projects from a desktop. EPA scientists can centrally manage projects; search for and download data sets, publications and other documents; set up web conferences; track the history of their work; and share information with other researchers within EPA and external scientists, partners and stakeholders who are collaborating with the Agency. (https://ssoprod.epa.gov/sso/jsp/obloginESCNew.jsp)

EPA often collects and makes available information that is important to other federal agencies. For example, we hold multiple radiological emergency response exercises each year with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Energy (DOE), as well as state and local governments. The CDC and EPA also work together to help local health officials prepare in case of a radiological emergency. We developed tools to assist federal, state and local agencies with the review of Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements through a web-based geospatial application. The NEPAssist tool automates the collection and coordination of information needed in the environmental review process, as mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NEPAssist provides immediate screening of environmental assessment indicators in accordance with regional decision rules for a user-

defined area of interest. These features contribute to a streamlined review process that potentially raises important environmental issues at the earliest stages of project development.

As another collaboration example, the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program is a grant vehicle that empowers local communities to reduce risks from toxic pollution. Local groups create partnerships to address issues of local concern, from reducing chemical exposure of workers at automotive shops to addressing the presence of heavy metals in drinking water for people living near certain mining activities. Through one CARE project, a community discovered that a large source of mercury releases into the Great Lakes was from dental offices, a finding that prompted the American Dental Association to call on its members to install a low cost device that captures mercury, keeping it from going down the drain and into our river systems.

We also foster collaboration through training. We have EPA training programs that focus on building collaboration skills as well as programs that provide information on available tools and resources. Our skills building training programs cover areas such as negotiation, situation assessment and collaboration. Training is sometimes made available to EPA partners as part of a program. And the Superfund Program has a Community Involvement University that provides public involvement and collaboration training, including methods to help our staff manage difficult topics and situations.

To continue and expand our collaboration with the community, EPA will analyze public feedback from the publication of our Open Government Plan and commit to providing updates on a periodic basis.

B. Collaboration Innovations

While technology platforms and standards adoption are key enablers for collaboration and being more open, fair and inclusive, not all of our stakeholders have access to technology to use the new tools. So we will continue to collaborate in more traditional ways while we leverage technology to reach a more diverse cross-section of the public.

With technology versus traditional methods in mind, the Agency is actively pursuing initiatives that build on our infrastructure to help us publish high value data sets, encourage innovative collaboration with stakeholders, and encourage increased partner and stakeholder involvement.

1. Collaboration Actions and Mechanisms

a) Address Technology Platforms to Improve Collaboration

EPA's infrastructure will continue to evolve to meet the growing demands of transparency, participation and collaboration. The Agency has a backbone of services that support our ability to share meaningful data sets with various stakeholders. EPA's Central Data Exchange (CDX) (www.epa.gov/cdx/) enables fast, efficient and more accurate environmental data collaboration with state and local governments, citizens and research groups, industry and tribes and EPA participating program offices. This infrastructure is built on shared services, open data standards and web services that improve data quality. Our infrastructure also provides the Agency with the ability to publish high-value data sets such as TRI data in an increasingly efficient manner. We are committed to pairing this infrastructure with existing reporting toolsets (e.g., Envirofacts, MyEnvironment) as shared investments in the critical infrastructure and service oriented architecture standards. Ongoing investments in data publishing and collaborative toolsets will be evaluated against Agency standards to ensure potential

investments in new solutions leverage the existing architecture, are built in open formats that have collaboration/publishing in mind, and abide by established best practices.

b) Propose Innovative Methods to Encourage and Promote Collaboration

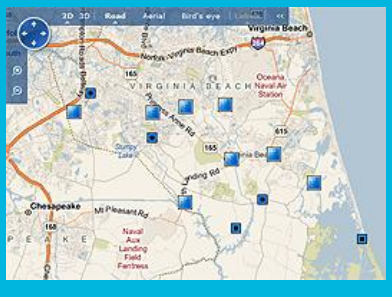
EPA is evaluating various methods to encourage more inclusive and effective collaboration such as creating a way to recognize and reward collaborative projects.

WaterSense: Like EnergyStar, WaterSense helps consumers evaluate products for efficiency – in this case water efficiency. This is another way EPA is using modern social networking technologies and mobile applications to reach a broad audience.

We know that increased adoption of Web 2.0 and social media technologies place a burden on the existing infrastructure from activities such as downloading large data sets or video streaming open meetings. As EPA continues to incorporate more tools to facilitate open government, we will focus on improving infrastructure and ensuring proper security. We have begun to improve our infrastructure performance by using virtualization and through our Wide Area Network (WAN) 2010 Initiative. We are also evaluating recent innovations in cloud computing.

We will continue to expand our focus on making data sets meaningful to various stakeholders, capitalizing on technical frameworks that have been created and can now be expanded for new purposes. Initiatives that highlight this focus include making data sets geographically relevant and accessible via MyEnvironment. This solution allows the public to search by neighborhood to learn about local air quality, cancer risk levels, water quality, Brownfields and other factors that determine the overall environmental quality and livability of a community.

EPA's Facility Registry System (FRS) (found at www.data.gov and www.epa.gov/frs) provides a complete universe of facilities and places that are or might be of environmental concern. EPA is working with OSHA and SEC to link facilities of environmental interest with facilities under worker safety regulations and financial reporting mandates. FRS is the linking database for Agency mapping and GIS applications.



In an effort to improve access to services, we will create a one-stop resource for application programming interfaces (APIs) and other web services that could be used with data sets. This catalog will allow users to access the web services for possible reuse of existing code when developing new services. The catalog will identify associated XML schema and data sets that could be used with the services. Where appropriate, EPA will determine how to establish a standardized format for some of these services to facilitate public usability.

The Agency also has an ongoing initiative to centralize information about various cross-Agency resources, from facilities to substances to environmental terms. These catalogs act as doorways to information across EPA. Different EPA programs may have data about a particular facility; however, that facility may be reported to each program office using a variation of the name. The Facility Registry System (FRS) (www.epa.gov/frs) makes it possible to link the different data about a facility together, enabling the public to find that information. Similarly, substances can be known by a multitude of synonyms. Toluene, phenyl methane and methyl benzene are all valid names for the same chemical. The Substance Registry Services (SRS) (www.epa.gov/srs) has a record for each substance tracked or regulated at EPA, which EPA program is interested in the substance, and the name used by each program for the substance. Through these two registries, and others which can all be found at (www.epa.gov/sor), the public can discover where to find information throughout EPA and, in the future, in the states and tribes. EPA offices

are taking steps to integrate these registries into their systems as a way to improve public transparency and data quality. We are also working with our state and tribal partners to ensure the registries support their business needs.

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) is working collaboratively with a broad spectrum of partners to increase access and use of information. Presently, there is a wealth of information related to the Chesapeake Bay stored by state agencies in New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Washington, D.C., in non-governmental organizations, and within EPA. To ensure better access to this information, the CBP is developing a registry, called ChesapeakeStat, to catalog this voluminous, but dispersed information.

2. Sample Projects

In the area of collaboration, EPA is undertaking some new projects. Sample projects include:

- EPA's Watershed Central Web site (www.epa.gov/watershed) offers a wiki environment for local watershed managers to collaborate with others, share management plans and compare notes on tools of the trade. EPA uses this site to make managers aware of funding and other resources. The wiki adds value to the Agency's general web presence on these topics by enabling a dialogue and discussion among the watershed groups and by allowing them to upload documents.
- EPA recently joined a cooperative effort called EcoCar, a consortium of government, industry and academic leaders dedicated to advancing clean, efficient automotive technology. The consortium hosts EcoCar, The Next Challenge, a three-year competition among 17 universities in the United States and Canada to redesign and reengineer a 2009 Saturn VUE to minimize fuel consumption and emissions.
- Clean Energy – Clean Climate (CECC): EPA's Region 6 (located in Dallas, Texas) plans to create an online, interactive tool to help states, local governments and tribes keep the CECC strategy current as technological and scientific information emerges. Successes will be shared with other regions.
- EPA will be highlighting creative uses of our data, and will establish a process to collaborate with the community, by building a community of interest, to identify opportunities for new innovative "mash-ups" for our data.

- EPA works in collaboration with our state and tribal partners on the National Environmental Information Exchange Network (NEIEN) (http://exchangenetwork.net/index.htm), discussed above. One of the recent innovations established through this network is the Homeland Emergency Response Exchange (HERE) (http://www.herenetwork.org/). This capability provides a rapid and easy way to pinpoint and assess potential threats such as hazardous substances and vulnerable resources. Wherever possible, explanatory information has been included to provide some context to the variety of data presented. HERE supports a broad assessment of the immediate, and potential reciprocal threats that need consideration in many emergency scenarios for emergency responders and emergency operations centers. Now, a "slimmed down" mobile version of theHERE Client has been released to allow first responders an additional way to easily access information while in the field from their mobile telephones. The mobile version requires no installation, and allows a responder to access information about nearby potential threats (such as sites with hazardous chemicals) and provides contact information so they can click to call site representatives to help evaluate and contain a situation. To access the mobile version from your phone: m.herenetwork.org/. The HERE application is based on Exchange Network security and exchange privileges between the current state partners (Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, and Ohio) and is available to other regional areas. Visit the HERE site to learn more about this capability.

Homeland Emergency Response Exchange (HERE) Mobile Application

- Another example of EPA-state partnership is illustrated by the creation of MassAir by the State of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. MassAir was created based on the principal that the public has a right to know about the environmental conditions in their community. To reduce costs and increase efficiency, Massachusetts integrated its air quality data internally and used the NEIEN to automate data quality assurance processes and provide real-time air quality data to the public. This innovative solution can be seen at: http://public.dep.state.ma.us/MassAir/.
- EPA has established an effort with NatureServe to access threatened and endangered species and location information. NatureServe is a non-profit organization that collects information on species, plants, and ecosystems from 50 states, Canada, and Mexico and the Caribbean. The agency has integrated this information into a major EPA application to support the National Environmental Policy Act and NEPAssist, an innovative tool which facilitates place-based environmental review. We established an interagency agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior, to provide access to this critical data source. Other Federal agencies can also access NatureServe data and services through our vehicle.

Of course, we could not really collaborate without a working relationship with our partners, the public and other stakeholders. EPA regularly identifies new ways to reach out to and include the public in our education and decision making processes. The SunWise Program, which aims to teach children and their caregivers how to protect themselves from overexposure to the sun,

has teamed up with the SHADE Foundation on a poster contest that asks kids to suggest ways to prevent skin cancer and to raise sun safety awareness.

3. How the Public Uses EPA Data

EPA provides the public with a number of data sets, publications and general information through a variety of electronic and non-electronic means. We have a web site (http://www.epa.gov/nscep/) that provides free access EPA publications with more than 7,000 print publications in stock and over 35,000 digital titles. The public can search and retrieve, download, print and/or order EPA publications from this site. Publications on these sites are government material and not copyrighted; therefore, these materials can be reused for educational or other purposes. Any materials in EPA libraries that are copyrighted are marked accordingly.

In addition, educational materials geared to students and teachers can be found at http://www.epa.gov/epahome/students.htm, accessible from EPA's home page and OpenGov page; the site also provides links to training opportunities and materials for environmental professionals. Finally, the EPA Web Site Restructuring project will address any copyright issues, using a policy statement as necessary.

The public and other stakeholders often take EPA data to use for reports or combine with other data for mashups to tell a story. One way to facilitate these mashups is to standardize data elements in the data sets that EPA is making available on Data.gov and other locations. There is a federalwide effort to standardize data elements used in information exchanges. EPA will crosswalk the data elements in our data sets to the federalwide standards to identify commonalities. Making the crosswalk information available to the public will facilitate easier mashups of EPA data with data from other agencies.

Public uses of EPA data span a broad range of users and information, including[2]:

- Sites that provide the public with EPA data to aid understanding of the environmental conditions in their communities include:
  - This We Know (www.thisweknow.org).
  - Data Masher (www.datamasher.org).
- Forbes magazine combined EPA data with outside data to compile an independent analysis of toxics in urban areas for Forbes.com.
- SciScope, developed by the research office at Microsoft, is a research project to integrate data from different sources and to provide the information on a map. SciScope brings together water data, including EPA's STOrage and RETrieval (STORET), which collects water quality monitoring data (www.epa.gov/storet/), water data from the U.S. Geological Service's (USGS) National Water Information System (NWIS) (http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis) and data from several states. The integration of the data is further supported by EPA's Substance Registry Services (SRS), which enables cross-walking between different substance synonyms (www.epa.gov/srs).
- Oreck Corporation has created a mobile device application that provides users with the status of their local air quality. The data in the application comes from EPA's Air Quality

[2] No citation or illustration of any specific product, service or enterprise in this report should be construed as a Government endorsement.

Index (AQI), which provides a yardstick for determining the degree to which a geographic area is clean or polluted for five major pollutants: ground-level ozone, particle pollution, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide.

- Since 1989, the Right-to-Know Network (www.rtknet.org) has provided free access to numerous environmental databases and resources from EPA data sources. The information available on RTK NET enables users to identify specific facilities and their environmental effects, find permits issued under environmental statutes, and identify civil cases filed – all from a single Web site.

We are maintaining our Open Government Web site (www.epa.gov/open), and by April 30, 2010, we will include a section that asks the public to share innovative ways EPA data are being used. We intend to recognize the most innovative uses of EPA data, as determined by public vote. EPA will work through groups such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and our partners to reach those who do not have electronic access.

4. Input from the Public on Ways EPA Can Increase Openness and Transparency

EPA's OpenEPA public engagement Web site was one of the most active and heavily visited of all federal agencies' sites during the development of the initial Open Government Plan 1.0. We addressed five of the most popular suggestions within our plan 1.0. We've kept our OneEPA site up since the plan 1.0 was published and included a blog feature to accept comments directly on portions of the plan. All of the comments received are in the process of being categorized and will be summarized and made available on EPA's Open web site. As suggestions are evaluated and a response is prepared, the status of the suggestion will be updated on the Open Web site. As follow up to the suggestions on the plan 1.0, responses to five additional top voting ideas are provided below:

- **Idea:** Create a policy allowing EPA employees to speak openly about their data.
    - **Response:** We received a recommendation to consider including a communication policy in our plan that "clearly describes the rules governing interactions between the public and agency staff." EPA will evaluate this recommendation within our established Open Government Governance process beginning in the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2011, and we will provide updates on the status in future updates.
- **Idea:** Live webcast of all meetings focusing on proposed regulations.
    - **Response:** Web casts are increasingly being use for significant meetings and notice of these are often posted through EPA news releases available from the Agency's web site. Some projects included in EPA's Community Engagement Flagship Initiative relate to expanding public engagement in the regulatory process. Our Flagship teams are considering the use of various tools, including web casts, to assist in communicating more effectively with the public.. Best practices and lessons learned from the Flagship Initiative will be shared across the Agency so that other efforts can more easily use proven, effective communication tools.
- **Idea:** Regulate the growing use of antibiotics in farming animals.
    - **Response:** The commenter is correct in stating that this is a complex issue which requires coordination among multiple federal agencies and other organizations. This comment has been shared with the EPA program office

responsible for developing suitable regulations to ensure the proper management of Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations. The most current compilation of related documents can be found at http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/afo/info.cfm.

- **Idea:** Post examples of successful grant applications online.
  - **Response:** The State Innovation Program is one among many grant programs in the Agency. All State Innovation grant proposals - not just the successful ones - were made available on our web site (http://www.epa.gov/innovation/stategrants/competitionhistory.htm) in order to make the concepts more widely known. Potential submitters were advised of the publication plan in the solicitation.
- **Idea:** Create a Bill of Rights for the environment.
  - **Response:** EPA operates under the authorities provided by the various laws passed by Congress. Each of these laws has come about due to the identification of a particular need or condition that was recognized by the legislative branch sufficient to warrant support and ultimate approval. Laws and the corresponding regulations developed by EPA are intended to protect the environment. Protection of the environment is central to EPA's mission, that is, to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment – air, water and land – upon which life depends.

All of the comments received through our OneEPA site on IdeaScale are viewable at http://www.openepa.ideascale.com/. Comments received on our Open Government Plan blog through Greenversations have been categorized and are available at http://www.epa.gov/open/BlogComments.pdf. In addition to these sources, EPA has received approximately 60 public comments through the Open Government EPA email account. Unique comments with actionable requests have been captured and summarized in the document http://www.epa.gov/open/public_email.pdf. Please note, email names and original comment content has been removed to protect the identity of the sender. We will continue to provide summary and status of actions related to suggestions we've heard in our quarterly updates available from the Open site http://www.epa.gov/open/.

V. Flagship Initiative - Community Engagement

Each agency was asked to select at least one Flagship initiative – a new, specific project to promote transparency, participation or collaboration. Rather than selecting one concrete project, EPA determined we would have more impact by defining and launching a broad Community Engagement initiative, with many concrete projects across the Agency.

Community Engagement refers to a broad spectrum of activities intended to promote a greater understanding of, participation in, and contribution by individuals regarding the environmental issues that affect or interest them most. EPA considered several areas of its core mission where improvements could be achieved by implementing open government principles. The selection of the Community Engagement theme presents many challenges, and the Agency believes it also offers the greatest source of growth potential by encompassing many of the elements associated with the other themes. The broad scope of this theme also allows us to select a range of projects, many with ties to suggestions posed during the public participation/input process.

We selected Community Engagement by applying the following evaluation criteria developed by the Agency's Open Government Work Group:

- Supports the Agency's strategic goals and the Administrator's priorities
- Degree to which the initiative supports openness principles
- Anticipated degree of impact and benefits
- Feasibility and likelihood of success
- Transformative value

To successfully accomplish our mission, EPA needs active participation from the public. Effectively engaging communities means we will need to make information easy to understand; find diverse ways to reach the public (both electronically and via traditional means); find creative ways to hear their needs and suggestions; and work with partners, stakeholders and other federal agencies to make informed decisions and find the best solutions.

Each Flagship candidate area (Community Engagement, Regulatory Involvement and OneEPA) met these criteria; however, the Agency selected Community Engagement because of its wide applicability—potentially influencing nearly every part of the Agency. We crafted this initiative with opportunities to apply what is learned throughout the Agency, providing a higher return on our invested effort.

To implement the Flagship initiative, EPA selected a number of projects - each designed to involve the public and/or a particular segment of the population in greater depth than activities typically conducted. Individually, each project varies in how it will engage the public. The Agency expects to learn what is most effective and make use of this information as it evaluates policies and standard practices that will be of benefit to future Agency efforts. The sections that

follow briefly describe the selected projects, organized around various components of the community that EPA intends to target as part of our community engagement initiative.

A. Expanding the Environmental Conversation with Communities

- **Urban Waters:** We are leading a federal interagency working group focused on helping communities get educated and involved in local decision making that impacts urban waters. EPA will develop new Web 2.0 tools for community-to-community information sharing, reach out to non-digital audiences, and provide technical assistance to communities.
- **Improve Communication of Sampling and Testing Results:** EPA is developing a new communication methodology to use with the public when contamination is found in their communities. The new methodology will simplify scientific language, provide communities with visual illustrations and clear explanations of contamination levels and associated risks, and recommend actions that community members should take to protect themselves.
- **Improve Delivery of Information to At-Risk and Remote Communities:** We are connecting with communities historically underrepresented in EPA decision making, to enhance their abilities to be informed and meaningfully participate in EPA decisions about land cleanup, emergency preparedness and response, and the management of hazardous substances and waste. A national EPA work group will evaluate how information is provided and make recommendations to improve our processes. The group will focus on electronic access and the digital divide, and ways to provide technical information so that it is clear, accessible and timely for use by affected communities.
- **Faces of the Grassroots Video Contest:** We are sponsoring a video contest asking the public to highlight an environmental justice activity, issue or topic. Submissions via YouTube of public service announcements or short documentaries may be used in future outreach and education.

B. Expanding Public Awareness and Involvement in the Development of Rules and Regulations

- **Chesapeake Bay TMDL Webinar Series:** EPA will conduct a series of monthly webinars to help the public learn about the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) initiative (setting a "pollution diet" for the bay) and share feedback with the officials designing it. We are working with state partners to set restrictions on nutrient and sediment pollution through the TMDL.
- **NPDES Pre-proposal Involvement:** A future rule will require entities that have National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits to report information to EPA electronically. This change in reporting created great interest within and outside the Agency, so we are launching the NPDES Electronic Reporting Rule Web page to post public meeting information and rulemaking progress as well as to host a discussion forum.
- **Rulemaking Gateway:** EPA's Rulemaking Gateway provides continual updates to the public about the progress of priority regulations that are being developed. An important part of the Gateway is a set of filters that help specific stakeholders understand which rules are most likely to be of interest to them. There are filters for impacts on children's health, environmental justice, state and local governments, tribal governments, unfunded mandates, energy and more (http://yosemite.epa.gov/opei/rulegate.nsf/content/about.html?opendocument).

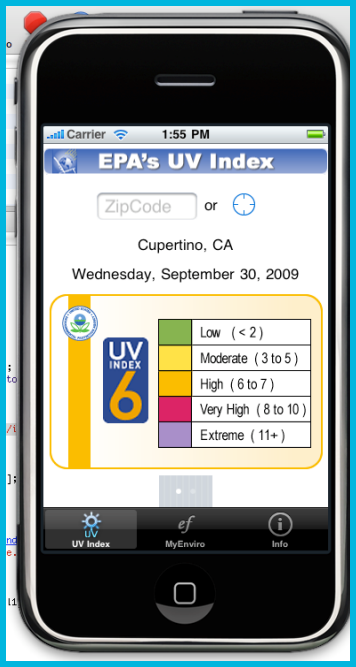
C. EPA Mobile Applications (apps) to Empower Citizen's Environmental Decisions

- **Human Health Advisories:** EPA is leveraging technology to push human health advisories via mobile phone apps, providing the public with location-based information to help them take action. The project is cross-Agency. One example being developed is the EPA Saves Your Skin mobile phone app, providing ZIP code-based UV index information to help the public take action to protect their skin. Another example of a mobile app is the Air Quality Index (AQI) which feeds air quality information based on zip code.
- **Green Product Information:** This is an Agencywide strategy to provide a one-stop source of information to consumers to help them consider the impacts of products when making purchases (e.g., energy efficiency, water conservation, chemical exposure, sustainable design). In response to public input during the development of this plan, EPA is developing an Internet portal that consolidates the various Agency product information Web sites into one Web site. Future efforts may include ways to deliver such information through mobile channels, either by EPA providing data that others can incorporate into mobile applications, or direct EPA effort such as text messages or Smartphone applications.

These projects help us meet our strategic goals through the use of openness principles as shown in Figure V-1.

Mobile Apps
EPA saves your skin

- The UV Index, developed by the National Weather Service and EPA, indicates the strength of solar UV radiation on a scale from 1 (low) to 11+ (extremely high).
- EPA's UV Index Mobile App allows you to take appropriate sun-protective behaviors and avoid overexposure to UV radiation.
- Simply enter your ZIP Code or city name and state to get the UV Index forecast for your community or for a place you are visiting.



Community Engagement Flagship Project Characteristics

Flagship Project Name	OG Principles			Strategic Plan Goals					Cross Goal Strategies		
	Transparency	Participation	Collaboration	1. Clean Air and Global Climate Change	2. Clean and Safe Water	3. Land Preservation and Restoration	4. Healthy Communities and Ecosystems	5. Compliance and Environmental Stewardship	1. Results and Accountability	2. Innovation and Collaboration	3. Best Available Science
Urban Waters	X	X	X		X		X	X		X	X
Improve Communication of Sampling and Testing Results	X	X	X			X			X	X	
Improve Delivery of Information to At-Risk and Remote Communities	X	X	X			X			X	X	
Chesapeake Bay TMDL Webinar Series	X	X	X		X					X	
Faces of Grassroots		X					X			X	
NPDES Pre-proposed Involvement	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	
Rulemaking Gateway	X								X	X	
Health Advisories	X		X				X			X	X
Product Information	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		X	

Figure V-1: Community Engagement Flagship Project Characteristics

There are similarities among the projects which offer opportunities for knowledge transfer and lessons learned we can apply to future efforts. Additional information on the Community Engagement Flagship and individual projects will be available at our "Evaluating Our Progress" section of OpenEPA (http://www.epa.gov/open/evaluate.html). The public can follow our progress and find additional details about projects and how they support EPA's Community Engagement efforts. Information for each project includes:

- How the project supports one or more of the three open government principles.
- How agency operations will be improved/benefits across the Agency.
- How we will identify affected and interested parties, engage them and maintain a dialogue.
- Identification of any external partners.
- How we will measure improvements to openness principles.
- Steps we will take to sustain the initiative and build in improvements.

Answers to the above questions for each project and activity within our initiative can be found at http://www.epa.gov/open/flagship/index.html

VI. Evolution – The Open Road Ahead

EPA will learn from the activities identified in this plan and our focus on being more fair, open and inclusive. We will capture the benefits and lessons learned for new innovations and Flagship projects, and we will describe how lessons from those projects are being considered to make lasting improvements in how the Agency operates. Those changes will be incorporated into subsequent revisions of this plan.

EPA will leverage our governance structure, described in Section I, to continue to monitor activities as they progress and to continue transforming our culture.

OEI will maintain the lead role in coordinating routine reporting activities, including updates to Data.gov and Community Engagement flagship projects. The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) will continue to maintain EPA's open government Web site (epa.gov/open) as the primary resource for the public to stay informed on EPA's open government activities.

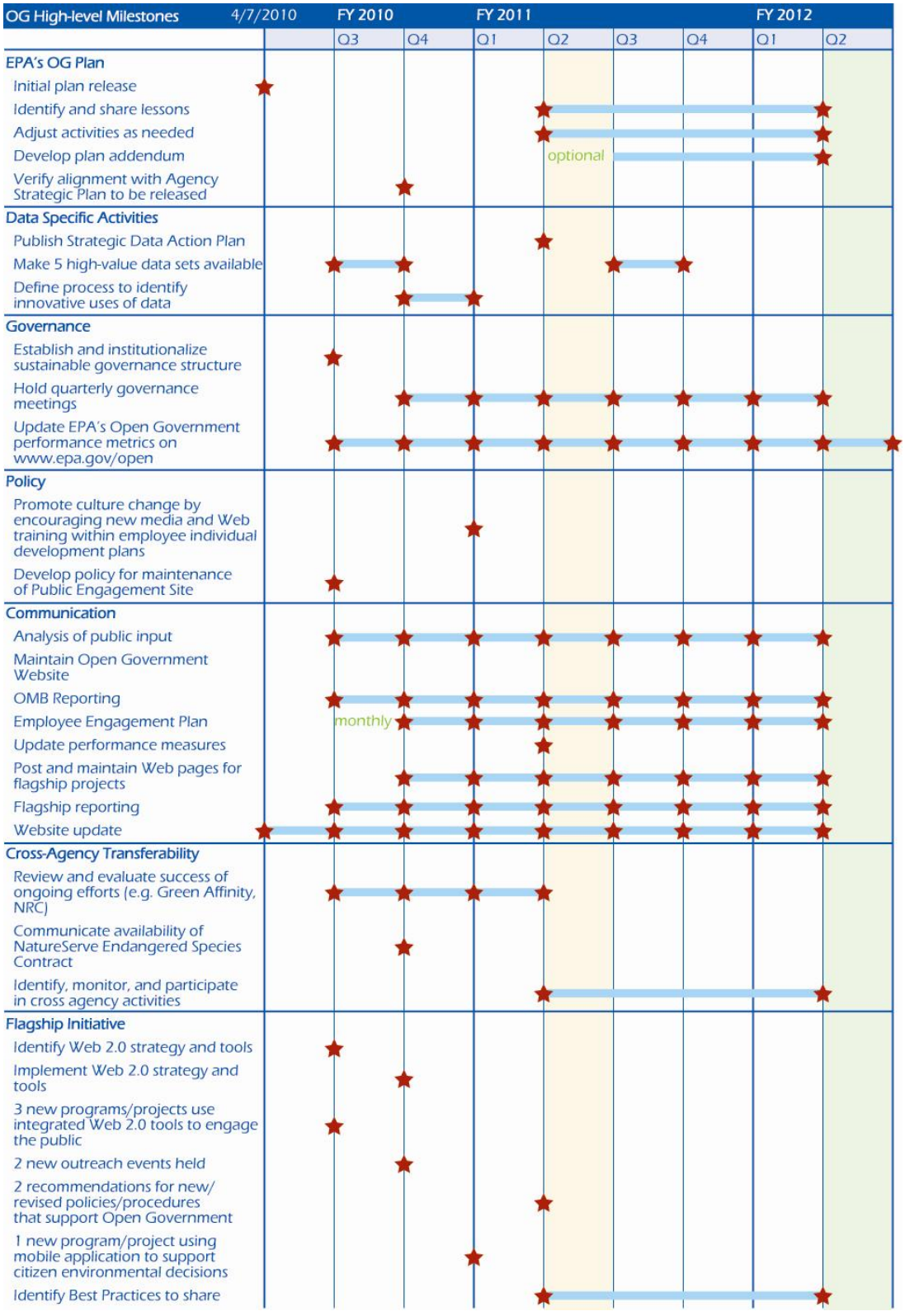
EPA will continue to operate the OpenEPA Web site to receive public input. We have taken a "lite" moderation role in operating this site during development of this plan. Upon publication of this plan, we will determine how our moderation role will evolve to make better use of this tool as a source of input--potentially increasing its use for dialogue. We will track suggestions from the site and will prepare an analysis of suggestions and make that analysis available when the plan is revised.

In summary, we ask you to provide us feedback, and we would appreciate specific engagement in the following areas:

- How can the EPA Open Government Plan 1.0 be improved?
- What additional data and information do you want to see from EPA?
- What are some innovative uses of EPA data that you have seen or implemented?

The success of this Open Government Plan, and of the environmental protection mission, depends on community engagement and a continued two-way dialogue – EPA looks forward to your participation.

Appendix A – Milestones



Appendix B - Open Government Plan Development Outreach Timeline and Plan

Key communications and the dates they were posted include:

- February 4, 2010 – Launch Open Gov Web site with link to the OpenEPA Web site
- February 8, 2010 – White House blog post
- February 10, 2010– E-mail from Linda Travers, Open Government Working Group leader, to 135,602 people - everyone who has subscribed to any EPA list managed by GovDelivery. (This message reached a much broader list than a news release, and recipients included reporters.)
- February 10, 2010 – posted to Facebook: (http://facebook.com/epa) and Twitter: (http://twitter.com/epagov)
- February 16, 2010 – Greenversations blog by Jeffrey Levy – Help Us Serve You Better By Being More Open
- February 18-19, 2010 – E-mails sent to non-governmental organizations (NGO) and industry stakeholder groups inviting input
- February 25, 2010 – EPA programs given sample note to share with specific stakeholder groups
- March 3, 2010 – Meeting with OMB Watch on Rulemaking and open government
- March 4, 2010 – Greenversations blog by Lisa Schlosser – What Does Open Government Mean to You?
- March 5, 2010 – Mass mailer from Linda Travers to all EPA employees inviting input
- March 11, 2010 – Stakeholder meeting
- March 24-26, 2010 – Draft EPA Open Government Plan made available to all EPA employees for comment

The following additional communications policies and plans were initiated February 8, 2010 and continued throughout March:

- Additional Twitter and Facebook posts
- Additional Greenversations blog postings
- Open Government banner on our EPA home page with a link to our Open Government Web site
- Banner on our Intranet with a link to our Open Government Web site
- Link to our Open Government Web site at the bottom of all e-mailed press announcements

Appendix C – Preview of Transparency Innovation: GeoData Gateway

GeoData Gateway Overview

The Geodata Gateway (GDG) is a geospatial portal that provides a single point of access to EPA's geospatial resources. The GDG contains metadata (information that describes data) from EPA's regions, programs, and labs and it links to those resources. By providing this single point of access, the GDG supports the work of environmental researchers, enforcement officers, emergency responders, policy analysts and the general public who want access to information about geographic sites of interest in their local community.

GDG Support to Open Government Directive

Direct Support for Data.gov Contributions:

- Data.gov and Geospatial One-Stop automatically pull data from the GDG.

Identification and Publication of High-Value Information

- The GDG enables EPA to assess and prioritize special data sets of high national interest or data sets that are national in scale such as combined sewer overflows.
- This data can be geographically represented and integrated into reports, such as shown below.

Enables viewers to access and use data that conforms to Open Standards

- Making data available in open standard formats supports information sharing and integration across databases, platforms, agencies and the public.
- Data in open standards enables users to view the data in commonly available tools such as Google Earth.

Innovations: The GDG provides access to content using some of the newest web 2.0 technologies

- RSS feeds available can inform users immediately about data updates and new data sets.
- The GDG offers other tools as well – such as a search widget that users can install within a web page or application that will automatically search the GDG for data without having to visit the GDG itself.

Using the GDG to Support the Agency's Mission

Using the GDG to Support the Agency's Mission

- The GDG connects people with the resources that support EPA's key priorities – below is an example of the data GDG embeds to show water data directly on web pages.

Next Steps for the GDG

The GDG web application will be released to the public this spring. The GDG will align its technologies and approaches to ensure full integration with Data.gov.