

Best Management Practices for Writing a Project Statement that is Substantial in Character and Design

For a project to be substantial in character and design it must; 1) address a conservation need relevant to the authorized funding program; 2) have measurable objectives that establish benchmarks that will resolve the need for the project if achieved; 3) specify the sound management actions, tasks or efforts to be undertaken to achieve the objectives and; 4) demonstrate cost effectiveness. It is all about connecting the dots or following a logical process from establishing the need for the project down to describing the work to be done in a sound, cost effective manner.

Need

A need statement will identify the conservation issue, problem or opportunity to be addressed. The need will identify a lack of something such as habitat or an opportunity to provide something such as access to wildlife dependent recreation. The need may in the form of some pending threat to the resource. The need must be relevant to the purpose of the Act or enabling legislation that authorized the program. “*Why*” is this project necessary?

A need statement will answer why your agency should deal with this issue or opportunity (your statutory authority)?

A need statement will provide evidence such as results from surveys, research or other data to demonstrate that the need is real and not perceived.

A need statement will articulate the null alternative (the negative result of taking no action).

Objectives

Objectives are meant to be realistic targets or benchmarks that, if achieved, will resolve the project Need. “*What*” would be accomplished during the grant period pursuant to the state need? Objectives must be written in TRACS format to ensure they are SMART objective. They must specify what would be accomplished within the grant period, money (federal & non-federal), and staffing allocated, Specify a recognizable end point, and be quantifiable or measurable. Please refer to the [TRACS Matrix](#).

SMART Objectives are:

Specific-Specify exactly what the desired outcome, result, output or deliverable will be. Say what you are going to do by using action verbs. A smart objective will describe a result in terms of who or what?

Measurable- You need to be able to track progress and measure the outcome using quantitative or qualitative assessments. A smart objective will answer how much or how many?

Achievable-All the necessary resources (money, time, equipment, and labor) should be available to accomplish the objective. A smart objective will consider capabilities.

Relevant- How does the objective directly relate to the stated need? A smart objective will demonstrate that if it is accomplished the need will be resolved.

Time bound- Establish a deadline. A smart objective will include a time limit and answer “by when ”will the result will be achieved?

TRACS OBJECTIVE TEMPLATE

Objectives

See the [Matrix](#) and [Fact Sheets](#) on for a list of standard objectives and reporting requirements (unit of measurement, activity tags and species/habitat tags):

1. Enter an objective title (e.g. Stock 25,000 fish by 06-30-2020):

2. Select the Standard Objective Strategy for this objective (pick one):
 - Coordination and Administration
 - Direct Habitat and Species Management
 - Environmental Review
 - Facilities/Areas Construction, Renovation or Acquisition
 - Facilities/Areas O&M
 - Incentives
 - Outreach and Communications
 - Planning
 - Real Property Acquisition
 - Research, Survey, Data Collection and Analysis
 - Species Stocking
 - Stakeholder Involvement
 - Technical Assistance
 - Training and Education

3. Select the Standard Objective corresponding to the Strategy (Tip: Refer to the [Strategy Fact Sheets](#))

4. Target Date: _____

5. List activities with unit of measurement (tags 1 & 2 as listed on the strategy fact sheets):

6. List Target Species and/or Habitat Types (if applicable):

7. Does this objective relate to R3 activities (Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation)?
 - Yes
 - No

Objective Example:

Research, Survey Data Collection and Analysis

1. Conduct 20 Investigations by 2024
 - a. Activity Tag 1: Fish and wildlife species data acquisition and analysis
 - i. Unit of Measurement: 20 investigations
 - ii. Species: Nerodia species

R3 Related Activities: No

Approach

The approach describes the specific conservation methods or efforts necessary to accomplish project objectives. The approach answers the question “*how*” the objectives will be accomplished by describing the actual work that will be done. This information must demonstrate that the agency will use sound design, appropriate procedures, and accepted fish and wildlife conservation, management, or research principles. Include the name of the Principal Investigator for research projects and other key project staff. Include essential equipment purchases and specific management actions that will be taken that require compliance with NEPA, Sec 7 and NHPA.

Expected Results and Benefits

The expected benefits and results will specify the benefits of completing the project and resolving the need for a variety of individual interests. Approach descriptions should itemize the specific activities that are expected to be performed to meet the stated need, objectives and results. The expected benefits will answer the question. If successful at resolving the need, what will be the benefit to the:

Species? _____

Habitat? _____

Economy? _____

Society/Public? _____