

Tennessee *Growth Readiness*

Project Initiated: August, 2001

How the Project Developed

Growth around Tennessee's urban centers is rapidly converting farmland into suburban development. The Tennessee Department of Agriculture recognized the need to address the new forms of water pollution coming from urban and suburban areas, and took action after being introduced to NEMO by the Alabama NEMO Program at a regional nonpoint source pollution meeting.

After a multi-agency workshop was held in collaboration with the Network Hub, a pilot effort entitled the "Growth Readiness Project" was started in the summer of 2001, and funded by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Section 319 Nonpoint Source Program.

Pilot communities began using training and presentation materials in the winter of 2002. The pilot is now evolving into a statewide program that will make training and materials available beginning in the summer of 2003. The state's Section 319 Nonpoint Source funding has been matched with support from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the University of Tennessee

and the pilot communities themselves. Through TVA, the project is reaching out to surrounding states in the Tennessee River Basin.

How/Where NEMO Works

The Growth Readiness Project, led by the TVA, involves many partners that include academia, city, county and state government and nonprofit watershed groups. These partners have formed an inter-agency development team which interacts with four pilot communities: Blount and Knox Counties and the Cities of Alcoa

and Maryville. All four communities are concerned about preserving water quality in areas undergoing rapid development, and are using the project as a resource to help them comply with upcoming NPDES

Stormwater Phase II requirements. Representatives from the pilot communities were trained by project staff to conduct NEMO educational presentations on natural resource-based planning and design. In addition, they were trained in water-protective site design principles developed by the national nonprofit *Center for Watershed Protection* (CWP), a NEMO Network partner. To date, 36 presentations have been made to over 500 local officials and other leaders. In addition, members of the development team have given presentations about the project at a dozen statewide conferences and meetings, reaching over 300 people in the water resource and land use planning disciplines.



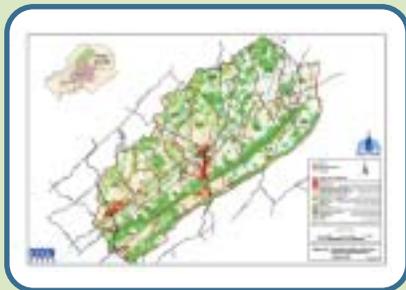
Stream restoration work. Photos courtesy of the Growth Readiness Project.



All four communities are using the Growth Readiness Project as a resource to help them comply with upcoming NPDES Stormwater Phase II requirements.

Accomplishments

The pilot communities are in the process of reviewing their existing land use regulations and practices, in light of NEMO natural resource-based planning principles and CWP community design principles. Project leaders expect that all four com-



The Growth Readiness Project helps land use officials envision future conditions. Shown are existing (top) and future (bottom) land use maps for the Beaver Creek Watershed in Knox County.

munities will make changes to their codes and ordinances in the coming year. In the meantime, the Tennessee Growth Readiness Project is gearing up to go statewide. The statewide program will offer both Leadership and Growth Readiness training classes to planning and public works officials, based on feedback from the pilot projects. Curriculum materials, presentations, brochures, maps and reference materials are almost completed for the training, and are all being put on a Growth Readiness Project CD.

The Future

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and the Tennessee MS4 Working Group have been presenting the Tennessee Growth Readiness Project as a tool that communities could use to help them comply with the Stormwater Phase II permitting program. With that kind of endorsement, the beginning of statewide training, and the positive ripple effect generated by the pilot successes, project partners expect NEMO in Tennessee to continue to expand.

Project Partners

Tennessee Valley Authority
University of Tennessee Water Resources Research Center
Tennessee Department of Agriculture Nonpoint Source Program
Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation
Blount County
City of Alcoa
City of Maryville
Knox County
Little River Watershed Association
Southeast Watershed Forum

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The Growth Readiness Project is a charter member of the National NEMO Network.