

NATIONAL WATER REUSE ACTION PLAN

COMPLETED ACTION



Action 3.3 Convene Experts to Address Opportunities and Challenges Related to Urban Stormwater Capture and Use

Background

Many states and cities are increasingly interested in pursuing stormwater capture and use (SCU) to supplement water supplies, SCU includes both the management of rainwater on individual parcels, and the management of precipitation that flows offsite to, or falls directly on, streets and in municipal stormwater collection systems. However, widespread adoption of SCU has been hampered by perceived institutional, logistical, regulatory, and financial constraints and concerns pertaining to ensuring adequate environmental flows. Until recently, there was not a comprehensive effort to assess barriers affecting implementation of SCU, and to prioritize actions to address perceived challenges. In September 2021, a convening was held at the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread with experts from across the country to identify the key activities needed to advance SCU nationwide.

Accomplishments/Impact

- A series of webinars were held with partners - the WaterReuse Association, the National Municipal Stormwater Alliance, the Water Environment Federation. The webinars covered the [drivers and impediments](#) of SCU, [treatment standards](#), and [estimating project benefits](#).
- An expert convening occurred at the Johnson Foundation at Wingspread with over 25 attendees from different parts of the country. Experts discussed the primary opportunities and projects needed to advance SCU nationwide. A report based on this convening was [published](#) in March 2021.
- An informal working group within EPA was formed to enhance collaboration and build institutional capacity for stormwater capture and use.
- In 2023, two infographics will be released to demonstrate how SCU can be integrated into the urban environment. The infographics build off the convening report and identify various co-benefits communities may consider when pursuing stormwater capture and use.

Action Team

Action Leaders

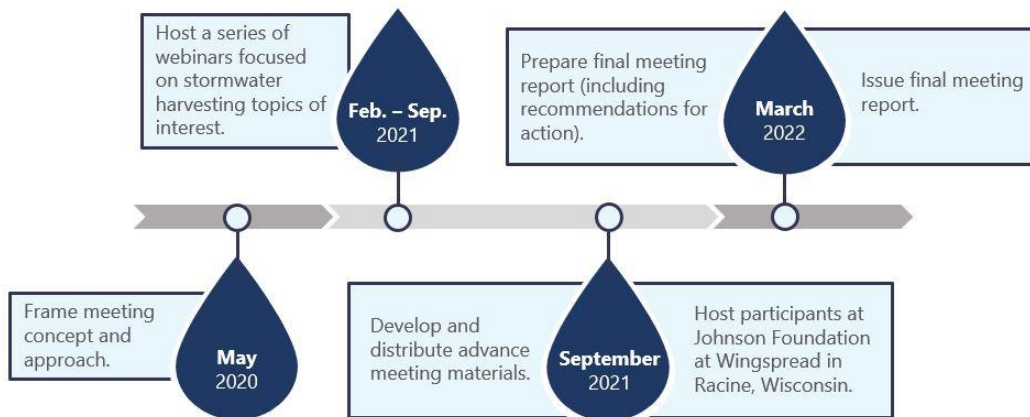
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Lessons Learned

During the implementation of this action and the through the expert convening, it was recognized that interest in and experience with SCU varies widely around the country. Additionally, different practitioners will need different types of support depending upon local water management circumstances. Most importantly, it was concluded that SCU and integrated stormwater management is a critical tool in the portfolio of options for promoting the design and management of resilient water systems in urban communities. As documented in the convening report, several key needs include:

- Advance the Nation’s Commitment to SCU to build federal, state, and local capacity
- Build Trust and Understanding Through Partnerships
- Expand Funding Mechanisms
- Clarify Regulations, Policy, and Guidance
- Advance Science and Treatment Standards
- Accelerate the Use of New Technologies and SCU Strategies

Action Implementation Process



Potential Future Activity

One of the top recommendations from the convening report was for EPA to establish an internal leadership caucus on SCU to spread awareness of outputs and initiatives on SCU. In response to this recommendation, the Office of Water (OW) has formed an informal working group with representatives from different OW program offices to meet regularly and share information, coordinate on initiatives that may impact SCU, and determine a path forward to address additional needs. Two infographics are currently being developed by this working group and discussions are ongoing about future products including a potential “Beginner’s Guide” to help stormwater managers get started with SCU.

Additional Resources

- The summary report from the expert convening can be found [here](#).
- The webinar series can be found in the outputs tab on the WRAP Online Platform [here](#).
- EPA’s resources on green infrastructure from stormwater management can be found [here](#).