



Agricultural Conservation

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Housed at the National Hub

Watershed Applications of the Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework – Training Guide

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Introduction

Background

The Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training workshop was developed, delivered, and refined between 2019 and 2023. USEPA and the USDA NRCS funded the development of the curriculum. Development and delivery was led by the University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension, the North Central Region Water Network, the Conservation Professional Training Program, and the University of Minnesota Water Resources Center. The instructional team developed this document to help future trainers interested in hosting a Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training workshop or incorporating components of this training into other educational events.

Purpose of Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training

The Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework (ACPF) is an add-on to ArcGIS that helps watershed practitioners analyze the landscape to identify which conservation practices are appropriate and where to site them. Effective use of the ACPF requires collaboration between GIS technicians who run the toolbox and field technicians who understand the landscape and can interpret and present the outputs generated by the GIS toolbox. Technical training for the GIS specialists is a separate training that is not addressed in this document. **Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training will prepare conservation planners and field specialists (and interested GIS specialists) to interpret, validate, refine, analyze, and share the ACPF results.** The training does not teach participants how to run the ACPF toolbox in ArcGIS.

How to use this guide

This document is a guide for planning and implementing the Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training workshop. Steps include:

- 1) Build a planning team and connect with the ACPF National Hub (see Resources).
- 2) Define your specific audience (see Target Audience) and desired learning outcomes (see Objectives).
- 3) Develop the training event, including selecting a delivery format (see Instructional Approaches), identifying instructors, and refining the content (see Modules and Agenda).
- 4) Schedule timing and begin promotion.
- 5) Evaluate the training, summarize lessons learned, and plan for future trainings (see Tips and Lessons Learned, and Evaluation)

Resources

ACPF4Watersheds.org has many resources including:

- [ACPF Technical Training](#) to help GIS technicians use the ACPF toolbox.
- [Information on working with the ACPF National Hub](#)
- The [Resource Library](#) includes academic articles, PDFs for training and outreach, videos, and more.

Target Audiences

Who should take the Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training?

The Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training is designed for NRCS staff, state agency staff, extension professionals, watershed practitioners, county conservation staff, and private consultants who are interested in learning more about using the ACPF to improve their small (HUC-12) watershed-based planning and implementation projects. No GIS or prior ACPF experience is needed. Learners will not run the ACPF toolbox in this workshop. GIS specialists who want to learn how to use the ACPF toolbox in ArcGIS should instead attend the [ACPF Technical Training](#).

When promoting the training, be very clear that the training is not for people who expect to learn how to run the ACPF in ArcGIS. In the past, we frequently had frustrated participants because they arrived with that expectation.

Learner scenarios

The following are examples of people who might attend this training and their motivations. Note that none of these are day-to-day GIS users or GIS experts. Participants of this training will rely on others with that expertise to run the model and create ACPF results.

State and federal agency staff at the regional or state level are considering whether to add ACPF to planning and implementation guidance or processes. They need to understand (a) what the ACPF can and cannot do, (b) how that fits with other water resource tools, requirements, and funding, (c) which staff members might use the ACPF outputs and how, and (d) what resources, time, expertise, and actions are needed to effectively utilize the ACPF.

Decisions participants need to make:

- Is the ACPF something we should support at a state level?
- If so, what is our strategy for implementing it?
- If so, how can we strategically share data, approaches, and lessons learned within the state?

Local watershed practitioners are considering whether to incorporate ACPF analyses into their planning and implementation activities. They may be in the public or private sector, and they may conduct the analyses in-house or contract with external partners. This group of learners *includes government employees and the private consultants working with them*. Like the agency staff, they need to understand what the ACPF can do, how it fits with other tools, and what resources they need to use it. Additionally, they need to understand how to work with the GIS technician to get valuable results and link them to other planning tools and activities.

Decisions they need to make:

- Will ACPF address the water resource issues in our watershed?
- Can we run the ACPF in-house?
- If we hire someone else to run the ACPF, what do we need to know about running and validating the data?

Local conservationists, including NRCS field staff and local watershed and conservation district staff, work at a watershed-scale or farm-scale to implement conservation practices. These individuals want to use existing ACPF results in their conservation implementation process. Compared to the previous two groups, conservationists

need less time to learn how ACPF results are generated, but they need to know enough to access and effectively use the ACPF results.

Decisions they need to make:

- Do I need ACPF results for working with a particular landowner?
- If so, how do I get the information and integrate it with the other information I am using?

Parts of the workshop described in this training guide are more detailed than what this audience needs. A workshop for this audience would focus on acquiring and using ACPF results in the context of conservation planning with individual landowners. Thus, local ACPF results should already be available before training this audience.

Objectives

Course objectives

The Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training will result in participants recognizing the value of and appropriate uses of the ACPF for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of conservation, including understanding the implications of a watershed-wide perspective to land conservation work. Participants will be introduced to how ACPF analysis and outputs can be utilized as part of their farm-scale and watershed-scale planning and implementation processes. Participants will gain a basic understanding of the technical concepts and assumptions behind ACPF outputs and know when and where to find this technical information, as needed. Finally, participants will prepare to engage staff and stakeholders in developing, sharing, and interpreting ACPF outputs as part of watershed planning and implementation.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this training, learners will be able to:

1. Describe appropriate situations where the ACPF can be used to improve conservation effectiveness and efficiency.
2. Plan for the use of ACPF analysis and outputs as part of their farm-scale and watershed-scale planning.
3. Compare the function and use of the ACPF to other tools and processes used in their state.
4. Describe how the ACPF may be useful within their specific state.
5. Recognize misleading results and the importance of validating results.
6. Explain some of the considerations for designing maps and other outputs so they (a) meet the needs of various audiences and (b) engage partners in learning and decision-making.
7. Assess an organization's readiness to use the ACPF.
8. List technical and organizational requirements for using the ACPF.

Audience-specific learning outcomes

If your training audience does not include all these target audiences, this table will help you determine how to customize the training.

Module	State and federal agencies	Local watershed practitioners	Local conservationists
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect with people in other agencies and sectors who can partner to build ACPF capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect with other local planners doing similar work. 	NA
ACPF Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how ACPF can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of conservation work and prioritize limited resources statewide. Understand what functions ACPF can and cannot serve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how ACPF can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of conservation and prioritize limited resources statewide. Understand what functions ACPF can and cannot serve. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand what functions ACPF can and cannot serve.
ACPF Overview: The Watershed Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how a watershed vs. farm-based perspective impacts conservation planning and implementation. Understand that the ACPF is only applicable in situations where a watershed perspective is supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how a watershed vs. farm-based perspective impacts conservation planning and implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how a watershed vs. farm-based perspective impacts conservation planning and implementation. Recognize how both perspectives can be used with individual landowners.
The Technical Basis of ACPF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand details and assumptions behind individual tools well enough to integrate with other planning and implementation tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand details and assumptions behind individual tools well enough to explain them to a non-tech audience (e.g., farmers and board members). Understand the details well enough to work with a GIS specialist to adjust input parameters and design outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand details and assumptions behind individual tools well enough to interpret results correctly.
Case Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain several different ways that the ACPF can be used to support conservation and stakeholder engagement. Understand challenges and opportunities enough to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain several different ways that the ACPF can be used to support conservation and stakeholder engagement. Understand challenges and opportunities enough to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the range of use case examples, especially for farm-scale work.

	determine the role ACPF can play in your own state.	determine the role ACPF can play in your own area.	
Presenting ACPF Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the ACPF tools produce data that can be shared as tables or maps. • Understand how design can be adjusted depending on how the results will be used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that the ACPF tools produce data that can be shared as tables or maps. • Understand how design can be adjusted depending on how the results will be used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand when it is appropriate to share ACPF results with landowners, and how to talk about the tables or maps.
State-specific Overview of the Watershed Approach and ACPF Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how ACPF relates to other conservation planning tools and processes in your state. • Know what resources (tech support, GIS capacity, data inputs, and funding) are available to run ACPF and communicate the results in your state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how ACPF relates to other conservation planning tools and processes in your state. • Know what resources (tech support, GIS capacity, data inputs, and funding) are available to run ACPF and communicate the results in your area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how ACPF relates to other conservation planning tools and processes used in your organization. • Learn where to get ACPF results and user support.
National Update on the HUB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be motivated to coordinate with other states and provide feedback to Hub about state needs and activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be motivated to use the hub to share ACPF results across the state and region without personally identifiable information (PII). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that data shared will not put landowner personally identifiable information (PII) at risk
Develop a Work Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the technical and organizational requirements for using the ACPF and assess your state's readiness to use the ACPF. • Identify steps, resources, and partnerships needed to build capacity and support in your region/state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the technical and organizational requirements for using the ACPF and assess your organization's readiness to use the ACPF. • Identify steps, resources, and partnerships needed for using the ACPF in your organization based on the case examples and your watershed's unique situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA

Instructional Approaches

Using adult learning principles

The workshop design presented here incorporates several adult learning principles based on Malcolm Knowles.

- Adult learners prefer learning that is relevant to their personal or work needs. The instructional team encourages educators to gather input about the target audience and tailor the information to their specific needs. Questions to ask include:
 - Will the target audience have any experience with ArcGIS?
 - If yes, then consider including a few technical details about the toolkit or reminding participants of other training options focused on how to use the toolkit.
 - Will the target audience include decision-makers who need to evaluate the usefulness of ACPF for their contexts?
 - If yes, then consider spending time working through the readiness tool.
 - What are some of the common conservation practices already being successfully implemented in the watershed or area of interest?
 - Using specific examples familiar to participants helps them see how the tool can be used.
- Adult learners prefer experiential and problem-centered learning. The instructional team encourages trainers to minimize presentations and to create opportunities for participants to discuss with each other. Questions to ask yourself include:
 - How can we allow participants to practice some high-level decisions about using ACPF results?
 - How can we help participants consider whether the ACPF suits their needs?
 - Can we market this training to groups that would benefit from participating in the training together?
 - Could this training provide groups with the opportunity to learn about each other's work?

Choosing the workshop format

This workshop has been designed to consider the needs of the target audience and how to use technology in the best ways to meet those needs.

Synchronous delivery is learning intended for a group to move through the content together in real-time, virtually, or in person. Asynchronous delivery happens at the convenience of the learner. Hybrid delivery combines elements of both methods. The “flipped classroom” is one type of hybrid delivery that expects the learner to work individually outside of the group activities scheduled for a specific time. All three delivery methods can be done virtually or in-person.

Questions to ask include:

- What are the goals of the session? If connecting people doing watershed work is a goal, consider how technology can be used to support this goal. If a goal is discovering different uses for ACPF, consider presentations or panel discussions of case studies.
- Would participants have deeper discussions or reflections if asked to view or read material before the training? If so, then consider a “flipped classroom” format.

Make the workshop accessible to everyone

Take steps to accommodate the needs of everyone who wants to participate. If you plan to share materials with participants, be sure to use the accessibility checkers built into Microsoft PowerPoint, Word, and Adobe Acrobat. If you're not sure how to do this, use the application search feature to search for "accessibility checker" or go to the online support documentation for the application and search for "accessibility checker".

Other suggestions for improving your materials for everyone's benefit include:

- Use unique and meaningful headers.
- Choose to put less information on a slide rather than fill up the space with several images and bullet points.
- During a webinar, read out loud all chat comments and questions so that they will be captioned and included in the transcript. Turn on live captioning if available.
- Review all video captions and make sure to provide fully edited captions of all recordings. Auto-generated captions frequently have editorial problems and could cause confusion.

Additional recommendations for making training accessible can be found at [Section508.gov/create](https://www.section508.gov/create).

Module Details

See the table at the end for links to the activities and resources.

Networking

Networking is not a separate module but is an important theme throughout the agenda. The Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training workshop is an opportunity to strengthen the community working on watershed planning and implementation.

While the core ACPF technology relies on data layers and GIS tools to locate potential opportunities for conservation practices on the landscape, successful use of ACPF results for conservation planning relies heavily on the communication and involvement of many different interests within a particular region. It is important to develop, promote, and engage in networking opportunities with these groups to promote an effective strategy for using ACPF across your state to achieve specific conservation goals. Be aware of how individual interest in ACPF differs between the different sectors of government and private sector because they play different roles in watershed and conservation planning and implementation. Each group may have a unique perspective that others will benefit from. The workshop organizers are responsible for conveying the aspects of ACPF most relevant to each group to maximize its successful use in the conservation planning process.

To promote the Watershed Applications of the ACPT Training workshop, an effort should be made to engage local and regional stakeholders frequently to build an understanding of the technology, the theory behind its use, and the support available in your state. Different types of training workshops will naturally have different focuses and participant groups for which the messaging around the use of ACPF should be specifically tailored. Some of the groups that should be considered are:

- Members of state and federal agencies
- Local watershed practitioners
- Local conservationists
- Landowners
- Environmental consultants who work on watershed plans

- University researchers and educators

Workshop organizers should attempt to promote networking opportunities with the idea of connecting individuals from different regions or sectors to facilitate the sharing of ideas, regional best practices, collaboration opportunities, research, and more.

Activities and resources

- Introductions: if the group is small, allow time for everyone to introduce themselves. For larger groups, send them a questionnaire to introduce themselves and share the results with everyone.
- Consider supplemental sessions before or after a workshop or small-group discussions during the workshop to focus on the needs specific to a state, region, or sector.

ACPF overview

The purpose of the overview is to provide the big picture of what the ACPF is and how it is useful in watershed-based conservation planning and implementation. Some audiences who are very new to the ACPF will appreciate seeing the overview presentation a couple of months ahead of a full workshop so potential participants can decide whether to invest time in the workshop.

The watershed perspective

Some audiences may need an explanation of “watershed-based conservation” in contrast to farm-based planning. General information about watershed planning may be incorporated into the overview (see the “Recap” slide set). Also, the presentations about state-specific resources may include a discussion of watershed planning at the state level.

Activities and resources

- Recording and slide set of Matt Romanko’s fall 2022 presentation. We recommend asking participants to watch this before the first session.
- A slide set of a recap of the overview presented live during the first session that highlights and reiterates key messages.

The technical basis of ACPF

This portion of the content can be challenging. Learners and instructors both need to have realistic expectations about what skills participants can acquire during one workshop. Learners need to know what inputs and assumptions are behind each of the tools in the ACPF to (a) communicate with GIS technicians, (b) integrate ACPF with other planning information, and (c) interpret and explain results to non-technical partners. However, this level of detail about the tools is far too much to absorb in a short time in a workshop setting. Learners are more able to absorb information in the context in which it will be used.

The approach we recommend is to give a detailed presentation about just a few tools, and then provide an opportunity to practice using the user guide to find information. During the presentation, learners will see the structure of the ACPF. Some key concepts are:

- Each tool is based on NRCS standards.
- Each tool uses input files and generates specific outputs.
- Outputs from earlier tools are often inputs to later tools.

- With guidance from a field technician, the GIS technician can adjust a few parameters in each tool to ensure the results are appropriate for the local landscape.
- Hydro-conditioning is an essential and potentially time-consuming step.

During the practice, learners will experience how to find information when they need it and will identify what questions to ask.

Activities and resources

- [Slide set from spring 2023](#).
- [Practice questions](#). By working through these questions, participants will be asked to search the User Guide for answers and will be exposed to key features of some tools. Instructors may work through the questions with the whole group or ask small groups to work through questions independently before discussing them as a large group. Individuals could also work on the questions independently between sessions.
- [ACPF User guide for non-technical users](#). This has full information about each tool without the ArcGIS detail.
- [Recording of Matt Romanko \(90 minutes\)](#) from fall 2022 and associated slide set. This is an excellent and comprehensive description of the ACPF toolbox. We do not recommend using this in its entirety, but instructors may use sections to prepare an abbreviated presentation. Note that this presentation uses an earlier version of the ACPF, and parts may be out-of-date.

Case examples

Learners always respond positively to discussions of actual uses of ACPF results. It helps them visualize how it fits into real-life conservation work, the challenges to be aware of, and the unique benefits.

Our most effective approach for presenting case examples was asking participants to view video recordings and/or read the case studies ahead of time. During the workshop, instructors led a discussion with a panel of experienced users talking about the case studies and their own experiences. The panelists appreciated this format because it required minimal preparation. During the spring 2023 session, most participants watched at least one of the cases ahead of time.

Activities and resources

- Videos and written case examples: <https://acpf4watersheds.org/training/#casestudies>
- Discussion questions for the panelists.

Presenting ACPF results

Considerations for presenting results

The first part of this lesson explores different ways of using the ACPF, depending on the audience, the partners involved, and the purpose of using ACPF in watershed planning and implementation. This is a chance to link ACPF to other processes, especially the NRCS 9-Step Conservation Planning process and EPA 9-Key Element Plans.

The presentation slides refer to the Community Capacity questionnaire that participants should be asked to browse before coming to the session. This worksheet helps users assess their social and organizational readiness to use watershed planning and the ACPF. Instructors may choose how much emphasis to put on this worksheet and on watershed planning generally.

Key messages

- Interests and roles of various stakeholders can differ, and the messaging needs to match.
- The ACPF provides an opportunity to build relationships as you work together to pull together resources to run the ACPF, conduct field validation, and integrate it with other information.

Map design and formatting

The second part of this lesson focuses on cartography and how you choose cartographic elements based on the audience considerations discussed in Part 1. Carefully choosing how to display ACPF results on a map significantly impacts how viewers interpret and understand the information.

Activities and resources

- PPT slides Presenting ACPF Results Pt1: considerations for presenting results
- PPT slides Presenting ACPF Results Pt2: map design
- Community Capacity questionnaire
- Practice sheet to use in small groups to practice critiquing maps of ACPF results.
- ACPF and the NRCS 9-Step Conservation Planning Process
- ACPF and EPA 9-Key Element Watershed Planning

State-specific and national resources

Each state has a very different set of institutions and guidance for watershed planning, funding, and technical support. The ACPF Overview module provided a big picture of how ACPF is used in watershed planning and implementation, but it is important to provide state-specific details, so users understand how to link ACPF work to existing rules, resources, tools, and guidance.

Activities and resources

- Examples of state-specific presentations
- Contact the ACPF National Hub to recruit someone to present on the support and resources available from the Hub.
- Working with the ACPF National Hub Factsheet
- Using ACPF in Wisconsin factsheet as an example of how the ACPF fits into the state context in Wisconsin

Develop a work plan

One objective of this workshop is for participants to start thinking concretely about how they will use ACPF. This means figuring out their purpose, where they can access GIS expertise, and other logistics. We have tried providing time for people to work in small groups to each develop their individual ACPF plans, but this has not worked well. Generally, there is too much variation in where people are starting from in the process of adopting ACPF. It may work better with a more homogenous group. Alternatively, hosts might lead a discussion of next steps for advancing ACPF in your state.

Activities and resources

- A slide summarizing ACPF requirements is part of “Presenting ACPF Results Pt1”.
- State and national resources from the previous module.
- The Community Capacity questionnaire can be used here or with the “Presenting ACPF Results” module.

Planning the Format and Agenda

Table of topics and resources

The table below summarizes the workshop topics to help you choose a mix of asynchronous (individual/self-paced) and synchronous (live/interactive) activities to address each.

Walking through the organization of the table, moving from left to right, each row represents a topic of the training. The second and third columns (“Recordings” and “Other resources”) suggest resources that are available. The fifth and sixth columns suggest asynchronous activities to engage the learners and the recommended amount of time for the activity. The final two columns suggest synchronous activities.

Any one Watershed Applications of the ACPF Training workshop would not use all the resources or do all the activities in the matrix. Trainers can mix and match these methods to customize each training delivery for the target audience. Different content is suited to each of these delivery modes (asynchronous vs. synchronous).

Topic	Recordings	Other resources	Asynchronous activities	min	Synchronous activities	min
Networking			Participants complete Intro questionnaire . Share results.	10	If training is multi-state, arrange for state-based sessions before or during the training	30
Overview of ACPF	Overview by Matt Romanko (20 min, fall 2022)	Slide set for recorded overview. Slide set for recap.	Watch recording before the session	20	Present a recap of the overview.	20
Technical content	By Matt Romanko (90 min, fall 2022)	A user-guide for non-technical people created from the PPT slides	Reflection questions or other engagement exercises *	60	Present a short version of the tech presentation, highlighting one or two tools** Q&A	60

Case studies	Individual case study presentations : Magner (IN), Kuehner (MN), Gesch (IA), Cleary (WLEB)	Written case studies (Polk County, others) available on the ACPF Hub website	Watch or read a selection of cases	40	Panel of case study presenters to discuss implementation. Discussion guide	30
Presenting ACPF results		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Capacity questionnaire • ACPF and Consv Planning • ACPF and Area Planning • ACPF and EPA Plans 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present considerations for displaying ACPF outputs (slide set) • Present scenarios and ask learners to make design decisions. • Help learners develop their own use plan. 	60
State and national information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACPF in WI watershed planning • ACPF National Hub Factsheet (pdf) • ACPF National Hub web page 	Complete the Community Capacity questionnaire Provide a question guide to help learners identify ACPF resources and planning/implementation tools in their state.	30	Presentations about activities and resources in selected states. Presentation from the National Hub	40
Planning to use ACPF		Slide of ACPF requirements . Community Capacity questionnaire			Presentations of state and national resources.	

* In lieu of presenting technical details for all the tools, provide exercises and reflection questions that help learners practice accessing resources to get the technical details they need. Learners could do some of this work alone, and some could be done in class. E.g. in a webinar, in the chat, ask people to vote for what tool they'd like to learn next. Then, name breakout rooms for the 3 or 4 most popular tools. Learners choose their breakout room. In the breakout, the groups use the resources to answer questions about their tool.

** When preparing the abbreviated presentation, choose tools important to the audience. One of the examples should be a tool that (a) pulls in soil layers (because the audience generally understands the relevance of soil) and (b) builds on previous tool outputs (to demonstrate how the toolbox is linked together).

Sample Agenda – Three online sessions

This is a facilitator’s agenda for three two-hour web meetings that we presented in March 2023.

Pre-Session activities (30 min)

1. Download the ACPF User Guide (pdf file)
2. Introduce yourself to the group by completing this form. Then browse this list of participants to learn who is participating.
3. Watch this 20 min Overview of ACPF. We will assume you have watched this introduction before the first session.

Time	Topics and Speakers	Support
Session 1		<u>Monitor chat:</u> <i>[indicate who is responsible]</i>
10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce training. [Session Intros] • Housekeeping • Q&A • Recordings • Review key messages from pre-session videos. • Introduce participants by pointing to the survey results and summarizing who is present. 	Add these to the chat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants materials are at: . . . • Spreadsheet with list of participants: • Fill out this form to add your name to the spreadsheet of participants
10:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running the ACPF: What a non-GIS technician needs to know 	Convert slides to PDF and post into participant folder
11:00	Small group work session Introduce toolkit practice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We’ll give you 40-45 minutes for this session • The worksheet will raise important issues with additional tools • In your handouts folder, open the “Session 1: ACPF Toolkit Practice” • Work through the questions; you can skip #6 • Use the “User Guide for Field Staff” • Select a breakout group based on your state so you can meet people in your area. When you speak, introduce yourself 	Create state-based break-out groups so participants can self-organize. Be prepared to re-organize participants to keep group sizes uniform. Give facilitators co-hosting rights to share screen before sending into breakout rooms. Share Practice worksheet: Share User Guide for Field Staff:
11:45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q&A of technical topics 	
11:55	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing and preview of next session • Listen to some of the case studies 	Session feedback form: (to collect questions to answer next time) Watch/read some case studies:

Session 2: Case Studies		
10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review a few key takeaways from the last session Poll audience about their comfort with last sessions content Answer any questions submitted through the feedback form Invite further questions about last sessions content 	Polls: I understand what information I can get from ACPF results. Yes, somewhat, not really Which ACPF output are you most interested in? (respond in chat)
10:15	Panel discussion: What does ACPF look like in the real world? Joe Magner – Beargrass Creek, Indiana Kevin Kuehner – Root River, Minnesota Karl Gesch – Iowa Watershed Initiative, and WI watershed planning Sarah Kussow – Outagamie county	Discussion questions
11:55	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before next time, fill out the watershed readiness assessment 	Provide your feedback and questions:
Session 3		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome, and answer any questions 	View feedback questions and answers:
10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerations for presenting ACPF results [Presenting ACPF Results Pt1] Map design and formatting [Presenting ACPF Results Pt2] Review of resources needed to run ACPF 	Polls: Do you use the NRCS or EPA planning approaches? I use the NRCS Conservation Planning Framework I use the EPA 9-element planning approach I use both I use neither
10:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group critique of ACPF results [Presenting ACPF Discussion] 	Send people to breakout rooms. Have people select their group Discussion guide
11:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full group debrief of ACPF results discussions 	Thinking about the case studies and the map examples, how do you see your organization using ACPF results? What kind of maps do you need? What are your barriers? Additional, non-ACPF info, especially existing practices. Which tools seem most useful to you? Which partners are you thinking of working with to use the ACPF?
11:10	State Specific Resources - Iowa	

11:20	State Specific Resources - Minnesota	
11:30	State Specific Resources - Wisconsin	
11:40	National Resources	
11:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send off: questions for state discussion • Closing comments, questions • Look for an evaluation 	[In the chat, write a single word or phrase describing what you are feeling at the end of this workshop.]

Sample agenda – Three-hour in-person workshop

30-40 min	<p>Introduction to the workshop – ACPF in Watershed Planning and implementation</p> <p>Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Name, affiliation, state - One fun part of your job <p>Overview of ACPF in WS planning</p>
40 min	<p>Running the ACPF: What a non-GIS technician needs to know</p> <p>Tech info</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain hydromodification plus 1 or 2 tools. Demonstrate that ACPF tools are based in hydrology, practice standards, and field verification • Optional: Use a few questions from the practice sheet as a discussion guide. Highlight common pitfalls and strengths
35 min	<p>Incorporating the ACPF into your watershed planning toolbelt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readiness and requirements • Intro to the settings where ACPF is appropriate • Considerations for presenting ACPF results to fit your goals and the watershed planning process • Communicating mapped results to key stakeholders and landowners
40 min	<p>ACPF in action: Examples of different uses of ACPF</p> <p>Pre-work: Ask participants to watch/read case studies before the workshop</p> <p>Lead discussion of a panel of experienced ACPF users*</p>
20 min	<p>Resources for training and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What local data resources are needed to use the ACPF. • What support and resources are available at the national ACPF hub? • Activities in a couple of different states • State discussions – if there are several states with a lot of participants, then break into state-based discussion groups. Otherwise, spend more time talking in the larger group and move to the closing sooner
10 min	<p>How might you use the ACPF?</p> <p>and what do you need to move forward with ACPF?</p> <p>What challenges do you envision?</p> <p>(This is self-reflection to help participants integrate the information.)</p> <p>Repeat introductions so people can decide who to meet with.</p>

*The purpose of the panel is to **highlight how organizations use ACPF in different ways**: at different stages in watershed planning/implementation, using different map products, presenting results to different stakeholders, in combination with different planning tools, etc. Try to give specific and local examples as much as possible, but statewide uses will also be of interest.

1. Participants have had a chance to watch your presentations. But as a reminder, or for people who didn't watch it, give us a quick *verbal* overview:
 - a. Name the watershed(s).
 - b. Describe the resulting maps and who used them. (scale, format (electronic or print size), ACPF results used, other information included)
2. What was your purpose for adding ACPF to your work? What did ACPF contribute to that other tools don't do as well?
3. What was the most valuable information you got from the ACPF?
4. What type of non-ACPF information was particularly important to link to the ACPF results?
5. What were your challenges or barriers to using the ACPF? What pitfalls should people look out for?
6. Talk about logistics: How did you pay for running the ACPF? Where did you find the specialists to do the work? How much time did it take to run the ACPF and create the results?
7. Was data privacy an issue? If so, how? If not, why not?

Tips and Lessons Learned

Based on evaluations and our experience, here are a few suggestions for creating a successful workshop or other learning opportunity.

- Besides building skills, we always need to **raise awareness**. People don't know if they want to commit to learning the ACPF. It worked well when we presented a short preview webinar a couple of months prior to the workshop. Consider providing a short overview session or webinar scheduled early enough to let participants decide whether to participate in the full training.
- **Repeatedly explain that this is not ArcGIS training**. ACPF is different than other tools that conservationists learn to use, so people do not have an intuitive sense about what they will be learning. Inevitably, some will expect to walk away from the workshop able to run the toolbox in ArcGIS. Be sure the learning outcomes are clear in the course description and confirm them after people register. Consider asking questions during registration about their GIS experience and their expectations.
- The Toolbox Practice Worksheet and the Community Capacity Assessment are both valuable learning tools, but they didn't fit into the half-day workshop.
- **Know your audience**. Managers who are making decisions about whether to support ACPF use in their state or organization have different learning interests than local conservationists who will apply the workshop to their local planning and implementation.

Evaluation Questions

Evaluation surveys are valuable for learning what further support participants need and for improving future workshops. Below are examples of survey questions asked immediately at the end of a workshop and six months later.

Immediate feedback

1. Overall, how effective was this training at teaching you about using the ACPF outputs?
[present a 5-point scale from “not at all effective” to “extremely effective”]
2. For the material covered, how was the overall length of the training?
 - a. It was too short
 - b. It was about the right length
 - c. It was too long
3. Depending on the response, ask:
 - Which parts of the training were *too long*, or did instructors spend too much time on?
 - Which parts of the training were *too short* or were covered too quickly?
4. Which of these case studies did you have time to review prior to the Wednesday case study discussion?
Select all that apply.
 - a. Beargrass Creek, Indiana (Joe Magner)
 - b. Iowa Watershed Approach and WI Watershed Planning (Karl Gesch)
 - c. Lower Fox River Basin, Wisconsin – Outagamie County (Sarah Kussow)
 - d. Root River, Minnesota (Kevin Kuehner)
 - e. I did not review any of them.
5. Did you find the case studies relevant to your work?
[present a 5-point scale from “not at all relevant” to “extremely relevant”, plus “N/A”]
6. Please select your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements regarding the training. [for each statement, present a 5-point scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”]
 - The content of this training was at the right level of detail for me.
 - The delivery of the content was at the right pace for me.
 - The training provided information I will use in my job.
 - The training was important for my professional development.
 - After this training, I understand the differences between ACPF and other conservation planning tools (such as SWAT models, P indices, etc.).
7. Briefly describe your most significant learning from this training.
8. How confident are you in using the Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework (ACPF) outputs in your work BEFORE and AFTER the training? [provide the following rating scale for before and for after]
 - a. Not confident (I need to know more before using the outputs.)
 - b. Slightly confident (I could do it, but prefer to see how someone else uses the outputs first.)
 - c. Moderately confident (I could do it and learn the rest through experience or by asking questions.)
 - d. Very confident (I've got this down.)
9. Are you aware of other people using ACPF in your state? [Yes/No]
10. Have you communicated with them about ACPF? [Yes/No]
11. Do you or any other ACPF users participate in an ACPF user group? [Yes; No; I do not know; I do not know, but I think it would be useful]

Next Steps

Please answer the following questions to help us understand how you may or may not use ACPF moving forward, the topics you want to learn more about, and any barriers you face.

12. How likely are you to use each of the following over the next year? [Provide a 4-point scale from “not at all likely” to “very likely”]
 - ACPF outputs
 - ACPF User Manual
 - Video tutorials about the ACPF
 - ACPF website
13. What are the biggest barriers to using the ACPF in your work? (Please check all that apply)
 - Cost / financial resources
 - Lack of GIS expertise
 - Lack of watershed planning expertise
 - Lack of training opportunities
 - Lack of training materials
 - Lack of data for my state or watershed
 - We are not ready to do watershed-based planning
 - It's not relevant to my work / I don't see how ACPF fits with my work
 - Lack of time
 - Other (Please specify) _____
 - None of these
14. In what kind of planning or outreach do you think you will use the ACPF?
15. How likely are you to share ACPF outputs with others? [Provide a 4-point scale from “not at all likely” to “very likely”, plus “Not applicable”]
16. About how many people do you expect to share ACPF outputs with over the next year?
17. Which of the following would be most helpful in supporting your use of the ACPF? (Please check all that apply)
 - Additional in-person trainings /workshops
 - Additional resources on the ACPF website (Please specify) _____
 - Additional online/remote trainings
 - One-on-one consultation with ACPF experts
 - None of the above
 - Other (please specify) _____
18. Is there anything specific you would like to learn at future ACPF training or other resources?
 - Yes (Please specify) _____
 - No

Participant Information – add questions to meet your needs such as where they work, what type of watershed work they do at what scale, or what state they work in.

Six-month follow-up

The following questions were sent to participants six months after the workshop to learn how they were using what they learned.

1. In the past 6 months, did you use the ACPF tools more often, less often, or the same as before the training?
 - More often
 - Less often
 - Same
2. In the past 6 months, how many watersheds (HUC12) have you used the ACPF tools on?
3. Are you more confident in using the ACPF outputs than before attending the training? [Yes/No]
4. In the past 6 months, how often did you use each of the following? [for each item, provide these options: Not at all, 1-3 times, 4-8 times, More than 8 times, N/A]
 - ACPF outputs
 - ACPF User Manual
 - Video tutorials about the ACPF
 - ACPF website
5. What kind of planning or outreach did you use ACPF on in the past 6 months?
6. Did you encounter any barriers in using ACPF in your planning or outreach? [Yes/No]
 - a. If yes, what barriers did you encounter?
7. Did you do the following in the past 6 months? [Yes/No/NA]
 - Share/discuss ACPF output with other partners in a watershed.
 - Share/discuss ACPF output with producers/landowners in a watershed.
 - Meet (in person or virtually) with other ACPF users.
8. Looking forward, how many watersheds do you plan to use ACPF in the next 6 months?
9. Would you recommend this training to colleagues who work in another watershed?
 - Yes
 - No, please explain: _____
10. [Add questions about participant attributes such as type of organization they work for and state.]

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