

MICHIGAN AND WISCONSIN STREAM RESTORATION:
AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING
PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An Abstract of

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of Geography

Western Illinois University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Gust M. Annis

April 6, 1998

Map
QH
76
.5
.M5
A55
1998

2.2

Abstract

Human activities have degraded many Michigan and Wisconsin streams and watersheds. Because of combined citizen and government concern over the deteriorating condition of these streams, numerous restoration projects have been undertaken to try to restore stream environments to a more natural state. These restoration projects, however, have had varying levels of success and studies on stream restoration projects in the United States have suggested that many projects do not use appropriate monitoring and evaluation strategies.

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which project monitoring and evaluation is taking place on stream, river, and watershed restoration projects in Michigan and Wisconsin and to determine what factors affect the implementation of the project evaluation process.

A questionnaire designed to identify whether monitoring was taking place on each project in the study area and to distinguish which factors contribute to or restrict the implementation of project evaluation was administered to stream restoration project coordinators. Seventy-one projects returned surveys for a response rate of eighty percent.

The results indicate that most projects conducted some form of evaluation, but only fifty-one percent conducted formal project evaluation. Project success rates varied, although fifty-six percent of the respondents reported that they have experienced significant progress toward reaching their project goals.

The primary problems associated with monitoring and evaluation involved lack of funds and time. Respondents indicated that a lack of personnel or personnel with an insufficient knowledge about monitoring and evaluative procedures were sometimes

problems as well. Forty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that they would do something differently if they were to redo their monitoring and evaluation program. These responses varied, but generally centered around funding and data collection methods.

Although the primary intent of this research was not to compare the two states in the study, several differences between the states were observed. Regarding project evaluation, Michigan tended to report higher frequencies of problems relating to personnel, coordinating efforts between agencies, technique inconsistency, and funds than Wisconsin. Projects in the state of Wisconsin generally reported fewer difficulties regarding the conduction of formal project evaluation.