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Type	Poster or oral presentation
Category	Innovative Watershed and Stream Restoration Approaches/Methods
Title	<i>Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) to Prioritize Watershed Improvement Projects: Indian and Howard's Creeks Local Watershed Plan Case Study</i>
Abstract	<p>A common challenge for watershed planners is prioritizing watershed improvement projects with consideration of the disparate purposes of providing ecological improvement, meeting programmatic needs, and complying with stakeholder concerns. To meet this challenge, ENTRIX has developed a project-ranking tool using multi-criteria decision analysis (MCDA). MCDA is a quantitative, systematic, and transparent process that identifies the values and costs of alternative management options using stakeholder goals and objectives. ENTRIX applied this process to the Indian and Howard's Creek local watershed plan in the Catawba River basin in North Carolina.</p> <p>The project-ranking process began with a stakeholder "framing session" to identify criteria for selecting stream, wetland, and BMP projects and to reach a consensus on the importance of each. These criteria included need for restoration or preservation, pollutant load reduction benefits, programmatic considerations, and stakeholder interests. A spreadsheet-based statistical model estimated the project rankings based on stakeholder-approved criteria and weights. The model output consisted of a prioritized list of projects that should be pursued to best meet the needs of the mitigation program and stakeholder goals. MCDA provided a straightforward and defensible approach to help the NC EEP maximize the value of the mitigation funds.</p>