

# science in ACTION

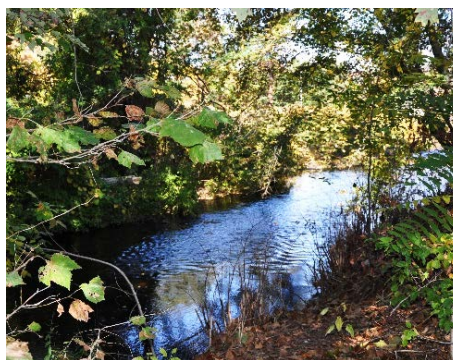
INNOVATIVE RESEARCH FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

## The Rapid Benefit Indicators Approach: A Process for Assessing the Social Benefits of Ecological Restoration

**The Rapid Benefit Indicators (RBI) Approach** is an easy-to-use process for assessing restoration sites using non-monetary benefit indicators. The RBI uses readily-available data to estimate and quantify benefits to people around an ecological restoration site. Whether you are a federal, state, or local manager, or a member of an interest group or funding organization, this simple yet powerful site analysis will make restoration decisions clearer for you and for stakeholders.

### The RBI Approach can be used to:

- ✓ Prioritize restoration sites and projects
- ✓ Screen projects that may require further evaluation
- ✓ Justify funding requests
- ✓ Assess who may benefit most from a project
- ✓ Evaluate tradeoffs
- ✓ Inform people about the benefits of restoration
- ✓ Evaluate what a project has accomplished
- ✓ Inform further planning
- ✓ Inform a structured decision-making process or monetary valuation



### The Assessment Process

Through the five step process, you will:

1. Describe the decision context, including objectives and scope, who is affected, and what their needs are
2. Select and describe relevant ecosystem services and benefits, and record general characteristics of each
3. Compile benefit indicators using five questions:
  - Are people able to benefit?
  - Who benefits?
  - How do benefits compare across sites?
  - What are the social equity implications?
  - How reliable are benefits over time?
4. Summarize the indicators
5. Use the results in decision-making

### [Download the RBI Guidebook!](#)

The Guidebook presents the RBI approach and its application to wetland restoration. It provides **step-by-step instructions** for performing assessments.

Each step is introduced by an overview section that summarizes the step and how to apply it. Following the full walkthrough of each step, you will find pages showing the “Step in Action” to demonstrate how the step is applied in a real-world scenario, using an example application to freshwater wetland restoration in the Woonasquatucket River Watershed in Rhode Island, USA.

The Guidebook is accompanied by a **spreadsheet checklist tool** that provides a way to record the information and compare sites. The Checklist includes prompts to guide the process, and automatically summarizes the information.