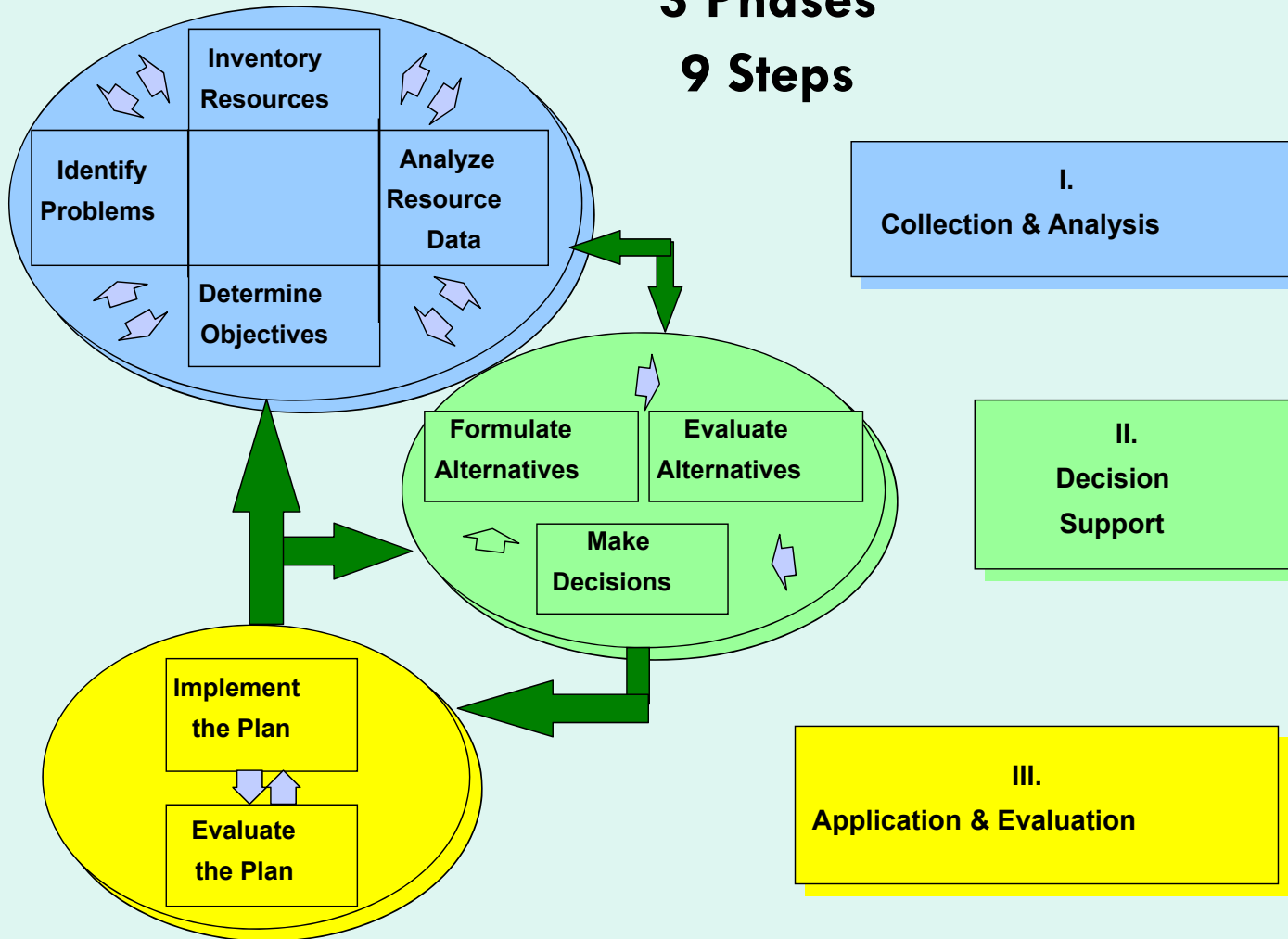


NRCS Planning Process

3 Phases

9 Steps



What is a conservation plan?

- ✓ A customized document that catalogs and describes natural resources and their characteristics
- ✓ An outline of the use and best management practice options available to help achieve client's goals
- ✓ A record of client's goals and decisions.

THE 9-STEP CONSERVATION PLANNING PROCESS

- The planning process provides the framework for developing conservation plans on the basis of ecological, economic, social, and policy (or regulatory) considerations.
- Implementation of these plans may then be facilitated by utilizing technical, educational, and financial assistance programs from NRCS or other sources.

Phase I - Collection and Analysis

- **(Understanding the Problems and Opportunities)**
 1. Identify Problems and Opportunities
 2. Determine Objectives
 3. Inventory Resources
 4. Analyze Resource Data

During Steps 1-4, while working with tribes, consider:

- Tribes sometimes have more stringent laws than the Endangered Species Act.



During Steps 1-4, while working with tribes, consider:

- **NRCS employees do NOT need to know where sacred plants exist.**
- **History – NRCS employees need to research the history of the tribe(s) they are assisting.**

During Steps 1-4, while working with tribes, consider:

- Respect the role of Elders as spiritual advisors in the tribal government structure. Decisions won't be made as quickly.



Phase 1 Considerations Related to Indian Laws

- Consultation and Trust Responsibility requirements
- NRCS Policy regarding Indian Country
- Cultural Resources, work with the tribe's Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO)

Resource Concern? Invasive Species Removal in Willow Gathering Stands



Phase II - Decision Support

- **(Understanding the Solutions)**

5. Formulate Alternatives

6. Evaluate Alternatives

7. Make Decisions

Variables

- **Who Should be at the Table?**
 - Tribal Members
 - Council
 - BIA?
- **What is the Land Status?**
 - Tribal Trust
 - Individual Allotment
 - Public Domain Allotment
- **Who's Plan is it?**

Phase III - Application and Evaluation

- **(Understanding the Results)**

8. Implement the Plan

9. Evaluate the Plan

Items to consider during Phase III when assisting tribes:

- Are you working with the tribe's Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) or the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO)? What are the requirements?
- Dealing with cultural resources and possibly finding a cultural resources site during construction. What are the steps and requirements?

Phase 3 Considerations Related to Indian Law

- Tribal Law – Business Permits Needed, Water Rights Permits Required
- THPO Approval

Items to consider during Phase III when assisting tribes:

- Does the tribe have the authority to enter into a contract or agreement for the required amount of time? ACEP-WRE???



Some programs are difficult for tribes.

Permanent easements may not work for tribes. 30 year easements do not rank very high in many states, so makes it difficult to get an easement offer.



Farm Bill Programs - What must I ask? What information do I need?

- **The Center:**
- Time Requirements
- Social Economic Issues
- Signatures Needed
- Natural Resource Priority of the Tribe

Farm Bill Programs – What must I ask? What information do I need?

- **Indian Law:**
- Be aware of Tribal Laws affecting your work
- Be aware of BIA's role
- USDA/NRCS Policy – Payment Limitations, Tribal Conservation District, FSA Issues, AGI (Adjusted Gross Income)

Conservation Planning with Tribes

- Summary:
- It takes more time, research, and understanding to plan with tribes.
- It is very rewarding and you will gain more than a conservation plan. The cultural exposure and partnership is priceless!