

# Recovery Potential Screening



*Recovery Potential Screening (RPS) is a systematic method for comparing watersheds based on characteristics relevant to successful restoration or protection.*

With limited restoration resources, strategic planning and priority-setting are inevitable. EPA Office of Water developed RPS to provide restoration planners with a systematic, flexible tool for comparing watersheds in terms of key factors affecting restoration. To date, 22 States have engaged in different types of RPS projects. 48 States have RPS tools, with data drawn from a library of over 500 indicators.

## Ecological Indicators

Measure the capacity to maintain or reestablish natural structure and processes

## Stressor Indicators

Measure the extent of anthropogenic sources of impaired water quality

## Social Indicators

Measure relevant community, regulatory, informational or motivational factors

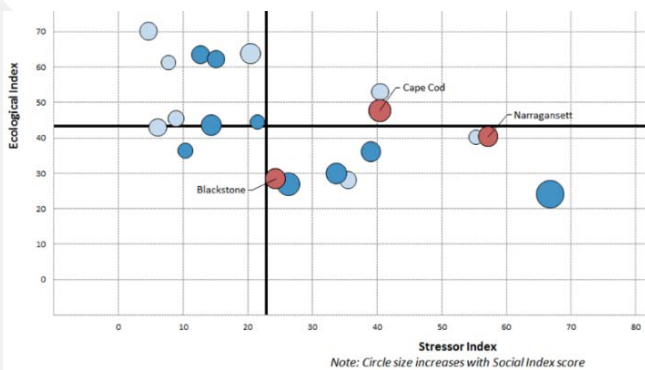
**RPS uses three categories of indicators to compare watersheds. Indicators are combined to calculate Ecological Index, Stressor Index, and Social Index scores as well as an overall Recovery Potential Integrated (RPI) Index score. Users choose different indicators for different screening purposes.**

*The RPS Tool is a custom-coded Excel spreadsheet that performs all RPS calculations and generates RPS outputs. RPS Tools are now available for each of the lower 48 states.*

The Statewide RPS Tool series was released in July 2014 as a set of ready-to-use RPS tools for each of the lower 48 States. Each Tool has indicator data already embedded for all HUC12 watersheds that are wholly or partially within the State's boundary. In addition to storing pre-calculated indicator data, each Statewide Tool:

- Contains a user-friendly interface for setting up a screening
- Automatically calculates RPS index scores and ranks for the HUC12 watersheds of interest
- Displays results in customizable table, plot, and map form
- Can be readily updated with user-generated indicator data

The RPS Tool is designed for use by anyone with basic familiarity with Microsoft Excel. Directions for each step are contained within the Tool file, and a user manual with more detailed directions is under development. EPA provides technical assistance to States, Tribes and Territories through RPS projects.



**The RPS Tool displays customizable plots, maps and data tables of screening results completely within Excel. No additional software is needed.**