

Review of the Background and Methods sections for the project, “GIS Support for Clallam County Streamkeepers Watershed Assessment Project”  
by Michael Kaminski and Robert L. Knapp.

## **I. Background**

**A. Statement of the problem and issues:** The problem statement was very well addressed in this report. The issue was mentioned first in the introduction, which gave the reader a good sense of what was going to be proposed and discussed. The problem statement was then addressed in more detail in the rest of the Background section. I really enjoyed the first paragraph of the Background section, which simply addressed how habitats affect the health of a stream. I thought this was a good way to introduce the issues that are later presented. It provided some overall environmental importance to the work.

I felt the foundation of the problem was adequately provided. There was a lot of quality background information and many different sources of information were referenced, giving more credibility to the work. I do think it would be a little more helpful to expand on the “Limitations and things to think about” section; at least create full sentences and maybe explain each item a little bit more to make the section more clear.

**B. Objectives:** I thought the objectives could be a little more clearly defined or presented. I am assuming the objectives are what are stated in the Timeline, but it might be nice to label some specific items/tasks as objectives to make them clearer. As far as I can tell, the tasks outlined in the timeline seem realistic.

**Overview Map:** The overview map is very nicely done. There are only a few suggestions of how to improve the map:

- The poster background is a little dark on the left side; maybe lighten it up a little bit in order to make the title and text stand out more
- Line up the text boxes along the top, sides, and bottom. For example, make the top of the title box, map info box, and project description box line up along the top edge.
- The Streamkeepers logo seems a little out of place. It fits well within the map layout, but it took me a second to realize it was a logo, and not just a random word stuck onto the map. I’m not too sure how that can be fixed though, or if it is even a big enough thing to worry about.
- The color of the insert map doesn’t really match the rest of the map’s colors. Maybe choose a color that fits in a little better.

Overall, the map looks great!

## **II. Methods**

The acquisition of the original datasets was very well explained. I enjoyed the figure showing the data layer, the scale, and the agency for each of the datasets that were collected. This was very helpful in understanding where the data was collected from.

The pre-processing steps for the data were also well explained, including where the data is now stored.

I would like to see more of an explanation on what the “artificial sinks” in the DEM are. It was also unclear why these sinks needed to be filled. It would be good to also explain what some of the lingo used means, such as “catchment.” A little more information of what ArcHydro does and why it is important to use in this project might also be helpful. Labeling the work done for Phase II as Phase II would also be good to help keep things consistent with the rest of the labeling (ex. Phase I work and Phase III work are labeled as such, but no label is included for Phase II work).

The Data Flow Diagram is very nice and helpful in understanding the methods a little more. It seems though as if the DFD does not include all the work explained in the Methods section. Maybe a more detailed DFD would be helpful in this aspect. It would also be helpful to the reader if the DFD steps were labeled as either Phase I, Phase II, or Phase III to keep all the information straight.

The methods seem fairly clear and concise, although I think there could be a little more improvement in this area to help make the methods more repeatable for someone else’s use. Phase III steps especially could use a little more explanation and detail.