



Title: Pollution Prevention Assessment and Action - What Value is Added by National Theme Facilitation?

Name: Elizabeth Bird

Email: eabird@wisc.edu

Organization: UW-Madison Environmental Resources Center

State: National **Region:** National

Year of Funding: 2001

Theme: Pollution Assessment and Prevention

Situation: “Pollution Assessment and Prevention” is one theme of the USDA integrated water quality program, and the only one that has a national facilitation grant devoted to networking and outreach around it. As the project enters its third and final year of current funding, it is time to review how it has served the community of extension educators and researchers involved with Water Pollution Prevention Assessment and Action (P2A2) programming. How does theme-based networking and outreach differ from or blend with other kinds of efforts for water quality professionals? What value does it add?

Objectives: Original objectives of the project were to support a national theme team; enhance researchers’ and extension educators’ effectiveness through networking, model materials, use of new water quality research findings, identification of funding opportunities, and evaluative research; help educators program for agricultural Environmental Management Systems; and to usefully document extension program outcomes on the theme of voluntary assessment and action to protect water quality.

Methods: The method employed to achieve these objectives is to provide staff time devoted to developing useful networking and program development products and services. These include: theme-based national web directory, web electronic library, quarterly newsletter, and listserve; theme-focused conference sessions, meetings, topical conference calls, referrals and training opportunities; collecting and marketing the stories of successful thematic projects; and developing or providing model P2A2 materials through gathering and sharing lessons learned by practicing educators.

Partnerships: The project convenes nearly 100 researchers and educators engaged in diverse pollution prevention assessment and action programming. The 22-member Steering Committee includes participants from each Water Quality regional program, several agencies, and 1890 and 1994 land grant institutions.

Research: The project integrates research and educational outreach by engaging diverse researchers and educators in its networking, publicizing and event organizing. Integrated research and outreach are conducted through theme-based evaluation, investigation and review of relevant research findings, provision of research-based educational tools, combined research and extension professional development programming, and the critique and revision of P2A2 educational models.

Resources: This project was funded through USDA/CSREES Section 406, but for many activities has leveraged funding from the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water and Non-Point Source Control Branch, USDA/NRCS, USDA/CSREES/IFAFS, as well as state funding through cooperating Extension educators.

Results: Outputs include a searchable, printable national web directory and educational materials index, quarterly newsletters, informational postings to a listserve, and distribution of model materials. Outputs include active networking through encouraged participation at the National Water Quality conferences by diverse P2A2 researchers and educators. Topics emphasized to ensure diversity in conference programs include work with underserved audiences, forest BMPs, and whole farm environmental management. This presentation begins the project’s identification of outcomes.



The mission of CSREES is to advance knowledge for agriculture, the Environment, human health and well being, and communities.

