



Title: The Southern Region Water Quality Coordination Project

Name: Mark McFarland

Email: ml-mcfarland@tamu.edu

Organization: Texas A&M University

State: Multi-State **Region:** Southern

Year of Funding: 2000

Theme: Watershed Management

Situation: The Southern Region Water Quality Planning Committee was formed and has been engaged in regional program coordination since 1988. In 2000, the Southern Region Water Quality Coordination Project, which includes the 13 states of EPA regions 4 and 6, was approved as one of 9 regional projects funded through Section 406 of the CSREES National Integrated Water Quality Program.

Objectives: The primary objectives of the Project are to facilitate delivery of Land Grant University resources, promote regional information sharing and resource exchange, and develop and maintain valuable external partnerships. The Project targets integration of multi-state research, education and extension activities in watershed management and protection and pollution prevention.

Methods: Quarterly regional meetings enable strategic planning among states and partners to identify priority issues and coordinate programs. Regional and multi-state special project grants target critical or emerging issues. A regional database serves as a storehouse of university water quality research, education and extension resources and provides links to the National Water Quality Program website and other regional sites. A biennial water quality training conference enables transfer of technologies and successful programs and resources throughout the region.

Partnerships: Significant effort is directed toward enhancing coordination with resource management agencies such as USEPA, USGS, and USDA agencies including NRCS and ARS, US Army Corps of Engineers, state agencies, local governments, and citizen watershed organizations.

Research: Integration of research, education and extension programs occurs through focused program coordination utilizing the network of state Water Quality Coordinators, the multidisciplinary theme teams, and the regional coordinating committee. For example, the Project has enabled research-based courses on stream restoration techniques, comprehensive nutrient management plan development, and runoff education to be offered throughout the region.

Resources: Over \$3 million has been leveraged to support and/or enhance project efforts, including funding provided by and through faculty and staff time, EPA 319 funds, USDA Special Initiative funding (Rio Grande Basin Initiative), state agencies, local watershed organizations and private contributions.

Results: The project has enabled the continuation and enhancement of integrated, regional coordination within the South, as well as the development of invaluable new national linkages. Regional projects and training programs have significantly expanded the capacity for program delivery at state and local levels. Substantive regional and national products have been developed including a comprehensive regional website and database, an extensive Drinking Water & Human Health FAQ database, and theme-based resource summaries and program impact reports.



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

