



Title: The CSREES National Water Quality Program

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Organization: CSREES

State: National **Region:** National

Year of Funding: 2000

Theme: Watershed Management

Situation: The CSREES National Integrated Water Quality Program (NIWQP) develops research, education, and extension projects aimed at improving the quality of water resources in agricultural watersheds. Through a network of regional coordination projects, NIWQP advances and disseminates the knowledge base of information developed at universities to agriculture and rural communities to enhance the management and protection of the Nation's surface water and groundwater resources.

Objectives: The CSREES NIWQP brings university scientists, instructors, and extension educators into more effective and efficient partnerships with Federal interagency priority programs while addressing water quality issues in U.S. agriculture. The program seeks to solve critical agricultural issues through an integration of research, education and extension activities and through enhanced coordination within regions and across the Nation.

Methods: AREERA Section 406 established four major project categories: Extension Education, Integrated (Research/Extension/Education), National Facilitation, and Regional Coordination. Funding is directed towards topical themes identified as priorities by the states and the CSREES National Program Office for Water Quality. State Water Quality Coordinators promote regional collaboration, enhance delivery of successful programs and encourage multi-state and multi-region efforts to protect and restore water resources.

Partnerships: Partner organizations include federal agencies such as USEPA, USDA-NRCS, Army Corps of Engineers, and US Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as state environmental agencies, state Departments of Agriculture and Transportation, local governments, citizen watershed organizations and private consultants.

Research: NIWQP's utilizes integrated funding categories to facilitate multidisciplinary research, extension, and education activities addressing agricultural water quality issues. In addition, regional coordination projects have employed integrated strategic planning and program development efforts to bring to bear the full array of university resources in responding to critical water resource management concerns.

Resources: The NIWQP has worked to coordinate regional programs and to enhance linkages among university systems and other federal and state water resource management agencies. Through these efforts, programs and resources from multiple agencies and organizations are being better linked and organized to address critical water resource issues regionally and nationally.

Results: The Committee for Shared Leadership (CSL) has been created to serve as the management structure for the National Water Quality Program. It includes representatives from each of the 10 regions that meet quarterly to conduct strategic planning within the program and with partner agencies. The CSL is working closely with CSREES and other federal partners, has developed a national website (<http://www.usawaterquality.org>) linking regional databases, and is creating a national reporting system to improve awareness and access to Land Grant University Resources.



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

