



Title: Region 10 Watershed Satellite Conferences Build Capacity and Facilitate Funding

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State: WA **Region:** Pacific Northwest

Year of Funding: 2000

Theme: Watershed Management

Situation: The Northwest is involved in watershed planning for future beneficial use. The process alters individual lives. Intense emotion and apprehension rules the experience, requiring disparate groups to recognize and appreciate concerns of rival water-users. The process thwarts many planning groups and some fail. The first satellite conference showcased local PNW groups who have worked through the dilemmas and are successfully building consensus in their watersheds. The second conference presented technical assistance for ensuring a funding stream for local projects.

Objectives: The project's primary objectives are to strengthen capacity of watershed stakeholder groups and enhance expertise of local agency and Extension Service personnel as they work with constituents involved in watershed restoration and water quality protection projects. The conferences also offered opportunities for discussion and collaboration between river basin groups. Statistical assessment of evaluation forms was done to determine the effectiveness of the conference objectives, and as a decision tool for succeeding conferences.

Methods: Watershed group members, government agencies, and Extension Services in the PNW received e-mail invitations and follow-up notices. Promotional updates appeared on <http://wawater.wsu.edu> and natural resource related listservs. Satellite downlink capable Extension offices in Region 10 were invited to host and facilitate a local watershed group. A resource guide, Creating Effective Groups to Address Pressing Local Problems: A Resource Guide for Watershed Councils in the Pacific Northwest was developed by Dr. Fiske, as a handout. Videotapes of the broadcasts are available.

Partnerships: Initial partners were Capital Press an agricultural newspaper, government agencies in OR, WA, and ID, Conservation Districts, numerous watershed councils, EPA Region 10, WSU's Dept of Rural Sociology, Environmental Finance Center (EFC) of BSU, and Evergreen Funding Consultants.

Research: Partner publications were surveyed for appropriate supplemental science-based materials to include in participant packets. Dr. Fiske's consensus building guidebook was collated into the packets. Copies of Plan2Fund tm, EFC's newly developed watershed planning tool, introduced in the second satellite conference and their comprehensive database of funding resources were given to conference participants. The Environmental Finance Consultants' Primer on Habitat Project Costs was also included in the packets an added planning guide for watershed projects.

Resources: In-kind support by Capital Press included press releases and reporter coverage at several of the hosting Extension offices. The OR, WA, and ID environmental agencies provided travel for their personnel to appear on the conference airing. Partners provided second conference materials.

Results: Forty CE offices hosted an average 15 participants each. CE Volunteers acted as conference facilitators. The group process guidebook and video set are available through the Publications outlet at WSU. Conferences were video streamed and taped for a larger audience. Participants in the first conference demonstrated increased knowledge of consensus. The funding conference's results should increase the sustainability of watershed projects. Satellite conference alumnae have attended subsequent watershed workshops sponsored by the PNW land grant universities.



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