



Title: Green country Watershed Education

Name: Michael Smolen

Email: smolen@okstate.edu

Organization: Oklahoma State University Coop Ext

State: OK **Region:** Southern

Year of Funding: 2002

Theme: Watershed Management

Situation: Green Country refers to northeastern Oklahoma, where abundant water resources fuel rich plant growth. The region's waterways and reservoirs form the core of a thriving tourism industry. Many reservoirs are also drinking water sources for area communities, including the Tulsa metropolitan area. Recent increased development has resulted in more lakeside communities, golf courses, and poultry farms in the region. The project will combat these water quality threats by educating individuals, industry, and government to reduce nutrient enrichment and habitat degradation.

Objectives: First, the project will increase awareness of the potential impact of individual, industrial, and governmental actions on water quality. Second, it will demonstrate the effectiveness of Best Management Practices (BMPs) as alternatives to traditional riparian and nutrient management methods. Finally, the project team will provide information and support to individuals, industry (particularly poultry), and government to help promote alternate methods, practices, or policies that protect water quality.

Methods: Research information from previous studies in the region will be consolidated and refined. Summary reports and a reference guide to conservation groups and activities will be completed and distributed. An Illinois River informational website will also be developed. Blue Thumb Volunteer Monitor Education will produce program reports and monitoring data. Assessment and demonstration of at least two BMPs and reports on two annual management workshops will be produced. Water quality education modules will be developed for use in at least four Extension program areas.

Partnerships: Cherokee Nation, OK Conservation Comm, OK Scenic Rivers Comm, NRCS, and City of Tulsa support the work. OK Dept of Ag, OK Water Resource Board, OK-DEQ, USGS, AR-CES, Cattlemen's Ass'n, OK Farm Bureau, OK Farmers Union, The Nature Conservancy, and Trust for Public Lands will be asked to help.

Research: Previous research in the watershed will be analyzed and used to formulate best approaches for education and future research. Water quality education modules will be developed for Extension programming. BMP demonstration results will be presented at project workshops. Project information will be used in coursework at OSU, water quality day camps and environmental fairs for children, and workshops tours, and demonstration areas for producers.

Resources: The resources of this project were pooled with the EPA 319 project on Illinois River to support volunteer monitoring. A result of this effort is a new 319 project that begins in FY04.

Results: The project is designed to educate residents of the Long-term, the project is designed to educate residents of the Illinois River and Lake Eucha watersheds about factors they control such as management of the river corridor, riparian management, and nutrient management. Short-term, the number of volunteer monitors and their activities in schools and fairs are evidence of impact. Full assessment of impact has not yet been completed.



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