



Title: Great Lakes Regional Water Quality Coordination Program

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Organization: University of Wisconsin

State: WI **Region:** Great Lakes

Year of Funding: 2000

Theme: Watershed Management

Situation: Extension State Water Quality Coordinators in the Great Lakes region provide successful water quality programs and recognize the advantages of coordinating and sharing programs among states with similar water quality challenges and opportunities. The Cooperative States Research, Extension and Education Service National Water Quality Program has made resources available to assist in coordination efforts and increase opportunities to leverage funds for collaborative water quality improvement projects.

Objectives: The primary objectives of this project are to 1) Provide regional coordination of research and education efforts addressing water quality problems related to agriculture activities regionally, 2) plan strategically on a regional scale, 3) build continuing education and professional development programs that address water quality problems and their solutions, and 4) offer an entry point for state and federal agencies, commodity organizations, and other non-government organizations to the resources within the Land Grant Universities that will lead to collectively developed solutions to water quality problems of mutual interest.

Methods: Methods for accomplishing regional objectives include 1) Using organizational development and effective facilitation methods to foster an effective team of Extension State Water Quality Coordinators within the Great Lakes region, 2) promoting and securing funding for collaborative projects through diverse communication and networking strategies, and 3) conducting regular evaluation of project progress in process and program areas and integrate results into future team strategies

Partnerships: Key partners in Great Lakes initiatives and programs include federal and state agencies (EPA and NRCS being the most prevalent), Land and Sea Grant institutions, industry and producer groups, government officials, and non-profit organizations.

Research: Extension State Water Quality Coordinators in the region have strong technical skills in a variety of water quality issues and good relationships with faculty researchers at their respective institutions and state agencies. The project uses these relationships to initiate research where new information is needed and to incorporate research into extension and education programs.

Resources: Over \$6 million has been leveraged from local, state and federal agency partners, land grant institutions and private sources.

Results: This effort has increased communication and coordination among agencies, land grant institutions and other organizations engaged in water quality programming. Products include regular coordination among Extension State Water Quality Coordinators, a multi-interest strategic planning process based on four regional topical themes, multi-state projects that provide professional development for conservation planners and custom manure haulers, and an evaluation process to support regional coordination efforts nationally.



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