



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

Interactive Internet Experiences with Watershed Concepts: Targeting Youth, Elementary and Middle School Educators

Water is costly to purify and transport, impossible to substitute - and essential to food production, economic development, plant and animal life. In the United States over 250 million people depend on rivers, lakes, streams and ground water supplies for their drinking water. Approximately 184 water bodies are listed on Missouri's 2002 303 (d) List for Impaired Waters and require immediate restoration to designated uses. Many streams suffer from low water volume, organic enrichment, siltation and polluted runoff. There is need to address surface runoff, groundwater, sediment, in-stream nutrients, wildlife and fish populations from the perspectives of researchers, state and federal conservationists, local citizen-based watershed groups, natural resource interest groups, landowners, farmers, young children plus local officials. MoWIN proposed to develop and disseminate interactive watershed information web sites for use in schools (grades 4-8) in five Missouri watersheds. Objectives included: providing information to encourage participation in watershed stewardship; increasing knowledge and understanding about watersheds and facilitating development of skills to identify and prevent nonpoint source pollution.

Web site topics included history, agricultural activities and statistics, human impact on the environment, recreational resources, non-point source pollution and prevention, plant and animal life plus water quality information:

<http://outreach.missouri.edu/mowin/Project31903/webtools.html> and water-related interactive websites

<http://outreach.missouri.edu/mowin/Project31903/interacmowin.html>.

Science teacher workshops were designed and implemented during the summer of 2004 to disseminate this information. Compact disks (CDs), brochures and fliers were additional instructional materials made available to science teachers for use in the classroom. Evaluations were positive and requests for additional materials were overwhelming. Dissemination of this information continues through after school programs, teacher conferences, watershed festivals and other youth related forums and programs.

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