



## **USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference**

### [A Conjoint Analysis of Conservation in the Upper Big Walnut Watershed in Ohio](#)

The CEAP process is taking place in twenty different watersheds across the nation. This process will allow researchers to use a watershed scale approach to determine the overall performance of conservation at the national level, while at the same time providing a regional perspective. Of these twenty watersheds, the Upper Big Walnut Watershed and eleven others are considered “benchmark watersheds.” These are watersheds in which the USDA, Agriculture Research Service (ARS) is joining forces with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to conduct watershed scale research over long time horizons with the goals of assessing conservation, developing models to measure benefits, populating conservation practice databases, defining performance measures, and expanding research on the effects of conservation.

This paper explains the components of a conjoint analysis in the Upper Big Walnut Watershed. The focus of this research is to survey the tax payers in the five county area surrounding the watershed to determine which aspects of natural resources conservation the public values most. Relative utility levels are analyzed and willingness to pay for specific attributes of conservation is discussed. A benefit cost analysis of the best management practices that are currently being monitored by ARS is an additional component. This research helps us to better understand how taxpayers value conservation in comparison to the billions of dollars authorized in the 2002 Farm Bill.

Author: Colleen Tenny