



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

Training Environmental Stewards from Mountains to Ocean: A Water Quality Training Curriculum

King County, Washington is a prime example of the difficulties posed by managing water resources in a rapidly urbanizing area that encompasses diverse land-use activities such as forestry, agriculture, rural lifestyles, and urban living. In order to educate the public on these issues, Washington State University King County Extension (WSU-KCE) has long utilized a “train-the-trainer” model. Volunteers are trained in sustainable water resource management practices and are then able to reach a larger segment of the public than Extension Educators alone can reach.

Our volunteer training programs cover a range of land-use topics including natural areas, home gardening, forestry, and livestock ownership. Each of these train-the-trainer programs concentrates its message on sustainable resource stewardship for its intended audience, resulting in topic overlap in the area of water quality. However, volunteers in one training program may not be exposed to the specific issues covered in other training programs. For example, Master Gardeners are not always aware of the issues livestock owners face, nor are they aware of efforts livestock owners make to protect water resources. With a more integrated approach, it would be easier for volunteers to provide a complete watershed picture to the individuals they work with.

Our goal is to train all volunteers as “natural resource stewards”. To foster this integrated training, we have developed curriculum entitled, *Training Environmental Stewards: Integrating Water Quality and Quantity Education from Mountains to Ocean*. The objective of this project was to develop a core water quality volunteer training curriculum to teach sustainable land-use practices that reduce human impacts in the Pacific Northwest. Extension Faculty members have developed this curriculum in cooperation with local and regional experts, and with funding from the CSREES 406-Water Quality Program. It has been piloted in several WSU Extension programs throughout the region and will soon be available for use throughout the Pacific Northwest.

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