



USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference

In the ditch: Results and impacts of collaborative efforts on federal irrigation projects

Research and education at the university level produces valuable data, statistics, facts and figures but sometimes that information doesn't get to the people who could benefit from it most. Multi-agency partnering can lead to positive extension outcomes and help bridge the gap between "scientists" and "non-scientists". Montana State University Extension Water Quality Program (MSUEWQ) and the Bureau of Reclamation – Great Plains Office (Reclamation) have joined forces and are working with four federal irrigation districts to positively influence behavior and promote changes in project wide irrigation practices. Over the years, cooperative work between MSUEWQ, Reclamation, irrigation districts and water user groups has resulted in changes in management practices leading to water conservation, improved water quality and enhanced agriculture. In these partnerships, MSUEWQ plays the role of technical service provider – conducting research, collecting data, and providing technical information for several on-going debates/discussions related to the management of water resources.

Author: Holly Sessoms

University Affiliation: Montana State University

Co-Author(s): Amber Kirkpatrick and Kim Hershberger