



## **USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference**

### **Living Streams: A Flexible Aquatic Science Curriculum for Educating Youth about Nutrients**

The Tallapoosa Watershed Project (TWP) is a 3-year, CSREES-funded, Integrated Water Quality Initiative that evaluates a variety of technologies for estimating nutrient and sediment loading within a large river system in east-central Alabama. A major goal of the project is to develop educational and outreach programs to extend research findings and aquatic science within this primarily rural river basin and beyond. An aquatic science curriculum called Living Streams has been designed for grades 6-12, in collaboration with the Alabama Water Watch (AWW) program and the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. The curriculum correlates with many Alabama course of study science objectives, and has been piloted in seven schools over two years with favorable results. A team of teachers, Science Education interns and volunteers from a local AWW group implemented the week-long, six-module inquiry. Students investigated water quality issues and concerns in their community, and became familiar with citizen groups and agencies involved in monitoring, policy making and regulation. The curriculum included a field trip to a nearby stream where students conducted a biological assessment under the guidance of an AWW group. Living Streams is scheduled for completion and statewide distribution in 2007 in conjunction with educational initiatives of the Alabama Clean Water Partnership and other organizations. Ideally, Living Streams will become an important component of a coordinated effort to strategically expose students to customized activities in aquatic science and watershed stewardship.

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