



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

CSREES National Integrated Water Program

A Partnership of USDA CSREES and Land Grant Colleges and Universities



The CSREES Integrated Water Quality Grants Program (AREERA Section 406) enabled the formation and linkage of 9 Regional Water Coordination Projects which serve as the foundation of a National Water Program. The goals, framework, organization and key accomplishments of this program include:

Program Goals

The CSREES National Water Program is working through a coordinated regional structure to:

- Provide leadership for the development and implementation of outcome-based water resource programs.
- Link state and regional projects and their network of research, extension and education professionals to facilitate information and resource exchange regionally and nationally.
- Integrate water research, education and extension efforts to solve water resource problems at the home, farm, community and watershed level.
- Improve public understanding and involvement in community decision-making regarding water resource issues.
- Develop and strengthen important partnerships.

Framework

AREERA Section 406 established a competitive grants process for USDA-CSREES water program funding, and is composed of 4 major funding categories:

- Integrated Projects (Research/Extension/Education)
- National Facilitation Projects
- Extension Education Projects
- Regional Coordination Projects are managed by State Water Quality Coordinators to promote regional collaboration, enhance delivery of successful programs and encourage multi-state and multi-region efforts to protect and restore water resources in 10 regions.



Organization

The Committee for Shared Leadership for Water Quality (CSL) is an internal working group created to foster development of the National Water Program. Members include:

- Representatives from the regional projects (10)
- 1890 and 1994 Institution representatives (2)
- CSREES National Program Leaders (2)

Subcommittees and Special Teams target key issues related to communication, policy, partnerships, marketing and program evaluation.

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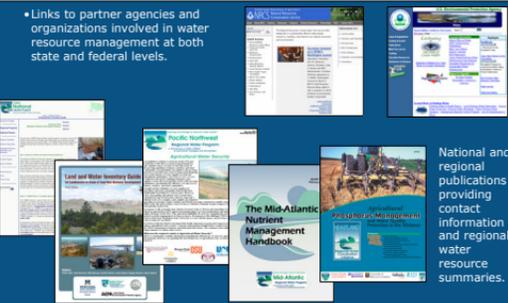
Resource Development

A National Website that provides:

- Direct links to each of the 9 regional water program information databases.
- Access to local and regional programs, publications and resource management tools.



- Links to partner agencies and organizations involved in water resource management at both state and federal levels.



Regional/National Coordination

- Annual National Water Conferences have enabled strategic planning and national program coordination organized around 8 key water quality themes:



- Animal Waste Management
- Drinking Water and Human Health
- Environmental Restoration
- Nutrient and Pesticide Management
- Pollution Assessment and Prevention
- Watershed Management
- Water Conservation and Agricultural Water Management
- Water Policy and Economics

- Interagency Liaisons in each region have enhanced multi-agency coordination and promoted partnerships.
- Integrated water resource management information and technology are being delivered to clientele at the state and regional level.

- Regional Water Program Coordination meetings and conferences have facilitated resource sharing and technology transfer.



- Special projects are targeting critical water resource issues within and across state boundaries.

- Paper and on-line National Impact Reports and a National Water Quality Coordinator Directory are providing information and linkages to regional and state contacts across the country.



Selected National Water Program Impacts

Regional Coordination Projects promote collaboration, delivery of programs and multi-state efforts. Sample impacts include:

- Success of the New England Regional In-Service Training for Agricultural Service Providers
 - Program participants have influenced manure application on at least 60,000 acres of farmland and soil fertility management on 55,000 acres. Similar efforts are underway in all Regions.



Integrated Projects implement a focused research effort along with outreach education to address a watershed concern. Sample impacts include:

- Sources and Abatement of Fecal Bacteria in a High Priority TMDL Watershed in NE Kansas
 - Implementation of improved management practices on two mid-sized cattle operations has led to measurable reductions in peak bacterial loading, which could lead to delisting the watershed's bacterial TMDL. Outreach included Extension programs and one-on-one education for area farmers, as well as updating Kansas State University courses and educational materials.



National Facilitation Projects coordinate comprehensive efforts and high value programs relevant across the country. Sample impacts include:

- Volunteer Monitoring
 - Volunteer water quality monitoring programs often serve as the critical first link that engages the public in watershed stewardship. The CSREES Volunteer Monitoring Project supports the formation and management of volunteer monitoring efforts nationally.



<http://www.usawaterquality.org/volunteer/>