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Southern Region Water Resource Project

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Abstract:

The Project promotes regional collaboration, enhances delivery of successful programs and encourages multi-state efforts to protect and restore water resources. Ultimately, the project improves public access to the research, extension and education resources available through the Land Grant University System in the Southern Region and nationwide. The primary goals of the Project are to facilitate delivery of Land Grant University resources, promote regional information sharing and resource exchange and develop and maintain partnerships. Delivery of high-quality programming on water resource issues is the backbone of the Project. The Project targets integration of multi-state research, education and extension activities in watershed management and protection and pollution prevention. Regional planning efforts identified seven Priority Programs representing the most urgent water resource needs for agriculture and rural communities in the South. Regional teams are working to develop and deliver technology and resources to agricultural producers and rural communities across the South to enable them to better understand and respond to these critical water resource issues. These teams are building products tied to national water quality themes such as the web-based Drinking Water and Human Health FAQ Database (http://www.aces.edu/waterquality/faq/faq_03.htm), which provides answers to more than 2,000 questions on numerous water quality-related topics. A regional water quality website (<http://srwqis.tamu.edu/>) brings together the collective water quality research, education and extension resources for Land Grant Universities in 13 states and provides specific links to the National Integrated Water Program website and water resource databases hosted by other agencies. The Southern Region offers a region-wide, biennial water quality training conference that provides direct access to successful programs and resources which can be employed throughout the Region. Significant effort is directed toward enhancing coordination with other federal and state water resource management agencies such as USEPA, USGS, and USDA agencies.

Impact Statement:

The Project promoted regional collaboration, enhanced delivery of successful programs and encouraged multi-state efforts to protect water resources. Selected outcome indicators include: 7,100,000 pound reduction in nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizer applied, 1,888,500 acres impacted by nutrient management plans, adoption of soil testing by ag producers increased 60% and affected 120,000 acres, regional-team delivered trainings resulting in a 15% improvement in irrigation efficiency and the conservation of 3,250,000 ac/feet of water, improved irrigation practices adopted in 36% of 19,000,000 irrigated acres, wetland restoration projects implemented on 24,000 acres and stream restoration projects implemented on 120 stream miles, riparian buffer restoration projects implemented on 45,000 acres, 500 well water tests requested, and 300 soil tests requested. Over \$10.7 million in supporting funding has been leveraged from private, state, or other federal sources to expand the impact of Southern Region Water Resource Project. Ultimately, the goal of the Southern Region Water Resource Project is to protect and improve water resources at the local level. Regional collaboration has enhanced our ability to achieve that goal.

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