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### **Citizen Opinions about Water Issues in the Pacific Northwest**

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#### Abstract:

The Pacific Northwest Water Quality team completed its second major regional survey in 2007 (the first was in 2002) to document public attitudes, aptitudes and changes in actions taken toward water resource issues in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. This Dillman structured mail-based survey was completed by 1,012 of the 1,800 residents who were randomly chosen to take part in this effort. This poster highlights public responses to questions about drinking water, surface and groundwater quality, water quantity and responsibility for protecting water quality and quantity. Where appropriate 2007 responses are compared to responses to identical questions in 2002. Over 86% of survey respondents feel that their home drinking water is safe to drink. Primary drinking water sources were city water systems (56%), community wells (10%), and individual wells (23%). Over 57% of survey respondents considered surface water quality and groundwater quality to be good or excellent; however, over 20% of respondents did not know enough about groundwater to have an opinion. Approximately 39% of respondents felt that state governments should be most responsible for protecting water quality in their community followed by 37% choosing local governments, 11% the federal government and 10% responding that individual citizens should be most responsible. Respondents felt that local government fulfilled their responsibility for protecting water better than other private or public entities. Most citizens in the region do not believe that water quantity is a problem issue now or in the foreseeable future.

#### Impact Statement:

The results of this survey will allow us to develop effective outreach programs that will address the issues that citizens of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington have ranked as high priority water issues.

Category: Human Dimensions

Type of Presentation: Poster Presentation