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## **Understanding Personal Characteristics that Lead to Pro-Environmental Behaviors: An Attempt to Improve Surface Water Quality**

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### **Abstract Text:**

Farmers choose to adopt conservation practices for varying reasons. There are many proposed models of pro-environmental behaviors that incorporate personal, physical, economic, and institutional factors. However, most models that include personal factors only examine farmers' education level and years farming.

Understanding the relationship of farmers' knowledge, skills, and abilities to their environmental stewardship could be greatly improved by testing additional personal factors. This study seeks to justify the importance of three personal variables in relation to farmers' behaviors that benefit surface water; environmental attitude, work motivation, and moral reasoning about the environment.

### **Impact Statement:**

The proximate goal is to provide a greater understanding of why farmers choose to engage in practices that benefit the environment. This data will aid researchers and policy makers in conservation management decisions. The information gained will be used in creating an educational program for farmers in the Big Blue Watershed in four counties in the states of Nebraska and Kansas. Through education and communication, the project ultimately seeks to facilitate a reduction in the levels of toxic chemicals and sediment in Tuttle Creek Lake, KS, a major source of drinking water for Kansas citizens.