



USDA-CSREES 2005 National Water Quality Conference

Integrating Water Research, Teaching, and Extension in the Northern Plains & Mountains Region

Abstract: The Northern Plains and Mountains Region includes Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and North and South Dakota. These states share a number of common water across the region. In 2000 funding was provided by USDA-CSREES to form a regional partnership among the six Land Grant Universities in the region in order to collaboratively address these water quality issues.

Objectives:

- 1) Create and expand linkages within the Land Grant Universities between research, education and outreach in order to comprehensively address water issues.*
- 2) Develop and deliver coordinated programs to address key water quality and water resource issues in the region.*

Methods:

Create a water quality team for the region that communicates frequently to share resources and collaborate on programming. Conduct appropriate research, education and outreach across the region to address water quality issues. Maintain and expand linkages to other partners in the states.

Partnerships:

State: NPS Councils, Depts of Ag, Env. Qual, Educ, and Commerce, Assoc of Cons Dists, Commodity Groups. Federal: EPA, NRCS, USFS, BLM, USGS, USFWS, BOR, DOE

Integration of Research, Teaching, and Extension:

Examples include: developing web-based water curriculum and training courses; integrating water quality education into undergraduate and graduate teaching; research and education on coal bed methane development and related water quality issues; developing mapping tools to assess aquifer sensitivity, land use and water quality, and impervious area development; research on remote sensing; developing monitoring protocols and water quality standards; research on wetland plants for use in phytoremediation.

Resources:

Through responding to requests for proposals and other collaborative arrangements, the project has leveraged \$4M of additional resources.

Results:

A greater degree of collaboration and communication among the states; further development of partnerships with state and federal agencies and local stakeholders; increased leveraging of program funds through contacts with other funding agencies addressing water quality issues.

Partnerships have begun at the campus level to engage more faculty as resources for the regional programs. Program is marketed through information

fact sheets mailed to 700 key leaders in the region.

Author: Reagan Waskom