



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Pacific Northwest

Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA CSREES
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Winter 2007
PNWWATER 102

Regional Extension Faculty Training

Extension educator training is part of the Pacific Northwest (PNW) Water Quality Coordination program. In the past, regional workshops have focused on water quality monitoring. For the 2006 training a new approach was tried. Recently, many grants and programs require multi-state and multi-discipline proposals. Extension educators are often not able to respond to these opportunities due to lack of resources and peer connections, yet are dealing with the very issues that these grants seek to address. It was decided that the training for 2006 would focus on providing an opportunity for Extension educators in the region to get together and participate with individuals that have done multi-state projects in order to foster communication and possibly create teams to continue work on regional projects and themes.



Participants from all four PNW Land Grant Extension institutions were invited based on recommendations from the principle investigators. Individual Extension educators that were recognized as dealing with multiple programs such as IPM (Integrated Pest Management), water quality, SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education), livestock, field crops, and urban horticulture and who may not have many opportunities for workshops such as this were selected. About 30 participants were invited and were able to attend the workshop held in late October at the University of Idaho campus in Moscow, ID.

Presenters at the workshop covered topics such as the PNW water issues survey, groundwater issues in the PNW, surface water issues in the PNW, multi-state grant opportunities, how to successfully work on multi-state projects, group dynamics, and resources available for these programs. Breakout sessions were split according to groundwater and surface water issues that affect programming at the local level and across disciplines. A separate breakout group dealing with urban horticulture and stormwater was formed after the surface water group identified the need for this discipline to be separated from the others.



Participation in the breakout sessions was excellent with ideas and discussions continuing into mealtime. Discussions included methods and plans to continue the dialogs in future meetings of the various teams and potentially developing proposals to fund these future



Pacific Northwest Regional Water Quality Coordination Project Partners

Land Grant Universities

Alaska

Cooperative Extension Service
Contact Fred Sorensen:
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<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/water/index.html>

University Publications:

<http://www.alaska.edu/uaf/ces/publications/>

Idaho

University of Idaho
Cooperative Extension System
Contact Bob Mahler: 208-885-7025

<http://www.uidaho.edu/wq/wqhome.html>

University Publications:

<http://info.ag.uidaho.edu/Catalog/catalog.html>

Oregon

Oregon State University
Extension Service
Contact Mike Gamroth: 541-737-3316

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/>

University Publications:

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>

Washington

Washington State University
WSU Extension
Contact Bob Simmons:

360-427-9670 ext. 690

<http://wawater.wsu.edu/>

University Publications:

<http://pubs.wsu.edu/>

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Water Resource Research Institutes

Water and Environmental Research
Center (Alaska)

<http://www.uaf.edu/water/>

Idaho Water Resources
Research Institute

<http://www.boise.uidaho.edu/>

Institute for Water and
Watersheds (Oregon)

<http://water.oregonstate.edu/>

State of Washington
Water Research Center

<http://www.swwrc.wsu.edu/>

Environmental Protection Agency

EPA, Region 10

The Pacific Northwest

<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/>

Office of Research and Development,
Corvallis Laboratory

<http://www.epa.gov/wed/>

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meetings. Priority issues from the breakout sessions were:

Groundwater:

Nutrient management

1. Animal
2. Fertilizer
3. Septic
4. Agenda vs. issue

Policy issues

1. Greywater
2. Septic
3. Local planning and zoning

Surface Water:

1. Water use efficiency (agriculture and urban)
2. Invasive species
3. Urban misuse

A new method of evaluation was utilized for this training. Rather than the traditional method of using a paper survey completed on site, following the workshop the evaluation for this training was electronic based and emailed to participants, giving everyone a chance to filter their thoughts. Using the SurveyMonkey web based model we received an 80 percent return. Some of the results are as follows. There was a 17 percent increase in those participants reporting an increase in their knowledge of water quality issues after attending this workshop. Eighty percent reported that there was a good likelihood that they would continue communications with the others at the training about the issues and their programming. On a scale of 1-10 the average score for both the individual presenters and the program format were around 8.0.

One of the goals for the training was to reach local Extension educators that may not have the opportunity to participate in this type of professional development. Based on the survey results over 33 percent of the participants had never or very occasionally worked on a team project and over 54 percent had participated in one or less professional development events in the past. Most of the participants stated that they would attend this type of training again with many adding that in the future it would be helpful to have more specific topics or issues identified. There was an agreement that the focus audience continue to be relative new faculty rather than mid to senior faculty.

An additional survey using the same method will be sent to the participants in a few months in order to assess the follow-through in communications within the groups. At this time the next workshop is in the planning stage for the fall of 2007. The theme is yet to be determined. For more information contact your state Extension WQ Coordinator listed on this bulletin.

National Water Quality Program Areas

The four land grant universities in the Pacific Northwest have aligned our water resource extension and research efforts with eight themes of the USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension System.

1. Animal Waste Management
2. Drinking Water and Human Health
3. Environmental Restoration
4. Nutrient and Pesticide Management
5. Pollution Assessment and Prevention
6. Watershed Management
7. Water Conservation and Management
8. Water Policy and Economics

CSREES is the Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service, a sub-agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, and is the federal partner in this water quality program.