

Watershed Exchange and Technology Partnership

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry



Tools and education to manage forested drinking water supplies

Description:

The Watershed Exchange and Technology (WET) Partnership convenes scientists, educators, field practitioners, and communities in the Northeast and Midwest to share natural resource information and expertise on watershed forest management. Our main objective is to protect and manage forests critical to providing high quality water, with a focus on small and medium-sized water suppliers and their communities. WET emphasizes practical, science-based solutions to to conserve and restore watersheds across public/private ownerships. Tools developed focus on information and analysis; watershed planning; innovative forest management; and educational opportunities.

Key Issues:

- Fewer than 40% of Americans know what a watershed is or how forests protect drinking water. (Northeastern Area [NA] Strategic Plan, Obj. 2.D.)
- Forested watersheds are at risk from land use conversion and lack of management. (NA Strategic Plan, Obj. 1.A.)
- Technology and tools are available to help small and medium-sized water providers better protect and manage their lands, but this information is not delivered effectively to this audience. (NA Strategic Plan, Obj. 1.D.)
- Professional foresters who manage forests for municipal water supplies need more information about the importance of forests to watersheds and drinking water and how to improve management practices. (NA Strategic Plan, Obj. 1.D.)



Accomplishments:

- Completed a regional assessment report and maps showing the connections between forests, drinking water, and people. Report evaluates and ranks current and future conditions and identifies priorities for conservation and on-the-ground stewardship.
- Began demonstration of the Watershed Forest Management Information System (WFMIS) software program on the Presumpscot (Sebago Lake) watershed in Maine to aid them in developing a watershed forest management plan.
- *Land Use Effects on Streamflow and Water Quality in the Northeastern United States* is published.
- Completed desk guide and field guide explaining the data management and analysis software for the Best Management Practices (BMP) Monitoring Protocol project.



Budget History:

Watershed Exchange and Technology Partnership <i>(\$ in thousands)</i>				
Funding Source	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Forest Stewardship	\$30	\$30	\$60	\$0
Urban and Community Forestry	20	0	0	0
US Environmental Protection Agency	30	0	0	0
Totals	\$80	\$30	\$60	\$0

Future Direction:

- Publish the Forests, Water and People final report and accompanying maps online and customize data and maps for NA-served states' use online. Develop a webcast training program to teach states how to replicate the assessment. Get the key facts in this report out to the general public.
- Deliver watershed forestry technology online using a web-based “ask the experts” or “Frequently Asked Questions” platform with information on several forest-related topics of importance to water supply managers.
- Complete a series of lesson plans for a web-based training program for the Watershed Forest Management Guidebook.
- Continue the planning and program development for a 2008/2009 “From the Forest to the Faucet” international conference, focusing on expanding the audience beyond watershed forest managers.
- Replicate the Source Water Stewardship Exchange Demonstration Project (completed in 2004) in the Meramec River, MO, watershed, in partnership with the Trust for Public Land.

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January 2008 - revised