



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

# Pacific Northwest

## Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA CSREES  
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Fall 2002  
PNWWATER 007

### Living on the Edge: Grassroots Watershed Planning in the Pacific Northwest

On May 31, 2002 at 38 Cooperative Extension sites across the Pacific Northwest, people gathered to discuss and learn about collaborative processes for watershed restoration and protection. The centerpiece of the meetings was a two hour live satellite broadcast downlinked to each of the meeting locations. The program introduced techniques to bring together diverse community interests, approaches to contentious water resource issues, and offered real world advice on collaborative planning styles.



Watershed management has emerged as an intense political, environmental, and social issue throughout the country. The Endangered Species and Clean Water Acts have increased pressure on communities to improve water quality and protect salmon populations. Fulfilling these mandates and meeting competing demands for water use requires innovative watershed-scale management approaches and cooperation. In the Pacific Northwest, watershed councils and planning units have been developed to address watershed issues. These groups are each in a different stage of development—from long standing vigorous groups to withering ones. This program was developed to energize and inspire participants by demonstrating how other successful groups have organized and worked together to address specific issues.

Rounding out the program that utilized excerpts from the video, *Living on the Edge: Watershed Planning in the PNW*, was an interactive question and answer session with the representatives of the featured watershed planning councils and environmental agency department personnel from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. After the broadcast portion of the program, many of the locally facilitated meetings focused their discussions on identifying ways they could work more effectively as a group.

*Creating Effective Groups to Address Pressing Local Problems: A Resource Guide for Watershed Councils in the Pacific Northwest*,

written as a companion piece to the video by rural sociologist Emmett P. Fiske, Ph.D. was included in conference attendee packets. The Guide was designed as a tool to improve consensus-based decision making skills. Conference attendees also received web-based resources on environmental project assessment and evaluation as well as state specific funding sources.

The program rated highly in participant evaluations and enthusiasm was expressed for a future satellite conference on a related subject. *Living on the Edge: Grassroots Watershed Planning in the Pacific Northwest* and *Creating Effective Groups to Address Pressing Local Problems* are available from WSU Bulletins at <http://pubs.wsu.edu>.



## Pacific Northwest Regional Water Quality Coordination Project Partners

### Land Grant Universities

#### Alaska

Cooperative Extension Service  
Contact Fred Sorensen:  
907-786-6311

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

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/>

Northwest Indian College  
Contact Dan Burns:  
360-392-4328

[dburns@nwic.edu](mailto:dburns@nwic.edu) or

<http://www.nwic.edu/>

### 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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### The Project

Land Grant Universities, Water Research Institutes, and EPA Region 10 have formed a partnership to provide research and education to communities about protecting or restoring the quality of water resources. This partnership is being supported in part by the USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension System (CSREES).

### Our Goal and Approach

The goal of this Project is to provide leadership for water resources research, education, and outreach to help people, industry, and governments to prevent and solve current and emerging water quality and quantity problems. The approach to achieving this goal is for the Partners to develop a coordinated water quality effort based on, and strengthening, individual state programs.

### Our Strengths

The Project promotes regional collaboration by acknowledging existing programs and successful efforts; assisting program gaps; identifying potential issues for cross-agency and private sector collaboration; and developing a clearinghouse of expertise and programs. In addition, the Project establishes or enhances partnerships with federal, state, and local environmental and water resource management agencies, such as by placing a University Liaison within the offices of EPA Region 10.



### 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.*