



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Pacific Northwest

Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA NIFA
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Summer 2004
PNWWATER 039

Our Water Quality Programming Priorities



As part of our needs assessment survey conducted in the Pacific Northwest we asked residents of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington to tell us which water quality issues would they like to learn more about. Approximately 32 percent of survey respondents were identified as rural, with the remainder classified as urban. Based on the survey, a significant portion of the rural residents living in the Pacific Northwest wanted more information about three water quality theme areas: (1) drinking water and human health, (2) water quantity and policy, and (3) watershed management (Table 1). Almost 75 percent of rural residents identified the need for more information about drinking water and human health. Almost two-thirds of rural residents wanted more information about water quantity and water policy. Almost half of rural residents wanted more information on watershed management. It is also important to note that when rural and urban responses were added together, drinking water and human health, water quantity/policy, and watershed management ranked as three of the top four water quality areas of interest. Conversely, there was little demand for additional information on nutrient and pesticide management and animal waste management by either rural or urban audiences.

Table 1. Responses to question: “Would you like to learn more about any of the following water quality issues?”

Area of interest	----- respondents wanting to learn more -----	
	RURAL	ALL (rural + urban)
	----- % -----	
Drinking water	74.2	48.8
Water quantity / policy	66.2	31.9
Watershed management	48.5	27.3
Pollution prevention	26.2	30.2
Environmental restoration	20.4	27.4
Nutrients and pesticides	18.4	22.3
Animal waste management	14.3	16.5



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.htm>

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 Charlotte Clausing:
360-392-4319

cclausing@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/>

For more information contact Jan Seago at 206-553-0038 or seago.jan@epa.gov

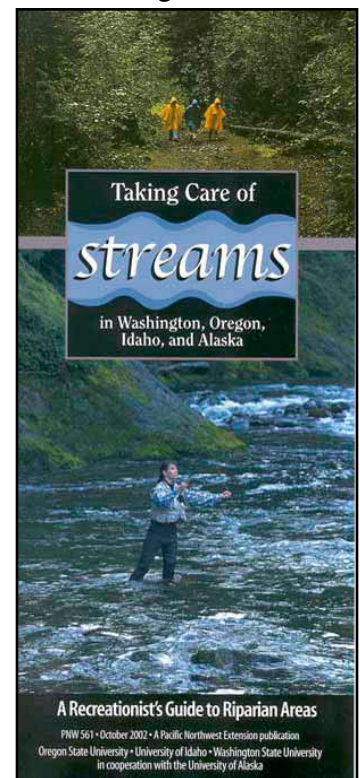
We also asked residents about the type of educational delivery methods they preferred. Based on this survey, rural residents prefer to be educated about water quality through radio, television, newspapers and printed fact sheets (Table 2). Workshops and short courses as educational tools to learn about water quality are not popular with rural audiences in the region. This is very important because workshops and short courses are traditional methods used by many agencies including Extension to educate the public. Urban audiences prefer radio, television, newspapers and printed fact sheets as preferred delivery methods for water quality information.

Table 2. Responses to the question: “If you had the following methods of learning opportunities available, which (check up to three) would you likely take advantage of for water quality learning opportunities?”

Item	----- respondents -----	
	RURAL	ALL
	----- % -----	
Radio	63	51
Television	62	55
Newspapers	62	54
Printed fact sheets	59	53
Internet (web sites)	29	41
Demonstrations or displays	26	21
Workshops (2 – 3 hours)	8	20
Short courses (1 day)	4	18

Based on the information provided in the two tables shown on this sheet, our regional water quality team is emphasizing the following:

- Programming will be concentrated in three national water quality theme areas: (1) drinking water and human health, (2) water quantity/policy, and (3) watershed management.
- We will think outside the traditional box when it comes to program delivery. The traditional two to three hour and one-day workshops will be de-emphasized. We will emphasize printed fact sheets, satellite conferences, Internet delivery, and concentrated regional hands-on learning opportunities. We will also try public service announcements on television and place more emphasis on newspapers and radio.
- We will use several strategies that are currently under development to increase our penetration into younger audiences, be more successful in rural areas, and use mass media to have a greater impact in suburban and urban areas.



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