



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Pacific Northwest

Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA CSREES
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Summer 2004
PNWWATER 041

Alaska's "Scoop the Poop" Program



The municipality of Anchorage, Alaska has a population of approximately 260,000 people, 2,100 moose, 250 black bears, 60 brown bears and 59,000 dogs. Anchorage has septic and sewage systems that handle human waste and nature seems to keep up with the moose and bears. What hasn't been addressed is the estimated 22 tons of dog waste deposited each and every day. Individual yard owners pick up some of this waste but a significant amount is concentrated along trails, roads and public lands. There are 8 creeks and 3 lakes in the municipality that are on the state 303d list for fecal matter pollution.

In an effort at public education on this issue, a group of agencies partnered in a three-step program. An organizing committee was formed including the UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Anchorage Waterways Council, the Municipality of Anchorage, the State of Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, and the US Bureau of Land Management.

The first phase was an awareness program. A series of posters highlighting obvious public personalities such as Olympic skiers and hockey stars and personnel associated with dogs such as police K9 officers and



firemen, all with their dogs was produced (see photos).

The second phase was putting on an event that demonstrated the need for and results of a "Scoop the Poop" program. The event was the clean-up of the trail system on the BLM land tract within the municipality. This is an area with hiking and skiing trails heavily used by the public year round. An educational "Science Center" is also located at the site. Approximately 50 people showed up for this event and collected over 1,200 pounds of poop.

The third phase was the installation of sponsored poop stations at trailheads and parks in the municipality. Over 30 stations have been sponsored and constructed within the municipality at this time. They include signage, a



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 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

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.

poop bag dispenser and a trash can to deposit the bags. Most of the sites are located so the municipality crews can collect the waste. One unforeseen problem is that at some sites the trash cans will need to be bear proofed.

To learn more about Alaska's "Scoop the Poop" program, contact Fred Sorensen at dffes@uaa.alaska.edu, 907-786-6311, or visit the Anchorage Waterways Council web site at <http://www.anchoragecreeks.org/>.



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.