



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Pacific Northwest

Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA CSREES
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

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Funding Water Quality Efforts in Pacific Northwest Watersheds

Watershed groups, county economic development departments, and state departments of transportation are all seekers of funding for projects to improve or protect wildlife habitat and assure quality drinking water to residents. Federal and state agencies are facing shrinking budgets, funding fewer grant applications, thus making the process more competitive on all levels.

A recommended first stop for the funding seeker is the Directory of Watershed Resources (<http://efc.boisestate.edu/watershed/searchmenu.asp>) developed and maintained by the Environmental Finance Center (EFC) Network of Region 10 based at Boise State University. The directory is searchable by keywords. The database contains descriptions of foundation initiatives as well as state and federal agency requests for proposals. A sample search may be as simple as 'stream restoration' or more targeted by inputting more exact terminology, such as 'remediation' or 'floodplains.'



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has several programs available. Clean Water Act, Section 319 funds are provided only to designated state and tribal agencies to implement approved nonpoint source management programs. State and tribal nonpoint source programs include a variety of components, including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and regulatory programs. The 2008 funding for Tribes highlights developing or implementing watershed-based plans that address Non-Point Source (NPS) impaired water bodies. An internet search under Clean Water Act Section 319 yields project eligibility requirements for the designated states and tribes.

Another of EPA's many grant opportunities is the Targeted Watersheds Grants (TWG) program designed to encourage successful community-based approaches and management techniques to protect and restore the nation's watersheds. The TWG program is based on the fundamental principles of environmental improvement: collaboration, new technologies, market incentives, and results-oriented strategies. The TWG program has changed over the years. Starting in 2006, the request for proposals introduced a two-year cycle. The next cycle may well follow suit and include 2008 and 2009.

Just released for a January 31, 2008 deadline is the Puget Sound Initiative Targeted Watershed Grant Program. U.S. EPA Region 10 is soliciting proposals under this announcement to support the protection and restoration of high valued Puget Sound aquatic resources in areas threatened by growth pressure through holistic watershed protection and management approaches at the local level. These grant funds will assist local and tribal governments in managing land uses while protecting watershed functions and values. Successful projects will match proposed activities to the appropriate watershed scale to ensure environmental results.

The National Estuary Program, based on Section 320 of the Clean Water Act, directs EPA to develop plans for attaining or maintaining water quality in an estuary. This includes protection of public water supplies and the protection and propagation of a balanced, indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife. It allows recreational activities, in and on water, and requires that control of point and nonpoint sources of pollution supplement existing controls of pollution. The PNW is home to three estuaries covered in the initiative—Puget Sound, Tillamook Bay, and the Lower Columbia River.



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

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<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.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture through its many sub-agencies is a source of remediation, protection, and restoration funds. Typically, the funding will have an agricultural focus. Conservation Effects Assessment Program funding quantifies the watershed benefits derived from conservation practices. Favorable findings may serve to increase the funding available for farm conservation Best Management Practices (BMPs). The National Water Quality Program from Cooperative State Research, Extension, and Education Service funds ten programs encompassing EPA's regional organization to protect and improve water quality, particularly in agricultural areas. This program brings scientists, university instructors, and Extension educators into a more effective partnership to address water quality problems that are agriculture related.

Another Department of Agriculture sub-agency, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs help people reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. The programs are voluntary and require matching funds; however, the Service is a willing partner with science-based technical assistance and advice.

Many Pacific Northwest private non-profit organizations are deeply interested and involved in watershed and habitat restoration and protection. A visit to the EFC searchable database proves this out. Although this Update is not about writing successful grant proposals, a key factor in finding funds is to determine the commonality of interests and environmental goals between a funds seeker and a funder.



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.