



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

# Pacific Northwest

## Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA NIFA  
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Spring 2009  
PNWWATER 157

### NPS and Stormwater Outreach Conference: ***Achieving Results with Tight Budgets***

One hundred sixty-seven professionals attended the 5<sup>th</sup> NPS (Nonpoint Source) and Stormwater Outreach Conference in Portland, Oregon in May 2009. This conference was co-sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Land Grant Institutions in the Northeast (Regions 1 & II), Great Lakes Area (Region V), and the Pacific Northwest (Region X). Faculty from Washington State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Idaho made presentations at this conference. The professionals attending this conference represented universities, non-profits, public agencies, state and local governments, and watershed councils. The theme of this conference was “Achieving Results with Tight Budgets.”



*Making the invisible, visible: The Big Pipe Portal commemorates the construction of a pipe that moves westside stormwater runoff under the Willamette River to the eastside wastewater facility for treatment.*

Pre-conference events on Monday offered three full-day and one half-day workshops presented by Extension educators and the fourth included Extension participation. Region V’s National Facilitation Project, *Changing Public Behavior*, given by faculty of University of Wisconsin was well attended. *Eyes on the Prize*, an evaluation primer given by University of Wisconsin Extension faculty drew good reviews as well. *Onsite Wastewater Pollution Minimization Risk Research*, a half-day workshop, was given by faculty from Texas A&M, University of Rhode Island, and North Carolina State University to assist professionals with tracking down failing onsite septic systems. *Getting in Step*, a popular workbook-based outreach campaign developed and presented by Tetra Tech was the fourth full-day workshop that drew many newcomers from Conservation Districts and municipal stormwater departments.



The two and one-half day conference was information packed with examples of successful non-point source outreach programs from across the nation. Nancy Lee of Social Marketing Services gave the Keynote speech, giving out advice on designing winning outreach campaigns. The lunch speakers introduced new technology useful in metropolitan planning for sustainable cities. The conversation in the hallways between sessions reflected appreciation for the high quality presentations and the plethora of outreach ideas to adopt for at-home campaigns. One session’s presentations were based on how to use cartoons and graphics that capture attention from many target audiences.



## 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](mailto: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/>

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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 National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

### 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.

Wednesday's banquet was to be a tour of Meriwether's Skyline Farm and Restaurant, which are examples of a farm-to-table vertical and sustainable business. The tour was 'weathered' out by hail, but everyone ate great home-grown fresh produce and meats in the historic restaurant. The rear pavilion at Meriwether's is surrounded by a rain garden planted with native vegetation, giving a charming setting for the People's Choice Awards ceremony of exceptional radio and video public service announcements focusing on nonpoint source and stormwater messages.



*The rain garden pavilion at Meriwether's restaurant.*

After the conference closed on Thursday, a tour was available for attendees to have a look at the smart planning that the City of Portland is doing to manage stormwater pollution from entering into the Willamette River. The city abounds in vegetated roofs, curb-side catchment and filtration systems, and other on-site strategies.

The partnership of US EPA's NPS personnel, the Land Grant Institutions, and Tetra Tech delivered an informative and inspiring conference that sets the bar for years to come. To read abstracts of the conference, go to <http://www.epa.gov/nps/outreach2009/>.

### 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 National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

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

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