

USDA-CSREES National Integrated Water Quality Program

Mark L. McFarland¹, R.L. Shepard², A.J. Gold³, and L.T. Green³

¹ Texas Cooperative Extension, 348 Heep Center, Soil & Crop Sciences Dept, College Station, TX 77843-2474

² University of Wisconsin-Extension, Environmental Resources Center, 210 Hiram Smith Hall,
1545 Observatory Drive, Madison, WI 53706

³ Cooperative Extension Water Quality Programs, Dept. of Natural Resources Science, University of Rhode
Island, 105 Coastal Institute in Kingston, One Greenhouse Rd., Kingston, RI 02881

Abstract

The USDA-Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES) National Integrated Water Quality Program (NIWQP) focuses the combined efforts of the Land Grant University System in research, teaching and extension to address major water resource issues across the United States. The program is supported largely by Section 406 of the Agricultural Research Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 which created four funding categories: regional coordination projects, national facilitation projects, integrated projects and extension education projects. Ten regional coordination projects established based on EPA regional delineations serve as the core of the program. These projects function to enhance communication among state programs, facilitate information and resource exchange, and to develop and strengthen important external partnerships. In addition, a management team called the Committee for Shared Leadership (CSL) has been created with representatives from each region, external partners and CSREES to provide oversight and support to the program. Regional and national program efforts are being organized under eight key water quality themes: Watershed Management, Pollution Prevention and Assessment, Drinking Water and Human Health, Environmental Restoration, Nutrient and Pesticide Management, Water Conservation and Agricultural Water Management, Animal Waste Management, and Water Policy and Economics. Regional meetings and conferences as well as an annual national conference are being used for technology transfer and strategic planning. A national water quality website (<http://www.usawaterquality.org>) provides a direct link to regional efforts which in turn serve as a conduit to state-level water quality programs and resources.