

Best Education Practices (BEPs) for Water Outreach Professionals
Defining BEPs, Refining New Resources and Recommending Future Actions

POSTER PRESENTATION

Presenter(s): Amber Langston, University Of Missouri-Columbia

Title: Fostering Locally-Led Holistic Watershed Management

Abstract: The Water Quality Outreach program was created within the University of Missouri Outreach and Extension program to work with agencies, organizations, local governments and individuals to develop information, technical expertise and strategies for protecting water resources throughout Missouri. Early in the development of the water quality program, the importance of developing collaborative networks was realized for success in protecting Missouri's water resources. To achieve this, MU extension programs took a Community Development approach in working with communities. The approach was to create capacity (leadership) within the community by the transference of knowledge and technical expertise to people in the community. As this program has now worked with twenty different watershed-planning groups, it has been found that citizens will choose to become involved if they understand the situation and how it might affect them, and, if they have the knowledge and resources to work through the situation.

To date, twenty watershed-planning groups have been involved with this program because of being forced through regulatory action or because of concern for their water resources. Each of the twenty watershed planning committees is at different intervals in the planning process. Lessons learned so far are as follows:

- People do care about their community
- People will become involved if they understand the problem/situation
- People need to do the work with assistance from agencies, organization and government (local ownership/buy-in)
- National/State Community/Economic and Environmental/Natural Resources problems are local problems "first"

Target Audience(s): Local decision/policy makers, agency partners and SWCD personnel

Educational Purpose: Communication and capacity building

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