

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

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION

Presenter(s): Timothy Lawrence, Ohio NEMCO/CAMPUSHED

Title: Local Control Of The Environment-Is This What They Asked For?

Abstract: The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Storm Water Program, being implemented by many small to medium sized communities across the nation, provides a unique opportunity to investigate the role that federal, state and local communities assume to protect the environment. Local, state, and some federal officials, as well as political pundits and activists from both the right and the left, are increasingly questioning the judgment and value of relying on a central authority to protect the environment. These proponents of environmental devolution argue that locals have a better understanding of the problems and constraints to institute lasting and effective environmental protection to best meet the needs and interests of local residents. This presentation will discuss preliminary results of a research project that looks at local officials' perception of their ability to implement federally mandated environmental regulations based on knowledge; willingness to participate in multi-jurisdictional collaboration; the role of local watershed groups in protecting the environment; the balance between economic and environmental concerns; their ability to implement environmental regulations; their perspective on local control versus federal or state control; and their view of regulatory control mechanisms. The study utilized a mix methodological approach using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. This includes interviews with key informants, document review, a census survey of local officials, and in-depth interviews with local officials. The results of this research will provide a better understanding of how environmental educators can meet needs of local public officials in addressing federal and state environmental regulations.

Target Audience(s): Local decision and policy makers: SWCDs

Educational Purpose: Information;
capacity building

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