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EPA'S TARGETED WATERSHED GRANTS 2005 ANNUAL REPORT

December 2005



The River Network

The River Network's Watershed Support Network (WSN) represents a model collaborative approach – bringing together state, regional, and local partners to form a formidable cadre of expert watershed trainers. Last year, the network used EPA funds and other leveraged resources to provide intensive watershed training programs in six states. These programs included more than 175 watershed groups and one-on-one support services for 94 organizations in Colorado, Kentucky, New Mexico, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

The watershed groups served by the Watershed Support Network are making a profound difference in water quality conditions. Examples of the improvements include:

- 40 percent reduction in acid mine drainage from the Majestic Mine into the Hocking River (Ohio)
- Improved basinwide sewage plan for the Big Darby, a watershed highly valued for its ecological diversity (Ohio)
- Improvements in the Bad River, including improved fish passages and instream flows thanks to the repair and replacement of 1,000 culverts identified by citizen volunteers (Wisconsin)
- Pollutant reductions in the Gallinas and Rio Grande tributaries, which has made the water safer for swimming and human use (New Mexico)

Participants learned concrete skills that dramatically strengthened their effectiveness. The groups increased and diversified their funding sources, raised membership, leveraged additional dollars (including corporate sponsors), built community support, learned to utilize vital financial and strategic planning tools; and learned technical skills like monitoring and assessment. Representatives from 14 states graduated as skilled watershed trainers.



The first group of watershed trainers from six states that kicked off the Watershed Support Network.

EPA's support for River Network's capacity building program has allowed us to establish a new, collaborative model for watershed assistance. By increasing the strength and stability of watershed partnerships, this program will result in measurable improvements in hundreds of watersheds across the nation in the next few years."

– **Don Elder**
President and CEO
River Network