

Utah State University

From the Selected Works of Michael R. Kuhns

2011

Water Issues

Michael R. Kuhns



Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals

Natural Resources Extension Programs and Impacts

Water Issues

Clean Water and Grazing Coexist in California –

California rangelands provide grazing, wildlife habitat, and serve as valuable watersheds for drinking water reservoirs. At Pardee Reservoir in Calaveras County grazing and clean drinking water were perceived to be incompatible. University of California Cooperative Extension advisors were contacted for assistance when the grazing lessees around the reservoir were told to remove their cattle due to con-



cerns that *Cryptosporidium* might enter the drinking water supply. East Bay Municipal Utility District (EB MUD) owns and manages the land around Pardee Reservoir, which supplies drinking water to the East Bay. Extension staff provided research-based information to help EB MUD manage rangelands around the reservoir, including a change in grazing practices to reduce *Cryptosporidium* risk and a water quality sampling program. Winter livestock grazing has been maintained, reducing invasive plant numbers, reducing fuel loads before fire season, and maintaining a viable rural industry, while protecting drinking water. **Contact:** Theresa Becchetti, Livestock/Natural Resource Advisor, University of California

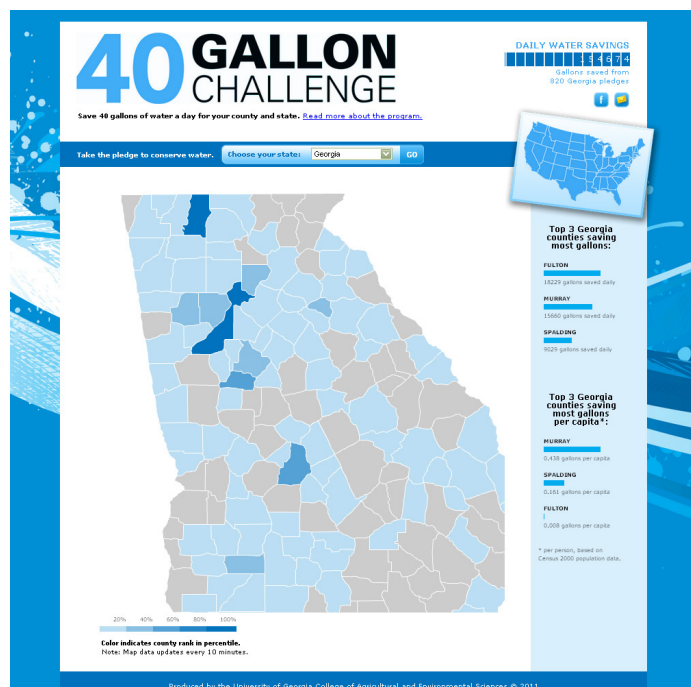
Cooperative Extension; phone: 209-525-6800 email:
tabecchetti@ucdavis.edu.

Minnesota Extension Works With Communities to Improve Water Quality – Wadena County residents were concerned about the water quality of Stocking Lake. Without data on the source of pollution, discussions on the topic became heated. Extension educators identified the various pollution sources but knew that just sharing the monitoring results wouldn't address the broader concerns of the community, or create a long-term solution. So, when bringing research findings to the residents for discussion, Extension also invited scientists, farmers, and community leaders to address common misconceptions and develop a plan. The meeting directly led to action: a farmer reduced runoff from his fields, individuals accepted responsibility for upgrading inad-



equate septic systems, and the association opened their membership to all watershed residents. The result will be cleaner water and a sustainable model for the future in which citizens take ownership of the water quality impacts within their watershed. **Contact:** Karen Terry, Extension Educator, University of Minnesota Extension; phone: 218-998-5787; email: kterry@umn.edu.

Conserving Water in Georgia – Recent droughts in Georgia have severely affected Cherokee County and surrounding counties in northwest Georgia. Cherokee County Extension recognized a critical need to address this severe drought situation and ongoing state water restrictions by teaching local citizens to conserve residential water. Community



education seminars were held and “The 40 Gallon Challenge” was created. Fifty rain barrels were given away to citizens who pledged to save a minimum of 40 gallons of water per day. The Cherokee County Master Gardener Speaker’s Bureau also taught water conservation in 21 seminars and plant clinics. Potential water savings were documented with the “40 Gallon Challenge” pledge cards and

follow up surveys at educational seminars. Then a website was created (www.40gallonchallenge.org) that allows people across the country to pledge. To date over 1,920 people have completed the “40 Gallon Challenge” and total pledges exceeded 342,000 gallons saved per day, or 124 million gallons per year. **Contact:** Paul J. Pugliese, Extension Agent, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension; phone: 770-387-5142; email: pugliese@uga.edu.

Wastewater Treatment in Nebraska – Nebraska’s groundwater and surface water quality can be protected by efficient wastewater treatment, but professionals need training on system design and sizing. University of Nebraska - Lincoln Extension staff offered this training; twelve 6-hour classes and one 2-hour class were attended by 315 professionals who annually impact about 3,427 systems that return 599,725 gallons of treated sewage to the environment each year. Nearly all of these professionals reported a better understanding of system sizing and design. A follow-up evaluation showed that one-third changed how they designed and installed systems, providing greater protection for water resources. Homeowner education was also identified as high need, so educational materials and a website (unl.edu/sewage) were created. **Contact:** Sharon O. Skipton, Extension Water Quality Educator, University of NebraskaLincoln Extension; phone: 402-472-3662; email: sskipton@unl.edu.

‘Win-Win-Win’ Situation for Lake Superior Shoreline in Minnesota – Shoreline stabilization is an important need along the North Shore of Lake Superior. A Minnesota Extension educator used grass roots connections and mediation skills to organize shoreline stabilization projects using waste blast rock from tunnel construction along Highway 61. This helped protect private lands and public recreation areas from erosion, helped the contractor dispose of waste rock, and benefited the state from efficient use of cost-share funds, resulting in a ‘win-win-win’ situation. **Contact:** Wayne Seidel, Extension Natural Resources Educator, University of Minnesota Extension; phone: 218-834-8377; email: seide002@umn.edu.

ANREP – Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals
National Office: ANREP, 4-402 Warnell School of Forestry & Natural Resources
University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-2152
President (2011): Dr. Mike Kuhns, Utah State University
Phone: 435-797-4056; Email: mike.kuhns@usu.edu
Website: www.anrep.org. Produced August 2011.