Forming Partnerships: 
The Mud Creek Urban Nonpoint Source Project

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Northwest Arkansas

- Experiencing exponential growth
- Urban areas infiltrating rural areas
- Urban storm water runoff increasing
- City residents unaware of their role in water quality

Mud Creek is a tributary to the Illinois River, one of the two major watersheds in Northwest Arkansas. The Mud Creek Project was the first to target urban nonpoint source pollution prevention in the state.
Partnership Formation

• Introduces varying perspectives
• Reaches new audiences
• Strengthens programs
• Accomplishes more
• Enhances credibility
• Provides permanence
Varied Perspectives

- Organizations
- Agencies
- Backgrounds
- Interests
- Experiences
Steering Committees

Local stakeholder input is invaluable to guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes.

and...

steering committee members also bring a network of connections to new potential partners, audiences, and resources.
Mud Creek Project
Mud Creek Project

Urban Water Quality Steering Committee

Schools

Local public officials

Civic Groups
Mud Creek Project

Pollution Prevention Partners

AWRC Water Quality Lab

Local public officials

University of Arkansas

Schools

Urban Water Quality Steering Committee

Storm Water Focus Team

Civic Groups

Master Gardeners

Arkansas Stream Teams

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Arkansas Stream Teams
The Cooperative Extension Service in Arkansas is familiar with certain segments of the population involved with agricultural, 4-H and soil testing programs.

By partnering with local government, civic organizations, educators, and business leaders who have their own familiar clientele-base, Extension has been able to tap into a network of new contacts for water quality education programs.
Touring on the “Kiwanis Circuit”

- Member of urban water quality steering committee was program coordinator for local Kiwanis Club
- Arranged educational presentation to his club
- Composed letter to all Kiwanis clubs in 4-County area promoting the program
- Presentations made to 6 Kiwanis Clubs
- 203 area residents heard the urban water quality message
NWA Regional Water/Wastewater Trainings

- The Fayetteville Wastewater Treatment Plant’s Laboratory Supervisor knew about Extension’s water quality education programs through the “Pollution Prevention Partners”

- She is responsible for developing quarterly training agendas for all of the water/wastewater operators in the region

- Since 1999, Cooperative Extension Service programs have been featured at 4 different training sessions

- 267 training participants learned about nonpoint source pollution prevention efforts and techniques
Educational programs are often expanded and improved as a direct result of partnership development.
Creekside Learning

5th Grade Students “Kick and Pick” for Creek Critters
When one teacher changed schools, her 7th grade Science students were then brought to the creek...
A parent chaperone arranged for additional programs where her second child attended school …
Tributary and Watershed Sign Programs

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**Kitty Creek**

This creek flows to Mud Creek, then to Clear Creek, then to the Illinois River.

It carries water which runs off from neighborhoods.

Please help keep it clean.

City of Fayetteville

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**Entering Illinois River Watershed**

This creek flows to Mud Creek, then to Clear Creek, then to the Illinois River.

It carries water which runs off from neighborhoods.

Please help keep it clean.

City of Fayetteville
Increased Accomplishments

The more partnerships established, the greater the impact of the water quality educational efforts.

This is true of partnerships with groups, agencies, individuals and the media.
“Train-the-Trainer” Programs

- 4-H Program Assistant Training
- County Agent In-Service
- Master Gardeners, Master Composters
- Teacher In-Service
- 4-H Teen Leaders
- High School Students

These help establish and expand successful programs
Master Composters

Youth programs
Workshops
Displays
Demonstration site
Media Partnerships

Storm Drain messages painted during a 4-H County Summer Camp were featured in local newspapers…
Local High School Conducted Design Contest
Public requests for messages painted at specific locations

Fayetteville begins ordering covers with messages forged into them
As effective partnerships are established, the reputation and credibility of the Cooperative Extension Service is enhanced and educational programs further expand and flourish.
Cities and Counties affected by Phase II Storm Water Regulations

Storm Water Education
12 Communities
2 Counties
University of Arkansas
“Storm Water Focus Team”
Regional Partnership

- Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission
- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
- University of Arkansas
- Washington County
- Washington County Environmental Affairs
- Cities of Fayetteville, Springdale, Bentonville, Rogers, Greenland, Farmington, and Lowell
Extension’s Role

- Fact sheet for public officials
- Phase II Storm Water Forum
- Education efforts spreadsheet
- Youth curriculum
- Presentations to civic groups
- Public awareness campaigns

Public education and outreach
Public participation/involvement
Storm Water Phase II
Focus Team

Willingness to work together helps:

- Communities understand new regulations
- Reduce the financial cost for communities
- Increases the effectiveness of the programs
- Protects water quality on a regional basis
It is imperative to find ways to institutionalize successful educational programs so that they continue long beyond the life of the grant.
Arkansas Stream Teams

Springdale 4-H Club
Savoy 4-H Club
Fayetteville High School’s “School Within A School”
Permanent messages on all new development
Stumbling Block

When developing partnerships, link to the organization not the individual to provide continuity and permanence

Example: Since 1997, seven different people have been in the “Environmental Educator” position - the key contact in our partnership with the Tri-County Solid Waste District
Capitalize on Partnering Opportunities!
Fayetteville’s
“Pollution Prevention Partners”

Fayetteville Wastewater Treatment Facility
(Operations Management, Inc.)

U of A Cooperative Extension Service

City of Fayetteville - Solid Waste Division

Tri-County Solid Waste Management District

University of Arkansas Physical Plant

*Formed in 1998 in response to well-publicized pesticide misuse/improper disposal incidents*
“Pollution Prevention Starts at Home”

- Public education program
- Proper use and disposal of household hazardous products
- 20 minute slide/LCD program
- Presented by Fayetteville’s “Pollution Prevention Partners”
From the “Pollution Prevention Partners” came...

→ Tri-County Solid Waste asked Extension to conduct a water quality program during a Teacher In-Service Training

→ Repeat broadcasts of the training were televised on the local cable channel

→ A teacher saw the program and contacted Extension to come to all of the 2nd grade classes at the school where she taught

→ The Fayetteville Public Librarian also saw the program and asked Extension to present a water quality program as part of their “Nature in Focus” lecture series
Extension has also turned to the “Pollution Prevention Partners”

- Paint for the storm drain stenciling has come from the Tri-County Solid Waste’s “Household Hazardous Waste Collection Trailer”
- 4-Hers have toured the Wastewater Treatment Plant as part of their “Wet and Wild” Summer Day Camp
- The City of Fayetteville Solid Waste Division offers tours of its Composting Facility as part of Extension’s Master Composter Training each year
- The Tri-County Solid Waste District hosted an Extension “Farm Pond Management Workshop”
- The U of A Physical plant has worked with Extension to set up a recycling program for the local County office
Partnership opportunities are everywhere – The key is to be prepared to look for them and act on them!