

# Watershed Exchange and Technology Partnership

USDA Forest Service  
Northeastern Area  
State and Private Forestry



**Description:** Forests play a critical role in providing a reliable supply of safe drinking water throughout the Northeast. Over 50 million people depend on surface water supplies that in turn rely on forests for protection. The Watershed Exchange and Technology (WET) Partnership facilitates the sharing of natural resource information and expertise on managing forested watersheds to protect and improve water quality while providing wildlife habitat, forest products, recreation, and scenic beauty.

The goal of the WET partnership is to “connect the forest to the faucet”. WET explores the science and practical watershed-based solutions related to the challenges of conserving, managing and restoring forest watersheds across public and private ownerships. By working together, the University of Massachusetts, the USDA Forest Service, and other partners learn and share state-of-the-art science on watershed structure, function, and biology for forest, agricultural, urban, and mixed land uses and tools for assessing and managing watersheds especially those providing drinking water supplies.

## Key Issues:

- Communication and Outreach – Explain the importance of forests to drinking water.
- Watershed Health – Document the effects of land management on watershed condition.
- Protection of Water Quality – Transfer technology through assessments and problem solving.
- Learning and Development – Provide education in watershed science and management.

**Accomplishments:** The following are completed WET Partnership activities:

- Collaborated with the Trust for Public Land in *Protecting the Source*, completing four demonstration projects assisting communities in protecting drinking water through land conservation.
- Provided source water analyses on five watersheds located in portions of six states.
- Exchanged watershed stewardship expertise for land protection and forest management.
- Drafted a manuscript and bibliographic data base of land use effects on watershed function and aquatic system health.

## Budget History:

Watershed Exchange and Technology Partnership (\$ Thousands)				
	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004
Forest Stewardship	\$80	\$25	\$30	\$30
Urban Forestry	30	0	20	30
U.S. EPA	60	60	\$0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$170</b>	<b>\$85</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$60</b>

**Future Direction:** These activities are planned to continue the support of watershed forestry:

- Publish a Technical Report of land use effects on watershed function and aquatic system health..
- Transfer watershed analysis methodology developed in the “*Protecting the Source*” project for use by states and forest watershed managers.
- Provide technical support and education for resource professionals.
- Complete a survey of training and information needs among watershed forestry professionals.
- Develop a WET internet site and other educational resources.
- Complete a Watershed Forest management Guidbook for forestry professionals.
- Assist in the analysis of data for the Forestry BMP Monitoring Protocol in the Northeastern Area.

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