

NRCS Rapid Watershed Assessments



Jan Surface

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NRCS Strategic Plan

Overarching Strategies

- Cooperative Conservation
- Watershed Approach
- Market-based Approach



Rapid Watershed Assessments

Provide a general picture of resource concerns, an estimate of the conservation needs, and an estimate of funding needs as well as potential sources of funding.



Rapid Watershed Assessment (RWA) Components

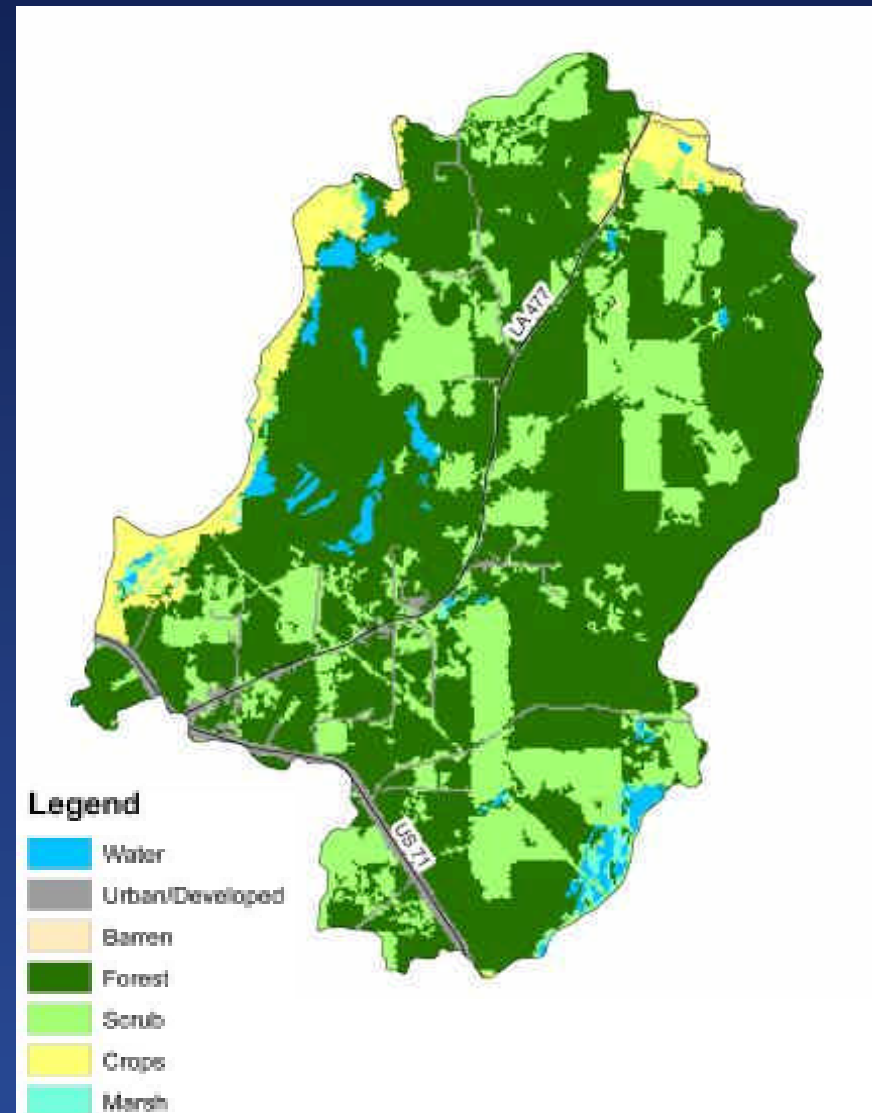
1. Watershed
Resource Profile
2. Summary
Assessment
Matrix



RWA Watershed Resource Profile

Typical Elements in a Profile

- Physical Description
- Land Use Map
- Precipitation Map
- Common Resource Areas
- Resource Concerns
- Census and Social Data
- 303d Impaired Waters
- Progress/Status
- References/Bibliography



RWA Summary Assessment Matrix

Contains:

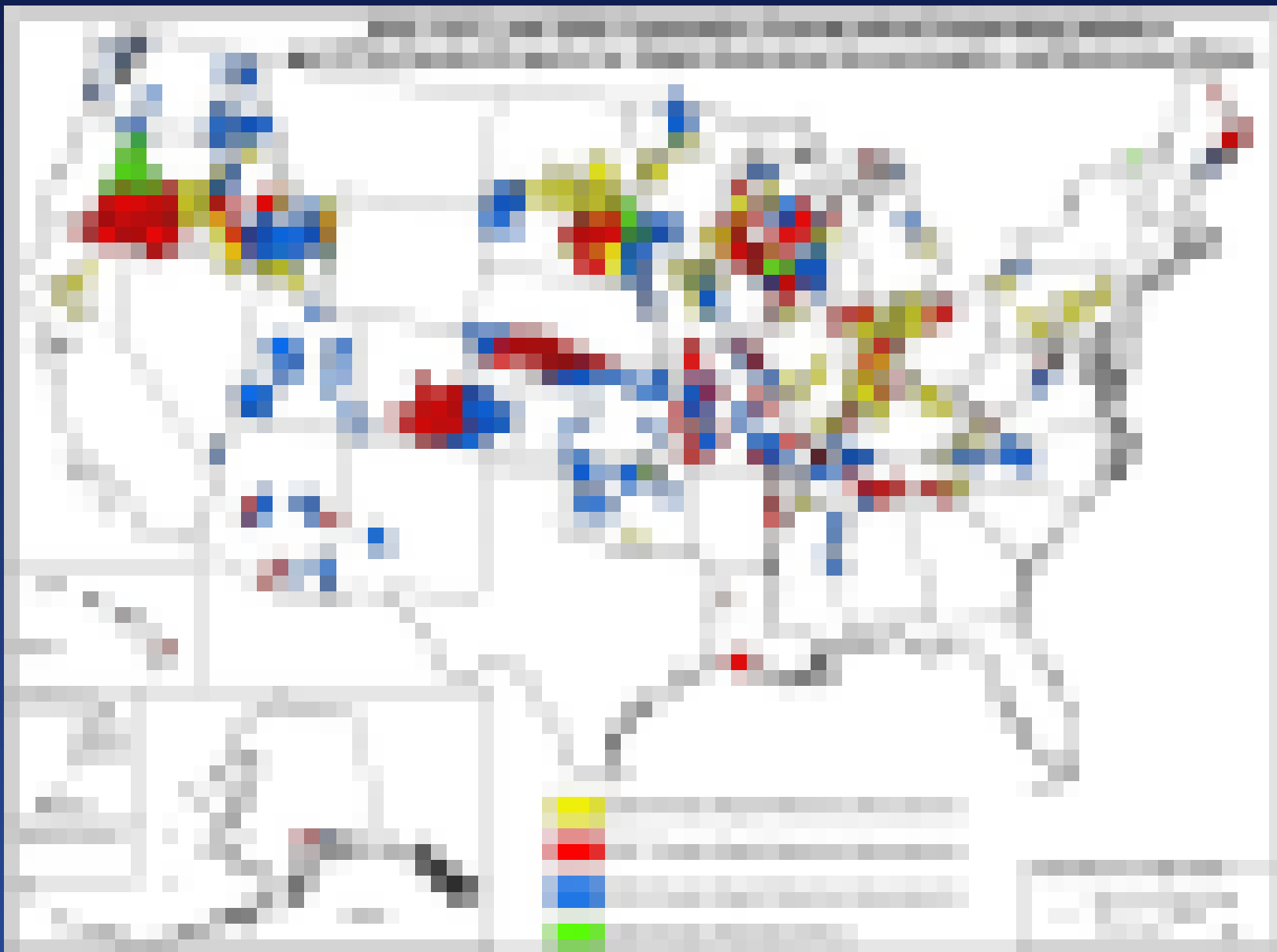
- **Current Conditions Table**—detailing the current level of conservation in the watershed
- **Future Conditions Table**—identifying appropriate suites of conservation practices needed to deal with the primary resource concerns for each major land use
- **Summary Table**—summarizing the various costs associated with the Resource Management System



WATERSHED NAME AND HUC		NACHES, WA – 17030002			LANDUSE ACRES 4,854	
LANDUSE TYPE		Pasture, Irrigated			TYPICAL UNIT SIZE 450	
Assessment Information					EST. PARTICIPATION 42%	
Conservation Systems by Treatment Level	Bench-mark	Future Conditions			Resource Concerns	
	Total Units	Existing Units	New Treatment Units	Total Units	Water Quantity	Water Quality
RMS			System Rating ->		5	4
Irrigation System, Sprinkler (ac.) 442	437	1,878	0	1,878	4	1
Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline (ft.) 430	1,079	4,638	0	4,638	5	0
Irrigation Water Management (ac.) 449	340	1,019	442	1,461	3	3
Nutrient Management (ac.) 590	340	1,019	442	1,461	0	5
Pasture & Hayland Planting (ac.) 512	146	553	73	626	2	2
Pest Management (ac.) 595	146	146	481	626	1	0
Pipeline (ft.) 516	216	928	0	928	3	0
Prescribed Grazing (ac.) 528	243	243	801	1,044	1	1
Pumping Plant (no.) 533	1	4	1	5	3	0
Residue Management, Seasonal (ac.) 344	146	146	481	626	1	-1
Water Well (no.) 642	1	1	4	5	2	0
Total Acreage at RMS Level		485	485	1602	2087	

Number of RWAs funded by NHQ

FY	Internal- West	Internal- Nation	External- West	External- Nation
2006	48	87	11	47
2007	47	163		
2008	24	110		
Total (130/407)	119	360	11	47



FY 2008 Accomplishments

- Funded \$2M to complete 110 RWAs in 22 States
- Complete “lessons learned” report for the FY06 CCPI-funded RWA pilot watersheds
- Provide national net-based training on developing RWA profiles and using assessment matrix template
- Updated RWA National website

Findings from 2006 Lessons Learned Questionnaire

- **54** out of the **59** Western RWAs in FY 2006 identified water quality and/or water quantity as one of the top four resource concerns
- RWA Assessment Matrices were developed that included conservation practices to address water quality and water quantity

Findings from 2006 Lessons Learned Questionnaire

How are RWAs being used within each State?

- Setting Local Priorities for Farm Bill Programs 44%
- **Prioritize Implementation of Conservation 68%**
- Set Future Staffing Levels 20%
- Marketing Tool for Programs 44%
- **Information Source for Grant Proposal 88%**
- ID Partnerships to Leverage Funding 50%
- **Platform for more extensive planning 76%**

Findings from 2006 Lessons Learned Questionnaire

Who's Using RWAs?

- **NRCS 82%** (Field 58%, Area 63%, State 79%, Multi-State 27%)
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts 68%
- State Technical Advisory Committee 18%
- Resource Conservation and Development 59%
- Local Work Groups 63%
- Federal Agencies 23%
- State Agencies 63%
- Non-profits 41%

Future RWA Activities in FY 2009

- Updated guidance, based on input from lessons learned questionnaires
- Evaluate results from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)/RWA streamlining pilot
- Second RWA NetMeeting training
- Request continued national funding for RWAs
- National Cartography and Geospatial Center working on automating part of GIS for profiles

Rapid Watershed Assessment Information on the Web



<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/rwa/index.html>

NRCS State RWA Info on the Web

- **Arizona**
- **Colorado**
- Delaware
- **Idaho**
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- Nebraska
- **Nevada (coming soon)**
- North Dakota
- Oklahoma
- **Oregon**
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- **Utah**
- Virginia
- **Washington**
- Wisconsin

Questions/Comments

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