

GAO

Fact Sheet for the Chairman, Committee  
on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry,  
U.S. Senate

March 1992

# WATER QUALITY

## Information on USDA's Water Quality Cost-Share Programs



146365

**RESTRICTED**

**RESTRICTED--Not to be released outside the  
General Accounting Office unless specifically  
approved by the Office of Congressional  
Relations.**

553830

---

---



United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Resources, Community, and  
Economic Development Division

B-247791

March 16, 1992

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Chairman, Committee on Agriculture,  
Nutrition, and Forestry  
United States Senate

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In response to your July 19, 1991, request, and as subsequently agreed with your office, this fact sheet presents information on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) programs that provide cost-sharing for water quality activities. For the purpose of this fact sheet, the term "cost-share payments" refers to moneys provided to producers--generally, eligible farmers and ranchers--to implement USDA-approved water quality activities on their land. Throughout this fact sheet, we refer to these programs as "water quality cost-share programs."

Our information covers the 5-year period of fiscal years 1988 through 1992 and relates to (1) USDA's programs that provide cost-share payments to producers to protect or enhance water quality; (2) the activities that protect or enhance water quality, in particular, those activities that are eligible for cost-sharing under these programs; and (3) the funding of these programs. The following is a summary of the information gathered:

- USDA currently has 10 programs that provide cost-sharing to enhance or protect water quality. Three of these water quality cost-share programs are dedicated solely to the protection or enhancement of water quality. The remaining seven have activities that benefit water quality, although their primary purpose is other than water quality.
- USDA currently has 92 activities that protect or enhance water quality and are eligible for cost-share funding under these programs. These activities include, among other things, the planting of vegetative cover to

prevent soil erosion and related water contamination, fertilizer and nutrient management, and well testing.

-- Total appropriated funding for these 10 programs equaled approximately \$1.71 billion in fiscal year 1991. Of this total appropriated amount, about \$62.5 million, or about 4 percent, was used for water quality activities. Of the \$62.5 million, about \$39.7 million was used to provide cost-share payments to producers. The remaining dollars were used for purposes other than water quality cost-sharing.

-- The Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP) is the largest water quality cost-share program. In fiscal year 1991 ACP made available about two-thirds of the \$39.7 million in total cost-share payments provided to agricultural producers.

This fact sheet is divided into three sections. Section 1 contains information on USDA's 10 programs that provide water quality cost-share payments to producers. Section 2 contains information on water quality activities eligible for cost-sharing. Section 3 contains information on the funding of the programs, including total appropriated program funding, the water quality portion of this total funding, and the amount that went to producers in the form of cost-sharing.

#### SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

To obtain information for this fact sheet, we gathered and analyzed program and budget data from USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) and the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). We interviewed USDA officials to discuss these and other water quality-related data. We also reviewed prior GAO reports on water quality. We discussed a draft of this fact sheet with responsible USDA officials and have included their comments where appropriate.

We conducted our work between July 1991 and February 1992, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. However, we did not independently verify the data provided by either ASCS or SCS.

- - - - -

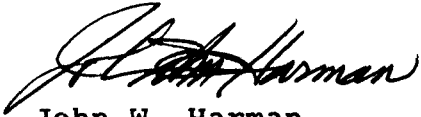
As arranged with your office, unless you announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this

B-247791

fact sheet until 30 days after the date of this letter. At that time, we will send copies to the Secretary of Agriculture and the Director, Office of Management and Budget. We will make copies available to others on request.

Please contact me on (202) 275-5138 if you or your staff have any questions. Major contributors to this fact sheet are listed in appendix I.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John W. Harman".

John W. Harman  
Director, Food and  
Agriculture Issues

CONTENTS

		<u>Page</u>
LETTER		1
SECTION		
1	USDA'S WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAMS	6
	What Are USDA's Water Quality Cost-Share Programs?	6
	What Are the Water Quality Features of These Programs and the Payment Limits?	7
2	WATER QUALITY ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR COST-SHARING UNDER USDA'S WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAMS	11
	What Activities Are Eligible for Cost-Sharing?	11
3	FUNDING OF USDA'S WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAMS, FISCAL YEARS 1988-92	15
	What Is the Total Appropriated Funding for Each Program?	15
	How Much of the Appropriated Funding Goes to Water Quality?	16
	How Much Money Is Provided to Participants in the Form of Cost-Share Payments?	17
	What Programs Provide the Largest Amount of Cost-Share Payments?	18
APPENDIX		
I	MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS FACT SHEET	19
TABLE		
1.1	USDA Cost-Share Programs That Benefit Water Quality	7
2.1	Eligible Water Quality Activities and Applicable Programs	12
3.1	Total Appropriated Program Funding	15
3.2	Program Funding for Water Quality	16
3.3	Program Funding for Water Quality Cost-Share Activities	17

## ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	Agricultural Conservation Program
ASCS	Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program
CRSC	Colorado River Salinity Control Program
FACT	Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade
FS	Forest Service
GPCP	Great Plains Conservation Program
RAMP	Rural Abandoned Mine Program
RCWP	Rural Clean Water Program
SCS	Soil Conservation Service
SIP	Stewardship Incentive Program
SWP	Small Watershed Program
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
WBP	Water Bank Program
WQIP	Water Quality Incentive Projects

## SECTION 1

### USDA'S WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAMS

This section responds to questions regarding the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) programs that provide cost-share payments to producers to protect or enhance water quality. Cost-share payments are moneys provided to producers--generally eligible farmers and ranchers--to implement USDA-approved activities on their land. For most of the programs, cost-share dollars are distributed through state Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation (ASC) committees to county committees, which allocate funding to participants. Cost-share dollars are usually available under annual or long-term agreements; the length of the agreements and the cost-share portion vary from program to program. For example, under the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP), USDA may share up to 75 percent of the cost of installing fencing under an annual agreement, with an annual limit of \$3,500 per participant. In this example, if the fencing was installed at a cost of \$5,000, USDA would pay a maximum of \$3,500--even though 75 percent of the cost would be \$3,750. The producer would pay the remaining \$1,500.

#### WHAT ARE USDA'S WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAMS?

USDA has 10 programs that provide cost-sharing to producers to implement activities that protect or enhance water quality: Great Plains Conservation Program (GPCP), Rural Abandoned Mine Program (RAMP), Small Watershed Program (SWP), ACP, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Colorado River Salinity Control (CRSC) Program, Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP), Stewardship Incentive Program (SIP), Water Bank Program (WBP), and the Water Quality Incentive Projects (WQIP).

Of the 10 programs, the following 3 are dedicated solely to enhancing or protecting water quality:

- RCWP was initiated in 1980 as an experimental program to develop and test ways of controlling agricultural nonpoint-source water pollution in rural areas. RCWP is presently being evaluated to determine the results of the program.
- The CRSC Program, authorized by the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Act of 1974, is intended to reduce the amount of salt in the Colorado River and is limited to the seven states that comprise the Colorado River Basin.
- WQIP is being implemented in fiscal year 1992 under ACP. The goal of WQIP is to achieve source reduction of agricultural pollutants by implementing water quality activities in an



environmentally and economically sound manner. For the purpose of clarifying the funding section of this fact sheet (sec. 3), WQIP will be listed separately from ACP.

The remaining seven water quality cost-share programs have water quality as a secondary benefit.

WHAT ARE THE WATER QUALITY FEATURES OF THESE PROGRAMS AND THE PAYMENT LIMITS?

Table 1.1 lists each water quality cost-share program; the water quality features of each program; and the year the water quality provisions were added to the program, if applicable. In addition, the table lists the program's main purpose, the year that these programs were authorized, and the maximum cost-share amounts available to producers or landowners. These programs constitute all of the water quality cost-share programs implemented by USDA.

Table 1.1: USDA Cost-Share Programs That Benefit Water Quality

<u>Program name</u>	<u>Year authorized</u>	<u>Main program purpose</u>	<u>Water quality changes to program and year added</u>	<u>Payment limits</u>
GPCP	1956	Promotes conservation in areas with high soil erosion levels	Reducing agricultural water pollution, 1969	Up to 80% of total cost of the activity, with a limit of \$35,000 per contract
RAMP	1977	Reclaims certain abandoned coal-mined lands in rural areas	<sup>a</sup>	25% to 100% of the total cost of the activity

<u>Program name</u>	<u>Year authorized</u>	<u>Main program purpose</u>	<u>Water quality changes to program and year added</u>	<u>Payment limits</u>
SWP	1954	Provides assistance to encourage activities that prevent flooding	<sup>a</sup>	Up to 50% of the construction cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$100,000 per participant for the life of the program
ACP	1936	Provides financial assistance to solve a wide range of agricultural conservation and environmental problems	Agricultural pollution abatement, 1971	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$3,500 per participant per year
CRP	1985	Encourages conservation and improvements in soil and water resources by removing land from production and establishing permanent cover	Use of "filter strips," <sup>b</sup> 1988  Expanded to include environmentally sensitive lands and special designated areas for water quality, 1990	Up to 50% of the total cost of establishing cover  Annual payments--up to \$50,000 per participant

<u>Program name</u>	<u>Year authorized</u>	<u>Main program purpose</u>	<u>Water quality changes to program and year added</u>	<u>Payment limits</u>
CRSC Program	1974	Provides financial and technical assistance to protect, reduce, and monitor the salt level of the Colorado River	USDA role in establishing an on-farm salinity control program, 1984	Up to 70% of total cost of the activity
RCWP	1980	Develops and tests ways of controlling agricultural nonpoint-source water pollution in rural areas	a	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$50,000 per participant for the life of the program
SIP	1990	Encourages more intensive management of natural resources on private lands to provide increased timber supplies, improved habitat for fish and wildlife, and recreational opportunities	a	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$10,000 per participant per year

<u>Program name</u>	<u>Year authorized</u>	<u>Main program purpose</u>	<u>Water quality changes to program and year added</u>	<u>Payment limits</u>
WBP	1970	Conserves water and preserves, maintains, and improves migratory waterfowl habitat through 10-year land use agreements	<sup>a</sup>	Up to 75% of the total cost of the activity, with a maximum of \$3,500 per participant per year  Annual payments--no limit on the amount that landowners or operators may receive in any calendar year
WQIP	1990	Incorporates a farm level practice or system of practices designed to protect water quality by mitigating or reducing agricultural pollutants	<sup>a</sup>	An incentive payment of up to \$25 per acre, with a maximum of \$3,500 per year

<sup>a</sup>Water quality benefits were not added to these programs because they were included in original legislation.

<sup>b</sup>"Filter strips" are strips of land along bodies of water that serve as filters for sediment and chemical runoff from farm fields.

## SECTION 2

### WATER QUALITY ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR COST-SHARING UNDER USDA'S WATER QUALITY COST-SHARE PROGRAMS

This section deals with questions regarding the activities eligible for cost-sharing under USDA's water quality cost-share programs.

#### WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR COST-SHARING?

The Soil Conservation Service (SCS), the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), and the Forest Service (FS) have designated 172 different soil and water conservation activities that are eligible for cost-sharing. Of these 172 activities, 92 are considered water quality activities. These water quality activities range from the record keeping of farm activities on individual fields and installing fencing to prevent livestock from contaminating water, to waste management systems and structures for the storage of livestock and vegetative waste to prevent water contamination. Not all of these water quality activities are eligible for cost-sharing under each program. Yet, more than one-half of the 92 water quality activities may be eligible for cost-sharing under five or more programs. One activity that benefits water quality--Critical Area Planting, which has the purpose of stabilizing soil and reducing damage to water from sediment--may be cost-shared under all of the programs.

Although these activities are designated as being eligible for cost-sharing at the national level, states and counties have the option to deny eligibility for any of the activities. In addition, no producer may receive funding from more than one federal program for the same activity. Table 2.1 lists the 92 water quality activities and shows the programs under which the activities are eligible.

**Table 2.1: Eligible Water Quality Activities and Applicable Programs**

Activities	GPCCP	RAMP	SWP	ACP	CRP	CRSC	RCWP	SIP	WBP	WQIP
Woodland Access Road Stabilization							X			
Water Quality Improvement Through Woodland Improvement							X			
Waste Management System	X		X	X			X			X
Waste Storage Structure	X		X	X			X			
Brush Management	X	X	X	X						X
Irrigation Canal or Lateral	X		X	X		X				
Channel Vegetation	X		X	X			X			
Conservation Cover	X	X	X		X					X
Conservation Cropping Sequence	X			X			X			X
Conservation Tillage	X			X			X			X
Contour Farming	X		X	X			X			X
Prescribed Burning	X	X	X					X	X	X
Cover and Green Manure Crop	X			X	X		X			X
Critical Area Planting	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Crop Residue Use	X			X			X			X
Sediment Basin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Deferred Grazing	X	X		X						X
Dike	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Waste Transfer				X			X			
Waste Treatment Lagoon	X		X	X			X			
Diversion	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Pond	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Fencing	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		
Fertilizer Management							X			
Field Borders	X	X	X	X			X			
Irrigation Field Ditch	X		X	X		X				
Field Windbreaks	X		X	X	X		X	X		
Filter Strip	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Grade Stabilization Structure	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Grasses and Legumes in Rotation	X			X			X			X
Grassed Waterway	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Waste Storage Pond	X		X	X			X			

Activities	GPCF	RAMP	SWP	ACP	CRP	CRSC	RCWP	SIP	WBP	WQIP
Irrigation Water Conveyance, Ditch, and Canal Lining	X		X	X		X	X			
Irrigation Water Conveyance, Pipeline	X		X	X		X	X			
Irrigation System, Trickle (Drip)	X		X	X	X	X	X	X		
Irrigation System, Sprinkler	X		X	X		X	X	X		
Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface	X		X	X		X	X	X		
Irrigation System, Tailwater Recovery	X		X	X		X	X			
Irrigation Water Management	X			X			X			X
Irrigation Land Leveling	X		X	X		X	X			
Land Smoothing	X	X	X	X		X	X			
Lined Waterway or Outlet	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Livestock Exclusion	X	X		X			X		X	X
Livestock Shade Structure							X			
Mulching	X	X	X	X			X	X		X
Obstruction Removal	X	X	X	X			X			
Pasture and Hayland Management	X	X		X	X		X		X	X
Pasture and Hayland Planting	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Pesticide Management							X			
Pipeline	X	X	X	X			X			
Pond Sealing or Lining	X	X	X	X			X			
Proper Grazing Use	X	X					X			X
Proper Woodland Grazing	X	X					X			X
Pumping Plant for Water Control	X		X				X			
Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment	X		X	X						X
Range Seeding	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Irrigation Pit or Regulation Reservoir	X		X	X		X				
Regulating Water Drainage System	X		X							X
Planned Grazing System	X	X					X			X
Row Arrangement	X									X
Roof Runoff Management	X		X	X			X			
Roofing for Runoff Control							X			
Heavy Use Area Protection	X	X	X	X			X			
Sinkhole Treatment	X	X	X				X			
Spoil Spreading	X	X	X				X			
Spring Development	X	X	X	X			X	X		

Activities	GPCP	RAMP	SWP	ACP	CRP	CRSC	RCWP	SIP	WBP	WQIP
Stock Trails and Walkways	X	X		X			X			
Streambank and Shoreline Protection	X	X	X	X			X	X		
Stripcropping, Contour	X		X	X	X		X			X
Stripcropping, Field	X		X	X			X			X
Structure for Water Control	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	
Stripcropping, Wind	X		X	X	X		X			X
Nutrient Management	X			X			X	X		X
Pest Management	X			X			X			X
Terrace	X		X	X	X		X			
Subsurface Drain	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Surface Drainage, Field Ditch	X	X	X	X			X			
Surface Drainage - Main or Lateral	X	X	X	X			X			
Toxic Salt Reduction	X		X	X	X	X				X
Tree Planting	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Trough or Tank	X		X	X			X			
Underground Outlet	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Waste Utilization	X		X	X			X			X
Wash Water Recovery							X			
Water and Sediment Control Basin	X	X	X	X	X		X			
Well	X			X			X			
Well Plugging							X			
Wildlife Wetland Habitat Management	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Wildlife Upland Habitat Management	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Windbreak Renovation	X			X				X		X
Well Testing										X
Record Keeping										X



SECTION 3

FUNDING OF USDA'S WATER QUALITY  
COST-SHARE PROGRAMS, FISCAL YEARS 1988-92

This section discusses questions regarding the funding of USDA's water quality cost-share programs from fiscal years 1988 through 1992. Specifically, it provides data on (1) the total appropriated funding for each of the programs; (2) the portion of the appropriated funding that is for water quality; and (3) the amount of this water quality funding that is provided to producers in the form of cost-sharing.

WHAT IS THE TOTAL APPROPRIATED  
FUNDING FOR EACH PROGRAM?

Table 3.1 shows the amount that was funded for each of the 10 water quality cost-share programs from fiscal year 1988 through fiscal year 1992.

Table 3.1: Total Appropriated Program Funding

Dollars in Millions

<u>Program</u>	<u>Fiscal year</u>				
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>
GPCP	\$20.4	\$20.4	\$20.9	\$24.6	\$25.2
RAMP <sup>a</sup>	14.5	12.4	12.0	11.7	11.8
SWP	136.1	136.1	135.1	138.9	138.9
ACP	176.9	176.9	182.4	190.1	194.4
CRP	1,085.8 <sup>b</sup>	1,727.5	1,011.0	1,314.9	1,611.3
CRSC	4.9	5.5	10.3	14.8	14.8
RCWP <sup>c</sup>	0	0	0	0	0
SIP <sup>a,d</sup>	e	e	e	e	19.7
WBP	8.4	9.0	12.3	13.6	18.6
WQIP <sup>d</sup>	e	e	e	e	6.8
Total	<u>\$1,447.0</u>	<u>\$2,087.8</u>	<u>\$1,384.0</u>	<u>\$1,708.6</u>	<u>\$2,041.5</u>

<sup>a</sup>These programs are administered by USDA but funded by the U.S. Department of the Interior's appropriation.

<sup>b</sup>Not an appropriated program for 1988. Funds were transferred from the Commodity Credit Corporation.

<sup>c</sup>Funding for the entirety of this program was appropriated in fiscal years 1980 and 1981 and distributed over the duration of the program.

<sup>d</sup>Programs initiated by 1990 Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade (FACT) Act; therefore, only funding appropriated for fiscal year 1992 is available.

<sup>e</sup>Not applicable.

HOW MUCH OF THE APPROPRIATED FUNDING GOES TO WATER QUALITY?

Table 3.2 illustrates the water quality portion of the appropriated budgets for the 10 USDA programs. As shown by comparing table 3.2 with table 3.1, most of the funding for these programs is used for purposes other than water quality. For example, in fiscal year 1988, \$41 million, or about 3 percent of the total \$1.45 billion for all appropriated dollars, was used for water quality purposes. In fiscal year 1991, this amount increased to \$62.5 million, or about 4 percent of the total \$1.71 billion in that year. USDA estimates that in fiscal year 1992, about \$89.6 million (not including SIP because these data could not be estimated) will be used for water quality activities for these programs.

Table 3.2: Program Funding for Water Quality

Dollars in Millions

<u>Program</u>	<u>Fiscal year</u>				
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>
GPCP	\$5.1	\$5.1	\$6.1	\$6.2	\$6.4
RAMP	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4
SWP	2.7	1.2	2.2	1.0	1.6
ACP	14.2	16.9	23.9	26.5	33.3
CRP	.4	1.6	2.5	5.9	12.3
CRSC	3.6	4.3	7.7	9.7	14.8
RCWP	3.3	2.1	2.2	1.4	1.0
SIP <sup>a</sup>	b	b	b	b	b
WBP	8.8	8.6	8.6	9.5	11.0
WQIP <sup>a</sup>	b	b	b	b	6.8
Total	<u>\$41.0</u>	<u>\$42.3</u>	<u>\$55.6</u>	<u>\$62.5</u>	<u>\$89.6</u>

Note: Water quality funding includes annual rental payments, where applicable; cost-share amounts; and technical assistance.

<sup>a</sup>Programs are being implemented in fiscal year 1992.

<sup>b</sup>Not applicable.

HOW MUCH MONEY IS PROVIDED TO PARTICIPANTS  
IN THE FORM OF COST-SHARE PAYMENTS?

The percentage of water quality dollars given to program participants through cost-sharing has remained constant over the 4-year period fiscal years 1988-91--equaling approximately 65 percent. The remaining 35 percent of water quality funds were used for other than cost-sharing activities. Table 3.3 illustrates the cost-share payments provided to program participants over the time period fiscal years 1988-92.

Table 3.3: Program Funding for Water Quality Cost-Share Activities

Dollars in Millions

<u>Program</u>	<u>Fiscal year</u>				
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992<sup>a</sup></u>
GPCP	\$5.1	\$5.1	\$6.1 <sup>b</sup>	\$6.2 <sup>b</sup>	\$5.5
RAMP	2.0	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.5
SWP	1.5	.7	1.2	.6	.9
ACP	13.4	15.9	22.4	25.0	31.4
CRP	0.4	0.7	0.6	1.8	2.4
CRSC	1.8	2.3	3.3	3.8	8.6
RCWP	2.3	1.3	1.0	.8	.5
SIP <sup>c</sup>	d	d	d	d	d
WBP	.2	0	0	.1	.1
WQIP <sup>c</sup>	<u>d</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>6.4</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$26.7</u></b>	<b><u>\$27.6</u></b>	<b><u>\$36.1</u></b>	<b><u>\$39.7</u></b>	<b><u>\$57.3</u></b>

Note: Cost-share funding refers to payments provided to producers to implement USDA-approved activities on their land.

<sup>a</sup>Data were estimated by USDA.

<sup>b</sup>Includes money targeted to special GPCP water quality projects.

<sup>c</sup>Programs are being implemented in fiscal year 1992.

<sup>d</sup>Not applicable.

WHAT PROGRAMS PROVIDE THE LARGEST  
AMOUNT OF COST-SHARE PAYMENTS?

Of the 10 water quality cost-share programs, ACP provides the largest amount of cost-share dollars to water quality activities. During the 4-year period fiscal years 1988-91, ACP provided, on average, more than one-half of all USDA water quality cost-share dollars. Furthermore, in addition to the substantial portion of all USDA water quality cost-share funding provided by ACP, a high percentage of ACP water quality funds go to cost-share activities. For example, for fiscal year 1991, about 94 percent, or \$25 million, of ACP's water quality funding went to providing cost-share dollars to participants.

ACP currently provides cost-share dollars through three projects that are dedicated solely to water quality.

- Hydrologic unit areas, which assist farmers and ranchers in voluntarily applying conservation practices to achieve water quality goals. In fiscal years 1990 and 1991, 74 hydrologic unit areas were selected in the United States.
- Demonstration projects, which accelerate the adoption of new water quality technology and demonstrate cost-effective agricultural practices. In fiscal years 1990 and 1991, 16 demonstration projects were funded.
- Water quality special projects, which emphasize improving ground and surface water quality that have been impaired through pollution from agricultural nonpoint sources. In fiscal year 1991, 35 special projects were selected.

In fiscal year 1992, WQIP has been subsumed under ACP, and sites for water quality activities will be selected under the existing hydrologic unit areas, demonstration projects, and water quality special projects.

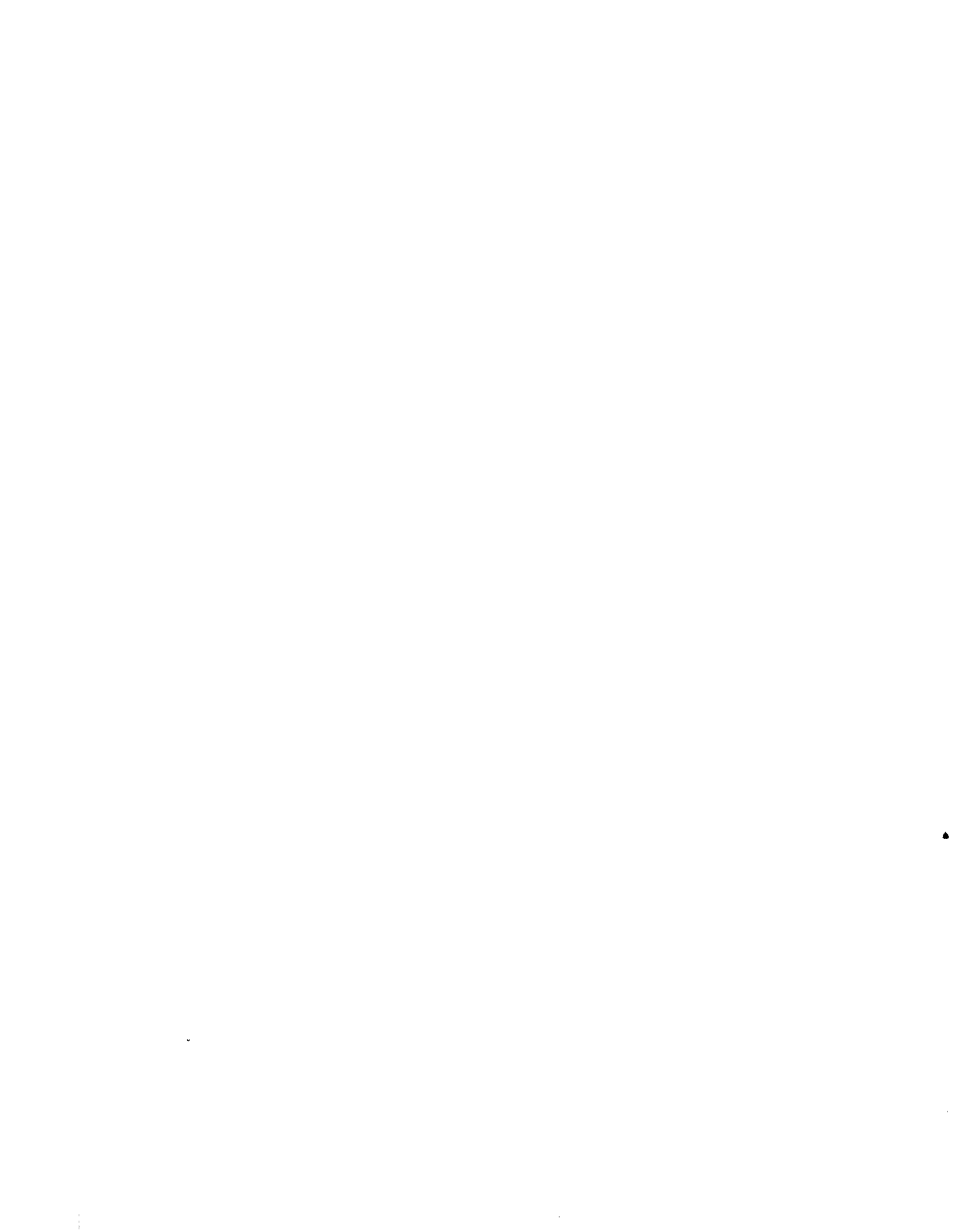
The next largest water quality cost-share program during fiscal years 1988-91 was the GPCP, which has about 17 percent of the total USDA water quality cost-share dollars, on average. In fiscal year 1991, \$6.2 million was provided in cost-share dollars to participants in this program.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS FACT SHEET

RESOURCES, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Luther L. Atkins, Assistant Director  
Daniel M. Haas, Assignment Manager  
Robert E. Seelinger, Advisor  
Valerie A. Rogers, Evaluator-in-Charge

(150527)



---

### **Ordering Information**

**The first copy of each GAO report is free. Additional copies are \$2 each. Orders should be sent to the following address, accompanied by a check or money order made out to the Superintendent of Documents, when necessary. Orders for 100 or more copies to be mailed to a single address are discounted 25 percent.**

**U.S. General Accounting Office  
P.O. Box 6015  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877**

**Orders may also be placed by calling (202) 275-6241.**

---

**United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548**

**Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use \$300**

**First-Class Mail  
Postage & Fees Paid  
GAO  
Permit No. G100**

---