
SOURCE WATER COLLABORATIVE

UNITED TO PROTECT AMERICA'S SOURCES OF DRINKING WATER

Our Mission

We, the undersigned organizations committed to safe drinking water, hereby agree to work together at the source – on the lakes, streams, rivers and aquifers we tap for drinking water and on the land which protects and recharges those bodies of water.

As the population grows and the countryside develops, drinking water protection should be integrated into land use planning and stewardship; road, sewer and water projects; farming, industry and development practices; waste disposal methods; watershed planning, protection and clean-up; and the routine decisions Americans make every day.

This is because the quality, quantity and cost of drinking water depend not only on treatment and distribution, but also on land stewardship and planning decisions. A broader set of actors – including policymakers, agricultural interests and the business community – needs to routinely consider their impact on the sources of drinking water. The impact is not always obvious. Decision makers should consider clearly visible point sources such as wastewater pipes, but also more diffuse origins of water pollution, such as runoff from farms, lawns and roadways.

The time to act is now. New assessments of drinking water sources, years in the making, are now complete for nearly all 160,000 public water systems in the country. While additional monitoring data is needed, more is available than ever before. What's more, as our population continues to grow and water demands continue to increase, the recent droughts and disasters have underscored our dependence on a safe and reliable water supply. Indeed, this is a time of opportunity: Action now can protect drinking water sources for generations to come.

How We Intend to Work

Working together will combine the strengths of our diverse set of member organizations. It will also require a shared understanding of how we will work and what we intend to accomplish. By participating in the Source Water Collaborative, we agree to do the following:

- Share information with each other through regular communication and during quarterly meetings. This includes

sharing our most recent finding around the best practices in source water protection and the needs of people who make the decisions for both community planning and stewardship purposes.

- Develop recommendations together with stakeholders in land stewardship and planning, beginning with this document, about what is needed to protect sources of drinking water.
- Package and disseminate these recommendations, through the membership of our organizations, with partners and through the media, in ways that are useful in land use and stewardship decisions.

The collaborative has developed an initial action plan. But this is only a start. We expect our action plan to mature and change as we use authorities we have, reach out for new partners, and look for more ways to help key players integrate drinking water protection into their decisions around land stewardship and planning.

Goals & Objectives

To do this, the Source Water Collaborative will encourage actions that:

- Contain or prevent contaminants, including pesticides, fertilizer, industrial waste, petroleum by-products and other runoff, from reaching the sources of our drinking water;
- Promote development patterns that limit threats to the integrity of lakes, rivers, ground water, water recharge areas or other sources of drinking water;
- Encourage matching uses of land with locations least likely to affect current or future sources of drinking water; and preserve the land needed to protect the quality of current and future sources of drinking water.
- This statement expresses our intent. It does not create any rights or benefits substantive or procedural, enforceable at or in equity by any person against any party to this statement. By signing below, we pledge to cooperate as outlined above to help all Americans – from homeowners to farmers to local official to business owners – protect our sources of drinking water.

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