

## Introduction

In 1972 Congress enacted the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, more commonly known as the Clean Water Act. This law, which completely revised the original 1948 act, provided the means to pursue a federal goal for the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. The Act has been revised three times since 1972, most recently in 1987.

With enactment of the 1987 amendments, which became law on February 4, 1987, a new emphasis was placed on sources of water pollution that are diffuse in nature, rather than distinct, end-of-pipe discharges. Section 319 of the Act required states to develop "nonpoint source management programs." Colorado's program was initiated that year, and the Colorado Nonpoint Source Council was established as a work group and advisory group to the Water Quality Control Division on nonpoint source issues.

Nonpoint source pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, depositing them into both surface water and ground water. Colorado's first assessment of nonpoint pollution sources was published in 1988, and the Nonpoint Source Management Plan was produced in 1989. The first funds allocated for on-the-ground restoration activities came from the construction grant program in 1989. In 1990, Congress appropriated funds specifically for Section 319(h), the Nonpoint Source Grant Program.

Between 1990 and 2000, Colorado was allocated more than \$11 million in federal funds to implement its nonpoint source program. The case studies that follow describe some of the efforts funded in the first 10 years

of Congressional appropriations.

The dictionary defines success as "a favorable or desired outcome." For the Nonpoint Source Program, the desired outcome may vary widely. Of course, the most coveted outcome is improved water quality. Improvements may be described as aquatic habitat restoration or reduced pollutant loads or attaining water quality standards in an impaired stream. With nonpoint sources, it can

take years to measure actual improvements in water quality.

In a program where implementation is strongly dependent upon

the voluntary actions of landowners and stakeholders in a watershed, it is important to identify interim measures of success, as well. These case studies provide examples of the wide range of success, from outreach to a specific audience to demonstrations of emerging technologies to the return of fish to a stream. Each effort takes us one step closer to the ultimate goal of the Clean Water Act: fishable, swimmable streams.

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