



## **The Bowman - Haley Watershed Project - Conservation Planning Succeeds in North Dakota**

Originally developed in 1990, the Bowman/Hayley Watershed Project has become a model for improving the quality of North Dakota's waters. Project efforts funded in 1990 and again in 1994 focus on controlling the flow of nutrients and sediments from agricultural lands. To reduce the delivery of these pollutants to the reservoir and improve water quality, the project staff provide one-on-one technical assistance to local producers and help them develop conservation plans for their farms and ranches.

The basic purpose of conservation planning is to evaluate potential nonpoint source pollutants on the farm or ranch and remediate them by installing the most appropriate best management practice (BMP). Financial assistance is provided through various USDA programs. The 319 funding also offsets costs associated with the installation of BMPs.

In conjunction with conservation planning, the Bowman/Hayley Watershed Project coordinates efforts with the Cooperative Extension Service to provide information and educational activities to project participants and other watershed residents. Increasing the public's awareness of the impacts of non-point source pollution on water quality is a primary goal of the project along with reducing the delivery rate of nutrients and sediments to the reservoir.

### **Project accomplishments**

To date, the project has developed one livestock waste management plan and farm or ranch management plans that collectively cover 2,460 acres of cropland, 4,860 acres of rangeland, 1,543 acres of pasture land, 1,194 acres of hayland, and 246 acres of farmstead or wildlife habitat. Over 50 percent of the watershed's acreage is under some type of conservation plan.

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Project staff have also organized and conducted several information and education events and assisted the North Dakota Department of Health in promoting nonpoint source pollution control in other areas of the state. Water quality data indicate that the median concentrations for phosphorus and total suspended solids have also declined over the past three years.