

## AGRICULTURE

# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Conducted by: Colorado Cattlemen's Association

On the Web: [www.cca.beef.org](http://www.cca.beef.org)

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Project Partners: Colorado State University Cooperative Extension, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Environmental Protection Agency, Delta County Livestock Association, Eagle County Cattlemen's Association, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association, Holy Cross Cattlemen's Association, La Plata/Archuleta Counties Cattlemen's Association, Mancos Cattlemen's Association, Mesa County Cattlemen's Association, Middle Park Stockgrowers' Association, Moffat County Cattlemen's Association, Ouray County Cattlemen's Association, Rio Blanco County Stockgrowers' Association, Routt County Cattlemen's Association, San Luis Valley Cattlemen's Association, Southwestern Colorado Livestock Association, Uncompahgre Cattlemen's Association and West End Livestock Association

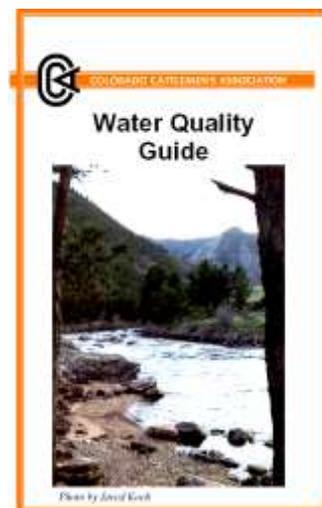
Contract Period: July 2001 through September 2003

NPS Funding: \$94,358

Matching Funds: \$69,820

The goal of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association (CCA) NPS grant was to provide beef producers on the west slope of Colorado educational and informative material on ways to enhance water quality. CCA provided information through trade publications like articles in the *Cattle Industry Directions* of the *Ag Journal*, in the *Cattle Guard*, in the weekly e-mail news *Bulletin*. In conducting regional meetings, CCA effectively increased beef producers' awareness of water quality-related issues. To reinforce these sources of information, an easy-to-read water quality guide list necessary steps to improve water quality.

Water is, and has been, a sensitive issue in Colorado ever since the first pioneers settled here over a century ago. In Colorado, the cattle industry generates over 2.5 billion dollars per year and 55.9% of all agricultural commodities. Without water, the beef industry would not exist. The quality of water for producing feed and watering cattle is a determining factor in how productive an operation is. In order to increase the sustainability of the beef industry, it is of utmost importance to protect water quality.



Throughout the project, CCA participated with its west slope affiliates in increasing awareness of the importance of water quality. In addition, CCA and its west slope affiliates have identified best management practices to improve water quality along with the overall sustainability of ranching operations in Colorado.

The west slope affiliates played a vital role in the Water Quality Program. Several watersheds on the west slope of Colorado have benefited from implementing management practices to improve water quality. **Can you name a few?????**

Pre-and-post meeting surveys show that beef producers are more aware of water quality issues and striving to take a proactive approach in addressing those issues. Beef producers are taking a strong interest in improving water quality because they recognize that water quality is a vital component to their productivity and profitability. Long term results of BMP implementation are expected to further increase awareness and commitment among beef producers to improving water quality.

*“Producers need to be actively engaged in protecting water quality and guiding the decisions that will affect how we address water quality”.*  
-- T. Wright Dickinson  
*Beef Producer and CCA Water Steering Committee member*

The CCA Water Quality program was presented to beef producers during many meetings. **Approximately how many meetings and how many producers attended???**