

# External Task Force Review of the U.S. Geological Survey Federal-State Cooperative Water Program, August 1999

## INTRODUCTION

The Advisory Committee on Water Information (ACWI) established the Task Force to Review the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) Federal-State Cooperative Water Program at their August 1998 meeting in Denver, Colorado. The Task Force review is the first external review of the Cooperative Water Program through its more than 100-year history. The purpose of the Task Force is to gather information, assess the effectiveness of the program, and recommend improvements.

This report describes the process used by the Task Force to review the Federal-State Cooperative Water Program and presents the findings and recommendations resulting from the review. This report provides information about the Task Force structure and meetings, the information collected and analyzed, and the decision-making process used to arrive at the findings and recommendations.

Consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the ACWI will review the Task Force report, and based on information in the report, will provide advice and recommendations about the Cooperative Water Program to the USGS and the Department of the Interior. Before the ACWI forwards the Task Force report to the USGS, the public will have an opportunity to review and comment on it through an announcement in the Federal Register. The results of the Task Force review provide a critical external perspective about the operations of the program and the usefulness of its products. The U.S. Department of the Interior and the USGS will use the input to help position the Cooperative Water Program for the challenges of the next century.

The USGS Cooperative Water Program is the largest single source of hydrologic data and information in the country. Hydrologic monitoring, assessments, investigations, and research conducted under the program support both national interests and Cooperator

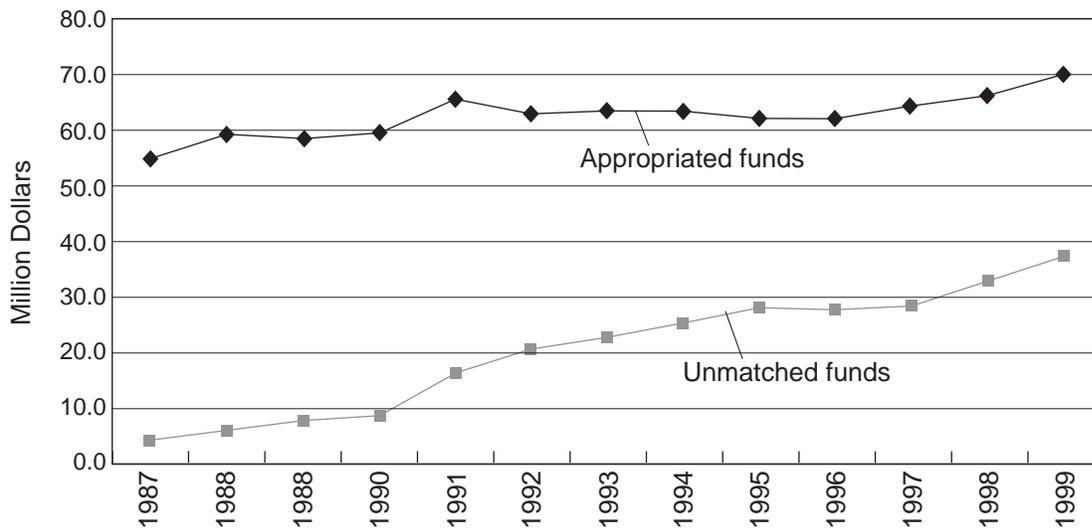
needs. The USGS and nearly 1,300 State, Tribal, regional, and local government partners jointly fund costs for the program. The Cooperative Water Program is a unique partnership, rather than a grants program. State, Tribal, regional, and local Cooperators transfer their share of the funding to the USGS for the USGS to perform work on specific data-collection activities and projects. The resulting data and information are archived and shared nationwide.

The first USGS cooperative water-resources investigation was with the State of Kansas in 1895. In 1905, Congress appropriated funds specifically for cooperative studies, marking the official beginning of the program. In 1928, Congress gave formal recognition to the Federal-State partnership and limited Federal financial contributions for cooperative water-resources studies to no more than 50 percent of the total funds for each investigation. The main objectives of the program are (1) to collect, on a systematic basis, data needed for the continuing determination and evaluation of the quantity, quality, and use of the Nation's water resources; and (2) to appraise the availability and the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of surface and ground water through data analysis and interpretive water-resources investigations and research.

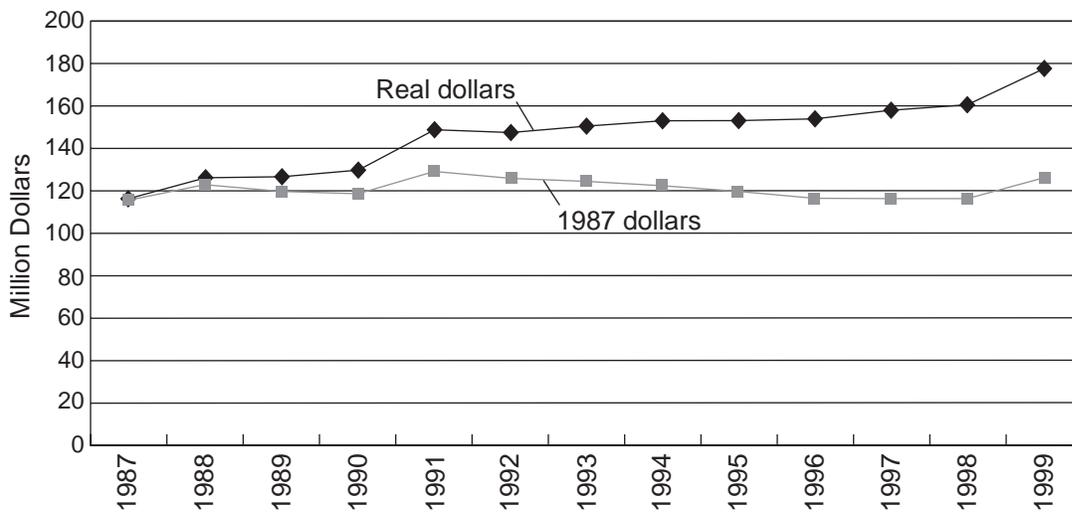
In fiscal year (FY) 1999, Cooperative Water Program activities were underway in offices in every State, Puerto Rico, and several territories in concert with about 1,300 cooperating agencies. In FY 1999, Federal funding of \$70.1 million was matched by Cooperators, who also provided about \$37.4 million unmatched funding for a total program of about \$177.6 million. A funding history of the Cooperative Water Program in the recent past is presented in figures 1 and 2. Additional information about the Cooperative Water Program is provided in Section A of the Appendix, which also is on the World Wide Web at <http://water.usgs.gov/pubs/circ/circ1192/appendix/a/index.html>.

The representatives chosen for the Task Force were selected to ensure a balance of interests, expertise, and functions related to the Cooperative Water Program and to achieve wide geographic coverage. The Task Force elected Mr. Larry Rowe (Western Water, Inc., California) as its Chairperson and Mr. Fred Lissner

(Oregon Water Resources Department, Oregon) as its Vice-Chairperson. Steve Blanchard, Staff Assistant to the Chief Hydrologist of the USGS, is the Executive Secretary for the Task Force. The Task Force Membership is provided in table 1.



**Figure 1. Recent history of appropriated funding for the Cooperative Water Program of the U.S. Geological Survey, in real dollars.**



**Figure 2. Recent history of all funds for the Cooperative Water Program, in real and 1987 dollars.**

**Table 1. Membership of the Task Force to Review the US. Geological Survey Federal-State Cooperative Water Program**

Mr. Craig H. Albertsen, Manager Water Supply, Use, and Conservation Group U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Denver, Colorado.	Mr. Thomas F. Baumgardner National Weather Service State College, Pennsylvania
Mr. Thomas M. Bruns Vice President, Development Services American Water Works Association Indianapolis Water Company Indianapolis, Indiana	Mr. Edmund B. Burkett Chief, Water Management Section U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile, Alabama
Mr. Richard S. Burton, Director National Association of Counties Monroe County Environmental Health Laboratory Rochester, New York	Mr. Randall C. Duncan International Association of Emergency Managers Sedgwick County Emergency Management Wichita, Kansas
Mr. James E. Enote, Department Head Department of Natural Resources Pueblo of Zuni Zuni, New Mexico	Mr. Frederick G. Lissner Manager, Ground Water and Hydrology Section Oregon Water Resources Department Salem, Oregon
Mr. Peter J. Mack, Regional Engineer New York Department of Environmental Conservation Schenectady, New York	Mr. Wendall McCurry Association of State and Interstate Water Pollution Division of Environmental Protection Control Administrators Carson City, Nevada
Dr. Fred L. Ogden, Assistant Professor Civil and Environmental Engineering University of Connecticut Storrs, Connecticut	Mr. Donald M. Phelps American Society of Civil Engineers Project Manager, Hammond, Collier and Wade Livingstone Chelan, Washington
Mr. David L. Pope, Chief Engineer and Director Division of Water Resources Kansas Department of Agriculture Topeka, Kansas	Dr. Jonathan G. Price, State Geologist Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology University of Nevada Reno, Nevada
Mr. Larry W. Rowe Western Water Company San Bernadino, California	Mr. James D. Shotwell American Institute of Professional Geologists RMT, Inc. Austin, Texas
Mr. Earl T. Smith Interstate Council on Water Policy Chief, Water Resources Management Division Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission Little Rock, Arkansas	Mr. Charles S. Spooner Monitoring Branch U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Washington, D.C.
Frank Tsai (retired) Federal Emergency Management Agency Washington, D.C.	Mr. Alan H. Vicory Executive Director Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission Cincinnati, Ohio
Dr. Leslie A. Wedderburn Department Director, Water Resource Evaluation South Florida Water Management District West Palm Beach, Florida	Mr. Donald E. Woodward, Hydrologist Natural Resources Conservation Service U.S. Department of Agriculture Washington, D.C. 20250