



# Programs for Nonpoint Source Control

A series of fact sheets on nonpoint source (NPS) pollution

**Pointer No. 3**  
EPA841-F-96-004C

States, territories, and tribes identify nonpoint source (NPS) pollution as responsible for more than half of the Nation's existing and threatened water quality impairments. To address these water quality problems, federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local governments provide technical assistance and fund programs to implement NPS controls. Other sources of funding are also available. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Financing Information Network Center in Washington, DC (202/260-1020) can provide communities with specific information on how to design and fund the most appropriate NPS pollution strategy.

**Did you know that communities rely on government programs and alternative sources of funding, such as investing in water conservation, to help control NPS pollution?**

### Federal Programs

#### *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*

EPA administers section 319 of the Clean Water Act, also known as the Nonpoint Source Management Program. Under section 319, states, territories, and tribes apply for and receive grants from EPA to implement NPS pollution controls. As of 1995, EPA had awarded more than \$370 million under section 319 to address NPS pollution problems.

EPA administers other sections of the Clean Water Act to help states, territories, and tribes to plan for and implement water pollution programs, which can include measures for NPS control. These include section 104(b)(3), Water Quality Cooperative Agreements; section 104(g), Small Community Outreach; section 106, Grants for Pollution Control Programs; section 314, Clean Lakes Program; section 320, National Estuary Program; and section 604(b), Water Quality Management Planning. Together with the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, EPA helps administer section 6217 of the 1990 Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments, a program that tackles nonpoint source pollution affecting coastal waters.

#### *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*

NOAA administers section 306 of the Coastal Zone Management Act that provides funds for water pollution control projects, including NPS management activities, in states with coastal zones. Together with the EPA, NOAA also helps administer section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments. This requires the 29 states with approved Coastal Zone Management Programs to establish and implement Coastal

NPS pollution occurs when water runs over land or through the ground, picks up pollutants, and deposits them in surface waters or introduces them into groundwater.

Nonpoint Pollution Control Programs.

#### *U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)*

The USDA administers incentive-based conservation programs through the Consolidated Farm Services Agency, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the U.S. Forest Service to help control NPS pollution from agriculture, forestry, and urban sources.

#### *U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration*

Under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, the Federal Highway Administration developed erosion control guidelines for federally funded construction projects on roads, highways, and bridges.

*U.S. Department of the Interior*

Within the U.S. Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Fish and Wildlife Service administer several programs to help states manage NPS pollution by providing technical assistance and financial support. For example, the Fish and Wildlife Service administers the Clean Vessel Act, which provides grants to construct sewage pumpout stations at marinas.

**Alternative Funding Sources**

Some communities rely on a combination of alternative funding sources to implement NPS controls. In 1994, EPA published *A State and Local Government Guide to Environmental Program Funding Alternatives*. This brochure gives examples of how states can use the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, leases, grants, taxes, fees, and bonds to craft innovative and effective strategies to generate funds for NPS controls. In addition, government agencies can establish programs to encourage investments in water conservation technologies.