

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Agriculture
Collaborative Cost and Capability Assessment**

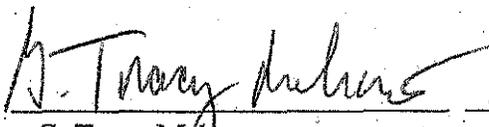
Statement of Involvement and Collaboration

In October 1999, Congress directed EPA to "conduct in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture a cost and capability assessment of the Unified National Strategy for Animal Feeding Operations." On May 10, 2001, USDA and EPA signed principles of collaboration for the production of a joint EPA-USDA cost and capability report to be delivered to Congress in December 2001. The objectives of the agreement are: 1) to develop an assessment and summary report that accurately portrays the public and private sector cost and capability to assist owners and operators of animal feeding operations (AFOs) in developing and implementing comprehensive nutrient management plans to meet water quality objectives; and, 2) to ensure that a collaborative effort is used in developing the assessment and summary report so that both USDA and EPA can support its findings.

An interagency team is leading the development of the collaborative report, which will build upon ongoing USDA and EPA studies, to determine the costs and capabilities of developing and implementing comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMPs). EPA is completing a micro-analysis of the costs and capability of CNMP development and implementation in two watersheds — the Eucha Spavinaw watershed in Oklahoma and Arkansas, and the Upper Makoqueta watershed in Iowa. EPA and USDA worked with local stakeholder groups, including AFO operators, local NRCS and extension personnel, conservation district staff, local and state environmental officials, and non-profit organizations in developing the study.

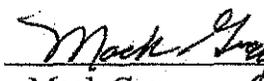
USDA is conducting a macro-analysis that assesses the anticipated costs to the public and private sectors to carry out the CNMP workload, and the capabilities of USDA, its partners, and the private sector to provide the necessary supporting information, education, research, and technical and financial assistance. The USDA assessment is based on 1997 Agricultural Census data on animal feeding operations, estimates of on-farm manure handling capability, and prototype CNMPs for each model farm.

The integration of these agency efforts will produce a comprehensive assessment of the costs and capabilities of developing and implementing CNMPs on a national scale.



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11/23/01
Date



Mack Gray
Acting Deputy Under Secretary
Natural Resources and Environment
U.S. Department of Agriculture

11/6/01
Date