



2012 BWSR Academy

Evaluation Update

November 26, 2012

Background

The 5th Annual BWSR Academy took place at Cragun's Conference Center in Brainerd, Minnesota from October 29-31, 2012. The goal of the BWSR Academy is *to provide high quality training for local government staff that maintains and improves the delivery of conservation work and meets the shared expectations of BWSR and local resource management boards.*

Evaluation Summary

Approximately 350 people attended the 2012 Academy. Ninety-two evaluations were completed, providing a response rate of 26%.

Academy Basics

The BWSR Academy consists of five different tracks with concurrent sessions: Technical, Wetlands, Organizational Capacity, Programs and Workshops. Sessions last 1.5 hours, and workshops are 3 hours. During the 2012 Academy, 33 sessions and 5 workshops were held. Ninety percent (90%) of participants felt the Academy sessions met their professional training needs and expectations.

Participant Goals

Participants were asked to identify two personal goals for this year's academy; things they were looking to learn, apply or be better at as a result of attending the Academy. The most common goals cited pertained to Organizational Capacity or the Wetland Program. The following five topics were of specific interest to many of the participants.

Topics of Specific Interest

- 1.) Personnel Issues
- 2.) WCA Regulation
- 3.) Networking
- 4.) Project Management
- 5.) Writing Skills

89% of participants indicated they received enough information at the Academy to meet their personal goals

Academy Sessions

The following sessions were identified by participants as most effective or relevant to their work.

Votes	Session Title
19	Color Communication
17	Practical Project Management
13	Technical Writing
11	Year End Requirements
11	The Ins and Outs of Performance Management
8	Ditches, Dams and Stream Connectivity
8	Drainage Systems-Setbacks, WCA Exemptions and Restorations
7	Watershed Based Local Water Management Planning

Overall, participants felt the most effective sessions were interactive, and offered concise information and ideas that could be utilized immediately upon returning to work. Comments on what made these sessions so effective included: *“Interactive and thought provoking”*, *“good examples and discussion”*, *“clear, concise information”*, *“interactive”*, and *“useful immediately”*.

Overall Effectiveness of the Academy

We asked participants if they would attend a future Academy or recommend it to others. Ninety-nine (99%) of the respondents indicated they would attend a future Academy, and 100% said they would recommend the BWSR Academy to others.

