

**DC Water Resources Research  
Institute (DCWRRI)/University of  
the District of Columbia (UDC)**

**Preliminary Assessment of  
Resources and Needs;  
Strategic Plan Development and  
USGS Evaluation Report  
Development**

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Watercat was contracted for a two-part effort by the DC Water Resources Research Institute (DCWRRI) to review and document water research and education capabilities at DC universities and activities completed by DCWRRI, and to support DCWRRI in its 5-year evaluation report for the US Geological Survey (USGS). The purpose of these project was to support DCWRRI in more fully realizing its potential to support DC-based university students and faculty and address DC and national water-related research needs. Watercat's activities were designed to support:

- compilation of a strength, weakness, opportunity, and threats (SWOT) and gap analyses and creation of a DCWRRI 5-Year Strategic Plan to guide future activities;
- identification of research priorities for the upcoming 2010 research grant request for proposals, to be issued Fall 2009; and
- development of the US Geological Survey (USGS) 5-year evaluation report required to ensure continuation of DCWRRI funding.

DCWRRI was created in 1973 by the Water Resources Research Act of 1964 (PL 88-379), which established a federal/state partnership in research, information transfer and education regarding water related issues. DCWRRI had taken several steps in recent years to build the capacity of the institute to fulfil its statutory mandate under the Water Resources Research Act of 1984 to (1) arrange for competent research that addresses water problems or expands understanding of water and water-related phenomena; (2) aid the entry of new research scientists into the water resources fields; (3) train future water scientists and engineers; and (4) distribute the results of sponsored research to water managers and the public.

**Outcomes:** The initial inventory and assessment, completed in September 2009, included include a review of recent DCWRRI activities and available faculty, students, and research facilities at UDC and throughout the DC Universities Consortium. This project included a review of recent DCWRRI publications and reports to the US Geological Survey (USGS), and interviews with university and advisory board leadership on overall goals, objectives, existing resources, and upcoming needs. Watercat supported the organization of the first and second meetings of the DCWRRI Stakeholder Advisory Board, and the compilation of research priorities by DC area stakeholders for inclusion with the DCWRRI Request for Proposals for USGS Seed Grant funds. Watercat also provided information for university administration officials at the land grant university that houses DCWRRI, the University of the District of Columbia, on how DCWRRI activities could be integrated with university goals for research, development of facilities and graduate programs, publications and publicity, and other university objectives.

Watercat recommendations were also incorporated into the development of a 2010 program sponsored by UDC's College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability, and Environmental Science (CAUSES) called the DC Area Water Issues Program, a 15-week pilot program consisting of weekly seminars, receptions, and other programs (e.g. art exhibits, a boat tour, film screening, book signing). DCAWIP was developed to address several of the issues identified in the original assessment and strategic plan for inter-institutional and interdisciplinary water education in the DC area.