Long-Term Watershed Monitoring—Do’s and Don’ts

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Project Description

- Project initiated spring 2002
- Monitoring 20,000 ha, detect trends, study innovative solutions, at HUC 12 to edge of field
- Studying the Blind-inlet tile riser alternative
- Member of CEAP, LTAR, and SMAP projects

- 9 Watershed/Stream sites
- 8 edge of field sites
- Telemetry at all sites
- Real-time web site
- Year-round automated sampling at all field sites

Do…

- LISTEN!
- Develop a multidisciplinary team such as ecologists, sociologists and economists
- Appoint a liaison between the scientists and the farmers/landowners
- Establish a local connection that will be the face of the project on a daily basis and accepted by the farmers/landowners.
- Budget for more than you estimate
- Collaborate with external organizations
- Follow through on all promises
- Include the cooperator in planning sessions
- Provide relevant data to the cooperators
- Expect setbacks and have contingency plans
- Protect your relationships with your farmers/landowners as much as possible.
- Respect cooperators privacy (PII)
- Respect cooperators land
- Accept and encourage suggestions
- Maintain sites regularly
- Communicate well and often with the landowners
- Build as if it will be there for 10 years minimum
- Go in to the project with an open mind
- Give honest and correct answers to questions
- BE SAFE

Don’t…

- Don’t start a project without letting the locals stakeholders know what you are doing and why
- Don’t underestimate the power of one voice
- Don’t underestimate the capabilities of any farmer
- Don’t underestimate the memory of anyone
- Don’t say you are going to do something and then not follow through (see previous bullet)
- Don’t think you know everything about a piece of land
- Don’t expect any two fields to react exactly the same way to the same treatments
- Don’t cut corners on instrumentation or site preparation.
- Don’t assume management strategies and conditions will remain constant
- Don’t assume complete acceptance by all within your target watershed
- Don’t forget to acknowledge all contributors, local/state/national

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