



The **Ground Water Protection Council** represents state ground water quality and underground injection control agencies. The GWPC is governed by a board of directors comprised of two senior state regulatory officials, elected by their peers, from each of the ten regions defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Core members include representatives of state agencies responsible for regulating ground water, oil & gas, and underground injection activities.

Ground Water Protection and the Federal Farm Bill



The Farm Bill will provide continued support to farmers and ranchers throughout the U.S. It includes many capabilities to protect a resource vital to the agricultural community, ground water. Ground water is used as drinking water for local communities, watering livestock, and irrigating crops. **Without ground water, rural farmers and their families could not survive.** As the House Agriculture Subcommittee considers the upcoming Farm Bill, there is an opportunity to provide greater protection of this important resource.

Existing Farm Bill programs can be better integrated with local, state and federal ground water protection and conservation efforts. This can help farmers and ranchers achieve economic goals and at the same time, help protect a valuable and needed commodity, fresh water. This briefing offers some general recommendations for improving program implementation at state and local levels and specific recommendations on select programs.



A detailed briefing is also available

Our Recommendations

The GWPC encourages changes to existing programs that would provide more focus on priority areas as defined by each state. This can be accomplished by increasing coordination between agencies, through data sharing, and by leveraging financial resources to facilitate ground water protection activities.

Ground water protection can be greatly enhanced by management approaches that recognize the *immediate interconnectivity* between surface and ground water within a watershed. For this reason, the GWPC advocates protection strategies which focus on ground water as a component of the hydrologic cycle. The Farm Bill should:

- **Acknowledge state priority areas such as wellhead, source water, and drinking water protection areas and give these locations priority status,**
- **Encourage data-sharing between the agencies implementing Farm Bill programs and state drinking water protection agencies, and**
- **Encourage better coordination between Farm bill programs and other federal funding programs such as the CWA Section 319 program.**

Ground Water
GWPC
Protection Council

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