

Progress Report

Report Period: October 2001 – September 2002

Date of Report: 4 October 2002

EPA Agreement Number: R – 82942901 – 0

Title: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) From the Commonwealth of Kentucky, SIP

Investigators: David S. White

Institution: Murray State University

Project Period: October 2001 – September 2003

Research Category: EPA EPSCoR

Progress Report

The objective of the SIP has been to enhance competitive research in environmental problems in the Commonwealth of Kentucky under the management of the EPA EPSCoR Subcommittee of the Kentucky Statewide EPSCoR Committee through information exchange activities, fellowships, and review processes to assist the investigators of the SEER Projects as they address research on environmental and human health biomarkers and use of biomarkers for pollution prevention in Kentucky.

The first SIP activity was to establish a complete KY EPA EPSCoR Committee following the guidelines of the Kentucky Statewide Committee. Of the 4 original members, David White, Russell Barnett and Scott Grubbs remain project co-directors. The 4th, Robert Volp has resigned his position as director of the Kentucky Water Resources Research Institute. The following members have been added: Rick Kurzynske (Director, Statewide EPSCoR Program), Blaine Ferrell (Dean, Western Kentucky University), Leslie Cole (Executive Director, Environmental Quality Commission), Alan Fryar (University of Kentucky), William Martin (Eastern Kentucky University), Hollie Swanson (University of Kentucky). A list server has been established to facilitate communication among the Committee members and SEER grant investigators. Members of the KY EPA EPSCoR Committee have met with SEER grant investigators both in Louisville and in Murray with emphasis on publications and new proposal development.

Initially, we had hoped to plan a biomarker conference in conjunction with the 2002 Statewide EPSCoR Conference. Research in both SEER was underway; however, we felt that not enough progress had been made to adequately assess early results and we could not take full advantage of bringing in external biomarker expertise. We therefore have decided to wait until the 2003 meeting to hold the special conference. Also we are beginning planning for a SEER meeting with the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission (and other state agencies), but as yet no date has been set.

A web site for the project has been created, and we hope EPA will provide the link on their EPSCoR site. The web site will be connected to the Kentucky EPSCoR in the next few weeks. We will maintain all progress reports on the web site and provide links to

other products resulting from the SEER research. The site is <http://www.mursuky.edu/qacd/cos/hbs/epaepscor-program.htm>

As much of the research did not begin until spring, we have not used as much of the supplemental undergraduate/graduate student funding as planned. Of more concern has been that the Kentucky EPSCoR Program as yet does not have a budget for 2002-2003 because no funds have been released from the State. This may continue to be a problem well into the fiscal year; however, we have received assurances from the Council on Postsecondary Education that the matching funds will occur. This may further slow some aspects of the research that are coming from the State match. Otherwise, funding is approximately on schedule with no expected eventual variance from the originally negotiated total cost estimates.