



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Great Lakes

Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA CSREES
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

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Extraordinary People Can Make an Extraordinary Difference

GREAT LAKES
REGION



National Theme:

Drinking Water and Human Health
Watershed Management

Project Description

Land use and drainage planning play a significant role in watershed health. In fact, many of the water quality issues affecting watersheds in the Midwest, including urban storm water runoff and sedimentation, are directly linked to land use decisions. Even highly successful stream protection and restoration projects can be undermined by changes in hydrology and contaminated runoff resulting from changes in land use patterns in the surrounding watershed.

Many watershed organizations and individual land owners lack the knowledge, skills, and contacts to participate effectively in land use planning, zoning, and evaluation of construction site plans. Watershed leaders and volunteers and individual land owners could have a much greater impact on water quality by participating more effectively in decision making processes that affect land use.

This project uses multi-state video conferences with local facilitated meetings, a website, and watershed leadership trainings to share the stories of decision makers who have successfully improved their communities and watersheds by linking land use and watershed planning. Read about these Extraordinary People at <http://ohiowatersheds.osu.edu/ep/>



Farmer Don Lee of Cardington, Ohio demonstrates the future height of his prairie buffer planting.

PROJECT CONTACTS

Anne Baird

The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio 43210
Phone: (614) 292-8603
Email: baird.41@osu.edu

Tracy DeHoop

Purdue University
Wets Lafayette, Indiana 47907
Phone: (765) 496-6331
Email: tdehoop@purdue.edu

PROJECT PARTNERS

The Ohio State University

Purdue University Extension

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

University of Minnesota

The Olentangy Watershed Alliance (Ohio)

Friends of Conneaut Creek (Ohio)

Delaware County Muncie Metro Planning
Commission (Indiana)

For more information about the Great Lakes
Regional Water Program, please contact:

Rebecca Power

University of Wisconsin
Regional Water Liaison
Phone: (608) 263-3425
rebecca.power@uwex.edu

Outcomes

Evaluation information was collected from video conference participants, who responded through a self-reported retrospective questionnaire three months following the video conference. Evaluation data was also collected via small discussion groups immediately following the video conference.

Major findings from the questionnaire include:

- 56 percent of respondents stated the video conference increased their knowledge about linking land and water management;
- 28 percent of respondents reported that they had already applied, or used in their work, a part of the video conference; and
- 46 percent of respondents reported that they were “likely” to apply, or use in their work, part of the video conference.

Specific changes participants planned to make included: increasing the diversity of stakeholder involvement in watershed planning; increasing collaboration with municipal planners, and increasing farmer involvement in watershed planning.

The funding for this project allowed the Ohio State University (OSU), Purdue, and the University of Minnesota to collaborate on two educational programs and three publications.



Muncie Metro Planning Commission Executive Director Marta Moody, and Angie Brown, White River Watershed, collaborated to incorporate watershed protection guidance into the Muncie Master Plan.



www.uwex.edu/ces/regionalwaterquality

<http://ohiowatersheds.osu.edu/ep/>