

St. Joseph River Watershed

Donnell Lake Watershed

Joe Ervin
MSU-Institute of Water Research
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Local: 616-445-8643

Active Planning Commenced: 1993(?)
Funding: 319,WQIP
County: Cass
Type: Watershed Management--Groundwater

The Donnell Lake Watershed is a very small and dominated by agriculture. Years of intensive hog production in the watershed resulted in significantly elevated levels of nitrates in groundwater. This groundwater project is unique because it not only focused on assistance to hog producers to better manage manure but also: 1) research on interfaces between farm practices at ground level, groundwater quality responses, and nutrient processing in wetlands, and 2) the social/personal “connections” to the land. The *Love of the Land* exhibit produced by this project has traveled a national circuit.

Dowagiac River Watershed

Marcy Colclough
Cass County Conservation District
1127 E. State St.
Cassopolis, MI 49031
616-445-8643

Active Planning Commenced: 1997
Funding: 604, 319
Counties: Cass, Van Buren, Berrien
Type: Watershed Management

The Dowagiac River Watershed project is a “protection” effort, with a primary focus on providing assistance to local municipalities towards making natural resource-minded decisions. In particular, the intent is to preserve the unique hydrology of the river/watershed through land use tools. Tasks include: developing “resource atlases” for townships; contracting with a planning consultant for 1:1 work with townships; impermeability analyses; and many I/E activities, including outreach by the SouthWest Michigan Land Conservancy. While this project is focused on protecting the hydrology of the watershed, MEANDRS is focused restoring the river channel (see below).

Homer Lake

Todd Campbell
Village of Homer
P.O. Box 155
Homer, Michigan 49245-0155

Active Planning Commenced: 1999
Funding: 319
County: Calhoun
Type: Storm Water Management

This project is in the process of designing a storm water detention area to help alleviate the affects of this input to Homer Lake. The storm water inputs are the main source of water quality problems for this lake and have caused increased nutrient levels as well as sedimentation problems. The detention structure will incorporate a sediment forebay, and an extended bio-filtration area with a constructed wetland to deal with the main storm water pipeline. A second pipeline will be treated in a smaller detention swale that will also use a bio-filtration system. This project is also planning a significant information and education program to help decrease storm water contaminants in the future. This project is being designed as a demonstration project to increase awareness of possible solutions for storm water issues related to water quality.

MEANDRS

(Meeting the Ecological and Agricultural Needs within the Dowagiac River System)

Joe Ervin/Jay Wesley

Partnership for MEANDRS, at

Cass County Conservation District

1127 E. State St.

Cassopolis, MI 49031

616-445-8643

Active Planning Commenced: 1994

Funding: 319, DNR Fisheries, EQIP

Counties: Cass, Van Buren, Berrien

Type: River restoration

The Dowagiac River is very unique in lower Michigan—its temperature and flow regimes put it in the same standing as the classic trout waters of northern Michigan. However, channelization and straightening of the river in the early 1900s effectively destroyed the fishery/habitat. With much of the river corridor still relatively undeveloped, many of the old meanders are still in tact. MEANDRS' long term goal is to functionally restore the ecosystem through river channel restoration, where feasible. Funding is being used to do major stream channel restoration at pilot locations.

Nottawa Creek Watershed

Sharon Williams

Calhoun County Conservation District

13464 15 Mile Road

Marshall, Michigan 49068

616-781-4867 x 46

Active Planning Commenced: 1997

Funding: 604(b), 319

County: Calhoun

Type: Watershed Management

Nottawa Creek is a largely rural watershed with water quality impairments attributable to agricultural and residential activities, and threats posed by additional development associated with urban sprawl. The project has identified critical areas with respect to both surface and ground water, is implementing a wide variety of best management practices, and has undertaken significant public education efforts on land use planning aimed at township planning officials.

Sauk/Coldwater Rivers Watershed

Gordon Porter

Branch County Conservation District

150 N. Willowbrook; Suite 100

Coldwater, MI 49036-8820

517-278-2725

Active Planning Commenced: 1995

Funding: 319

County: Branch

Type: Watershed Management

The Sauk River and Coldwater River Watersheds are dominated by agriculture, but also have a large number of lakes, and associated recreation. Highlights of the planning phase included a very extensive I/E plan, with many targeted audiences. Implementation has focused primarily on rural/agricultural sources of sediment and nutrients. This project has been very successful at BMP installation, with a very high percentage of local landowner match. A major "RiverFest" is planned for June, 2000.