

# Watchin' the Wabash

A publication of the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission

Volume 2, Issue 4

March 2015

The Upper Wabash River - Phase 2 watershed management plan will be available at local libraries, Surveyor and SWCD offices, or can be viewed at the UWRBC website: <http://uwrbc.org>

The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission meets every 2 months at 8:00 a.m. at the Wells Co. Government Annex 223 W. Washington St., Bluffton, IN.

## UWRBC MEETING SCHEDULE

April 14, 2015  
June 9, 2015  
August 11, 2015  
October 13, 2015  
December 8, 2015

The UWRBC Steering Committee meets every 2 months at 12 noon at the USDA Service Center, 117 W. Harvest Rd., Bluffton, IN.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

March 24, 2015  
May 26, 2015  
July 28, 2015  
September 22, 2015  
November 24, 2015

The public is encouraged and welcome to attend.

## The Watershed Management Plan

The planning process of the Upper Wabash River-Phase 2 project is almost complete. The final watershed management plan is being submitted to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) for approval.

### What have we learned?

The Upper Wabash River-Phase 2 project area drains 176,124 acres in the Rock Creek, Wabash River-Griffin Ditch, and Eight Mile Creek 10-digit HUC watersheds. There are over 330 miles of river, streams and legal drains in the project area, and over 295 miles of county legal tile. Almost one-third of the soils (56,643 ac.) are classified as highly erodible or potentially highly erodible; and over 41% of the area (72,564 ac.) is classified as hydric soils.

Agriculture is the dominate land use at 150,104 acres (85% of the project area). Urban, suburban and industrial use accounts for just over 8% of the area (14,739 ac.); and woodlands, wetlands, and open water make up the remaining project area (11,281 ac.).

There are 32 confined feeding operations, over 1,050 hobby farms, 5 municipal waste water treatment plants, over 4,000 residential on-site septic systems and 36 facilities with National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permits in the project area.

IDEM lists the Wabash River, Rock Creek and Eight Mile Creek as being impaired due to nutrients, *E. coli* and impaired biotic communities. The UWRBC water monitoring data shows that nitrogen, phosphorus and *E. coli* require reduction in order to meet water quality standards and/or the designated use of the water bodies; therefore, the UWRBC has developed the following goals to improve water quality and address stakeholder concerns:

### Goals:

- Reduce nitrate loading by 46% by year 2035.
- Reduce phosphorus concentrations by 28% by year 2025.
- Reduce *E. coli* average concentrations by 54% by year 2035.
- Reduce erosion and sediment by 66% by year 2035.
- Restore natural habitat to meet the aquatic life use designation by year 2035.
- Increase stakeholder awareness of floodplain and riparian area management to provide for flood control by 2035.
- Increase public awareness and community participation in water quality and best management practice programs.



### What's next?

The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission will focus on working directly with landowners for the implementation of best management practices to meet the goals, and provide educational events for stakeholder participation.

# UPPER WABASH RIVER BASIN COMMISSION

117 W. Harvest Road  
Bluffton, IN 46714

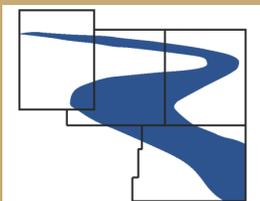
## Mission Statement

To provide regional leadership and promotion of flood prevention and control, soil and water conservation, and related resource management through a coordinated and comprehensive planning and implementing approach in which projects of the Commission will not adversely affect landowners within the watershed.

## The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission

*This project has been funded wholly or in part by the US EPA under assistance agreement number C600E72012 to IDEM.*

*The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the EPA, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.*



A cooperation of local government established in 2001 under IC 14-30-4.  
Huntington, Wells, Adams and Jay Counties

## Announcements

**Cost-share Program:** The UWRBC is currently developing a cost-share program for landowners to implement best management practices on the ground that will result in a reduction of sediments, nutrients and *E. coli* in the Upper Wabash River - Phase 2 watershed area.

### **Possible Practices:**

- *Cropland Practices* - Conservation tillage, cover crops, drainage water management, field borders, filter strips, nutrient management, variable rate application technology, and more!
- *Livestock Practices* - Access control (livestock exclusion), critical area plantings, diversions, heavy use area protection, roof runoff structures.
- *Other Practices* - 2-stage ditch, riparian forest buffer or herbaceous cover, storm water runoff controls, stream bank protection, and wetland creation, enhancement and restoration.

**Water Quality Monitoring Program:** Water monitoring data will be collected at 10 sites in the project area 6 times per year. The monitoring events will be scheduled every 4-6 weeks from April - November for the next 3 years.

Volunteer monitoring data will also be collected at 3 Hoosier Riverwatch sites twice each year throughout the three-year grant.



### **Volunteers Welcome:**

- Steering committee members
- Water quality monitoring
- River clean-up events
- Host field days or educational events

## Grant Request Approved

THANK YOU to the Wells County Foundation, Inc. for approving our grant request for \$6,350.00 to promote the cost-share program, and support for our educational activities, river float and clean-up events, and water quality training and monitoring.

### **The UWRBC**

The UWRBC includes the area in Adams, Jay, Wells and Huntington counties that is drained by the Wabash River. The voting members are the County Commissioners, the County Surveyor, and the Soil and Water Conservation District Chair or their appointed representatives from the four counties.

### **For more information contact:**

**Stacia Henderson,  
UWRBC Watershed Coordinator**

**Phone: 260/273-0972**

**E-mail:  
shenderson@adamswells.com**