



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

### Special Thanks

A special thanks to the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission Board; the Adams, Huntington, Jay, and Wells County SWCDs; Indiana Department of Environmental Management; Indiana State Department of Agriculture; Natural Resources Conservation Service; and the many others who made the Upper Wabash Phase 2 Implementation Project a success!

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The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission

# Watchin' the Wabash

A publication of the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission

January 2018

## Phase 2 Project Cost-Share Program Comes to a Close



Implementation of the Upper Wabash River Phase 2 Watershed Management Plan has been highly successful. The grant budgeted \$140,000 in cost-share funding over 3 years for BMP implementation. The first year resulted in 11 approved contracts affecting over 2,467 acres. Total cost share funds expended were \$20,059.85, with in-kind expenditures of \$10,777.96. The second year, 23 applications were approved affecting

8,902.68 acres. Cost-share funds spent equaled \$88,325.93, with in-kind contributions from farmers totaling \$48,080.63. This left \$31,614.22 in cost-share funds for 2017. These funds were divided among 17 approved applications affecting 2008.39 acres. In-kind contributions from farmers for this final year of implementation came to \$52,173.19. For the \$140,000 in cost share funds provided by the grant for BMPs, farmers and landowners contributed \$127,050.12, or 47.6% of total project costs.

The majority of the applications were for cover crops. However, other applications were for equipment modifications to move from conventional tillage to no-till, plant cover crops, and move to precision application of nutrients and pesticides. Monies were also spent for nutrient and pesticide management plans. This is encouraging because it means that many producers are planning to continue these best management practices even when cost-share funds are unavailable. In addition, many farmers used this program to experiment with cover crops for the first time. It is the hope of the UWRBC that all of these farmers will continue to use these valuable practice to insure soil health and improve water quality.



## Blackford County Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant

A CWI Grant for \$154,500 was awarded to Blackford County for the purpose of addressing water-quality impairments in the Upper Salamonie and Upper Wabash Watershed. The money will be used to fund a three-year project dedicated to cost-share programs, education, and community outreach.

The first two years will see the implementation of conservation and best management practices under the guidance of a Watershed Specialist. The third year will see the completion of any remaining projects or outreach events. Three workshops will be held over the course of the project focusing on various conservation practices, invasive species & pollinators, and cover crops.

## 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 meets every 2 months at 8:00 a.m. at the Wells Co. Government Annex 223 W. Washington St., Bluffton, IN.

### UWRBC MEETING SCHEDULE

*February 8, 2018*  
*April 12, 2018*  
*June 14, 2018*  
*August 9, 2018*  
*October 11, 2018*  
*December 13, 2018*

**The public is encouraged to attend.**

On October 21, 2017, the Upper Wabash River Basin Commission held a water quality field day at Bills Creek. The event was open to the public and included volunteer sampling, stream improvements, and a water quality presentation by Neil Ainslie. Funding was provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission**

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

### LARE Grant

The Upper Wabash River Basin Commission was recently awarded funding through a Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Grant to improve stream health in the Upper Wabash area. The project's cost is estimated at \$50,000, \$40,000 of which will be paid for by the grant.



The goal of the project is to improve stream health on a 33 river-mile section of the Wabash, ranging from Bluffton to the Ohio state line. Several methods will be employed, including the review of available reports, the assessment of hydrologic changes over time, and the gathering of data through field visits. These methods will allow an accurate evaluation of current river stability, resulting in a clearer picture of what needs to be done to improve overall stream health.

Since receiving the grant, the UWRBC has considered a number of contractors before narrowing the choice to two: Williams Creek Consulting and Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LLC. Both firms have offered solid plans for completing the outlined tasks. A final selection will be made in February.

### 205J Grant for Upper Wabash Phase 3 Area

Funding for a Watershed Management Plan in the Upper Wabash River Phase 3 area has been provided by a 205j Grant. \$138,220 is designated to develop the plan which aims to improve water quality in the Bluffton Till Plain through stream monitoring, outreach, community engagement, and careful planning.

Program goals will be accomplished over a three-year period. Said goals include increasing public awareness of water quality issues through workshops, community events and public meetings, and by encouraging landowners to participate in pollution reduction. A Watershed Coordinator and Water Quality Consultant will be hired to help meet these objectives.

### 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.

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