

ST. JOSEPH RIVER WATERSHED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN FUNDING THROUGH THE SECTION 319 GRANT PROGRAM

- Develop solutions on a watershed basis
- Capitalize on objectives, needs and issues associated with regulatory and non-regulatory programs for participants
- Create a web-based approach for all key project elements and the plan itself, accessible to anyone
- Develop Watershed Management Plan acceptable to both Indiana and Michigan

The working framework for this project targeted the following efforts:

- Secure and build upon partnerships with municipalities, townships, county, MDEQ, IDEM, industry, private sector, conservation and environmental groups, and other watershed stakeholders.
- Create and maintain a Project Steering Committee to direct and maintain the focus on both project and local objectives.
- Conduct all technical elements through private sector assistance responsible to the Steering Committee and the Project Administrator.
- Create a project web page (www.stjoeriver.net) to host all major project components for communication, dissemination and cost-effective updates.

This unique electronic format of the Watershed Management Plan and all of its related components facilitates lower costs for adjustments and updates as well as superior capabilities to more rapidly and cost-effectively provide any revisions to interested parties. It allows the Plan to be a “living” document.

Coordinating a bi-state planning effort in a largely agricultural watershed was an unprecedented task for the region. The St. Joseph River has been identified as the largest tributary contributor of atrazine to Lake Michigan. Nonpoint source modeling efforts by K&A identified those regions contributing the largest loads of sediments, nutrients and atrazine to Lake Michigan (http://www.stjoeriver.net/wmp/docs/SWAT_final_report.pdf). A unique "build-out" analysis (http://www.stjoeriver.net/wmp/docs/landscape_analyst.pdf) identified sensitive and vulnerable areas of the watershed potentially subject to urban sprawl. Urban non-point source modeling analyses provided (http://www.stjoeriver.net/wmp/docs/Urban_BMP_Analysis.pdf) vital information to identify current and future impacts of growth as well as the costs for urban stormwater retrofits. Several subwatersheds in both Michigan and Indiana are using these K&A analyses and the WMP to refine local needs through access to funding now available to them with the approved plan.