

1.1 WATERSHED COMMUNITY INITIATIVE

In early 2000, Jasper County local leaders and stakeholders expressed protecting water quality as important during the updating and formation of local ordinances and county wide planning initiatives. A sub-committee was formed to address this specific issue. A lot of good dialogue occurred, but no direct action occurred. However, key outcomes of the sub-committee were the acknowledgement that little data and awareness of local water quality existed, and that to protect water quality planning should occur at the water shed level. A watershed is the land area that drains to a common point, such as a location on a river. All of the water that falls on a watershed will move across the landscape collecting in low spots and drainage ways until it moves into the water body of choice. All activities that take place in a watershed can impact the water quality of the river that drains it. What we do on the land, such as constructing new buildings, fertilizing lawns, or growing crops, affects the water and the ecosystem that lives in it. A healthy watershed is vital for a healthy river, and a healthy river can enhance the community and help maintain a healthy local economy. Watershed planning is especially important in that it will help communities and individuals determine how best to preserve water functions, prevent water quality impairment, and produce long-term economic, environmental, and social health.

The Upper Iroquois Watershed Initiative project is located in Northwestern Indiana. The entire watershed crosses two states, but this plan focuses on the Indiana side of the Iroquois watershed. The project area is five watersheds that drain 651 square miles and covers mostly Jasper, Newton, and small portions of Pulaski, White, and Benton Counties in Indiana. It forms the majority of the headwaters for the Iroquois River.

Figure 1 Iroquois Watershed Overview

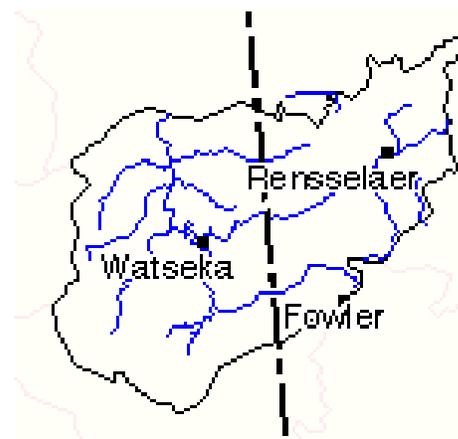
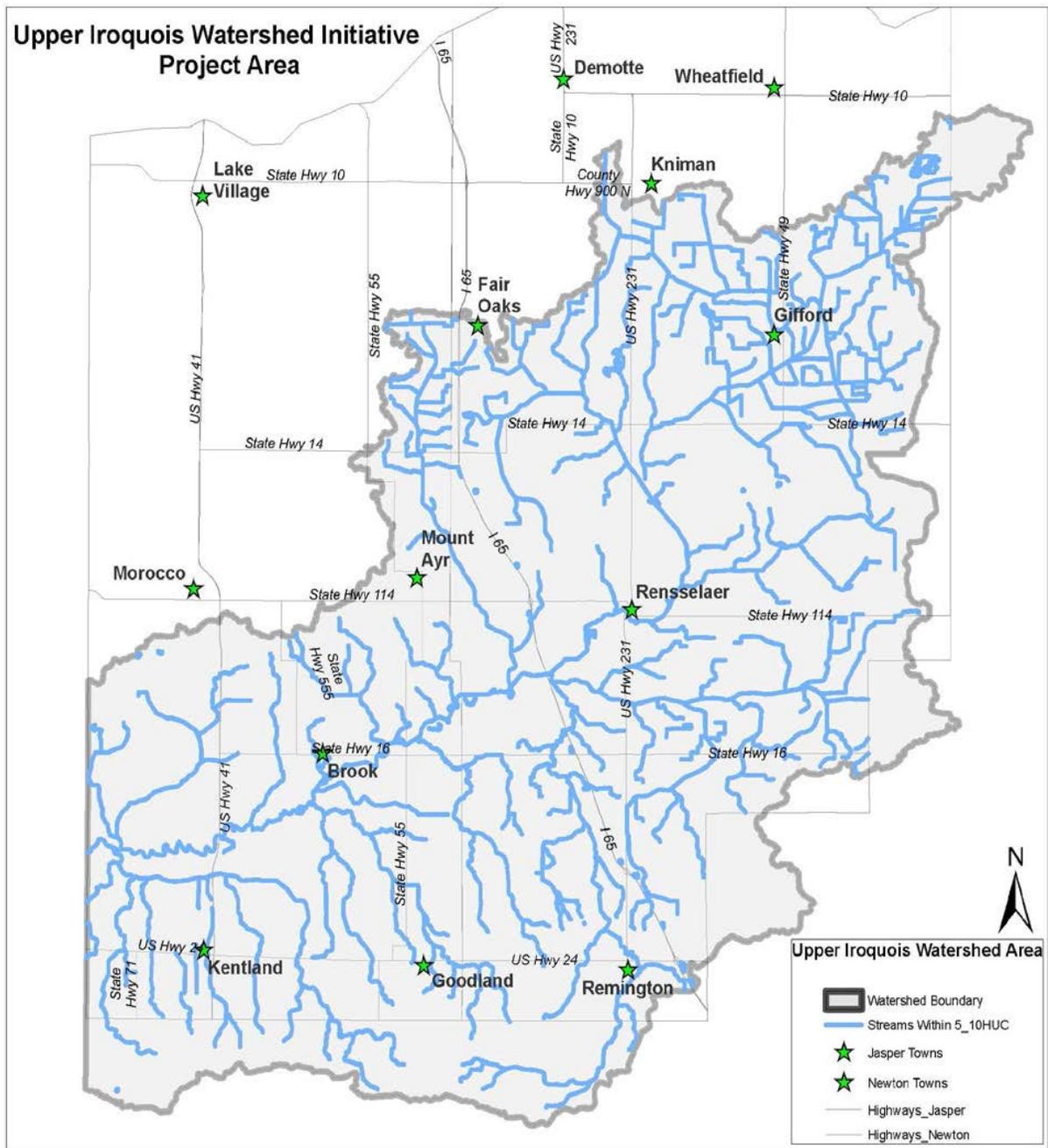


Figure 2 Zoomed In Iroquois Watershed

Figure 3 Upper Iroquois Watershed Area.



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0 2 4 8 Miles
by Dan Perkins Jasper SWCD

1.2 Project History

After the initial 2000 meetings raised the issue of water quality, the Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District (JCSWCD) board initiated the hiring of a watershed specialist, in 2008 to carry out the goals and mission of the JSWCD and to protect and improve local water quality via watershed planning. Upon hiring the watershed specialist a Section 319 Non-point Source Program grant application was submitted to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) watershed planning section. The grant's purpose was four-fold:

1. Locate the major contributing non-point pollution for bacteria, nutrients, and sediment loading.
2. Characterize each sub-watershed's water quality and where future water quality improvement efforts should be placed.
3. Educate to encourage implementation of best management practices (BMP), focus education efforts by area of need, and promote conservation practices.
4. Facilitate partnerships and educational efforts among all strategic partners to develop and implement the watershed plan.

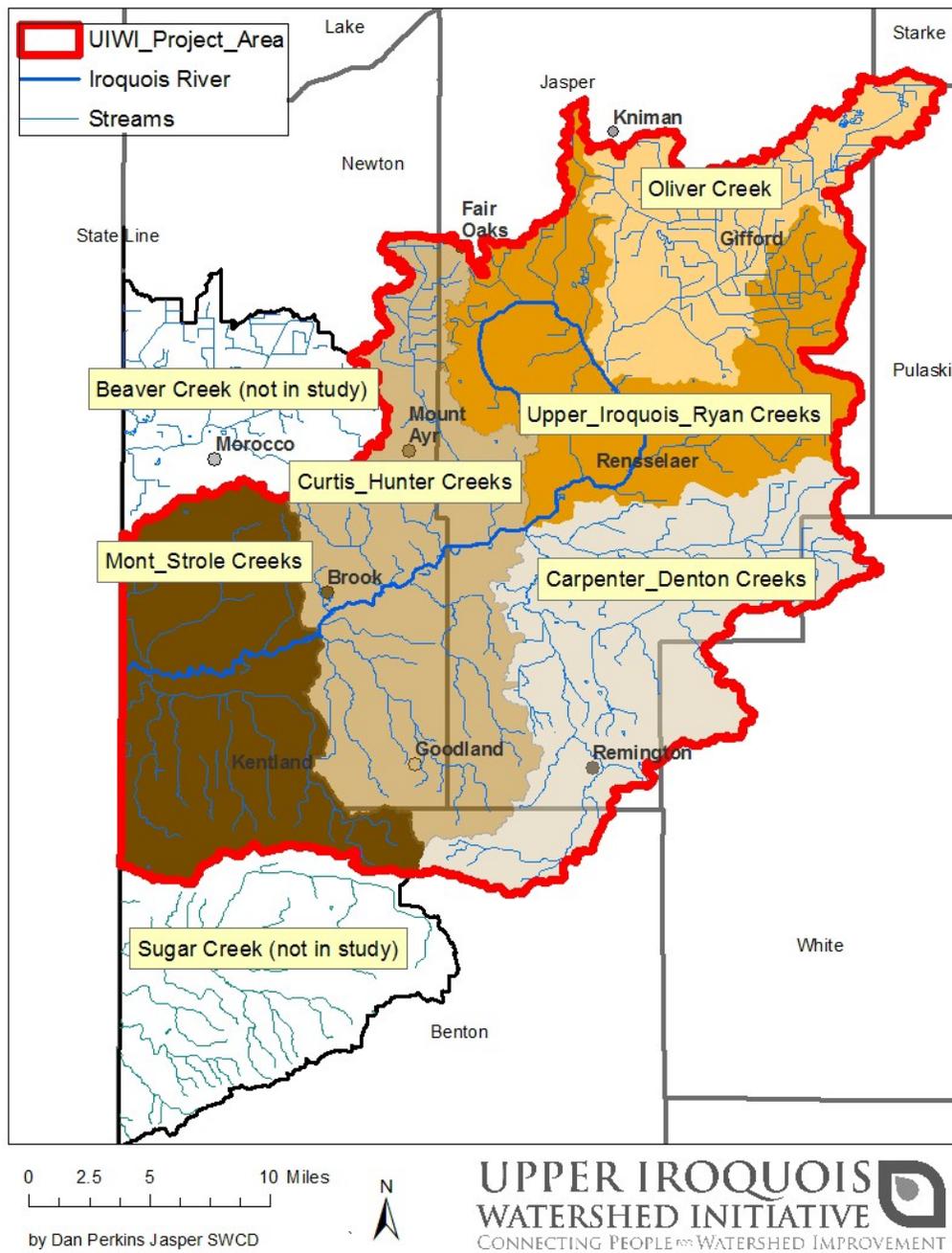
Concurrent with grant submission, identification of watershed partners occurred. Significant amounts of outreach occurred to generate support of the grant and watershed planning process. This occurred via newspaper articles, radio interviews, and 2 public meetings to garner stakeholder involvement. Much of this outreach resulted in partners signing on to the grant and also became part of the project steering committee and work groups. The grant application was approved in fall of 2010.

The following sections detail the committee and work groups created as part of this project, the work these committees completed, and the outcomes developed by the committees and work group. Additionally, input from watershed stakeholders and the mechanisms in which this input was generated are also included in the following sections. All of these efforts were guided by the following mission and vision developed by public participants and committee members:

Vision: Ensure an ecological and economically healthy Iroquois River watershed for today and generations to come.

Mission: Connecting people for watershed improvement by developing a watershed plan which prioritize areas of concern and then implement the plan for ongoing water quality improvements.

Figure 4 Five HUC 10 Sub watersheds



Two HUC 10 sub watershed “Beaver Creek” and “Sugar Creek” located North and South of Mont-Strole Creeks were excluded due to draining into the Iroquois River on the Illinois side and the need to plan on a smaller scale to make the project more manageable and feasible.

1.3 Steering Committee

The Upper Iroquois River Watershed Initiative is a group of citizens and organizations who cooperated to develop a watershed management plan (WMP) that will build capacity to accomplish the goal of improving water quality across the watershed.

The steering committee was formed by both the Jasper and Newton SWCD's board members submitting names of local decision makers who would be important to have on a steering committee and drawing from existing partnerships. Individuals representing farmers, businesses, the cities, towns, and counties within the watershed; neighborhood associations; environmental groups; natural resource and engineering professionals; and industrial and educational entities comprised the steering committee. Many of these names came from partnering organizations and stakeholders who had supported the initial grant application. Each steering committee member was then asked to chair a specific work group to address the concerns listed in Table 6 Complete list of Stakeholder Concerns. Work group members were recruited by steering committee members, Jasper and Newton SWCD boards and through public outreach efforts in the watershed. This is a list of founding members, some of which have changed as is the nature of this type of multi-year planning effort.

Table 1 Steering Committee Members and their Affiliation

Last	First	Affiliation
Davisson	Mark	Citizen
Kosanovich	Larry	Local Business
Babcock	Mike	Remington Parks
Kaper	Bob	Kaper's Building Supply
Korniak	Kent	Con Agra, Farmer
Laird	Kyler	Farmer
Veld	Kyle	Newberry Farms
Zimmer	Lana	Jasper SWCD
Collins	Russ	Newton Commissioner
Holderly	Larry	Newton County Engineer
Johnson	Brian	Newton SWCD/Farmer
Knochel	Chris	Newton County Surveyor
Nyberg	Gus	NICHES Land Trust
Smith	Randy	Newton Farmer
Eilers	Steve	Newton Farmer

1.2.1 Water Quality Work Group

The water quality work group was responsible for sample site identification, historic water quality data identification, and data review and recommendation development. This group met in the spring of 2011 to identify sites where water was to be monitored for the next several years. Once sample collection began, this group met on a roughly quarterly basis to review current and historic data, identify water quality targets, complete data analysis, and begin prioritization of concern areas. Table 2 identifies the water quality work group members and their affiliation.

Table 2 Water Quality Work Group

Last	First	Organization
Davisson	Mark	Citizen
Nyberg	Gus	NICHES Land Trust
Osterholz	Larry	Soil Scientist
Veld	Kyle	Newberry Farms
Harmon	Scott	Earthwise, Inc.

1.2.2 Education and Outreach Work Group

The Education and Outreach work group developed the education programs. This group determined the education priorities and goals, and developed and identified educational materials, such as the logo, brochures, newsletters, and the website, as well as target programs to achieve the goals. Additionally, they determined opportunities to provide this message, identified individuals to carry the message, and completed educational program development and staffing. Table 3 identifies the education and outreach committee members and their affiliation.

Table 3 Education and Outreach

Last	First	Organization
Zimmer	Lana	Jasper SWCD
Morgan	Rose	Newton County SWCD
Wilson	Jody	Jasper SWCD Staff
Osterholz	Larry	Soil Scientist
Seeger	Jordan	ISDA Resource Specialist
Wolf	Sarah	ISDA Resource Specialist

1.2.3 Outdoor Recreation Work Group

The Outdoor Recreation work group works to address the concern of lack of recreation access and opportunities in the watershed. They exist to raise awareness about the Iroquois river and create a plan of increasing access to the river. Table 4 identifies the outdoor recreation work group members and their affiliation.

Table 4 Outdoor Recreation Work Group

Last	First	Organization
Laird	Kyler	Farmer
Eilers	Steve	Farmer
Kaper	Bob	Kaper's Building Supply
Urbano	Vince	Jasper Surveyor
Porch	Bob	Wildlife Biologist DNR
Kingman	Connie	Park Board
Bailey	Josh	Friends of the Iroquois

1.2.4 Agriculture Work Group

The Agriculture work group works on two levels: the first completing the watershed inventory for their respective area and the second identifying specific best management practices (BMPs) and implementation areas for the implementation phase of the project. Table 5 identifies the agriculture work group members and their affiliation.

Table 5 Agricultural Work Group

Last	First	Organization
Strole	Larry	Newton SWCD
Laird	Kyler	Jasper Farmer
Korniak	Kent	Con Agra, Farmer
Eilers	Steve	Newton Farm
Bussmon	Lyle	Fair Oaks Dairy
Johnson	Brian	Newton SWCD/Farmer
Veld	Kyle	Newberry Dairy