

ST. JOSEPH

RIVER

WATERSHED

GROUP

Received
4/5/10
by S.R.M.
e-mail

March 10, 2010

Maumee Valley RC & D
06879 Evansport Road , Suite E
Defiance, OH 43512

Re: Western Lake Erie Basin Watershed Stakeholder Funding Final Report

Grantee: St. Joseph River Watershed Group
3718 New Vision Drive
Fort Wayne, IN 46845
260-484-5848 x 3

Contact: Sharon Hall, Program Manager
Greg Lake, Interim Director
(Address same as above)

Dear Western Lake Erie Basin Project Funders,

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for, and receive funding to facilitate watershed planning and conservation efforts in the St. Joseph River Watershed. The St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative has continued to make strides towards reaching the goals outlined by the group's mission. We hope that these funding opportunities will be available again in the future and look forward to working with you.

Background:

The St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative (SJRWI) is a certified 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit organization headquartered in Fort Wayne, Indiana, a city of 250,000 people, which draws its drinking water from the St. Joseph River.

The partnership was formed in 1996 around the HUC 8 St. Joseph River watershed. The mission of the SJRWI is "To improve water quality in the St. Joseph River Watershed by promoting economically and environmentally compatible land uses and practices."

The SJRWI is governed by a Board of Directors representing stakeholders in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. The SJRWI has completed a watershed management plan for the entire HUC – 8 watershed (The St. Joseph River Watershed Management Plan) as well as two HUC – 11 subwatershed plans (The Cedar Creek Watershed Management Plan and The Lower St. Joseph-Bear Creek Watershed Management Plan).

The SJRWI has been monitoring water quality across the watershed since 1996 and the resultant data is available to the public online via a link from our website, www.sjrwi.org.

Also available from our website: watershed management plans, annual water quality reports, brochures, program information and meeting dates for the Board of Directors.

The SJRWI also offers basic and advanced water quality monitoring and habitat assessment for citizen volunteers through the IDNR's *Hoosier Riverwatch* program.

Activities

Primarily the funding was used to provide partial payment towards the salary of the program manager, personnel development, program development/implementation, and materials development and distribution. The following bullet points will highlight some of the activities that we were able to accomplish over the grant period with grant funds.

- Within the grant period seven Board meetings were held. Most meetings were open to the public and advertised via press releases, newsletters, and inserts into SWCD newsletters. Meeting dates were Jan. 20, March 9, June 1, Sept. 14, Oct. 5, Nov. 9, Dec. 7, 2009. Strategic planning/goal achievements and board committee development were discussed at several meetings. The Outreach and Education Committee began a reevaluation of their strategic goals and action items.
- As part of our commitment to provide outreach opportunities to local governments, we partnered with the Maumee River Basin Partnership of Local Governments to host a field day in Montpelier, Ohio on Sept. 24, 2009. This event was open to the public but targeted toward public officials. Activities included a presentation on the SJRWI, a tour of a two-stage ditch, and a tour of Bridgewater Dairy.
- Four *Hoosier Riverwatch* training sessions were conducted throughout the grant period (April 22, 2009; April 30, 2009; May 30, 2009; June 17, 2009). Through this venue, we engaged and trained 19 volunteers.

- At our July 20, 2009 Annual Meeting, we presented information about our Strategic Plan and solicited input on future activities.
- Our largest public outreach event was held on Feb. 25, 2009, The Tri State Conservation Farming Expo. Over 200 people attended a day long program dealing with conservation farming and economic impacts.
- We have continued to promote the activities of the Initiative through numerous presentations, publications, and static displays. Activities of the SJRWI include: display at the Fort Wayne Farm Show, Earth Day, and The Home and Garden Show; numerous publications and press releases were distributed to local newspapers and SWCD newsletters.

Outcomes

We have experienced short and long term benefits from this grant.

These include: staff funding, board development, expanded awareness of the SJRWI name and organizational recognition; expanded use of outreach materials; and increased number of citizen volunteers for water quality.

Again, we thank you for helping to fund the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative. We truly appreciate the opportunities afforded by grant monies to help augment our conservation efforts in the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Sincerely,

Sharon Hall

Program Manager, SJRWI