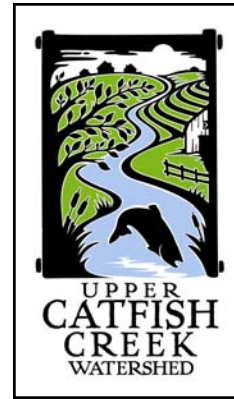


Upper Catfish Creek Watershed

Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District



Winter 2009

Upper Catfish Creek Watershed Project entering its final year—expansion and extension options



Believe it or not, the Upper Catfish Creek Watershed Project is now entering into its final year. The project started in 2007, and is slated to end in January 2010. With the successes we've had over the past two years, the Dubuque Soil and Water Commissioners are planning to apply for a 2-year extension—thus enabling the district to keep conservation practices and additional cost-share money available in the Upper Catfish Creek Watershed until 2012.

Some of the cost-share agricultural practices that have been completed in the watershed are: grassed waterways, grade stabilization structures, water/sediment control structures, and stream-bank stabilization.

Some of the urban practices that have been completed would include: rain gardens, bio-swales, native landscaping, and pervious asphalt.

With the 2-year project extension, the Dubuque SWCD commissioners are also considering expanding the project boundaries to include another 3500 acres. The district will find out in June if the project has been extended and/or expanded.

2nd Annual Low Impact Development Conference—March 3rd and 4th, 2009

Last year the Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) partnered with the City of Dubuque to produce a successful one-day Low-Impact Development workshop. With over 150 contractors, engineers, landowners, developers, and real estate agents attending the conference, the workshop brought together a diverse audience. This year we hope to do the same, yet expand upon what we did last year.

This year we are planning a two-day workshop, on March 3rd and 4th. Day 1 will primarily focus on sediment and erosion control practices, techniques, and policies. Day 2 will be focusing on Low Impact Development and Conservation Design strategies. **Topics would include: rain gardens, bioswales, native landscaping, permeable pavements, composting, the Quality of Dubuque's Streams, the City of Dubuque and Dubuque County's erosion and sediment control policies, and all sorts of Best Management Practices (silt fence topics, detention, etc).** Sponsors this year include the City of Dubuque, the Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, IDNR, Sustainable Land Development International, and the International Erosion Control Association (IECA).



The workshop is going to be at the Grand River Center, from 8am-4pm each day. Cost for the workshop is \$30 for one day, and \$50 dollars for both days, which includes continental breakfast, lunch, and a vendor reception that includes drinks and appetizers. Student discounts are available. Pre-registration is required. For further information please contact Eric Schmechel (563) 876.3418, Ext. 3

How much runoff leaves the Swiss Valley Nature Center? None.

Over the course of this past spring and summer, all of us have seen the devastating images caused by the floods of 2008. With a brutal winter and a wet spring, soils were saturated, and even the low intensity rain events were running off into our streams. Is there anything we could have done to prevent the severity of the spring floods? Simply, yes. While we may not be able to directly impact our precipitation patterns, we can make a difference on what we are doing on our own property, thus impacting the watershed you live in. The Swiss Valley Nature Center has become one of the best examples of this in Dubuque County.

Over the course of this past summer, the Dubuque County Conservation Board had added *five* different urban Best Management Practices (BMPs) to their site. The general idea behind these conservation practices is simple, **capture and infiltrate water on-site** (Retain the rain)! Thus, we are mimicking the natural infiltration based, groundwater-driven hydrology of our historic landscape. In doing so, pervious asphalt was recently installed in the existing parking lot. Pervious paving allows water to



Above: Swiss Valley Nature Center Rain Garden

infiltrate into a rock chamber placed below the paving and then into soil and groundwater below. Along with the pervious asphalt, the nature center added a rain garden, rain barrel, bioswale, and native landscaping. Rain Gardens are depressional areas landscaped with perennial flowers and/or native vegetation that soak up rainwater. They are strategically located to capture runoff from impervious surfaces such as roofs, and streets. Bioswales are similar; however they are water runoff conveyance systems that provide an alternative to storm sewers. This is an excellent demonstration project that allows us to clearly see the advantages of urban conservation practices that deal with both water quantity and water quality issues we are facing throughout Iowa. Every time a new subdivision, home, and/or road is constructed, we are adding additional runoff to our watersheds. We need to start designing our developments by infiltrating most of the stormwater on-site; reducing the amount of water and pollution flowing into storm sewers and directly to rivers and streams.

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Above: Pervious Asphalt

Dubuque County Seeks Erosion/Sediment and Stormwater Control Ordinance

This past year, I received several different phone calls from landowners in the watershed who were having sediment, dirt, mud, (whatever term is easiest to use) enter their property from a construction activity. Under federal regulations managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, all land disturbing activities with 1 acre or more require a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

The Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District and Dubuque County are now starting to play a bigger role when it comes to regulating land disturbing activities. Over the past year, we have been working to develop a Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater Policy. This policy addresses anyone who is disturbing an acre or more of land (there is additional criteria components as well) to develop detailed erosion prevention plans. The policy also addresses post-construction issues, (all construction has ceased, and buildings are finalized) which incorporate infiltration techniques to be installed. The policy is still in the works of being passed by the Board of Supervisors.

Best Management Practices—What are they?

What does cost-share even mean?

As we move into year 3 of this project, several questions come to thought. Are we meeting our original goals of this project? How many landowners still are not aware of the project and funding available? How many landowners are aware they live in a cold-water trout stream? (Last fall, I personally observed a 27 inch brown trout caught and released). What practices constitute as conservation practices?

Well...just a quick re-cap on how this project started. The headwaters of Catfish Creek is a cold-water trout stream, which is being threatened by urban development and sediment (mud, dirt, silt) loading. The main goal is simply = install conservation practices that protect the water quality in Catfish Creek and work with Dubuque County to better ensure development is done in a manner that protects our water quality.

So, how does cost-share work? If you own any land in the watershed, you are eligible for cost-share. For example, if

you were interested in installing a grade stabilization structure (pond) on your property—the watershed project would pay 75% of the estimated cost of the project. Another example would be installing a rain garden on your property—the project would pay for 75% of the estimated cost. A complete list of Best Management Practices is listed on the table to the right.

Whether or not this project receives an extension or not, **some of the funding available to landowners will be lost at the end of 2009. This includes practices such as permeable pavements** (pervious asphalt, pervious concrete, permeable pavers, grassed and gravel pave systems) **rain gardens, and native landscaping.**

Please give our office a call if you have any ideas/concerns regarding conservation work!



	Cost-Share Rate
Agricultural BMPs	
Streambank Stabilization	75%
Grade Stabilization Structures	75%
Water/Sediment Control Structures	75%
Sink Hole Diversions	75%
Filter Strips*	90%
Buffer Strips*	90%
Riparian*	90%
Livestock Exclusion/Limited Use**	50% AC
Terraces**	50% AC
Grassed Waterways**	75%
Strip Cropping**	\$40 Acre FR
*Funding Provided Through Conservation Reserve Program	
**Funding Provided Through EQIP	
	Cost-Share Rate
Urban BMPs	
Rain Gardens	75%
Bio-Retention Cells	75%
Infiltration Trenches/Bioswales	75%
Native Landscaping	75%
Pervious Pavement	75%

Below are a few photo's from a streambank stabilization project that was completed last summer. In cooperation with the IDNR and the Upper Catfish Creek Watershed Project, the Dubuque County Conservation Board installed 3,000 feet of streambank stabilization, along with 30 fish hides. Funding is available for streambank work!



Before: June 2008



After: August 2008

**Visit The Conservation
District on the Web!**

www.dubuqueswcd.org

Don't forget to order your trees and shrubs through the district's tree sale! Order due by Feb. 26th. Order forms are available on the website!

CONTACT US AT:

Phone: 563-876-3418 Ext.3

Fax: 563-876-3653

E-mail: eric.schmechel@ia.nacdnet.net

Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District

210 Bierman
Epworth, IA 52045



Mission Statement

The Dubuque Soil and Water Conservation District is working to protect, conserve, and restore the natural resources of Dubuque County for present and future generations by actively seeking resources and partnerships to promote soil conservation and improve water quality.

Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

319/WSPF—This project is supported in part by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation, through funds of the Water Protection Fund, and by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Non-point Source Management Plan (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act). Technical assistance is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service.”

WIRB—This project is supported in part by the Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board and with the support from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation.

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How can we be improving watershed projects? Your input is needed!

Successful watershed projects only truly work when landowners are involved in the project. Watershed projects are designed to not only address water quality/quantity issues, but help improve and enhance landowner's property. What type of improvements would you like to see from the Upper Catfish Creek Watershed project?

Please take a moment and fill out the survey that is enclosed with this newsletter.

It would be great to hear your thoughts on this project. Are there practices you would like to see cost-shared that aren't?

Once you've completed the survey, PLEASE mail it or return to our office—
Eric Schmechel
210 Bierman Road
Epworth, IA 52045.

If you are unable to drop it the mail, feel free to call me with your thoughts—563-876-3418 ext.3 I appreciate your feedback!

