

LOWER FALL CREEK WATERSHED PLANNING
NEWSLETTER INFORMATION
07-06-07

Marion County SWCD Begins Lower Fall Creek Watershed Improvement Project

In the fall of 2006, the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) submitted a Section 319 Non Point Source Program grant application to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to develop a WMP for the Lower Fall Creek Watershed. The grant funds were awarded in March of 2007 and the Marion County SWCD retained the professional services of Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd. (CBBEL) located in Indianapolis. CBBEL will assist in the development of the watershed plan steering committee, facilitate stakeholder discussions, collect and analyze water quality data, and serve as the primary author of the Watershed Management Plan.

A Watershed Management Plan (WMP) is a guiding document that examines the historical and existing water resource issues in a particular watershed and presents specific actions to address those water resource issues based on the values and needs of the community. The intent of the WMP is to provide better living conditions, economic viability, and environmental health benefits for those that reside in the watershed and for communities downstream. Developers of the WMP are interested stakeholders that investigate prior and existing watershed conditions, identify watershed priority areas, and formulate strategies for implementing specific actions. The WMP document represents the earnest efforts of the community to understand, analyze, and be an integral part of the solution to improve impaired water quality in the watershed. Furthermore, active community involvement in the development of the WMP helps to ensure that there is future commitment by the community to implement projects identified in the WMP.

Partnerships among water resource professionals and interested citizens are essential to the successful development and implementation of the Lower Fall Creek WMP. In recognition of the social, physical, and economic diversity that is present in the watershed a Steering Committee of local water resource experts was established to guide the development of the plan. The Lower Fall Creek Watershed Steering Committee will be the primary committee utilized to steer the overall direction of the Lower Fall Creek WMP. The Steering Committee will meet on a quarterly basis from May of 2007 through September of 2009 and include the following individuals and groups representing municipalities, counties, economic development organizations, neighborhood associations, universities, and environmental groups.

- **Chris Barnett**, Near North Development Corporation
- **Cindy Beckner**, Hancock SWCD
- **Crist Blassaras**, Madison SWCD
- **Victoria Cluck**, Indianapolis DPW
- **Angie Dye**, Veolia Water
- **Josh Goode**, Watershed Resident
- **Tina Jones**, Indy Parks
- **Lori Kaplan**, City of Lawrence DPW
- **Joe King**, Dirty Dozen Hunting & Fishing Club
- **Ron Lauster**, Marion SWCD
- **Bob Masbaum**, Indianapolis DPW
- **Donna Price**, Indianapolis DMD
- **John South**, Hamilton SWCD
- **Pam Thevenow**, Marion County Health Department
- **Kelly Wood**, Neighborhood Liaison

In addition to the Steering Committee, three Working Committees focusing on Public Education & Outreach, Water Quality, and Land Use and Economic Development will be established.

Participation in the Working Committees will be open to any stakeholder with expertise and interest in one or more of the 3 topics. The intent will be to thoroughly discuss each topic, identify critical areas in the Lower Fall Creek Watershed, and recommend programs, policies, and projects to improve water quality.

It is hoped that the successful completion of the Lower Fall Creek Watershed Improvement Project will serve as a benchmark for all future urban watershed efforts in the State of Indiana. Fall Creek is a highly recognizable recreational and drinking water supply resources and traverses a varied landscape socially, economically, and geographically.