

Application Cover

- a. **Project Title:** Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership
- b. **Project Manager:** Jack Knorek, Phone: 517-243-0072; knorekj@michigan.gov; alternative email: colcloughm@swmpc.org
- c. **Lead Partner:** Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD)
MDARD is an eligible partner as a department of state government and has an established history of working cooperatively with producers on agricultural land to address local conservation priorities related to agricultural production and critical watershed-scale erosion and other water quality and quantity issues.
Collaborating Partners: Friends of the St. Joe River Association, Southwest Michigan Water Resources Council, St. Joseph River Basin Commission, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, Council of Michigan Foundations, Michigan and Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, 14 Conservation Districts and NRCS, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Geological Survey (Western MI Univ.), US Geological Survey, US Army Corps of Engineers; Michigan State University Institute of Water Resources, MSU Extension, Purdue Extension, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, Two Rivers Coalition, Elkhart and South Bend Cities, Village of Paw Paw, St. Joseph River Harbor Authority, Michiana Irrigators Association, Crop Consultants, seed corn companies
- d. **Mailing Address:** MDARD Environmental Stewardship Division, Constitution Hall 6N, 525 W. Allegan St., PO Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909: Phone: 517 284-5606
- e. **Funding Pool:** National
- f. **Summary:** This partnership project is an innovative bi-state project addressing priority resource concerns in the St. Joseph River Watershed (SJRW). The project will address several national priorities. The primary resource concerns to be addressed are water quantity (large volume groundwater withdraw) and water quality (sediment and nutrient loading). The secondary resource concerns are soil health and at-risk species. The project will result in groundwater conservation, increased water infiltration, reduced phosphorus and sediment loading and increased habitat quality and quantity for fish and wildlife. These results will be achieved through a multi-faceted conservation approach working with farmers to identify and address their operation's irrigation practices, nonpoint sources of nutrient and sediment loss, and wetland restoration. The SJRW Partnership along with the states of Indiana and Michigan and other partners have identified NRCS conservation practices that farmers can implement using NRCS EQIP, CSP and ACEP cost share funds to address resource concerns (improving water quantity and quality, soil health, fish and wildlife habitat) while optimizing agricultural productivity.

A diverse team of partners will make significant contributions. Partners will collaborate to develop an innovative, cost-effective and targeted outreach campaign, determine critical implementation areas based on existing tools, models and plans, provide public and private financial and technical assistance to farmers in critical areas to assist them with applying for NRCS programs, and coordinate existing and target new monitoring efforts in critical areas to evaluate, document and report project outcomes. Several project partners have successful track-records of implementing conservation and this expertise will be shared and coordinated to be more effective in reaching new producers in the watershed. Many newer partners are providing evaluation and reporting expertise. There is a strong history of collaboration in the SJRW and additional partners continue to become involved because the proposed conservation practices/solutions provide multiple benefits. The Partnership strives to find solutions that are economically good for the farmer, but also have multiple conservation benefits resulting in a healthier watershed by optimizing groundwater use, improving infiltration, reducing nutrients and sediment while also improving wildlife and fisheries habitat.

The partners will monitor results, document and report outcomes and gauge success based on the specific resource concerns. Monitoring results will also be used in an adaptive management fashion to guide the targeting and selection of conservation practices. Partners will coordinate existing monitoring and modeling efforts and target new monitoring efforts in critical areas. Monitoring and modeling will occur at multiple levels providing outcomes at a field scale, sub-watershed scale and for the entire SJRW. Additionally, partners are currently conducting a pre- and post-project social indicators study in a sub-watershed in which the pre-survey will be completed this fall. Results will be used to inform the outreach campaign development. A social indicator study is also planned as a partner contribution. All of this work will provide pre- and post-environmental and social data and analysis, as well as trends over the course of the project.

The expected project outcomes are more than 208,950 additional acres in conservation practices and 1,400 acres of wetland restoration. At the end of this project, the annual environmental outcomes in the SJRW will include a 4.8 billion gallon reduction of groundwater use, 46,200 tons of sediment reduction, 116,200 pounds of phosphorus reduction, 700 tons of nitrogen reduction, and the long term environmental impacts that improve the groundwater, soil, surface, water and habitat resources of the SJRW. The synergistic efforts of this partnership will accomplish more than any one entity could do alone to address the environmental issues impacting the SJRW.

- g. Geographic Focus:** The project area is the St. Joseph River Watershed (Hydrologic Unit Code 04050001), located in southwest Michigan and northwest Indiana, and is the third largest river basin of Lake Michigan (see attached map). The SJRW is an ideal location for the RCPP because of the existing partnerships and projects, the watershed planning and implementation efforts, and the continued need for implementation. **Over 70% of the watershed is in agricultural use.** The 210 mile long St. Joseph River begins in Hillsdale County (MI) and crosses the IN/MI border twice before emptying into Lake Michigan at St. Joseph, Michigan. The watershed drains 4,685 square miles from 15 counties, has nine major tributaries and flows through and near four major metropolitan areas. The 217 14-Digit HUCs are grouped into 5 river valley segments (Headwater, Upper, Middle, Lower, Mouth) which mirror the boundaries of larger tributaries and the main stem. While the partnership area is relatively large, the partners will target outreach and implementation to sub-watersheds. Priority areas will be determined by partner expertise informed by resource concerns (TMDLS, etc), watershed management plan critical areas, and several existing tools (SWAT, SPARROW, HIT model, Landscape Level Wetland Function Assessment, Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool, etc).



- h. SF-424** (attached)

i. Project Objective and Partner Contribution

Partners will implement the following project objectives utilizing local, state and other (non USDA) federal funds:

- Develop and implement a coordinated and targeted outreach campaign.
- Develop and utilize a ranking system to advance implementation in areas to best address resource concerns.
- Provide one-on-one technical assistance to producers to increase irrigation conservation practices and reduce sediment and nutrient loading in the SJRW, with particular emphasis on reducing groundwater withdraws and enhancing wildlife and fisheries habitat.
- Provide payments to producers to implement conservation practices
- Coordinate and share existing and target new environmental and social monitoring efforts (from sub-watershed to field level) to evaluate and adapt efforts to achieve project results.
- Collaborate to annually evaluate, document and report results at the county, sub-watershed and SJRW scale.

- j. 424A Budget Form** (attached)

k. Expected Project Start and End: March 1, 2015 – September 30, 2019

RCPP Funds Requested for FA: \$7,100,000

RCPP Funds Requested for TA: \$0

Partner FA Contributions: \$1,379,500 (IN- \$300,000; MI - \$1,079,500)

Partner TA Contributions: \$4,725,758 (IN-\$971,550; MI - \$3,754,208)

See Estimated Funds Requested by Type (FA/TA), By State, Covered Program and Year in Attached Table

I. Budget Table (see worksheet (Partners Tab) for contribution by partner)

Fiscal Year	Activity	Lead Partners	Federal FA Requested	Federal TA Requested	Non-Federal Resources (In-Kind)	Non-Federal Resources (Cash)	Federal Resources (In-Kind)
2015	Technical & Financial Assistance to producers & program delivery	MDARD, Van Buren CD, Berrien CD, Noble SWCD, Steuben SWCD, Paw Paw Village, Cass CD, Branch CD, St Joseph CD (MI & IN), LaGrange SWCD, Kosciusko SWCD, Elkhart SWCD, FotSJR, SJRBC, TRC, Pheasants Forever, MI Farm Bureau, Ducks Unlimited, SWMPC, MSU IWR, MDNR, MDARD, IDNR	1,080,000	0	852,509	0	0
2016			1,790,000	0	852,509	0	0
2017			1,310,000	0	852,509	0	0
2018			1,560,000	0	852,509	0	0
2019			1,360,000	0	852,509	0	0
2015	Monitoring	Elkhart/South Bend Cities, Michigan Geological Survey, Branch Conservation District, St. Joseph River Basin Commission, Two Rivers Coalition, MDNR Fisheries, MDEQ, tribes	0	0	316,342.60	0	52,200
2016			0	0	316,342.60	0	52,200
2017			0	0	316,342.60	0	52,200
2018			0	0	316,342.60	0	52,200
2019			0	0	316.342.60	0	52,200

m. The intended producer and landowner participants will include eligible persons, entities and tribes that are involved in agricultural operations in the St. Joseph River Watershed. Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis will help target areas within the SJRW to identify high priority areas to address resource objectives targeted by this proposal as well as within sub-watersheds. Ducks Unlimited and other partners have a long and successful experience in providing this type of analysis and will provide this service as part of in-kind contribution. This analysis has already been conducted for parts of 4 sub-watersheds on a “parcel” based analysis. An analysis has also been completed by the Friends of the St. Joseph River Association to identify high priority landowners for wetland restorations that will result in the most sediment and nutrient loading reductions (See attached map of wetlands – note this information is available by parcel). This will allow SJRW partners to identify high priority agricultural operations that would result in the biggest impact for water quantity and water quality (sediment and nutrient loading), soil health and at risk species.

n. Private and tribal lands that will be the focus of the project and will include cropland (especially irrigated seed corn), rangeland, pastureland and other land incidental to agricultural production including wetland and riparian buffers when significant natural resource issues can be addressed under EQIP, CSP or WRE. There are two federally recognized tribal entities with land the St. Joseph River Watershed.

As described in section m., GIS analysis will be conducted to identify high priority areas across the landscape. Data has been collected from partners that will target activities, practices, landowners, and sub-watersheds based on water withdraw rates, soil types, wetland function restoration potential, sediment and nutrient loading, topographic characteristics, and juxtaposition to water bodies. This type of analysis can be conducted on parcel by parcel basis and has already been piloted for 4 sub-watersheds in the SJRW for private and public lands surrounding the Crane Pond State Game Area. See attached maps for areas prioritized by resource concern.



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

September 29, 2014

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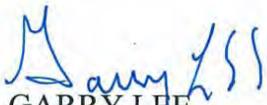
Mr. Jack Knorek
MDARD Environmental Stewardship Division
Constitution Hall 6N
525 W. Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30017
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

Your proposal entitled "Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership", submitted for Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) funding, will meet the goal of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of improving water quality by reducing runoff of phosphorus and sediment on working lands, increasing groundwater conservation, and restoring wetlands in the St. Joseph River Watershed.

In collaboration with NRCS, other Federal, State and local units of government and private industry, this project will help improve the water quality in southern Lake Michigan and in the Great Lakes Region as a whole.

Sincerely,


GARRY LEE
State Conservationist

cc:
Brian MacMaster, ASTC-Programs, NRCS, East Lansing, MI

Natural Resource Objectives and Actions

a.) Resource Concerns

The following resource concerns were identified in the Lake Michigan Lakewide Area Management Plan, the SJRW Management Plan and sub-watershed plans. The major resource issues are:

- increasing irrigation impacts on fisheries and aquifer sustainability,
- excessive sediment and phosphorus loading,
- over 50% wetland loss in the watershed and
- loss of wildlife and fisheries habitat.



Water Quantity

The majority of the SJRW's groundwater is part of the surficial aquifer, which is widespread, extensively used, and provides an easily accessible source of water. The aquifer system stores water and transmits it either along short flow paths to streams, thus sustaining base flow, or downward to underlying aquifers, thus providing recharge to the underlying aquifer. Because the surficial aquifer system is highly permeable and is often present at the land surface, it is extremely vulnerable to contamination from human activities. The relative ease of water withdrawal for crop irrigation, coupled with productive soils and ideal growing conditions support a fast growing market for seed corn production. Additionally, recent high commodity prices have facilitated a rapid increase in the number of agricultural irrigation wells and draw from the aquifer. St. Joseph County, Michigan, is the most irrigated county east of the Mississippi River. In Michigan alone, the annual agriculture water use exceeds 70 billion gallons/year. Recent data indicate the increased rate of groundwater withdraw will soon exceed the aquifer's recharge rate, which will limit the long-term sustainability of the agricultural community (specifically the seed corn industry). This will also have significant negative impacts to surface water hydrologic flow, water temperatures, and base flow which will adversely impact cold and warm water aquatic communities, specifically fish and mussels. In the St. Joseph River Watershed there are many high quality cold and warm water streams that support diverse fisheries and mussel communities, including the federally endangered Snuffbox mussel.



Contracts between producers and seed corn companies provide a disincentive to conserve groundwater for irrigation purposes; essentially, seed corn producers compete against each other to maximize their yields to get bonuses as defined in contract language. Relatively lower yields are penalized and continued lower yields eventually result in the loss of a contract. Irrigation is often considered "cheap insurance" against low yields when water is considered a limiting factor, with or without information that supports the decision to irrigate. A variety of irrigation system management tools are available to optimize irrigation; these tools include: using "smart technologies" that estimate soil moisture and evapotranspiration to determine when to run irrigation systems and at what rate and duration; calibrating irrigation systems to ensure uniform application; variable rate irrigation and frequency drive pumps, and proper system nozzle selection and maintenance. **Partners are currently working on an innovative approach to modify seed corn contracts with producers to promote water conserving irrigation practices. If successful, seed corn contracts could serve as a significant incentive to optimize irrigation and reduce groundwater withdraws.** Irrigation practices will also benefit the producer by saving money and energy (reducing the amount of electricity or diesel fuel). A partnership of farmers, municipalities, industry, university, federal and state stakeholders has been working for three years to advance these efforts and will contribute greatly to this portion of the project.



Water Quality Degradation

The SJRW Management Plan states that sediment is the priority pollutant. The US Army Corps of Engineers stated in 2005 the "*current sediment supply in the entire St. Joseph watershed is 590,625 tons/year.*" Since 1990, 1.2 million tons of sediment has been dredged from the St. Joseph Harbor. The SJRW is estimated to be the 2nd largest contributor of sediment to Lake

Michigan and 5th in the Great Lakes (The Journal of American Science, 1(2), 2005, Ouyang, et al. Assessing Sediment Loading from Croplands). Excess **sediment loading** from agricultural lands has been identified as a significant impediment to surface water quality in the SJRW, covering riffles, destroying spawning fish habitat, causing turbidity, decreasing flood storage capacity, and delivering nutrients, toxins, and invasive species. Sedimentation significantly damages the habitat of the Snuffbox mussel, a Federally endangered species. **Phosphorous loading** is directly related to sedimentation and excessive phosphorus levels increase the growth of algae and weeds, further degrading fisheries and wildlife habitat. Project partners will work with producers to implement agriculture practices that reduce sediment and phosphorus loading such as livestock exclusion, riparian filter strips, grassed waterways, windbreaks, conservation tillage and cover crops. Many of these practices not only reduce sediment and nutrients, but they also increase soil health and farm productivity.

Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife

The **loss of wetlands and riparian corridor canopy** in the SJRW has greatly reduced the capacity of the watershed to filter sediment and nutrients and stabilize banks which prevent sedimentation from erosion. This area historically had idle grasslands, savannah, prairies, and hay fields that provided habitat for grassland birds such as bobolink, Eastern meadowlark, grasshopper sparrows, mallards, Eastern wild turkey and ring-necked pheasants. Increased agriculture has greatly reduced grassland habitats impacting grassland birds. While practices such as riparian filter strips and windbreaks will reduce sediment and nutrients, they will also increase habitat for these species of concern. A recent wetland assessment for the watershed indicates a 50% of acreage loss watershed wide (over 90% loss in some sub-watersheds) with over 80 % loss of sediment retention and nutrient transformation in 3 sub-watersheds and over 80% loss of habitat functions in 5 sub-watersheds. Wetland loss causes sedimentation covering essential spawning areas for salmon, trout and other popular game fish and has reduced habitat for the Copperbelly water snake (Federally endangered) and the Eastern massasauga rattlesnake (candidate for Federal listing). Over the last 3 years, many project partners have been involved in a successful bi-state wetland partnership funded by EPA. The RCPP project will build on and expand this partnership to increase wetland restoration efforts in the SJRW.



b.) Project Objectives

This project will integrate multiple conservation approaches to deliver comprehensive and measurable solutions. Partners will be providing innovative conservation delivery methods, including outcome-based performance measures and methods. The Resource Concerns will be addressed via application of a suite of conservation practices that provide multiple benefits. This project leverages significant existing local, state and federal resources including conservation district staff with expertise in the design and implementation of key conservation practices covering:

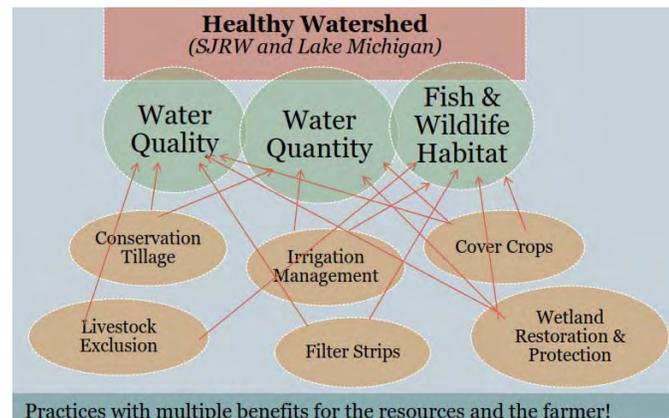
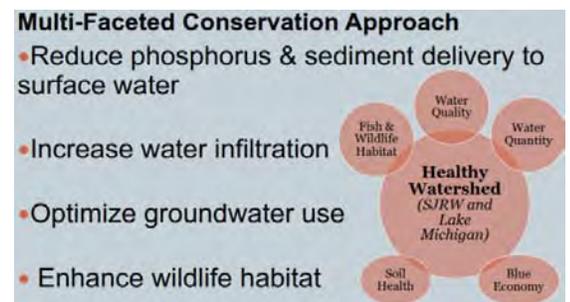
- Irrigation Water Management
- Erosion Control, Soil Health and Nutrient Management Practices
- Wetland Restoration.

Project objectives are to:

- Enroll 208,950 additional acres in conservation practices (EQIP, CSP)
- Restore and protect 1,400 acres of wetland through easements (WRE)
- Reduce impacts of groundwater withdrawals to streams

This will result in annual **environmental outcomes**:

- 4.8 billion gallon reduction of groundwater use
- 46,200 tons of sediment reduction
- 116,200 pounds of phosphorus reduction



Practices with multiple benefits for the resources and the farmer!

- 700 tons of nitrogen reduction
- 10% gain in bird populations

Partners will implement the following activities to meet project objectives:

- Develop and implement a coordinated and targeted outreach campaign that highlights the benefits to the agricultural community.
- Work with NRCS to develop a ranking system to advance implementation of practices in priority areas to best address resource concerns.
- Work one-on-one with producers to increase irrigation system improvements and enhance efficiencies and reduce sediment and nutrient loading in the SJRW, with particular emphasis on practices that also enhance soil health and wildlife and fisheries habitat. (see Section c for specific practices.)
- Coordinate and share existing and target new environmental and social monitoring efforts (from sub-watershed to field level) to evaluate and adapt efforts to achieve project results.
- Collaborate to annually evaluate, document and report results at the county, sub-watershed and SJRW scale as appropriate.

As described, this project will address inter-related resource concerns of water quantity, water quality degradation and inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife. Secondary resources concerns that will also be addressed include soil health and at-risk species habitat.

General timeline: In the first three months, the project team will determine critical areas, develop the ranking process, develop a professional multi-approach outreach campaign to be used/adapted by partners and identify landowners (focus on new producers to NRCS programs). The project team will meet monthly the first year and then at least quarterly the subsequent years to share needs and expertise, outreach successes and data, adapt assistance based on evaluation feedback and continue to coordinate project monitoring needs and report and document results for annual reports to NRCS due every November and for the project final report. Landowner outreach and engagement will be on-going and will begin immediately as NRCS staff have indicated that they have relevant applications waiting to be funded. Partner technical assistance staff will begin meeting one-on-one with landowners to identify priority resource concerns and appropriate practices. Outreach efforts to reach new producers will start in month four of the first year and one-on-one technical and financial assistance will follow.

c.) **Actions By Objective**

This project builds upon a strong history of collaboration including the development of a bi-state watershed management plan in 2005, a bi-state watershed council in existence for 8 years, an EPA funded wetland partnership consisting of federal, state and local partners and the Southwest Michigan Water Resources Council (a strong public - private partnership with participation of farmers, local, state and federal agencies, universities, non-profits and private industry) to addresses large quantity withdrawals in the watershed.

The partners will utilize existing data, models and plans to determine where to target outreach, technical and financial assistance to producers and to implement agricultural practices that are MOST needed to improve resource concerns. By targeting conservation efforts to the highest priority areas, this project will have a significant impact on Lake Michigan and the St. Joseph River Watershed including its tributaries and inland lakes. Partners will redirect current staff (such as CTAI (Conservation Technical Assistance Initiative) and MAEAP(MI Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program) technicians) and fund additional technicians to assist NRCS with implementing the EQIP, CSP and ACEP practices. A critical component of this project will be a targeted outreach/promotion campaign based on tools developed for the SJRW. These tools include the Landscape Level Wetland Function Assessment data coupled with parcel information, HIT model, Sediment Calculator, Watershed Management Plans' critical areas, and the Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool for large quantity withdrawals. Another critical component will be the quick creation and implementation of a marketing campaign that specifically

targets high priority producers and focuses on messages that highlight the economic benefits to the producers

The partners will provide staff to work with producers to implement conservation practices in EQIP, CSP and wetland restoration through ACEP. Expected EQIP practices will include: Irrigation Water Management (449), Nutrient Management Plan (104), Conservation Cover (327), Residue Management – No till/strip till (329), Cover Crop (340), Critical Area Planting (342), Field Border (386), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Filter Strip (393), Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395), Grassed Waterway (412), Access Control (472), Prescribed Grazing (578), Stream Crossing (578), Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580) , Restoration & Management of Declining Habitat (643), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645).

The extensive network of partners will perform monitoring throughout the watershed that will be shared to document the environmental outcomes of the project. Outcomes will be measured by the following methods:

Partners will be monitoring stream gauges, fisheries populations, stream temperature and groundwater elevations to better understand if irrigation practices are reducing impacts to streams.

Partners will be monitoring streams and rivers for sediment and other chemical parameters to determine if sediment and nutrient reduction goals are being achieved in priority sub watersheds.

Partners will be performing bird population surveys to determine if wildlife habitat is improving or increasing.

Partners will be performing volunteer macro invertebrate sampling to determine the overall health of streams and track the degradation and/or improvement of in- stream habitat throughout the watershed.

Partners will utilize the HIT model and landscape wetland function assessment tools to determine the reduction of sediment and nutrient loading from practices and wetland restorations.

Detailed Application

a.) Detailed Map The project area is the St. Joseph River Watershed (Hydrologic Unit Code 04050001), located in southwest Michigan and northwest Indiana, and is the third largest river basin of Lake Michigan. The watershed drains 4,685 square miles from 15 counties, has nine major tributaries and flows through and near four major metropolitan areas. Over 70% of the land is in agricultural production. Within the watershed, the following private and tribal lands will be targeted: cropland (especially irrigated seed corn), rangeland, pastureland and other land incidental to agricultural production including wetland and riparian buffers when significant natural resource issues can be addressed. Priority areas based on resource concerns have been identified (see attached maps). The attached sediment loading map shows priority target areas for EQIP and CSP. The attached map of wetland restoration areas show target areas that will significantly reduce sediment and nutrient loading according to the Landscape Wetland Function Assessment. There are 229,673 acres of wetland restoration areas that can provide a high function for sediment and nutrient loading reductions in the St. Joseph River Watershed. Sub watersheds with high levels of wetland loss will be targeted. There will be a special emphasis on addressing irrigation improvements and efficiencies on seed corn acres. The growing seed corn industry is driving more irrigation in the priority counties of: St. Joseph (MI), St. Joseph (IN), LaGrange (IN), Branch (MI) and Cass (MI), specifically in subwatersheds with high quality fisheries. Targeted conservation practices in the identified priority areas will significantly contribute to the national priorities of improving water quantity, water quality, soil health and at risk species habitat. The goal is to enroll 208,950 additional acres in conservation practices (EQIP, CSP) in the high priority areas identified.

b.) Cost Effectiveness

By taking a targeted approach using GIS analysis to focus the work of many partners, conservation practices implemented will have the biggest impact on proposed objectives, gaining the largest benefit (i.e. cost/ton of sediment reduction, cost/gallon of irrigation water saved, etc.) for both federal dollars and partner dollars spent. Furthermore, through this targeted approach technical assistance efforts will result with the largest impact for the effort expended. This targeted approach will also make it easier to communicate with landowners and partners where are priorities are within such a large landscape.

Through this proposal and partnerships, NRCS dollars will be matched nearly one to one. Furthermore, landowners will be proving at least 25% cost share for many of these conservation practices. Landowner cost share added with the SJRW partner's economic contribution means that for every federal \$1.00 targeted in the SJRW there will be nearly \$1.25 dollars in economic contribution. Because of the RCPP proposal we are working with and leveraging efforts with new partners and targeting new dollars into the SJRW. For example, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) will provide funding over the next four years to fund at least one Farm Bill Biologist to work in the area to promote this project and to provide technical assistance. Although MDNR has funded three other Farm Bill Biologists in Michigan, none of these biologists cover the SJRW and this will be an expanded effort in an area where none was before. In a similar manner MDNR will be provided financial incentives for landowners wanting to make a longer term conservation commitment through enrolling priority lands into the Conservation Reserve Program. Although MDNR has provided financial commitment to CREP in other watersheds, there has been no financial commitment within SJRW. These technical and financial contributions will increase investments in conservation.

Furthermore, the SJRW Partnership has reached out to numerous statewide and local foundations that have shown interest in this proposal but because of the tight proposal timeline combined with individual foundation Board meeting schedules and/or organization fiscal calendars they have not been able to make a solid financial commitment. If this proposal is funded the SJRW Partnership will continue to reach out to foundations and any financial contributions will be added to the partners' economic contribution. Because of the tight timeline, partners did not have a great opportunity to outreach to the many private

sector organizations in the watershed; if funded, efforts will continue to explore opportunities to gain economic contributions, especially from the private sector.

The targeted approach the partners propose to utilize has been successful in the past in the SJRW. The partners were successful with AWEF funds in the past and utilized a local ranking system to achieve project results. Recently, the SJRW bi-state wetland partnership has been successful in targeting technical assistance to producers based on the landscape wetland functional assessment. This project has resulted in many wetland restoration and protection activities in the watershed. The partners are confident they have the resources and can build on these past successes to ensure a cost-effective approach with this project.

c.) Collaboration

This project is supported by over 40 partners. The ones in the attached Partner table are those that are providing partner contributions. However, there are many other partners that are involved, but have not formally committed partner contributions such as the Michigan Corn Growers Association, Michiana Irrigation Association and others. Please see Partner table in worksheet for contributing partners’ roles

d.) Project Timeline

The annual reports will be submitted as required which is anticipated to be a month after the end of each fiscal year. The final report will submitted within two months of the end of the project end date (expected to be September 30, 2019).

Task	2015				2016				2017				2018				2019			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4																
Finalize critical areas & ranking criteria	x																			
Develop & distribute outreach campaign	x	x																		
Implement Outreach Campaign		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Provide producer TA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Establish baselines and Monitor results	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Project Partner meetings	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Submit Annual Reports					x				x				x				x			x
Submit Final Report																				x

e.) Description of Conservation Activity Plans

The partners will provide staff to provide technical assistance to producers to implement conservation practices in EQIP, CSP and wetland restoration through ACEP. Expected EQIP practices will include: Irrigation Water Management (449), Nutrient Management Plan (104), Conservation Cover (327), Residue Management – No till/strip till (329), Cover Crop (340), Critical Area Planting (342), Field Border (386), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Filter Strip (393), Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395), Grassed Waterway (412), Access Control (472), Prescribed Grazing (578), Stream Crossing (578), Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580), Restoration & Management of Declining Habitat (643), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644), Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645).

Practices will be implemented, to the greatest degree possible, in targeted areas based on modeling results using tools (such as the Landscape Level Wetland Function Assessment data coupled with parcel information, HIT model, Sediment Calculator, Watershed Management Plans' critical areas, and the Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool for large quantity withdrawals) focused on the objectives of this proposal. Marketing and outreach efforts will also be conducted in a targeted approach. Landscape planning recommendations in previously completed plans such as the Michigan Wildlife Action Plan, the St. Joseph fisheries watershed plan, St. Joseph River Watershed Plan, and other landscape SJRW sub-watershed planning documents will also be used to prioritize geographic priorities and conservation activity. At least one Farm Bill biologist will be funded through these efforts, and additional financial resources have been requested through a MDNR fisheries grant to fund a second Farm Bill biologist. These biologists are hired and employed through the local conservation districts. Presently, there are three Farm Bill Biologists in the state and they have completed all the administrative process and training to gain access to the USDA computer network, utilize the NRCS Toolkit, create and implement an Individualized Development Plan, and work synergistically with NRCS Field Office staff. This is a proven partnership that has worked successfully in other parts of Michigan which will be expanded to SJRW.

The six Conservation Activity Plans (CAPs) that will be utilized include the following:

- Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan – 102
- Nutrient Management Plan – 104
- Integrated Pest Management Plan – 114
- Irrigation Water Management Plan - 118
- Conservation Plan Supporting Transition from Irrigation to Dry-land Farming Plan – 134
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat Management Plan – 142

Project objectives are to 1) enroll 208,950 additional acres in conservation practices (EQIP, CSP) and 2) restore and protect 1,400 acres of wetland through easements (WRE). The following CAP's conservation practices, wetland restoration activities, and other partner activities for each objective are identified below.

Objective 1: Enroll 208,950 additional acres in conservation practices (EQIP, CSP).

Targeted outreach and technical assistance will be conducted to ensure cost effectiveness and reach our needed outcomes. Conservation Activities Plan will include Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan, Nutrient Management Plan, Integrated Pest Management Plan, Irrigation Water Management Plan and Conservation Plan Supporting Transition from Irrigation to Dry-land Farming Plan.

Expected EQIP practices will include: Irrigation Water Management (449), Nutrient Management Plan (104), Conservation Cover (327), Residue Management – No till/strip till (329), Cover Crop (340), Critical Area Planting (342), Field Border (386), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Filter Strip (393), Stream

Habitat Improvement and Management (395), Grassed Waterway (412), Access Control (472), Prescribed Grazing (578), Stream Crossing (578), and Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580).

Conservation partners for this proposal will conduct targeted outreach and promotional activities focused on high priority areas identified through GIS modeling. Partners will provide on-site technical assistance, develop the appropriate conservation plans, assist with landowner application for EQIP/CSP, and provide landowner assistance in conservation practice implementation.

Based on the funding level, the planning needs and conservation practices we plan on conservation practices on 208,950 acres. This conservation output will provide for the reduction of 4.8 billion gallons of groundwater use, 46,200 tons of sediment reduction, 116,200 pounds of phosphorus reduction, and 700 tons of nitrogen reduction.

Monitoring/data collection. Standard methods for identifying outputs (i.e. feet of access control, acres under irrigation water management, etc.), modeling tools to record practice-specific outcomes (i.e. tons of soil loss reduction, gallons of groundwater use reduction, pheasant counts, etc.) will be utilized to determine field-level impacts. Broader data collected by state and federal agencies (i.e. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, United States Geological Service, Michigan Geological Survey, etc.) will be used to establish baselines and identify trends in the SJRW over the life of the project. The Michigan Geological Survey, MDNR, USGS and MDEQ will monitor stream gauges, stream temperatures and perform hydro-geological modeling of project priority areas in conjunction with the Southwest Michigan Water Resources Council.

Objective 2: Restore and protect 1,400 acres of wetland through easements (WRE).

Targeted outreach and technical assistance will be conducted to ensure cost effectiveness and reach our needed outcomes. . Conservation Activities Plan will include Fish and Wildlife Habitat Management Plan.

Expected WRE practices will include: Conservation Cover (327), Critical Area Planting (342), Field Border (386), Riparian Forest Buffer (391), Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395), Restoration & Management of Declining Habitat (643), Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644), and Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645).

Conservation partners for this proposal will conduct targeted outreach and promotional activities focused on high priority areas identified through GIS modeling. Partners will provide on-site technical assistance, develop the appropriate conservation plans, assist with landowner application for EQIP, and provide landowner assistance in conservation practice implementation.

Based on the funding level, the planning needs and conservation practices we plan on conservation practices on 1,400 acres. Through these wetland restoration and grassland buffers surrounding them we expect to see a 10% increase in wetland and upland game bird populations. Through partnerships with landowners and others we will monitor outcomes through Citizen Scientist process where landowners and partners collect data for such as calling counts or bird surveys. Furthermore, MDNR spring waterfowl flights and rural mail carrier counts of pheasant and turkey broods will be used as metrics for project outcomes.

Expected short and long-term benefits for SJRW.

Objectives →	Conservation Actions	Outputs →	Short-Term Benefits	Long-Term Benefits
<i>Accomplishments that will improve the status of SJRW</i>	<i>Accomplishing these activities will result in the following measurable deliverables:</i>	<i>Accomplishing these activities will result in the following evidence of progress:</i>	<i>We expect the following measurable changes within a five-year period:</i>	<i>We expect the following impacts / trends beyond five years:</i>
Enroll 208,950 additional acres in conservation practices (EQIP, CSP) Restore and protect 1400 acres of wetland through easements (WRE)	Conduct GIS analysis to identify priority areas within watershed Conduct outreach and promotional activities Provide on-site technical assistance and develop site plan Assist landowner with application Assist landowner with practice implementation	Install water quantity conservation practices on 151,200 acres Install water quality practices on 57,750 acres Restore wetlands and adjacent upland buffers on 1400 acres	Help meet state water quality and quantity goals for SJRW Increase 735 acres of wetland/ grassland bird habitat for targeted species Increase number of landowners implementing conservation practices Increase public awareness of EQIP and WRE	Decrease the water withdraw rate within the watershed Reduce the sediment loading within the watershed Increase groundwater infiltration rates Increase habitat for non-migratory and migratory birds Increase public participation in Farm Bill Programs

f) Assessment and Evaluation

The partners are well-equipped to monitor, evaluate and report progress on project objectives and outcomes. Monitoring efforts will provide information on project effectiveness and will be used in an adaptive management fashion to guide the partnership's efforts during the project. Project partners are willing to redirect existing monitoring efforts and implement new efforts to effectively evaluate project outcomes if needed. Not only will partners report on acres of practices implemented, but also on outcomes such as changes in aquifer levels, changes in base-flow and stream temperatures, changes in fish and macro invertebrate communities, tons of sediment and phosphorus reduced, wetland functions restored, changes in populations of grassland birds and waterfowl and changes in social indicators (awareness and behaviors). Monitoring and modeling will occur at multiple levels from field, sub-watershed and SJRW scales. Some of the partners and their significant monitoring contributions include Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (5 year watershed assessment of the SJRW), City of Elkhart/South Bend (monitor over 90 sites in the SJRW for fish, macro invertebrate and water quality parameters), St. Joseph River Basin Commission (water quality and macro invertebrate monitoring in critical areas), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (deployment of temperature loggers, fish, macro-invertebrate and grassland bird and waterfowl surveys), USGS (deployment of additional stream gauges), Western Michigan University/Michigan Geological Survey (groundwater levels, aquifer pumping tests, geologic subsurface mapping and hydrogeologic modeling), Tribes (water quality and macro invertebrate monitoring), Conservation Districts and Watershed Groups (macro-invertebrate

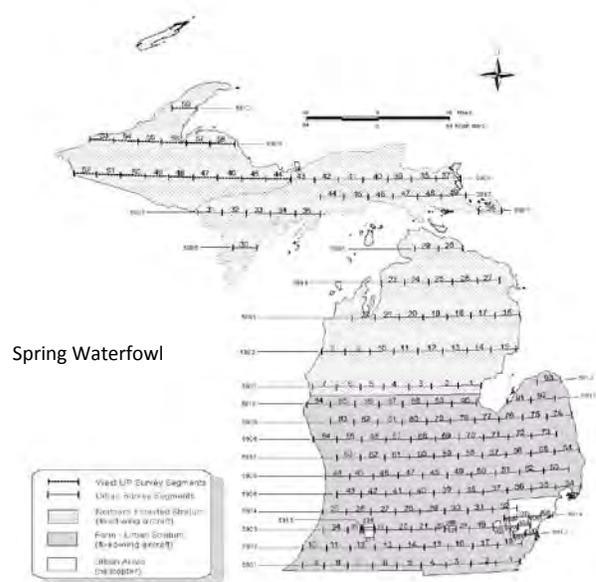
monitoring - some volunteer programs) Van Buren Conservation District (social indicator study) and Michigan State University (social indicator study). MDNR has an online Wild Turkey Observation Report, wherein citizens can voluntarily report turkey sightings and observation detail to the section level. The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) will contact volunteers in the project area and encourage them to report all turkey sightings. NWTf and MDNR staff will compile the data, with the hopes that it will demonstrate a positive population level response. Many existing plans include modeling of pollutant reductions with the implementation of agricultural best management practices which will be used to evaluate outcomes. Several existing tools are available to assist with evaluating outcomes such as the HIT model, SWAT Modeling, SPARROW surface water-quality modeling and the landscape wetland function assessment. Michigan State University Institute of Water has committed to helping the partnership utilize these existing tools. The SJRW Partnership will direct monitoring efforts to provide both pre and post project data and analysis, as well as trends over the course of the project.

Specifically, the Partnership will develop a detailed monitoring plan for objectives and outcomes described in this proposal; the monitoring plan will include a detailed description of methods proposed to monitor specific metrics, partner responsibility, monitoring timeline, reporting procedure and process and documentation. In general, a hierarchical approach will be used that allows resources to be concentrated on fields, sub-watersheds and across the SJRW. Where progress toward accomplishing short-term and long-term benefits is determined to be unsatisfactory, adaptive management strategies will be used to ensure goals and objectives are met. Monitoring will be conducted by state and regional agencies (Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, MDARD, MDNR, St. Joseph River Basin) as well as by conservation partners such as Conservation Districts, the Nature Conservancy, and Ducks Unlimited in a manner that maximizes the quality of information and expertise, while minimizing time and resources. Specifics of the monitoring plan are as follows:

- 1) Baseline conditions have been or will be established at project sites. Data collection will focus on sites for which baseline conditions have not already been documented. Photo points will be used to document baseline conditions and monitor vegetative changes over time as a result of management.
- 2) At selected sites, more intensive monitoring such as plot sampling and coarse-level metrics will be used to track progress towards specific goals and objectives.
- 3) Grassland and wetland practices implemented through this Partnership have the potential to positively impact numerous wildlife species which are dependent on these habitat types. Currently the MDNR Wildlife Division has numerous wildlife population monitoring efforts. Two specific monitoring efforts that will provide some indication of the impact of this proposal Michigan are the Michigan Spring Waterfowl Survey and the Michigan Pheasant Brood Count.

The Michigan Pheasant Brood Count was initiated in the mid-1940s. The survey is conducted annually by rural mail carriers during a two-week period from late July through early August. Mail carriers within the pheasant range voluntarily record the number of pheasant broods, chicks, and lone hens observed each day along their mail delivery routes during the survey period.

The survey areas examined include the SJRW valuation areas. Using brood indices from mail carrier information (e.g. broods observed per ten carrier-days), changes in pheasant abundance can be evaluated



Spring Waterfowl

Transects flown during Michigan's breeding waterfowl survey.

as a function of habitat changes within and outside the evaluation area. The results can be used as one indication of how the Partnership is affecting pheasant abundance within these areas.

Since 1992 the MDNR Wildlife Division has completed a survey of the state's breeding waterfowl through the Michigan Spring Waterfowl Survey. Using fixed-wing aircraft, east west transects (Figure 3) are flown and observers count the number of ducks, geese, and swans within each individual transect.

This information from surveys such as these can be used to measure the response of wildlife populations to “landscape-level” habitat changes. Although waterfowl numbers can change due to factors other than habitat (e.g., regulations and harvest levels), the spring waterfowl survey are a useful tool to measure the impact of this proposal.

- 4) The Partnership will seek opportunities with additional partners, such as universities and research organizations, to use these sites as long-term study areas. This will ensure that benefits initiated by the Partnership will be monitored well beyond the scope of this proposal. For example, outside funds have been used on past MDNR projects to implement management techniques on sites where university research studies have monitored the impact of these activities on water quality and quantity, sedimentation, vegetation changes and fish and wildlife species for years following the initial treatment.

The MDARD will compile annual performance reports which will document progress towards management goals and objectives. Partner monitoring of impacts, outputs and outcomes will be compiled into an annual report and the results shared with all partners. Forums such as the Friends of the SJRW will provide additional opportunities to disseminate monitoring results and discuss progress towards goals and objectives. Active participation on these groups will facilitate information sharing and help address emerging threats before they become widespread issues (for example, sharing information related to conservation practice implementation, the status and impacts of current management efforts, and the setting of priorities). Monitoring results will be summarized and shared with all partners at these meetings. By bringing together all of the expertise and resources from an array of organizations, this collaborative effort will enable conservation of water quality and quantity, reduction in sedimentation, and restored wetlands throughout significant portions of the SJRW.

g) Evaluate Outcome Approaches

The SJRW Partnership will use science-based measures to evaluate the outcome of the project, recognizing that no partner has unlimited resources to implement evaluation practices. MDARD will work with its partners to find new and better methods of evaluating outcomes over the life of the project.

One such approach considers the population levels of certain key wildlife species; many species utilize wetland and grassland habitat in all or a portion of their life cycle. Species such as Mallards and ring-necked pheasant are two that inhabit these habitat types and have current monitoring programs through the MDNR. Observing an increase in the number of these species would suggest general success but the specific numbers reported by the MDNR will give a true understanding as to the effect the Initiative had on this suite of species. The raw number of habitat acres resulting from the SJRW Partnership can be a great metric to measure the success of the Partnership.

h.) Potential Criteria

The NRCS national ranking process, along with the State and local screening tools will be utilized to select successful RCPP program applications. The ranking process and tools are in place as a result of past funding pools and have been functioning in Michigan in to allocate funds to producers. As the SJRW Partnership moves forward, modifications in state and local questions and scoring may occur. These changes will be implemented through the normal review channels for EQIP, CSP and WRE funds.

Specific ranking criteria will be based on priorities based on input from partners, GIS modeling results of priority areas, and practices with the highest conservation cost/benefit ratio (i.e. cost/ton sediment reduction, cost/gallon water conserved, etc.). The SJRW Partnership's RCPP EQIP, CSP and WRE fund allocation will enable more producers to become qualified for dollars for installing needed conservation practices.

It is imperative the SJRW Partnership develops a ranking question to be included in the State and Local priority to add points under the NRCS Ranking process, thus allowing single-practice applications to receive favorable rankings when compared to multi-practice applications that don't impact the SJRW. The AWEPP priority layer was developed to provide guidance to NRCS to rank its customers under this program. NRCS staff has indicated their desire to be able to rank projects locally to address key resource concerns. Project partners will work with NRCS staff to accomplish this.

i.) Estimated Percentage of Eligible Landowners/Participants

Conservation District Farm Bill Biologists will assist landowners (producers) in completing NRCS paperwork both in-office and over the phone. The expectation is that Farm Bill Biologists will work with landowners as intensively as the landowner requires and is comfortable. Additionally, through landscape level plans such as the SJRW plan, SJRW fisheries plan, Michigan Wildlife Action Plan and results of GIS modeling the Partnership we will be able to "drill down" from the strategic to the tactical level and can begin to fulfill the goal of targeting our goals and objectives on the landscape. The Partnership seeks to implement conservation practices on at least 10% of the landscape in identified priority areas by targeting outreach and promotional methods as well as outreach to non-traditional landowners and underserved populations.

The SJRW Partnership will build upon relationships with landowners developed through the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) a nationally recognized voluntary and innovative partnership program designed to address environmental risks and natural resource concerns on farms of all sizes and all commodities. Since its inception, its strengths of being partner-driven, proactive and voluntary enables farmers to become MAEAP verified through a holistic conservation systems approach to farm management and conservation stewardship practices that protect the environment.

The Conservation District and extension staff also have existing and growing relationships with producers that can be leveraged for this program. New partnerships with the Corn Growers Association and the Michiana Irrigation Association will also help project partners to reach new producers. In addition, NRCS staff in the watershed have submitted estimates of participation over the next 5 years that exceeds the amount being requested in this proposal.

j.) Assist producers in meeting or avoiding regulatory requirements

Producers participating in this program may become qualified for verification under the MAEAP Cropping System and Livestock System. MAEAP is an innovative, proactive, and voluntary program that helps landowners minimize environmental risk and they have certainty that they comply with all applicable environmental regulations. Irrigation conservation practices will help SJRW producers meet Indiana and Michigan's commitment to water conservation measures in the Great Lakes Water Compact. There are many Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) areas in the watershed caused by agricultural impacts. Focusing conservation in these areas will help reduce future regulatory actions.

k.) Requested Adjustment of Terms

- The Partnership requests that producers seeking assistance with Irrigation Water Management (449) be awarded automatic approval presuming all other NRCS requirements for program participation are met.
- The Partnership requests to develop an alternative ranking system for the RCPP project area that will be based on national and state criteria, but also includes local criteria to assist in achieving targeted

implementation of conservation practices in the SJRW. This process will result in a more cost effective, outcome based approach for NRCS program funding than what currently occurs. The local ranking criteria will utilize critical/priority areas identified in watershed management plans and information from existing tools including SWAT, HIT model and the Landscape Level Function Assessment to ensure resources are being spent in areas to best address resource concern needs. By having the flexibility to rank vegetative practices higher since they often rank low in the highly competitive EQIP process, the project team believes they will attract new landowners in the priority areas that are interested in starting these cost-effective BMPs.

- The Partnership also requests the flexibility to shift financial assistance across state boundaries, with approval of NRCS, when it is appropriate to achieve the desired outcomes for the project

l.) Alternative Funding Arrangements - Not Applicable

m.) Activities Not Covered By NRCS - Not applicable

n.) SF-424B (attached)

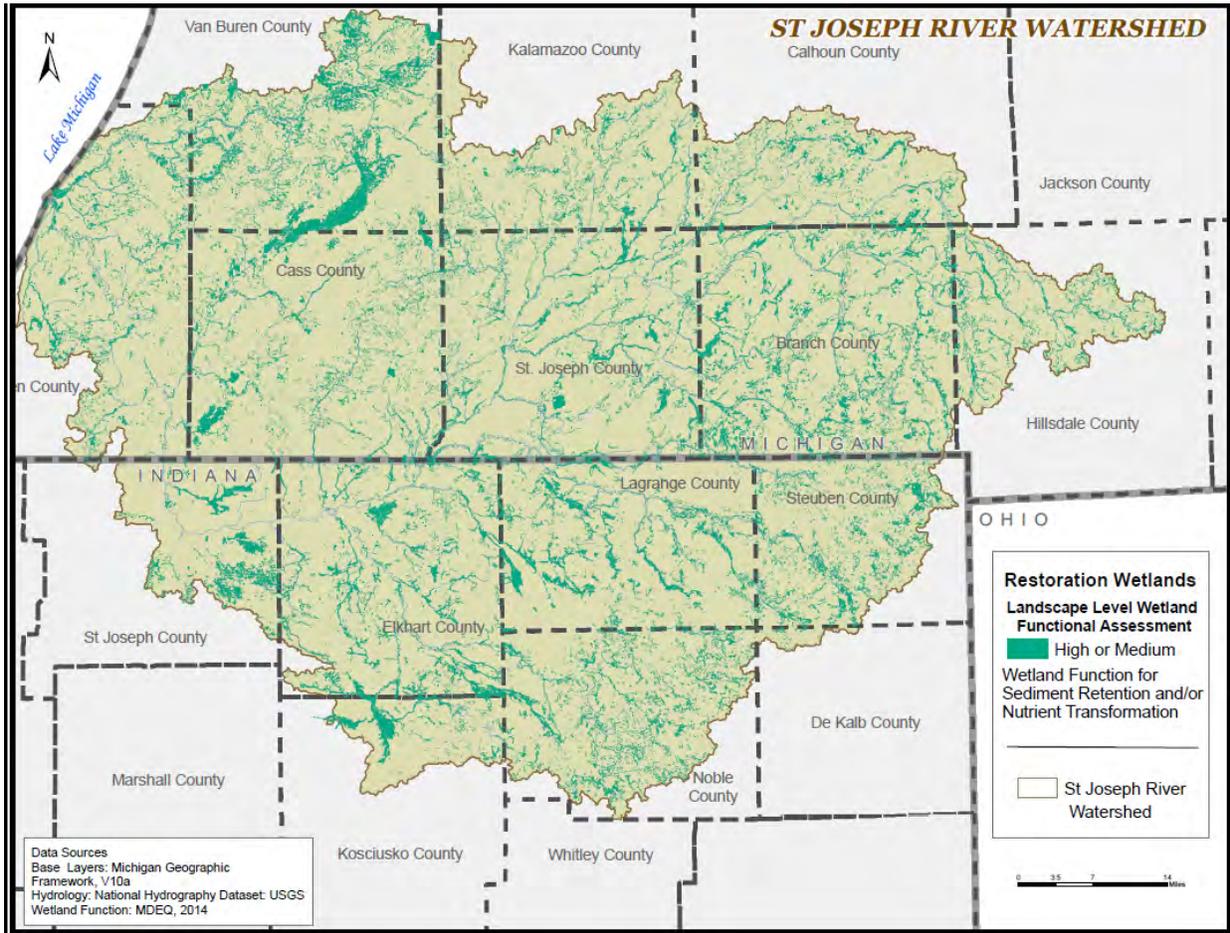
o.) Required Registrations

1. DUNS #: 8053355770000
2. MDARD has completed the SAM registration.

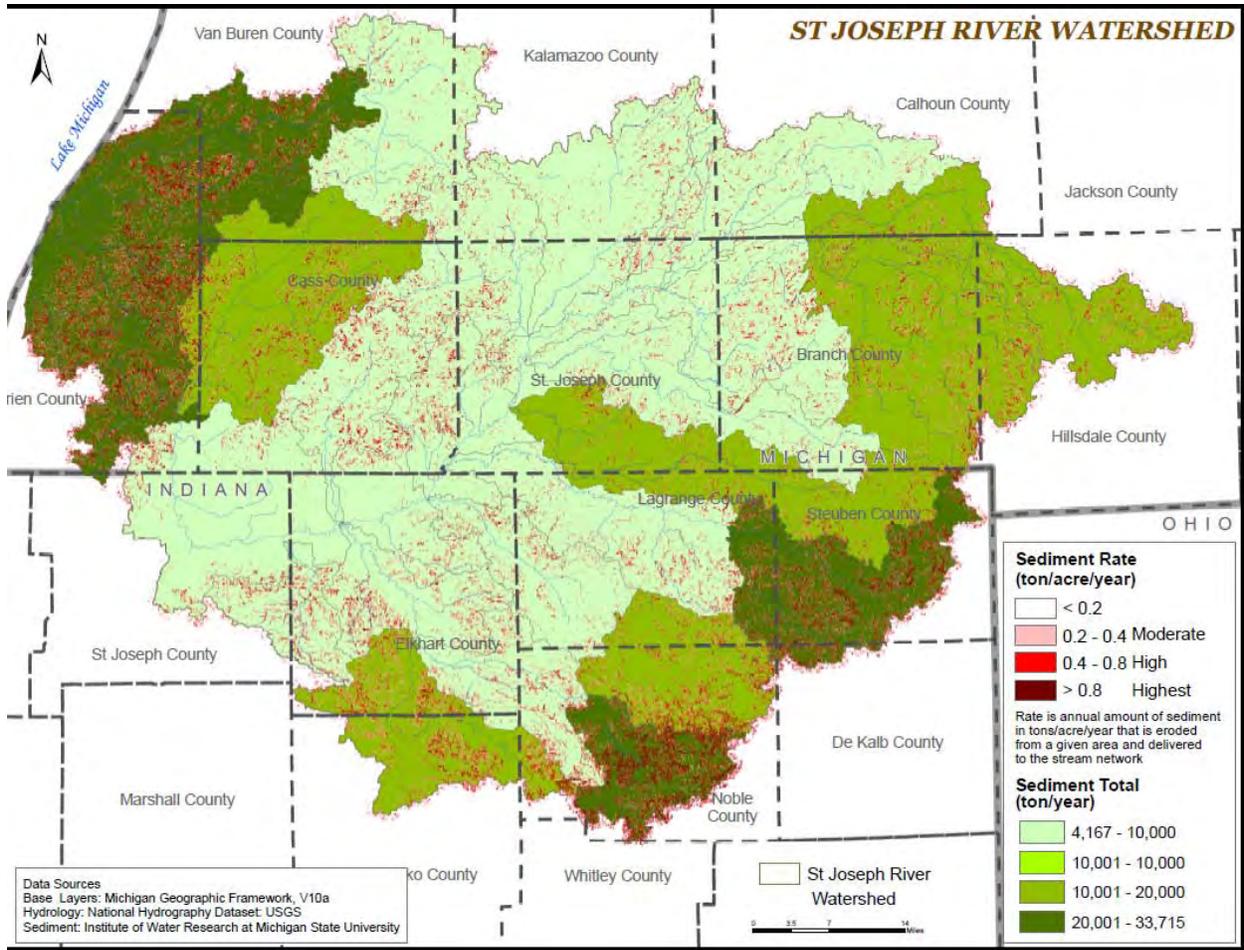
Map 1. Project Area Map



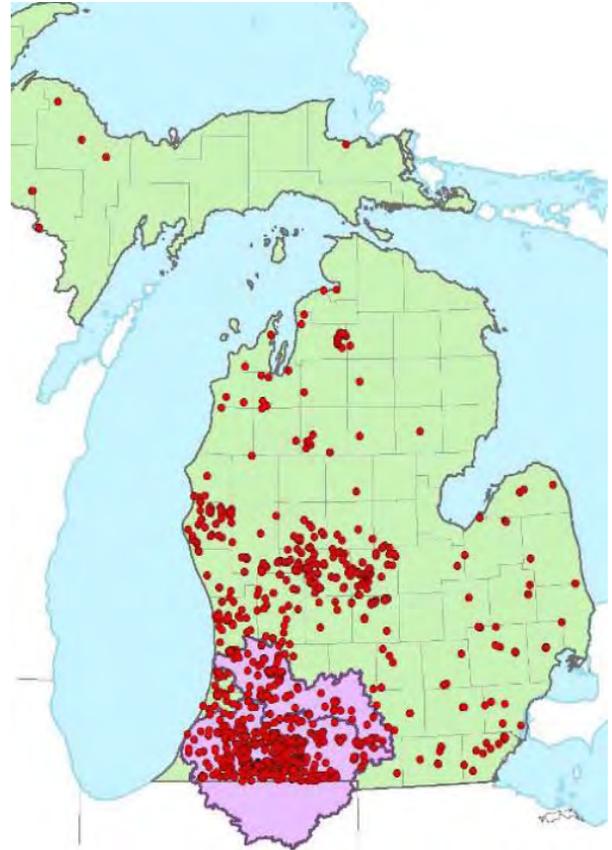
Map 2. Wetland Restoration Areas that will be targeted because these wetlands had a high ranking for sediment retention and nutrient transformation.



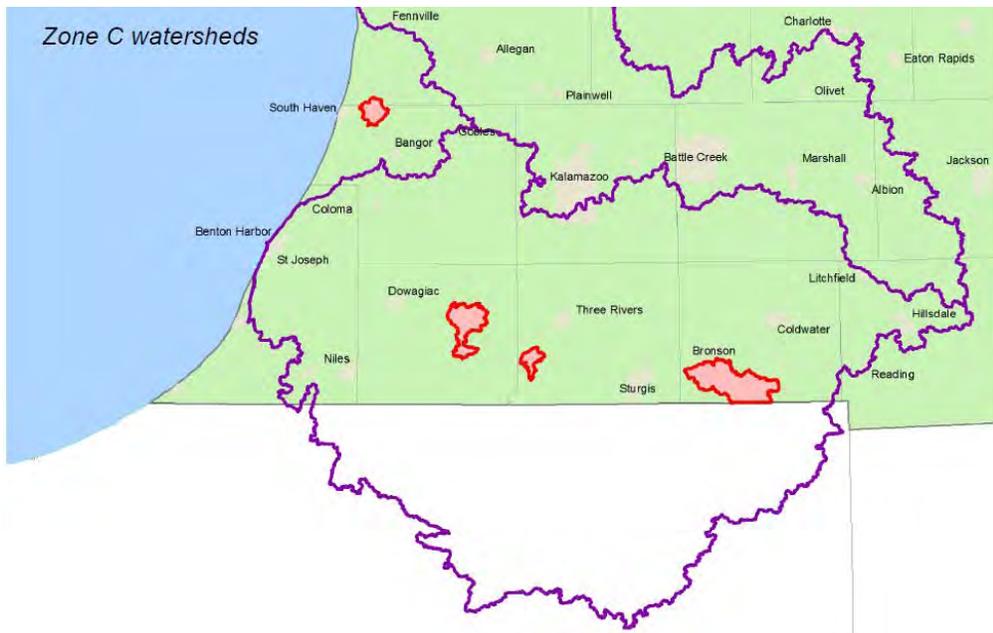
Map 3. Targeted Fields and SubWatersheds for EQIP practices that will reduce sediment and nutrients



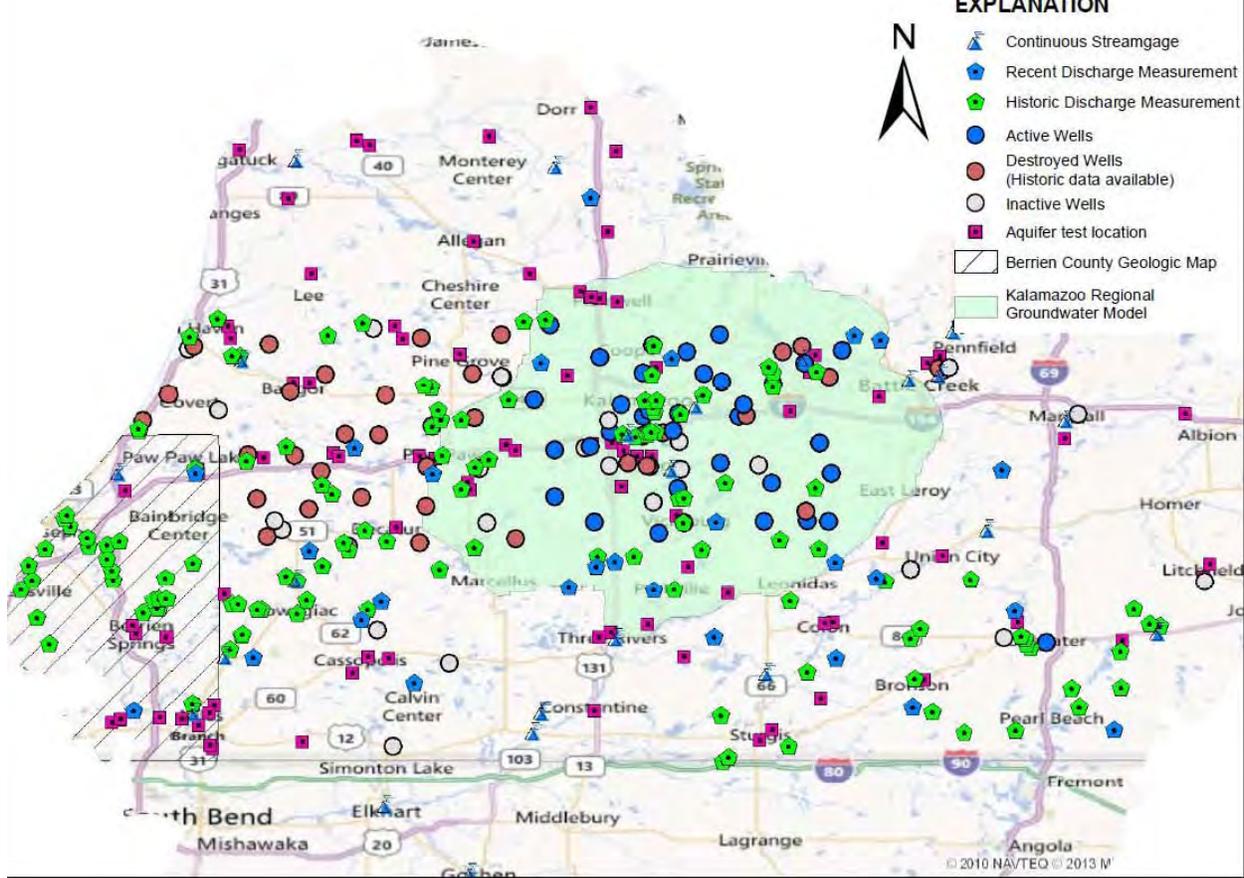
Map 4. Registered Large Quantity Water Withdrawals in Michigan (most are in the St. Joseph River Watershed). Northern Indiana also has increasing large quantity water withdrawals (in process of obtaining data).



Map 5. High priority subwatersheds in the St. Joseph River Watershed (in Michigan) that will be targeted for irrigation related practices. Based on best available information, high priority counties for targeting irrigation related practices are St. Joseph (MI), Cass (MI), Branch (MI), LaGrange (IN) and Elkhart, (IN).



Map 6. Groundwater and Stream Monitoring Locations in Southwest Michigan



Division of Fish and Wildlife
402 W. Washington St., Rm W273
Indianapolis, IN 46204
(317) 232-4091

October 2, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: St. Joseph River Watershed RCPP Application

Dear Mr. Knorek:

On behalf of the Division of Fish and Wildlife, within the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, I am writing to express our support and desire to participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership proposal for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The DNR has been an integral part of Indiana's Conservation Partnership program for over 25 years with the Lake and River Enhancement Program currently in our Division.

Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed. After reviewing the proposal, we believe this project meets the goals of the RCPP to implement effective conservation practices. This proposal aligns well with the goals of our LARE program to reduce sediment and nutrient input into Indiana lakes and rivers, which would also include those that drain through the St. Joseph watershed into Michigan and ultimately into Lake Michigan.

Our commitment to this project includes financial assistance. This assistance will include a commitment to provide funding to Soil and Water Conservation Districts for watershed land treatment projects in the St. Joseph River Watershed. The value of this assistance is \$300,000 over the five year project period.

We will contribute to the RCPP project with the following specific action:

1. Technical/Financial: A commitment to actively soliciting applications for LARE grants for watershed land treatment projects in the St. Joseph River watershed in Indiana, coordinating such efforts with the Indiana State Department of Agriculture and the County Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the technical assistance to them to properly apply for and utilize these funds. Our goal would be to fund at least \$60,000 annually to be utilized for specific land treatment practices to reduce erosion and sedimentation and nutrient inputs into the St. Joseph River Watershed including its tributaries in Indiana. The SWCD's must apply for the grants following the normal LARE policies, but will be assisted in that process by LARE staff throughout the effort.

Type of Support	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	Total
1. Technical/ Financial	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$300,000
Totals	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$300,000

We encourage a favorable review of the St Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership Proposal application for the RCPP from USDA-NRCS.

Sincerely,



Mark Reiter, Director
Division of Fish and Wildlife
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



October 1, 2014

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*Conservation Easement
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Emily E. Wilke
*Conservation Projects
Manager*

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and the Jones State Game Area Conservation Planning Workgroup are pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our organization is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes ongoing technical assistance over the next five years including conservation planning, direct outreach and assistance to producers to implement conservation/restoration programs and permanent conservation options, outreach events, attending RCPP and Southwest Michigan water resources council meetings and speaking at producer field days. The value of this assistance is at least 90 hours or \$3,000 per year over the five year project period, with the potential for substantially more.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely yours,

Peter D. Ter Louw
Executive Director

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

September 26, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

St. Joseph County, Michigan Drain Office is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. The value of this assistance is \$3,375.00 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Jeffery J. Wenzel
St. Joseph County Drain Commissioner

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



Office of the Drain Commissioner

201 West Kalamazoo Avenue • Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007

Phone: (269) 384-8117 • Fax: (269) 383-8920 • email: pacrow@kalcounty.com

Patricia A.S. Crowley, Ph.D., Drain Commissioner

September 26, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The Office of the Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. This assistance will include participation in partner meetings and provision of outreach and education. The value of this assistance is 14 hours of time at \$39/h and 200 miles at \$0.50/mi (for a total of \$646.00) over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Patricia A.S. Crowley
Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



VAN BUREN COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONER

JOE PARMAN, Drain Commissioner GEORGLA MASSURA, Deputy Drain Commissioner BRANDON KULHANEK, SESC & Maintenance Supervisor PETER VANDOP, Engineer

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Van Buren County Drain Commission is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance such as technical assistance to producers and monitoring. The value of this assistance is \$55,000 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the success of the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Parman".

Joe Parman
Drain Commissioner

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



Village of Paw Paw

September 25, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Village of Paw Paw is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. The Village is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes financial assistance of \$60,000 over the five year project. The financial assistance is being provided to producers to implement best management practices to reduce sediment and nutrients in the South Branch Paw Paw River Watershed, a subwatershed of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

We are excited to build on the success of existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns.

Sincerely,

Larry Nielsen
Village Manager



VAN BUREN CONSERVATION DISTRICT

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Van Buren Conservation District is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed. Our commitment to this project includes technical and financial assistance. This assistance will include participation in partner meetings, helping to develop priority areas and rank practices, provide producer technical assistance within Van Buren County, lead or provide outreach and education, provide administrative services, and other similar activities. Technical Assistance includes technical services provided directly to farmers, ranchers, and other eligible entities, such as conservation planning, technical consultation, and assistance with design and implementation of conservation practices. The value of this assistance is \$259,850 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

AJ Brucks
Executive Director
Van Buren Conservation District

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



VAN BUREN CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Project Period – Per Van Buren Conservation District:

Fiscal Year	EQIP		CSP		ACEP- WRE	
	Technical Assistance*	Financial Assistance**	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance
2014-2015	96,107.75	19,500	3,100.25		24,802.00	
2015-2016	64,681.50		2,086.50		16,692.00	
2016-2017	8,494.00		274.00		2,192.00	
2017-2018	8,494.00		274.00		2,192.00	
2018-2019	8,494.00		274.00		2,192.00	

Per USDA Paw Paw Service Center NRCS:

Fiscal Year	EQIP		CSP		ACEP- WRE	
	Technical Assistance*	Financial Assistance**	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance
2014-2015	72,000	300,000	9,000	100,000	9,000	
2015-2016	72,000	300,000	9,000	20,000	9,000	150,000
2016-2017	72,000	250,000	9,000	15,000	9,000	100,000
2017-2018	72,000	250,000	9,000		9,000	
2018-2019	72,000	250,000	9,000		9,000	



*An alliance of the Black River
and Paw Paw River Watersheds*

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Two Rivers Coalition is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. We are committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance such as assisting with project ranking and monitoring. The value of this assistance is \$5,400 over the five year project period.

We have participated in the St. Joseph River Wetland Partnership and are excited to build on the success of these existing partnerships to bring additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Sam Ewbank
|President

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Two Rivers Coalition is a citizen-based group working to protect the health of the Black River and Paw Paw River watersheds through conservation, education, and advocacy.

219 Paw Paw Street, Suite 301, Paw Paw, MI 49079
www.TwoRiversCoalition.org



St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District

USDA Service Center • 2903 Gary Dr., Ste. 1 • Plymouth, IN 46563 • Phone: 574-936-2024, ext. 4
Fax: 855-496-7861 • Email: info@stjosephswcd.org • Website: www.stjosephswcd.org

July 3, 2014

Marcy Colclough, Senior Planner
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
376 WEST MAIN ST., SUITE 130
Benton Harbor, MI 49022-3651

Re: Letter of support for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Dear Ms. Colclough,

On behalf of the St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), I am writing in support of the St. Joseph River Watershed's proposed Regional Conservation Partnership Program project.

Our board of supervisors has agreed that this project is in line with the mission of the St. Joseph County SWCD, and it is a worthwhile cause.

While the St. Joseph County SWCD does not have the resources to contribute financially at this time, we will offer whatever in-kind support possible, including technical assistance, marketing and outreach, data collection and monitoring, and reporting in the amount valued at approximately \$2000.00 each year.

Sincerely,

John Dooms, Chairman
St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District

Organization: St. Joe Co. (MI) CD **Contact Name:** Jen Miller

Email: stjoecountyed@gmail.com **Phone #** 249 467-4336

Financial Assistance (examples - DNR Wildlife Division Habitat grant for filter strips \$100-200,000/year; DNR Fisheries Division Habitat grant for wetland restorations \$100-200,000/year; DNR signing bonus for filter strips and wetland restorations from the Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Grants \$??\$/year; Village of Paw Paw Sediment Reduction Program \$60,000/3 years); CREP expansion)

Please Describe Details of any Financial Assistance Potential (if funding is restricted to a certain portion of the watershed please indicate this):

N/A

Technical Assistance - Please Describe Details of any Technical Assistance Potential (if funding is restricted to a certain portion of the watershed please indicate this):

Marketing/Outreach (examples include leading the development of the marketing campaign, serving on a committee to develop the marketing campaign, planning and hosting workshops, including articles in newsletters, develop and send out press releases, develop and pay for radio ads, newspaper ads, conduct social indicator surveys, share landowner contacts, etc.)

Serving on committees, workshops to all PR activities
(15% of Administrator time)

One-on-One Landowner Assistance (meet with producers and explain RCPP opportunities and help producer with the required NRCS processes to get RCPP cost share practices.)

10% of Admin's time will be available to connect with
Landowners one-on-one.

Organization Name	St. Joseph County Conservation District			Total	
	Program	EQIP	CSP		
Fiscal Year					
FY2015					
FA provided*					
TA provided*	2184	2184		2184	6552 all non-federal
FY2016					
FA provided*					
TA provided*	2184	2184		2184	6552 all non-federal
FY2017					
FA provided*					
TA provided*	2184	2184		2184	6552 all non-federal
FY2018					
FA provided*					
TA provided*	2184	2184		2184	6552 all non-federal
FY2019					
FA provided*					
TA provided*	2184	2184		2184	6552 all non-federal
TOTAL					

FA - financial assistance

TA - technical assistance

***Please indicate the sources of the FA/TA if possible and indicate if this source is federal or not.**

October 1, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

Stauben County Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical and financial assistance. This assistance will include providing planning and cost share assistance for implementing conservation practices as. The value of this assistance is \$120,000.00 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Stauben County Soil and Water Conservation District

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

United States Senate

133 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2204

July 23, 2014

Jason Weller
Natural Resources Conservation Service
1400 Independence Ave., SW, Room 5105-A
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Weller,

As you know, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program I authored in the 2014 Farm Bill represents the biggest investment in land and water conservation in decades, and its implementation will protect our Great Lakes and invest in critical conservation initiatives across the country.

I am very pleased to write this letter of support highlighting the unique strengths of the application submitted by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. This is an innovative bi-state project that addresses priority resource concerns in the St. Joseph River Watershed. Over 70% of the St. Joseph River watershed is dedicated to agricultural use, which makes it particularly significant to Michigan's economy.

The Partnership will focus on addressing water quality and quantity issues that affect fisheries and aquifer sustainability. They will use multi-faceted conservation practices to reduce excessive sediment and phosphorus loading, which has caused significant wetland and wildlife loss. This proposal is critical for reducing phosphorous from agricultural land and conserving the health of Michigan's streams and lakes.

This partnership is a unique and collaborative project that will protect our Great Lakes, land and waterways for future generations. I hope you will give this application your strongest consideration.

Sincerely,



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

cc: Garry Lee, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service





Friends of the St. Joe River Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 1794
South Bend, Indiana 46634
www.fotsjr.org

Established 1994
501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The Friends of the St. Joseph River Association, Inc. (FotSJR) is a bi-state watershed group working to protect, restore, and enhance the St. Joseph River and its tributaries. We are led by a diverse Board of Directors and guided by an advisory Watershed Council including municipal officials and representatives from conservation organizations and natural resource agencies. The FotSJR is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance such as GIS analysis for ranking projects and assisting with project rankings. The value of this assistance is \$10,000 over the five year project period.

The FotSJR has been bringing conservation partners together for many years. We are excited to build on the success of existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Matthew A. Meersman
President

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



**NOTTAWASEPPI HURON
BAND OF THE POTAWATOMI**

A FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENT

September 25th, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The Environmental Department of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi supports and will participate in the Bi-State St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership in Michigan & Indiana. We have held a close connection with the water and wetlands of the St. Joseph River for over 150 years, and believe this proposal will continue the excellent efforts being conducted to preserve water quality. The project will build on existing collaborations which will only be strengthened by continuing the work of local and regional Environmental advocates.

Our commitment is primarily through technical assistance from our Water Resources personnel. This includes attendance at four project meetings, water quality monitoring, provision of water data and analysis, and assistance with GIS to prioritize conservation areas, during each project year. We value this partner contribution at a total of \$2200/year, for a total of \$11,000 for the five year project period.

The Tribe is enthusiastic to bring in additional resources to address the inter-connectivity of surface water, groundwater, and related habitat and wetlands. We have been involved and supported previous efforts, and bring unique skills and perspective to this exciting Conservation Partnership.

Sincerely,

Eric Kerney
Water Resources Specialist
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
LANSING



DAN WYANT
DIRECTOR

September 24, 2014

VIA E-MAIL

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
P.O. Box 30017
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Water Resources Division (WRD), is pleased to partner with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development should the project *Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership* be funded under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Regional Conservation Partnership Program. The purpose of this project is to address priority resource concerns in the St. Joseph River Watershed with a bistate, multifaceted conservation approach focused on improving surface water, groundwater, and habitat quality and quantity.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance from Nonpoint Source Program staff, which may include participation in project coordination meetings, provision of watershed technical data, and assistance with determining critical areas for water quality and quantity. The value of this technical assistance is estimated at 16 hours of staff time annually for the 5-year project period, at an average staff rate of \$62.50 (estimated total partner match = \$5,000).

This project is supported by the WRD because it addresses surface water, groundwater, and related habitat resources and concerns in the St. Joseph River Watershed. It builds upon existing active bistate and local partnerships in the watershed that already have made progress in watershed improvement. The WRD has devoted considerable watershed planning resources to the St. Joseph River Watershed, and this project has the potential to further achieve progress on addressing high priority pollutants, sources, and causes identified in the St. Joseph River Watershed Management Plan, as well as multiple subwatershed management plans.

We look forward to partnering on this project. If you need additional information, please contact Ms. Chris Bauer, Kalamazoo District Office, WRD, at 269-567-3578; bauerc1@michigan.gov; or 7953 Adobe Road, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009-5025.

Sincerely,

William Creal, Chief
Water Resources Division
517-284-5470

cc: Ms. Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
Mr. Bob Day, MDEQ
Mr. Jerrod Sanders, MDEQ
Ms. Chris Bauer, MDEQ

September 25, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

Pheasants Forever, LaGrange Chapter 592 is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our organization is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical and financial assistance. This assistance will include the planting and management of warm season grasses for wildlife habitat improvement in the St. Joseph River Watershed. The value of this assistance is at least \$ 3,750 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

David Arrington, Chapter President

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Pokégnek Bodéwadmik · Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians

Department of Natural Resources

58620 Sink Road, Dowagiac, Michigan 49047 - 269.782.9602



Date

Mr. Jack Knorek

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Environmental Stewardship Division

PO Box 30017

Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

Pokagon Band Department of Natural Resources is pleased to support and participate in the Bi-State St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership in Michigan & Indiana. Partnering with others to address priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal along with improving the health of the native fisheries and other designated uses of these water resources is important to the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi and its Department Natural Resources.

Our commitment is through technical assistance from our water resources personnel. This includes attendance at annual project meetings, water quality monitoring, provision of water data and analysis, and assistance with GIS to prioritize conservation areas, during each project year. We value this partner contribution at a total of \$50,000/year, for a total of \$250,000 for the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Grant Poole".

Grant Poole - Water Quality Specialist

Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Department of Natural Resources

Cc: Marcy Coleclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

A proud, compassionate people committed to strengthening our sovereign nation.

A progressive community focused on culture and the most innovative opportunities for all of our citizens.

Organization: Elkhart County SWCD **Contact** **Name:** Nancy Brown

Email: nancy.brown@in.nacdnet.net **Phone #** 574-533-4383, ext. 3

Financial Assistance (examples - DNR Wildlife Division Habitat grant for filter strips \$100-200,000/year; DNR Fisheries Division Habitat grant for wetland restorations \$100-200,000/year; DNR signing bonus for filter strips and wetland restorations from the Wildlife and Fisheries Habitat Grants \$??/year; Village of Paw Paw Sediment Reduction Program \$60,000/3 years)); CREP expansion)

Please Describe Details of any Financial Assistance Potential (if funding is restricted to a certain portion of the watershed please indicate this):

Technical Assistance - Please Describe Details of any Technical Assistance Potential (if funding is restricted to a certain portion of the watershed please indicate this):

Marketing/Outreach (examples include leading the development of the marketing campaign, serving on a committee to develop the marketing campaign, planning and hosting workshops, including articles in newsletters, develop and send out press releases, develop and pay for radio ads, newspaper ads, conduct social indicator surveys, share landowner contacts, etc.)

We will assist with the marketing campaign, could help develop, will definitely promote in newsletters and news releases. We will host a workshop (or two if needed). Although we cannot share landowner contacts, we would be willing to contact landowners that we think would be interested or would qualify for the program.

One-on-One Landowner Assistance (meet with producers and explain RCPP opportunities and help producer with the required NRCS processes to get RCPP cost share practices.)

At the current time we do not have an ag conservationist, and cannot promise one-on-one assistance; but we would be willing to host producer information sessions and put interested landowners in contact with NRCS. We could also assist with mailings to contacts from social indicators.

Please Describe Details of any Data Collection, Monitoring or Program Management/Reporting Potential (if funding is restricted to a certain portion of the watershed please indicate this):

Data Collection

We can share data collected by the Elkhart County Health Department on water quality.

Monitoring

We have a trained Hoosier Riverwatch facilitator who is willing to work with volunteers to co-ordinate Hoosier Riverwatch volunteer monitoring in Elkhart County, and can train volunteers anywhere in the watershed. We can cover the expenses of water quality monitoring in Elkhart County.

Program Management and Reporting (serving on a program oversight committee, assist with develop ranking criteria, ensure reporting of results, etc.)

We could serve on a committee as long as it compliments what was done through AWEP and the Wetlands project.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

September 30, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The Institute of Water Research at Michigan State University (IWR) is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance, the value of which is expected to be \$30,000 per year over the five year project. This assistance will include technical training on the use of GIS applications and models developed by IWR that help practitioners identify impediments to water quality and guide them in the selection of BMPs, the development of new tools intended to address water quality and quantity issues, and participating in meetings with partners and practitioners.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,



Jon Bartholic, PhD.
Director

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



**INSTITUTE OF
WATER RESEARCH**

Michigan State University
101 Manly Miles Building
1405 S. Harrison Road
East Lansing, MI
48823-5243
517.353.3742
FAX: 517.353.1812
<http://www.iwr.msu.edu>

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Equal-opportunity institution*



John A. Yellich, CPG, LG
Director

E-mail: john.a.yellich@wmich.edu

MICHIGAN GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Western Michigan University
Department of Geosciences
1903 W. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5241

Contact:

Rood Hall: (269) 387-5337
CELL: (303) 901-2886
E-Fax: (425) 491-1976

Website:

<http://mgs.geology.wmich.edu>

September 25, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The Michigan Geological Survey is extremely interested in the water resources in the St. Joseph River and all the other watersheds in Michigan and is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency and Western Michigan University, Geosciences Department is committed to partnering with others in this case to address and assess the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to support this project includes technical assistance through utilizing a combination of academic and field programs and methods, that would and could be used in an ongoing annual educational course by Western Michigan University (WMU) in their nationally recognized Hydrogeology Field Course (HFC), one of the last continuously functioning academic hydrogeologic field application programs in North America, for more than 25 years. Many of these course techniques is what the State of Michigan needs to better understand the groundwater and surface water interactions in the watershed. The field testing would include and not be limited to surface, down-hole and possibly airborne geophysical methods; water level measurements in wells and streams; drilling, core sampling and sieve analysis; well installations, including the monitor well installed in July 2014 (Sec 30, T5S; R13W) as part of the HFC; pump tests for hydrologic characteristics; water level measurements; supporting the public outreach and education of the testing work completed by MGS/WMU; and if applicable, isotope geochemistry of groundwater.

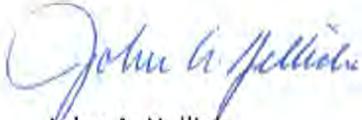
This technical assistance will include the activities and where applicable, the training of volunteers in this collaborative field program, listed above. The annual incremental value provided in financial assistance is estimated at \$164,000 escalating to \$240,000 at the end of five years of the project.

MICHIGAN GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

<http://www.mgs.geology.wmich.edu>

MGS/WMU is eager to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John A. Yellich". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

John A. Yellich,
Director

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



7373 West Saginaw Highway, Box 30960, Lansing, Michigan 48909-8460
Phone (517) 323-7000

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
P.O. Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

Michigan Farm Bureau is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. We are committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed. It is important that farmers are aware of cost-share funding that is available and we value the opportunity for Michigan farmers to work closely with NRCS to identify Farm Bill programs appropriate for their farm's needs.

Our commitment to this project includes in-kind support through education and outreach. This assistance will include promotion of the technical resources and cost-share dollars available to area farmers. The value of this assistance is \$500 per year, totaling \$2,500 over the five year project period.

We look forward to partnering to implement additional conservation practices in the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Wayne H. Wood'.

Wayne H. Wood
President

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

September 30, 2014

Mr. Mark A. Rose
Financial Assistance Programs Division
Department of Agriculture
Natural Resource Conservation Services
P.O. Box 2980
Washington D.C. 20013-2890

Dear Mr. Rose:

RE: St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership
Regional Conservation Partnership Program Application

On behalf of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) – Wildlife Division (WLD), I am writing to express our support of the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership (SJRW) proposal for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). We have worked closely with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and we all share the goal to increase groundwater conservation, increased water infiltration, reduced phosphorus and sediment loading and increased habitat quality and quantity for fish and wildlife. In addition, the WLD supports the desire of the SJRW group to reduce non-point source pollutants from entering St. Joseph River and its tributaries throughout the watershed.

After reviewing the proposal, we believe that this project meets the goals of the RCPP program to implement effective conservation practices, while addressing one of the more serious threats to the River, decreased groundwater quantity. We believe this project, to promote and install best management practices (BMPs) throughout the watershed, will improve water quantity and also build community involvement in the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, while it also increases the enjoyment of the river for local residents. This proposal aligns with our mission. We will contribute to the RCPP project with the following specific actions:

1. WLD will provide funding for a Farm Bill Biologist to provide technical assistance to landowners with a primary focus on wildlife habitat, filter strips and wetlands restorations.
2. WLD will provide new funding for Conservation Practices within the SJRW by providing state funded incentives for best management practices through the Conservation Reserve Program.

Our contact person for this project is Mark Sargent, MDNR- Wildlife Division who can be reached at 269-512-1218 or at sargentm@michigan.gov.

Mr. Mark A. Rose
 Page 2
 September 30, 2014

The corresponding anticipated contribution value of the above actions is detailed in the table:
 (Delete lines in the table that do not apply to your pledged support.)

Type of Support (technical assistance, monitoring, administrative, modeling, and/or education & outreach.	Value of Contributions					
	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	Total
1. Project Coordination						
2. Producer Technical Assistance	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$65,000		\$260,000
3. Lead Outreach and Education						
4. Conduct Monitoring						
5. Funding for Conservation	\$200,000	\$200,000	200,000	\$200,000		\$800,000
6. Funding for Administrative costs						
7. Other-						
Totals						\$1,060,000

We encourage a favorable review of the *Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership* application for the RCPP.

Yours in conservation,



Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
 Wildlife Division, MDNR
 (517) 284-6206



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

September 25, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

Fisheries Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. This assistance will include resource inventories and monitoring of lakes and streams within the watershed. The value of this assistance is \$307,477 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Jay K. Wesley
Unit Manager
Southern Lake Michigan Management Unit
Fisheries Division

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
LANSING



DAN WYANT
DIRECTOR

October 1, 2014

Mr. Mark A. Rose, Director
Financial Assistance Programs Division
Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013-2890

Dear Mr. Rose:

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Water Resources Division (WRD), is pleased to partner with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) should the project, "Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership," be funded under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Regional Conservation Partnership Program. The purpose of this project is to address priority resource concerns in the St. Joseph River watershed with a bistate, multifaceted, conservation approach focused on improving surface water, groundwater, and habitat quality and quantity.

Our commitment to this project includes nonpoint source pass-through grant projects funded with state Clean Michigan Initiative and federal Section 319 funds as well as routine monitoring to assess status and trends in water quality. The pass-through grant projects include:

Portage River/Little Portage Creek Watershed Planning (2012-0017): This project will result in a nine-element watershed management plan that will determine critical pollutants, priority areas, and prioritized recommendations for implementation activities. The approved watershed management plan will be shared with partners and strengthen efforts to identify top priority implementation activities.

Improving Water Quality in the South Branch Watershed (2012-0033): This project includes funding for Conservation District staff to implement Farm Bill-funded best management practices in the South Branch Paw Paw River watershed; a tributary to the St. Joseph River. The final report will be shared with project partners.

We will support this project by providing surface water quality monitoring data collected as part of the WRD five-year rotating basin monitoring efforts for the subject watershed. During the time period of this grant, the WRD expects to conduct water chemistry monitoring within the subject region. The WRD commits to sharing that data as part of the assessment requirements of this grant. These monitoring activities are funded with Clean Michigan Initiative environmental bond funds and should equate to a value of approximately \$4,500 as in-kind contributions.

This project is supported by the WRD because it addresses surface water, groundwater, and related habitat resources and concerns in the St. Joseph River watershed. It builds upon existing active bistate and local partnerships in the watershed that already have made progress in watershed improvement. The WRD has devoted considerable watershed planning resources

to the St. Joseph River watershed, and this project has the potential to further achieve progress on addressing high priority pollutants, sources, and causes identified in the St. Joseph River Watershed Management Plan, as well as multiple subwatershed management plans.

We look forward to partnering on this project. If you need additional information regarding the nonpoint pass-through grants, please contact Mr. Bob Day, Surface Water Assessment Section, WRD, at 517-284-5513 or dayr1@michigan.gov. If you need additional information regarding the water quality monitoring effort, please contact Mr. Mike Alexander, Surface Water Assessment Section, WRD, at 517-284-5550 or Alexanderm2@michigan.gov.

Sincerely,



William Creal, Chief
Water Resources Division
517-284-5470

cc: Mr. Steve Shine, MDARD
Mr. Jack Knorek, MDARD
Ms. Dina Klemans, MDEQ
Mr. Mike Alexander, MDEQ
Mr. Bob Day, MDEQ



Kosciusko County
Soil and Water Conservation District
217 E Bell Drive Warsaw, IN 46582
574-267-7445, ext. 3

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

Kosciusko County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), based in Warsaw, Indiana, is supportive of the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our SWCD has historically and continues to be committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project will be technical assistance. This assistance will include attending meetings, working with landowners, and outreach efforts (field days, newsletters, website). The value of this assistance is \$6800.00 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on our existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We are committed to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Darci Zolman

Program Administrator
Kosciusko County SWCD

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Fiscal Year	EQIP		CSP		ACEP- WRE	
	Technical Assistance*	Financial Assistance**	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance
2014-2015	\$1360.00					
2015-2016	\$1360.00					
2016-2017	\$1360.00					
2017-2018	\$1360.00					
2018-2019	\$1360.00					



INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We Protect Hoosiers and Our Environment.

100 N. Senate Avenue • Indianapolis, IN 46204
(800) 451-6027 • (317) 232-8603 • www.idem.IN.gov

Michael R. Pence
Governor

Thomas W. Easterly
Commissioner

September 29, 2014

Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

Re: RCCP Application
Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed
Partnership

On behalf of the Watershed Assessment and Planning Branch, Office of Water Quality within the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), I am writing to support the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership proposal for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCCP). IDEM is part of the Indiana Conservation Partnership and works very closely with local and regional watershed groups to leverage resources in order to develop watershed planning and implementation activities aimed at restoring and protecting water quality. We believe that the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership bi-state multi-faceted conservation proposal to conserve groundwater, increase water infiltration, reduce phosphorus and sediment loading to the St. Joseph River Watershed and to increase habitat quality and quantity for fish and wildlife via the installation of system's based best management practices is excellent.

The mission of our Office of Water Quality is to monitor, protect, and improve Indiana's water quality to ensure its continued use a drinking water source, habitat for wildlife, recreational resource and economic asset. We think that your proposal both supports our mission and meets the criteria for the RCCP program. We will provide support for the RCCP project in the following ways:

- Provide monthly water quality sampling at six sites in the St. Joseph watershed. Parameters include general chemistry and field data.
- Provide to the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership the quality assured data results within 60 days of the sampling event.

Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Page Two

- Provide technical assistance in the interpretation of the monitoring data.
- Provide outreach and assistance through our watershed specialist assigned to this region of the state.

For improving water quality, our Office of Water Quality appreciates the mutually beneficial relationship we have with the Indiana Conservation Partnership as well as the local and regional watershed groups with whom we work. We support your proposal to conserve groundwater, improve surface water quality via reductions in nutrient and sediment loading, and to increase wildlife habitat in the St. Joseph River Watershed. We wish you luck on your submittal!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marylou Poppa Renshaw".

Marylou Poppa Renshaw, Chief
Watershed Assessment and Planning Branch
Office of Water Quality

The Honorable
Dick Moore
Mayor
Laura Kolo
Environmental Resources
Michael C. Machlan, P. E.
Engineering Services
Margaret M. Jones
Utility Attorney



Public Works &
Utilities Department
Administration, Engineering
& Laboratory
574.293.2572
Utility Billing
574.264.4273
1201 S. Nappanee St.
Elkhart, Indiana 46516

September 30, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The Cities of Elkhart/South Bend Aquatics Community Monitoring Program is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. We are committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed. The Aquatics Program is a joint effort between the Cities of Elkhart and South Bend to evaluate the health of the St. Joseph and Elkhart Rivers and their tributaries. The program's main focus is to evaluate the fish communities of local rivers and streams. However, it also looks at the health of the macroinvertebrate (insects and other small animals) communities, collects water samples, and samples the tissue of certain species to evaluate fish consumption safety. All of the data gathered by the program, biological and chemical, is used in a comprehensive evaluation of the health of our local waterways. Since the inception of the program in 1998 a significant amount of data has been collected on the health of our local rivers and streams.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance through the monitoring efforts of our Aquatics Program. The value of this assistance is \$575,000 over the five year project period. We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and habitat related concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daragh Deegan".

Daragh Deegan
Aquatic Biologist

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



Great Lakes/Atlantic Regional Office
1220 Eisenhower Place
Ann Arbor, MI 48108-3281
(734) 623-2000 fax (734) 623-2035
www.ducks.org

October 2, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

Ducks Unlimited is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. This assistance will include GIS analysis of priority areas for conservation efforts. The value of this assistance is \$4,500 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Robb Macleod
National GIS Coordinator
Ducks Unlimited

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

United States Senate

September 25, 2014

Mark A. Rose, Director
Financial Assistance Programs Division
Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
RCPP Application
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013-2890

Dear Mr. Rose:

As a United States Senator, and a member of the Senate Agriculture committee, I appreciate the need to protect our water supply, improve biological diversity and enhance the environment while optimizing production from our farmlands. *Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership*, a consortium of 30 local, state and regional partners representing both states, 15 counties and over 1.5 million people, is an innovative bi-state, public-private partnership project addressing priority resource concerns in the St. Joseph River Watershed (SJRW).

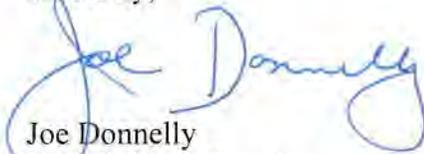
The St. Joseph River is the third largest tributary to Lake Michigan, and drains 4,685 square miles. Over 70% of the watershed is used for agriculture, and the watershed has experienced excessive sediment, phosphorus and nitrogen loading into the river, as well as significant loss of wetlands, increased irrigation impact on fisheries and aquifer sustainability, and altered surface water and groundwater quality. The Partnership is developing a multi-faceted approach to conserve groundwater, increase water filtration to reduce nutrient and sediment loading in the St. Joseph River, and improve wildlife habitat and soil health.

Funding will be used to promote the implementation of practices that will benefit the natural resource and the farmer. The practices that will be used include smart irrigation technology, soil moisture monitoring, conservation tillage, cover crop planting, livestock exclusion, filter strips and wetland restoration. Partners will monitor results and coordinate adjustments through adaptive management processes. The project expects to decrease groundwater use by 13.8 billion gallons per year, reduce sediment loading by 132,000 pounds, decrease phosphorus and nitrogen delivery to surface water by 322,000 lbs. and 2,020 tons per year respectively, and restore approximately 2,050 acres of wetland, increasing habitat for grassland birds and other native wildlife.

The Partnership is requesting approximately \$20 million of USDA Regional Conservation Partnership funds. They will collaborate to develop a cost-effective, targeted outreach campaign, determine critical implementation areas and provide technical assistance to farmers and evaluate, document and report project outcomes.

I believe this project meets the goals of the RCPP program to develop effective conservation practices to improve water quantity, natural wildlife habitat and water quality due to significant reductions in sediment and nutrient loading. I encourage a favorable review of the *Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership* proposal for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program Grant in accordance with U.S. law and public policy. I would appreciate being notified when a decision is made. Questions and announcements can be directed to my office by contacting Marianne Black at Marianne_Black@donnelly.senate.gov or by telephone at (317) 226-5555.

Sincerely,



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator

Cass County Conservation District Partner Contribution
St. Joseph River Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Total Partner Contribution for Technical Assistance - \$89,000 over 5 years

Technical Assistance - Please Describe Details of any Technical Assistance Potential (if funding is restricted to a certain portion of the watershed please indicate this):

Cass County will plan/host workshops for producers including but not limited to:

- Irrigation water management (Smart Technology- 3x/5yr, Irrigation uniformity-2x/yr for 5yrs, irrigation scheduling-2x/yr for 5yrs) , cost comparison of crop yields under irrigation-1x/yr for 5yrs). Total \$53,000 for workshop within the 5 years.
- Soil Health (Soil demonstration on No-till practices vs Conventional practices and cover crop 2x/yr for 5 yrs)
- Stream Monitoring (Monitor aquatic species, biodiversity of species and sediment disposition – ongoing project for 5 years), total cost \$20,000 within the 5 years.
- Wildlife education workshop, paddling in the Dowagiac River to promote conservation on stream banks, wildlife diversity, sediment disposition, water fowl nesting. Cass will provide wetland protection and enhancement information to the public. Total cost \$10,000
- Livestock workshop (exclusion from surface water, winter spreading, prescribe grazing) at least 2 within the 5 years. Total cost \$6,000
- Partner with FFA, 4-H, Boy and Girls Scouts of America, Cass Youth Org, Cass Parks and Recreations, Pheasant's Forever, to promote wildlife habitat protection and wetland reserve. 2x for 5 years.

One-on-One Landowner Assistance;

- MAEAP Technician completes initial appointment with potential NRCS customer and potential MAEAP participants, around 40 avg.
- MEAEP Technician also provides Irrigation uniformity, RUSLE2, WINPST, Pest & Nutrient Management and Drift management to all participants.

Please Describe Details of any Data Collection, Monitoring or Program

Data Collection:

- NRCS District Conservationist and MAEAP Technician collect Crop Yield Date.
- Inventory Aquatic species.
- Practice changes; NRCS DC & MAEAP Technician will document before and after effects on conservation practices in the soil to account for(Soil reduction & irrigation management).

Monitoring:

- Stream monitoring (inventory biodiversity with proper equipment)
- Tillage practices (residue inventory)

- Cover crop usage (species, residue inventor, standing percentage)

Program Management and Reporting:

- MAEAP Technician reports RUSLE2 for every farmer, Irrigation Uniformity reports, WEPS and MARI.

NOTE:

It is imperative that this new proposal develops a ranking question to be included in the State and Local priority to add points under the NRCS Ranking process, thus allowing participant with only one practice to stand a chance against a participant with multiple practices that don't affect the St. Joe Watershed. The AWEP priority layer was developed to provide guidance to NRCS to rank its customers under this program. -Frank Velazquez, NRCS-



387 N. Willowbrook Rd.
Suite F
Coldwater, MI 49036

Ph: (517) 278-2725
Fax: (517) 278-5176
Website: www.branchcd.org

September 30, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

Branch Conservation District is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan / Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. This assistance may incorporate technical services provided directly to farmers, ranchers, and other eligible entities, such as conservation planning, technical consultation, and assistance with design and implementation of conservation practices; and technical infrastructure including activities, processes, tools, and agency functions needed to support delivery of technical services, such as technical standards, resource inventories, training, data, technology, monitoring, and effects analyses. The value of this assistance is \$165,450.00 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

John Mitchell
Board Chairman
Branch Conservation District
Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

Our project contribution breakdown for technical assistance would be approximately, plus an additional \$3,000 dollars for meeting attendance.

Fiscal Year	EQIP		CSP		ACEP- WRE	
	Technical Assistance*	Financial Assistance**	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance
2014-2015	19,494		9,747		3,249	
2015-2016	19,494		9,747		3,249	
2016-2017	19,494		9,747		3,249	
2017-2018	19,494		9,747		3,249	
2018-2019	19,494		9,747		3,249	



BERRIEN CONSERVATION DISTRICT
3334 Edgewood Road, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

(269) 471-9111

Helping You Manage Your Natural Resources

September 26, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

Berrien County Conservation District is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. This assistance will include the following: serve on a committee to develop the marketing campaign, attend meetings throughout the duration of the project, plan and host educational speaking events, develop and send out press releases to newspapers and use social media to promote events or other activities, provide promotion and information at Conservation District events and booths. Conservation District staff will also meet one-on-one with landowners to explain NRCS processes and practices. The value of this assistance is \$3,418.00 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Nancy Carpenter
Manager

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

September 29, 2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knorek:

The Southwest Michigan Planning Commission is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance such as assisting with project coordination, GIS analysis for ranking projects and assisting with project rankings. The value of this assistance is \$88,000 over the five year project period.

SWMPC has been a partner with others in the St. Joseph River Watershed for many years. We are excited to build on the success of the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

Marcy Colclough
Senior Planner

376 West Main Street, Suite 130 • Benton Harbor, MI 49022-3651



9/30/2014

Mr. Jack Knorek
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
Environmental Stewardship Division
PO Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Knoreck:

The St. Joseph River Basin Commission is pleased to support and participate in the Michigan/Indiana St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership. Our agency is committed to partnering with others to address the priority resource concerns outlined in the proposal to improve the health of the St. Joseph River Watershed.

Our commitment to this project includes technical assistance. This assistance will include water quality sampling, quarterly newsletter articles, quarterly updates at board meetings, press releases, participation in the steering/project review committees and other technical assistance. The value of this assistance is \$71,000 over the five year project period.

We are excited to build on the existing partnerships in the St. Joseph River Watershed to bring in additional resources to address surface water, groundwater and related habitat concerns. We have supported past collaborative efforts and look forward to devoting our time and expertise to ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Turnwald", with a stylized flourish at the end.

James Turnwald
Executive Director

Cc: Marcy Colclough, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



You forwarded this message on 7/10/2014 9:15 AM.
From: nobleswcd Email [nobleswcd@igtel.com] Sent: Thu 7/10/2014 12:00 PM
To: Marcy Coldough
Cc:
Subject: Re: FW: RCPP - St. Joseph River Watershed (Lake MI)

Marcy,
Noble could probably spend \$750,000 or more over the next five years. You could count on us for a \$10,000.00 in-kind match of my time...per year. We spent over a million in AWEP funds.
Stacey

Stacey McGinnis
Noble County Soil and Water Conservation District

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission: <input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application <input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	* 2. Type of Application: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s): _____ * Other (Specify): _____
--	--	--

* 3. Date Received: 08/01/2014	4. Applicant Identifier: _____
-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

5a. Federal Entity Identifier: _____	5b. Federal Award Identifier: _____
---	--

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State: _____	7. State Application Identifier: _____
----------------------------------	--

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name: Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN): 38-6000134	* c. Organizational DUNS: 8053355770000
---	--

d. Address:

* Street1: PO Box 30017
Street2: 525 West Allegan
* City: Lansing
County/Parish: Ingham
* State: MI: Michigan
Province: _____
* Country: USA: UNITED STATES
* Zip / Postal Code: 48909

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name: MI Dept. of Ag. & Rural Dev.	Division Name: Environmental Stewardship
--	---

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix: _____ * First Name: Jack
Middle Name: _____
* Last Name: Knorek
Suffix: _____

Title: Regional Coordinator

Organizational Affiliation:
Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

* Telephone Number: 517-243-0072 Fax Number: _____

* Email: knorekj@michigan.gov

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

*** 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

*** 10. Name of Federal Agency:**

United States Department of Agriculture

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

10.930

CFDA Title:

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

USDA-NRCS-NHQ-RCPP-14-01

* Title:

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

13. Competition Identification Number:

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

RCPP Proposal Cities, Counties, States.pdf

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention in the St. Joseph River Watershed

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant

* b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date:

* b. End Date:

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="7,100,000.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="1,250,000.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="1,676,980.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="1,549,914.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="1,628,364.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="13,205,258.00"/>

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on

b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**

Yes No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name:

Middle Name:

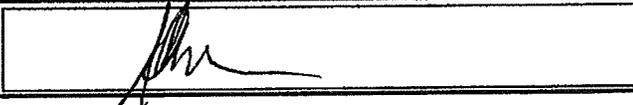
* Last Name:

Suffix:

* Title:

* Telephone Number: Fax Number:

* Email:

* Signature of Authorized Representative: 

* Date Signed:

RCPP Proposal - Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention in the St. Joseph River Watershed

Cities, Counties, States

States: Indiana, Michigan

Cities & Towns:

- Indiana: Elkhart, Goshen, Mishawaka, South Bend
- Michigan: Benton Harbor, Bronson, Buchanan, Coloma, Coldwater, Dowagiac, Gobles, Hartford, Hillsdale, Litchfield, Niles, Portage, Reading, St. Joseph, Three Rivers, Watervliet

Counties:

- Indiana: DeKalb, Elkhart, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, St. Joseph
- Michigan: Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Hillsdale, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Van Buren

RCPP Proposal - Water Conservation and Pollution Prevention in the St. Joseph River Watershed

Congressional Districts

MI-006

MI-008

IN-002

IN-003

BUDGET INFORMATION - Non-Construction Programs

OMB Approval No. 0348-0044

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY

Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget		
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)	Total (g)
1.		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
2.						
3.						
4.						
5. Totals		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

SECTION B - BUDGET CATEGORIES

6. Object Class Categories	GRANT PROGRAM, FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY				Total (5)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	
a. Personnel	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
b. Fringe Benefits					
c. Travel					
d. Equipment					
e. Supplies					
f. Contractual					
g. Construction					
h. Other					
i. Total Direct Charges (sum of 6a-6h)					
j. Indirect Charges					
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

7. Program Income	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
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Authorized for Local Reproduction

SECTION C - NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES

(a) Grant Program	(b) Applicant	(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e) TOTALS
8.	\$	\$	\$	\$
9.				
10.				
11.				
12. TOTAL (sum of lines 8-11)	\$	\$	\$	\$

SECTION D - FORECASTED CASH NEEDS

	Total for 1st Year	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
13. Federal	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
14. Non-Federal					
15. TOTAL (sum of lines 13 and 14)	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$

SECTION E - BUDGET ESTIMATES OF FEDERAL FUNDS NEEDED FOR BALANCE OF THE PROJECT

(a) Grant Program	FUTURE FUNDING PERIODS (Years)			
	(b) First	(c) Second	(d) Third	(e) Fourth
16.	\$	\$	\$	\$
17.				
18.				
19.				
20. TOTAL (sum of lines 16-19)	\$	\$	\$	\$

SECTION F - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION

21. Direct Charges:	22. Indirect Charges:
23. Remarks:	

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF-424A

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 180 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0044), Washington, DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

General Instructions

This form is designed so that application can be made for funds from one or more grant programs. In preparing the budget, adhere to any existing Federal grantor agency guidelines which prescribe how and whether budgeted amounts should be separately shown for different functions or activities within the program. For some programs, grantor agencies may require budgets to be separately shown by function or activity. For other programs, grantor agencies may require a breakdown by function or activity. Sections A, B, C, and D should include budget estimates for the whole project except when applying for assistance which requires Federal authorization in annual or other funding period increments. In the latter case, Sections A, B, C, and D should provide the budget for the first budget period (usually a year) and Section E should present the need for Federal assistance in the subsequent budget periods. All applications should contain a breakdown by the object class categories shown in Lines a-k of Section B.

Section A. Budget Summary Lines 1-4 Columns (a) and (b)

For applications pertaining to a *single* Federal grant program (Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog number) and *not requiring* a functional or activity breakdown, enter on Line 1 under Column (a) the Catalog program title and the Catalog number in Column (b).

For applications pertaining to a *single* program *requiring* budget amounts by multiple functions or activities, enter the name of each activity or function on each line in Column (a), and enter the Catalog number in Column (b). For applications pertaining to multiple programs where none of the programs require a breakdown by function or activity, enter the Catalog program title on each line in *Column* (a) and the respective Catalog number on each line in Column (b).

For applications pertaining to *multiple* programs where one or more programs *require* a breakdown by function or activity, prepare a separate sheet for each program requiring the breakdown. Additional sheets should be used when one form does not provide adequate space for all breakdown of data required. However, when more than one sheet is used, the first page should provide the summary totals by programs.

Lines 1-4, Columns (c) through (g)

For new applications, leave Column (c) and (d) blank. For each line entry in Columns (a) and (b), enter in Columns (e), (f), and (g) the appropriate amounts of funds needed to support the project for the first funding period (usually a year).

For continuing grant program applications, submit these forms before the end of each funding period as required by the grantor agency. Enter in Columns (c) and (d) the estimated amounts of funds which will remain unobligated at the end of the grant funding period only if the Federal grantor agency instructions provide for this. Otherwise, leave these columns blank. Enter in columns (e) and (f) the amounts of funds needed for the upcoming period. The amount(s) in Column (g) should be the sum of amounts in Columns (e) and (f).

For supplemental grants and changes to existing grants, do not use Columns (c) and (d). Enter in Column (e) the amount of the increase or decrease of Federal funds and enter in Column (f) the amount of the increase or decrease of non-Federal funds. In Column (g) enter the new total budgeted amount (Federal and non-Federal) which includes the total previous authorized budgeted amounts plus or minus, as appropriate, the amounts shown in Columns (e) and (f). The amount(s) in Column (g) should not equal the sum of amounts in Columns (e) and (f).

Line 5 - Show the totals for all columns used.

Section B Budget Categories

In the column headings (1) through (4), enter the titles of the same programs, functions, and activities shown on Lines 1-4, Column (a), Section A. When additional sheets are prepared for Section A, provide similar column headings on each sheet. For each program, function or activity, fill in the total requirements for funds (both Federal and non-Federal) by object class categories.

Line 6a-i - Show the totals of Lines 6a to 6h in each column.

Line 6j - Show the amount of indirect cost.

Line 6k - Enter the total of amounts on Lines 6i and 6j. For all applications for new grants and continuation grants the total amount in column (5), Line 6k, should be the same as the total amount shown in Section A, Column (g), Line 5. For supplemental grants and changes to grants, the total amount of the increase or decrease as shown in Columns (1)-(4), Line 6k should be the same as the sum of the amounts in Section A, Columns (e) and (f) on Line 5.

Line 7 - Enter the estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Do not add or subtract this amount from the total project amount, Show under the program

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF-424A (continued)

narrative statement the nature and source of income. The estimated amount of program income may be considered by the Federal grantor agency in determining the total amount of the grant.

Section C. Non-Federal Resources

Lines 8-11 Enter amounts of non-Federal resources that will be used on the grant. If in-kind contributions are included, provide a brief explanation on a separate sheet.

Column (a) - Enter the program titles identical to Column (a), Section A. A breakdown by function or activity is not necessary.

Column (b) - Enter the contribution to be made by the applicant.

Column (c) - Enter the amount of the State's cash and in-kind contribution if the applicant is not a State or State agency. Applicants which are a State or State agencies should leave this column blank.

Column (d) - Enter the amount of cash and in-kind contributions to be made from all other sources.

Column (e) - Enter totals of Columns (b), (c), and (d).

Line 12 - Enter the total for each of Columns (b)-(e). The amount in Column (e) should be equal to the amount on Line 5, Column (f), Section A.

Section D. Forecasted Cash Needs

Line 13 - Enter the amount of cash needed by quarter from the grantor agency during the first year.

Line 14 - Enter the amount of cash from all other sources needed by quarter during the first year.

Line 15 - Enter the totals of amounts on Lines 13 and 14.

Section E. Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project

Lines 16-19 - Enter in Column (a) the same grant program titles shown in Column (a), Section A. A breakdown by function or activity is not necessary. For new applications and continuation grant applications, enter in the proper columns amounts of Federal funds which will be needed to complete the program or project over the succeeding funding periods (usually in years). This section need not be completed for revisions (amendments, changes, or supplements) to funds for the current year of existing grants.

If more than four lines are needed to list the program titles, submit additional schedules as necessary.

Line 20 - Enter the total for each of the Columns (b)-(e). When additional schedules are prepared for this Section, annotate accordingly and show the overall totals on this line.

Section F. Other Budget Information

Line 21 - Use this space to explain amounts for individual direct object class cost categories that may appear to be out of the ordinary or to explain the details as required by the Federal grantor agency.

Line 22 - Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) that will be in effect during the funding period, the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.

Line 23 - Provide any other explanations or comments deemed necessary.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS (GRANTS) ALTERNATIVE I - FOR GRANTEEES OTHER THAN INDIVIDUALS

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Section 5151-5160 of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D: 41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.), 7 CFR Part 3017. Subpart F, Section 3017.600, Purpose. The January 13, 1989, regulations were amended and published as Part II of the May 25, 1990 Federal Register (pages 21681-21691). Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the Department of Agriculture agency offering the grant.

(BEFORE COMPLETING CERTIFICATION, READ INSTRUCTIONS ON PAGE3)

Alternative I

- A. The grantee certifies that it will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:**
- (a) Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;**
 - (b) Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about -**
 - (1) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;**
 - (2) The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;**
 - (3) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and**
 - (4) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.**
 - (c) Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph (a);**
 - (d) Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph (a) that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will -**
 - (1) Abide by the terms of the statement; and**
 - (2) Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;**
 - (e) Notifying the agency in writing, within ten calendar days after receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position**

(f) Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2), with respect to any employee who is so convicted -

(1) Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or

(2) Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or, local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

(g) Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).

B. The grantee may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant:

Place of Performance (Street address, city, county, State, zip code)

525 West Allegan St., PO Box 30017

Lansing, MI 48909

Ingham County

Check If there are workplaces on file that are not identified here.

Michigan Dept. of Agriculture and Rural Development

Michigan/Indiana St Joseph River Watershed RCPP

Organization Name

Award Number or Project Name

Jack Knorek, Regional Coordinator

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

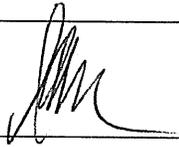
Date

*Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and Other
Responsibility Matters - Primary Covered Transactions*

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 7 CFR Part 3017, Section 3017.510, Participants' responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part IV of the January 30, 1989, *Federal Register* (pages 4722-4733). Copies of the regulations may be obtained by contacting the Department of Agriculture agency offering the proposed covered transaction.

(Before completing certification, read instructions on reverse.)

- (1) The prospective primary participant certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief, that it and its principals:
 - (a) are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;
 - (b) have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or Local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;
 - (c) are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and
 - (d) have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or Local) terminated for cause or default.
- (2) Where the prospective primary participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

<small>ORGANIZATION NAME</small>	<small>PR/AWARD NUMBER OR PROJECT NAME</small>
Michigan Dept. of Ag. & Rural Development	RCPP
<small>NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE</small>	
Jack Knorck, Regional Coordinator	
<small>SIGNATURE</small>	<small>DATE</small>
	10-1-14

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington, DC 20503.

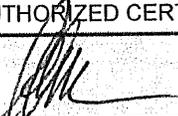
PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. §§4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and, (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally-assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. §§276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. §276c and 18 U.S.C. §874), and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. §§327-333), regarding labor standards for federally-assisted construction subagreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. §§1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (P.L. 93-523); and, (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. §§1271 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. §470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. §§469a-1 et seq.).
14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. §§2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §§4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing this program.
19. Will comply with the requirements of Section 106(g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. 7104) which prohibits grant award recipients or a sub-recipient from (1) Engaging in severe forms of trafficking in persons during the period of time that the award is in effect (2) Procuring a commercial sex act during the period of time that the award is in effect or (3) Using forced labor in the performance of the award or subawards under the award.

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED CERTIFYING OFFICIAL 	TITLE Regional Coordinator
APPLICANT ORGANIZATION Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	DATE SUBMITTED 10/01/2014