



**Federal Clean Water
Section 319 Grant**
2002-0060



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Sebewaing River Watershed Tillage & Cover Crop I&E Project

September 15, 2002 through June 30, 2005

The Sebewaing River Watershed is made up of approximately 66,000 acres of mostly agricultural land draining into Saginaw Bay. The two major water quality issues are nutrient and sediment loading and ice blockage leading to flooding in the Village of Sebewaing. The project goal was the successful implementation of the Information and Education Strategy contained in the Watershed Management Plan. Activities within the watershed demonstrate everyone impacts water quality and everyone, from the smallest lot owner to the largest agricultural producer, has a responsibility to improve and maintain water quality.

Grant Amount: \$ 289,941
Match Funds: \$ 168,400

Total Amount: \$ 458,341



Best Management Practices:

- Corn Stalk Residue (5,100 acres)
- Tillage Comparison Plots (2,300 acres)
- No-Till (800 acres)
- Tillage Demonstration Plot (40 acres)

Annual Load Reductions:

- Sediment: 29,346 tons
- Phosphorus: 14,497 pounds
- Nitrogen: 29,152 pounds

Partners involved:

- Natural Resources Conservation Services
- Farm Service Agency
- Huron County Drain Commission
- Tuscola County Drain Commission
- Monsanto
- Cooperative Extension
- Michigan Sugar
- Brookfield Township
- Columbia Township
- Village of Sebewaing
- McNeil Farms
- Cooperative Elevator
- Greenstone Farm Credit Services
- Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network

I&E Activities:

- Storm Drain Stenciling-Village of Sebewaing
- McNeil Demo Plot
- Sebewaing Sugar Festival
- Stream Monitoring
- Clean Sweep



**Storm Drain Stenciling
Village of Sebewaing**



McNeil Tillage Demonstration Site Before:

A typical sugar beet field after harvest in the Sebewaing River Watershed is left with no residue to protect the soil from wind and water erosion over the winter months. This site has drains on three sides.



McNeil Tillage Demonstration Site After:

Randomized and Replicated Strips have been established on this site to compare conventional and zone tillage. The photo shows corn stalk residue left over winter to provide protection. The zone-built strips have been installed and in the spring planting will be done directly over these slots without additional tillage.



A typical fall plowed field in the watershed. This field is prone to wind and water erosion. The proximity to the drain leads to sediment and nutrient loading.



Corn stalk residue left in place over winter reduces wind and water erosion and sediment and nutrient deposition. Corn stalks also provide wildlife cover and a winter food source.