Volume 1 Issue 1 Summer 2006

# Ripple Effects

Eagle Creek Watershed: We're All in It Together

**Mission Statement**

To utilize a holistic approach to watershed management with the ultimate goals of improving water quality, increasing public awareness of watershed water quality, and encouraging stewardship of the watershed's resources.

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What Can You Do?

Join the ECWA

Attend ECWA events

Use P-free fertilizer

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**We welcome your participation!**

Should you have an interest in participating in the ECWA, please contact John Ulmer at remlu@tds.net.

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Lynn Jenkins, editor
editor@tds.net

## What is the Eagle Creek Watershed Alliance?

The Eagle Creek Watershed Alliance (ECWA) is a broad coalition of individuals, volunteers, foundations, local organizations, utilities, county, state, and federal agencies, and universities working together to improve water quality and the environment of Eagle Creek Watershed. The ECWA, formerly the Eagle Creek Watershed Task Force, has been in existence since 1997. We work cooperatively with those who impact and are impacted by watershed activities.

ECWA has an Environmental Protection Agency grant under an assistance agreement with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management to implement the Eagle Creek Watershed Management Plan. With this grant, we will coordinate research, water quality monitoring, implementation of Best Management Practices, and watershed education and outreach programs.

A Steering Committee provides guidance on the overall direction, making decisions on behalf of the watershed community. It also provides oversight to the subcommittees, and provides direction to the Watershed Coordinator and Farm Promoter.

### ECWA Concerns

- Phosphorus and nitrogen runoff from fertilizers and septic systems resulting in algal blooms.
- Degradation of aquatic habitats as a result of increased sedimentation.
- Harmful levels of herbicides and other chemicals in our streams.
- High levels of *E.coli* and other pathogens in recreational waterways.
- Limited public awareness of the watershed and its value as a natural resource.

## Meet the Chairs of ECWA

**Lenore P. Tedesco, ECWA Co-Chair**

Lenore Tedesco is a faculty member of the IUPUI Department of Earth Sciences and the Director of the IUPUI Center for Earth and Environmental Science (CEES), grant sponsor to the Eagle Creek Watershed EPA Section 319 Implementation Grant.

Lenore also manages the Central Indiana Water Resources Partnership, a partnership between CEES and Veolia Water Indianapolis, LLC. This partnership has led to a significant amount of water quality research on the watersheds that feed Indianapolis' drinking water reservoirs, including Eagle Creek Watershed and Reservoir. Lenore's research focuses on addressing regional watershed and water quality issues, wetland restoration, and environmental education and outreach.

**John Ulmer, ECWA Co-Chair**

John Ulmer was a member of the Eagle Creek Watershed Taskforce, and has been working in the watershed for several years. He lives north of Zionsville, near the confluence of Mounts Run and Eagle Creek. He is retired from various data processing positions in the direct marketing industry.

He holds the Professional Certificate in Watershed Management from the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy, has completed the Natural Resources Leadership Academy's course, is a volunteer instructor with Hoosier Riverwatch, Vice-chair of the Eagle Creek Park Foundation Advisory Committee, and Executive Committee member of Hoosier Heartland RCD Council. Previously, John was on the Environmental Quality Service Council of the State Legislature and Conservation Chair for the state Sierra Club.
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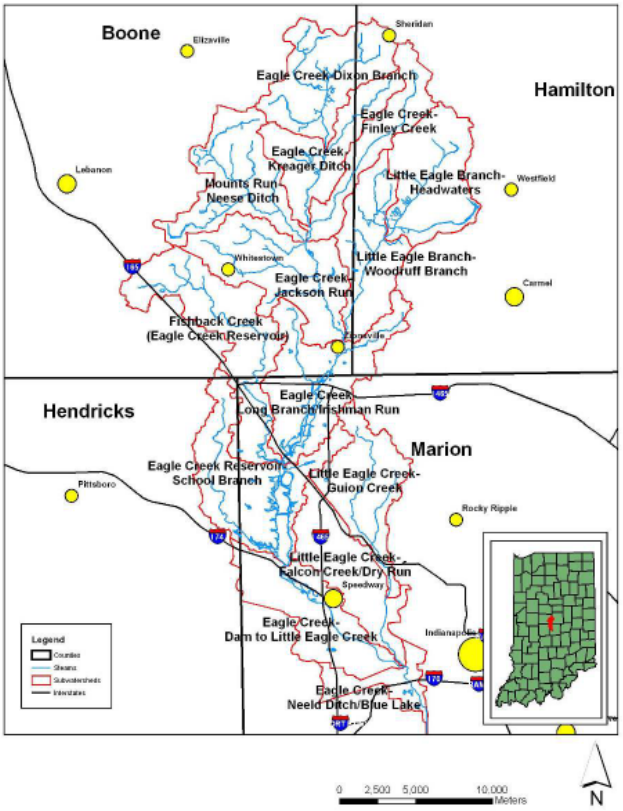
## Where is the Eagle Creek Watershed?

The Eagle Creek Watershed is part of the Upper White River Watershed and drains into Eagle Creek Reservoir, which serves as a public drinking water supply for Central Indiana. The watershed has a drainage area of 162 square miles north of the Eagle Creek Dam located approximately 10 miles northwest of downtown Indianapolis. The watershed runs through parts of Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, and Marion Counties with Sheridan at the northern end, ultimately draining into the White River below the Eagle Creek dam. The dominant land cover is agriculture with some portions of the watershed, particularly those closest to the reservoir, undergoing increased urbanization. Zionsville is the largest town within the watershed. EC Watershed is comprised of 10 subwatersheds north of the reservoir:

- Dixon Branch
- Finley Creek
- Kreager Ditch
- Woodruff Branch
- Little Eagle Branch
- Long Branch/Irishman Run
- School Branch
- Mounts Run
- Jackson Run
- Fishback Creek




## ECWA Committees – What Are We Doing?

The Alliance has formed three committees to begin efforts to alleviate nonpoint source pollution in Eagle Creek Watershed. Tasks will include implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs), monitoring water quality, installing watershed identification signs, conducting education and outreach programs for the watershed community.

### Technical Committee

Developing the Cost-Share Program is the Technical Committee's priority task. The committee will determine the most effective BMPs based on water quality return, expense, and effort. The program will outline the available BMPs and the cost-share allowance for each conservation practice implemented. Other tasks for the Technical Committee include water quality monitoring and engaging community leaders in efforts to protect the watershed. To participate in the ECWA Technical Committee, please contact committee chairs, Chuck Brinkman (cbyak@yahoo.com) or Sharon Adams (shadams@co.boone.in.us).

### Education Committee

The Education Committee is eager to explain how the watershed community can improve the water resources within Eagle Creek Watershed. They are developing an educational brochure and have several events scheduled for this fall. Planned events include Water Quality Awareness Day, a booth at the Zionsville Fall Festival, and a watershed tour. To participate in the ECWA Education Committee, contact chair, Angie Tilton (atilton@dnr.in.gov).

### Communication Committee

The focus of the Communication Committee is to create and distribute the ECWA newsletter *Ripple Effects*, promote the Alliance through the website and news announcements, and to promote ECWA events with press releases. In addition, the committee designed the new logo. To participate in this committee, contact chair, Paul Miner (backroads@surf-ici.com).

## Calendar

**August 28** Zionsville Library 6:30-8pm.
ECWA Quarterly public meeting. Update on Alliance and a guest speaker will present on a topic of interest to the community. Check website for details.

**September 9-10** 10-7 Sat; 10-5 Sun. Lion's Park.
Zionsville Fall Festival. There will be an interactive water testing station as well as informational brochures available.

**September 16**
ECWA will participate in Indiana Conservation Alliance's *Fall into Nature Days*. ECWA will host a tour of EC Watershed and Reservoir. Limited space; for information, contact Watershed Coordinator at 317-278-8585

**September 29-30**
"Eagle Creek Watershed: We're All in It Together" is the theme for the Water Quality Awareness Days. ECWA is partnering with DNR's Project WET program to educate students and the community on the role we all have in our watershed. On Friday, ECWA will engage 5th grade classes from schools within the watershed. Saturday's event will be open to the public at Eagle Creek Park. Educational booths will focus on topics such as Land Use, Wildlife, Wetlands, Water Quality, and Wise Water Use. There will also be monitoring stations set up so participants can test water samples from Eagle Creek.