



Accelerating Nutrient Management Adoption in the Saginaw River Watershed

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Conservation Adoption through Farmer-led Outreach and Education

Michigan State University's Institute of Water Research (IWR) received a \$1 million grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency to develop and implement a program to increase adoption of nutrient management practices on farm fields in the Saginaw River watershed. The funds will allow MSU to develop and implement a program to increase adoption of nutrient management practices in the Saginaw River watershed through peer-to-peer farmer networks, engaging existing farmer leaders in the watershed. The project's goal is to implement nutrient management practices on at least 7,800 acres, preventing at least 900 pounds of phosphorus leaving agricultural fields during the project period.

Partners of the program include MSU Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Michigan Farm Bureau, Michigan Association of Conservation Districts, River Raisin Watershed Council, and conservation districts in Gratiot, Genesee, Saginaw and Shiawassee counties.

Farmer Benefits

Saginaw Bay serves as Lake Huron's most important source for several fish species, including walleye, and is home to some of Michigan's most productive farm soils. It is not surprising that agricultural land use now covers over 45% of the watershed's land area because the Saginaw Bay watershed contains a large portion of the United States Department of Agriculture prime farmland soil types. When farmers participate in this program, they will be forming farmer-led communities to work towards a common goal within the watershed: improving our water quality. This will allow for enjoyable interaction with friends while discussing practices that can be installed to decrease excess nutrient and sediment runoff.

The program also has a small pool of funding available to producers to share the cost of implementing nutrient management and related conservation practices that minimize nutrient loss from farm fields in the watershed.

How to Get Involved!

Farmer nodes will be formed across the region (Fig. 1) to lead the surrounding farmer community towards localized conservation goals and implementation. If you are interested in getting involved in a node please contact:

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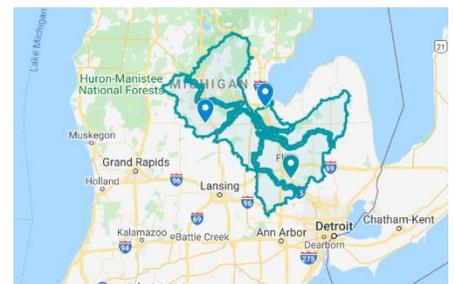


Figure 1. Potential farmer nodes.

To contact an expert in your area, visit extension.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)

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