

Southern District Innovative Grant Proposal

"Iowa County...Where Water Matters" is an educational effort to reach every household in Iowa County, presenting each with a packet of materials that describes various ways to protect the water resources. Included in each packet is a Water Quality Pledge, asking for a commitment to adopting environmentally friendly actions. This project grew out of the efforts and interest of the Stormwater and Erosion Control Workgroup of Iowa County.

1. Project Coordinators Information:

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2. Statement of Need:

Iowa County residents have expressed an interest in learning about water and also in preserving water resources. In a 2003-2004 Comprehensive Planning Survey, 97% of the residents stated that groundwater was "important to essential" to preserve. On that same survey, 95% stated rivers and streams are "important to essential" to preserve and 87% stated wetlands are "important to essential" to preserve. Residents have been eager to participate in a rural drinking water testing program, sponsored by Iowa County Towns and UW-Extension. Since 1999 over 1000 wells have been tested. Participants in the program are learning about the quality of their drinking water and about the importance of protecting groundwater, since it is the source of all drinking water in Iowa County. Along with the great citizen participation in drinking water and well testing programs, the Iowa County Board of Supervisors has committed financial resources to do Groundwater and Geologic mapping of Iowa County. The Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey, a branch of UW-Extension, is facilitating this expansive project.

These earlier and current local programs have set the stage for the residents of Iowa County to become more active in protecting the county's water resources. The level of conversation among policy makers, elected officials and citizens in general has risen to a certain level of expertise when discussing water issues. There is broad based knowledge of aquifers, depth to bedrock and water tables, watershed issues and water quality in general. Iowa County has been learning a lot about water and the feedback from Iowa County residents has been positive with inquisitive questions like, "What else can we do?" UW-Extension has facilitated this learning throughout the county. The "Iowa County...Where Water Matters" project gives citizens the additional background information they need to increase their understanding of the issues and with the inclusion of the Water Quality Pledge, asks individuals to pledge to change personal behaviors in order that water quality is preserved. It is the hope that thousands of individual pledges will make a big "splash" in the impact of water quality protection.

3. Project Goals or Objectives:

Our goals are to get an “Iowa County...Where Water Matters” folder of educational materials to every household in Iowa County and to have 50% of the households return a Water Quality Pledge sheet. These goals are in line with the goals and objectives of UW-Extension in that it is providing non-formal environmental education to continue the circle of lifelong learning.

The two-pocket folder was specifically designed for this effort using photos of Iowa County’s water resources. Contained in the folder are UW-Extension and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources publications on the topics of stormwater, groundwater, drinking water and other resource protection issues. The project partners also designed a Water Quality Pledge which will be included in every folder. It asks homeowners to pledge to adopt water friendly practices around their homes and yards and in exchange for making a pledge, they will receive a small, locally made gift. This idea of asking for a commitment and then rewarding it with a small gift was an idea that Peggy heard at a national extension conference in 2006 during a presentation on applying principles of social marketing in natural resources programs.

Packets are tailored to either the rural residential households or urban residents. Packets will be distributed using a traditional delivery model-distributing at educational forums designed to explain and enhance the information included in the packet. We will also use non-traditional delivery models, including distribution at polling places during the November 2008 election and working with local elected officials for assistance in distribution of the packets.

Our first measure of success will simply be our ability to get an “Iowa County...Where Water Matters” packet into every household in Iowa County AND to get 50% of those households to return a Water Quality Pledge. Six to twelve months after pledges are returned, we will follow up with those participating homeowners through written surveys and/or phone calls to determine if they are indeed following their pledge. Water quality impacts can be extrapolated from the pledge actions. For example: Multiply the number of rain gardens installed by the average water collected per rain garden to estimate a decrease in gallons of water entering the storm drain system. A project summary will be developed and distributed to all those who participated, to local elected officials and to the local media. We hope to demonstrate how our individual acts of water quality protection can make a big difference in our larger water resource protection efforts.

4. Personnel:

The “Iowa County...Where Water Matters” project is an outgrowth of the priorities and work of the Stormwater and Erosion Control Workgroup of Iowa County. This group formed to discuss and address the members’ growing concerns about stormwater and construction site erosion control issues in Dodgeville and the surrounding areas of Iowa County. The workgroup has adjusted as some members have left and others have joined, but the core of the workgroup has remained as listed, immediately following. Although Peggy has often been the official “Chair” of the workgroup, Peggy and Paul have worked seamlessly to lead the workgroup. In many instances there has been a distinct advantage brought to the group by having a county-based educator and basin educator working together on this project. For example, Peggy has brought the resources and expertise of the Environmental Resources Center Publications Unit to assist in the development and printing of the folders and pledge sheets, while Paul has been able to handle the financial contributions through the Iowa County Extension Office water quality account. Also, given the multi-county area covered by basin educators, Peggy hopes to share this model and replicate it in other counties in the Grant-Platte and Sugar-Pecatonica basins.

Members of the Stormwater and Erosion Control Workgroup:

Peggy Compton (Chair), Basin Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension

Randy Edge, Assessor, City of Dodgeville

Scott Godfrey, Director, Iowa County Planning and Development

Greg Lee, Public Works Director, City of Dodgeville

Jim McCaulley, County Conservationist, Iowa County Land Conservation Department; also the Mayor of Dodgeville

Paul Ohlogge, Community Development Educator, Iowa County University of Wisconsin-Extension

Bill Wisler, Member of Trout Unlimited

5. Budget and Dollars Requested:

We are requesting \$4,000 from the Southern District Innovative Grants Program. This will be used to purchase additional folders and Water Quality Pledge sheets. To maximize the use of our limited funds, we hope to purchase at one time all of the remaining folders and pledge sheets needed rather than submitting smaller orders as funds become available. As you can see from the included budget, the total cost of the "Iowa County...Where Water Matters" project will be nearly \$40,000. To date, we have raised \$6,750 through contributions from local organizations, committees, businesses and foundations and \$3,375 of in-kind contributions. It is our hope that the Southern District Innovative Grants program will support this project through a grant in the amount of \$4,000. This is equal to the funds needed to purchase the remaining folders (\$3,915) and a small amount to put towards the remaining pledge sheets that we need to order.

BUDGET

Task or Item (s)	Cost	Needed	In-kind
Photos for folder	4 hrs of photography and editing donated by local photographer		\$500
Design of the two-pocket folder	10 hrs x \$35/hr		\$350
Printing the two-pocket folders for each of the 9,500 households in Iowa County	An initial run of 1,000 folders was printed at a cost of \$1.42 each. Remaining 8,500 would cost only \$0.46 each if printed in one run.	\$3,915	
Cost of publications: Urban packet contains 10 brochures; Rural packet contains 14 brochures	5,400 urban homes x \$0.81/packet 4,100 rural homes x \$1.91/packet	\$4,374 \$7,831	
Design of Water Quality Pledge	15 hrs x \$35/hr		\$525
Printing the Water Quality Pledge for the 9,500 households in Iowa County	An initial run of 3,000 pledge sheets was printed at a cost of \$0.47 each. Remaining 6,500 if printed all at once would cost only \$0.29 each.	\$1,885	
Water Quality Pledge Incentives: Locally crafted wooden coaster or key chain; given to those who return a completed Water Quality Pledge sheet.	50% of households return a pledge sheet = 4,750 pledge incentives x \$3.00 each	\$14,250	
Mailing pledge incentive to participants	4,750 x \$1.00	\$4,750	
Follow-up Evaluation of Participants (produce and distribute a summary of pledge commitments)		\$2,500	
Staff	All time required to plan for and assemble the packets is contributed In-kind. 200+ hours x \$10 per hr.		\$2,000+
TOTAL FUNDS NEEDED		\$39,505	\$3,375

CONTRIBUTIONS TO DATE:

Financial Contributions Received From	Contribution
Iowa County Board of Supervisors	\$1,000
City of Dodgeville	\$200
Iowa County Land Conservation Department	\$200
Badgerland Farm Credit	\$100
Trout Unlimited	\$200
Blue Tree Realty	\$100
Potterton Rule	\$100
Rule Construction	\$200
Walnut Hollow	\$100
Stephens Realty	\$100
Peoples State Bank of Barneveld	\$100
Singer Lumber	\$100
Biddick Foundation	\$250
Natural Resources Foundation Besedny Grant	\$1,000
Alliant Energy Foundation Community Grant	\$3,000
TOTAL FUNDS ALREADY CONTRIBUTED	\$6,750