Fishers & Farmers Partnership has answered a national call to improve U.S. waters and fisheries through the National Fish Habitat Partnership. Fishersandfarmers.org.

Fish Habitat Partnerships consist of state, federal, and tribal agencies, non-governmental organizations, corporations and private individuals. They are self-identified, self-organized, and self-directed communities of interest formed around geographic areas, keystone species, or system types. There are five that focus their efforts all or in part in the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These include the Driftless Area Restoration Effort, Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership, Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, and the Fishers and Farmers Partnership of the Upper Mississippi River. Fish Habitat Partnerships are the working units of the National Fish Habitat Partnership.

The mission of the National Fish Habitat Partnership is to protect, restore and enhance the nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for the American people.
Fishers & Farmers Partnership worked with Andy Taets of the Mitchell County Conservation Office and Nate Hoogeveen from Iowa Department of Natural Resources to modify a lowhead dam on Rock Creek near an old gravel quarry near Osage, Iowa. The farmer will now be able to cross the creek to his fields and fish and mussels will be able to migrate up and down the river. There are strategic gaps in the rock placement for fish to burst up each step, a scour hole downstream to hold fish, large flat casting boulders for anglers, and a gap on the river left for skilled paddler navigation. The project showed almost immediate success with 6”-8” smallmouth bass in the scour pools at the end of contractor’s work day. Andy and Nate were able to hire and work with a local contractor which small communities love to see. This project not only benefits fish and farmer, but also paddlers and anglers.
Members of the Galena River Watershed planning committee attended a Fishers & Farmers: Watershed Leaders Network Workshop in Dubuque, IA, in November of 2016. Watershed members agreed that the formation of a farmer-led group would benefit the creation and implementation of a watershed-based plan. A retired farmer was recruited to identify and recruit 6 more farmers. and they have held 9 outreach events to bring awareness to their project and advance action. One of their events attracted 60 people!

Project Goals:
• Strengthen a farmer-led group in the Galena River watershed (in northwest Illinois)
• Develop a plan to address land use issues affecting water quality and habitat degradation
• Sample tributaries of the Galena River to determine contaminant sources and inform strategic placement of best management practices
• Conduct soil sampling in association with cover crop experimentation to expand awareness of benefits of this practice.

The Galena-area farmer-led group ended up naming itself the "Soil & Water Health Coalition."
Jared McGovern, Senior Education Manager at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa, recently joined Fishers & Farmers’ Steering Committee. Jared leads conservation action and positive social change efforts, external research opportunities, and conservation partnerships and network affiliations at the River Museum. His job is to share stories and provide education experiences that inspire stewardship of our rivers and watersheds which is also part of the mission of Fishers & Farmers Partnership.

The River Museum is a Science Center (STEM), a Historical Museum, a Conservation Organization and Aquarium, and Fishers & Farmers fiscal agent. Thanks to Jerry Enzler and Tommy Lange, the museum has worked with Fishers & Farmers Partnership since 2010, helping fund science and outreach projects in the Upper Mississippi River Basin as well as provide room for annual business meetings.

When asked what he can bring to Fishers & Farmers, Jared replies, “I am a story teller and can work to make the Fishers & Farmers program more visible through programming at the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium in our exhibitory and direct conservation action opportunities for our membership and community members. There is nothing better than private and public partnerships. This is how real meaningful positive change happens.” He also adds, “I look forward to getting to know more about Fishers and Farmers and getting to know you all much better.”

Jared’s undergraduate degree is from Iowa State University in Animal Ecology with an option in Interpretation and a minor in Cultural Anthropology. His Masters is in Organizational Leadership and Communication Theory.
Iowa Project AWARE

17th Annual Volunteer River Cleanup

July 7–12, 2019 • Boone River
Goldfield to Boone Forks Wildlife Area (61 miles)

- Paddle up to 16 river miles per day, loading trash into your canoe as you go
- Limited number of canoes available on a first-come, first-served basis
- Daily educational programs
- Catered meals included with daily registration fee
- Tent camping areas provided each night

Volunteer for a day, a week or anytime in between.

Register online: iowaprojectaware.org

Registration deadlines: April 1 (pre-sale) / May 15 (Early Bird) / June 15 (Regular)

Space may be limited. Early registration is recommended.

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