Tainter Creek, Wisconsin
Driftless Area Restoration Effort &
Fishers & Farmers Partnership

2019 Summer & Fall Newsletter
Fishers & Farmers Partnership has answered a national call to improve U.S. waters and fisheries through the National Fish Habitat Partnership. 

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.
Hutchins Creek – Streambank stabilization, FFP completed project in 2018

Keith Livesay - water retention pond

Thanks to the U.S. Forest Service – Shawnee National Forest, USDA Service Center in Anna, IL and John A. Logan College in Carterville, IL for hosting Fishers & Farmers in May! Steering Committee members toured the Cache River Wetlands, Hutchins Creek, and Oakwood Bottoms. Thanks to tour hosts and speakers: Matt Lechner, Keith Livesay, Tharran Hobson, Chad Deaton, Scott Wilmoth & Scott Martin.
Doug Nopar and Shona Snater from the Land Stewardship Project invited Conservationist Lance Klessig (Winona SWCD), Federal Wildlife Officer Rob Hirschboeck (FWS), and Fishers & Farmers Coordinator, Heidi Keuler to talk about soil and water conservation, fish, wildlife, and streams with local farmers.

Activities included a live demonstration with the rainfall simulator, a slake test, a hands-on stream table demonstration, and a Mississippi River pontoon ride. Farmers were able to learn more about cover crops, tillage practices and how farming practices can impact rivers and streams.

Learn more: Landstewardshipproject.org
Cannon River Watershed Partnership held a field day on September 16, 2019 at the Roger Helgeson Farm on Rice Creek, MN. Rice Creek is Rice County’s only self-sustaining trout stream. The field day made an excellent connection between land use practices and fish habitat. Attending farmers learned about cover crops and conservation tillage and how they help improve water quality and fish habitat. MN DNR did an electrofishing demonstration, and displayed aquatic invertebrates.

Fishers & Farmers demonstrated how streams work and how farmers can help improve them.

Contact Al Kraus from CRWP to learn more: crwp.net/about-crwp

Farmers are “Soiling their undies.” They bury them in different fields and see how well soil microbes break down the cotton.
Fishers & Farmers Partnership Highlights

Jo Daviess County
Soil & Water Health Coalition, IL

Farmer-led Field Days near Galena, IL  2019:
June 21, 2019 – Mel Gratton Farm
July 19, 2019 – Jeff Koester Farm
August 23, 2019 – Andy Hawley Farm
September 20, 2019 – Greg Thoren Farm
October 30, 2019 – Bill Holland Farm

Farmers from Galena Watershed, Jo Daviess County, Illinois, discuss cover crops on Greg Thoren’s farm.

Project Completed
✓ One strong Farmer-led committee formed
  * 12 Active farmers, 100 on list serve
✓ 5 Workshops on farms in 2019
✓ 12 Farmer-led events in 2018!
✓ 72 Attendees average, 448 overall!
✓ More farmers are trying cover crops now
✓ Soil nitrate & river water sampling
✓ Nutrient Censor Action Challenge Award
✓ Watershed Leaders Network Participant

Learn More: watershed.fishersandfarmers.org/apple-plum-watershed/

www.epa.gov/innovation/nutrient-sensor-action-challenge
Thanks to Karen and her team, multi-purpose oxbows are now an agricultural non-point source nutrient reduction practice in the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy!

Oxbows help reduce nutrients and sediment while providing spawning habitat for the federally endangered Topeka shiner.

In 2012, Fishers & Farmers worked with Iowa Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Iowa Soybean Association, counties and farmers to fund the first restored oxbow in the Boone River Watershed. Since then, Fishers and Farmers has funded a total of 12 oxbows and all their partners together have funded almost 30! Thanks to TNC for leading this amazing work.

Recent Projects Completed
- Restored 8 oxbows
- Created 1.89 ac wetland-oxbow
- Removing 42% (avg.) nitrate/oxbow
- Planted 186 ac cover crops
- Conducted 6 fish surveys
- Hosted 6 field days
- Created 4 newsletters
- More projects coming soon!

SAVE THE DATE! May 8, 2020
TNC & Fishers & Farmers will host an event in the BRW. Stay tuned!
Tainter Creek, has several ongoing projects with partners including improving streambank stabilization, in-stream cover for trout, cover crops, prairie strips, rotational grazing, strengthening the farmer-led council, outreach, monitoring, and enhancing angling accessibility.

Learn More: Tainter Creek Selected for NFHP’s 2019 Waters to Watch List

2019 Project Completed
✓ Restored 16.7 ac riparian
✓ Restored 1.2 mi instream
✓ 59 Habitat structures placed
✓ More projects coming soon!