Appendix F: Black River Agricultural Nonpoint Source Plan

Lorain and Medina Soil and Water Conservation Districts
and
Natural Resource Conservation Service
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1. RIPARIAN COORIDORS / STREAMS

Use existing USDA programs (CRP, CREP, EQIP, and WHIP) to improve stream corridors. Installing vegetative filter-strips of grass and/or trees in existing agricultural fields is the recommended method to improve water quality, treat erosion and create wildlife habitat.

Strategy:

- Establish grass / trees filter strip on 50% of agricultural field in watershed within 10 years.
- Focus on educational programs to inform agricultural producers of filter strip programs and the benefits.

2. STREAMBANK EROSION

A. Removal of logjams and clearing / snagging is needed to facilitate flow and reduce the risk of stream-bank erosion.

Strategy:

- Develop a demonstration project to remove logjams and major stream obstructions.

B. Streambank erosion is a severe problem through most major channels within the watershed. What is the best method to deal with this problem?

Strategy:

- Use educational programs to inform landowners of methods of streambank erosion control.

3. LIVESTOCK

Provide financial and technical assistance to traditional and non-traditional livestock operations to manage waste and improve wastewater.

A. Conventional livestock operation (dairy, beef, and hogs)

Strategy:

- Have all major livestock operations develop comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) and/or grazing management plan to assist them with managing waste.
- Inventory livestock operations with animals grazing stream corridors.
- Provide financial and technical assistance to all grazing operations to fence livestock from streams.
- Develop information program to inform livestock operators about rules concerning winter application of manure.

- Provide funding to livestock operations to assist with managing waste. Utilize EQIP and APAP.

B. Non-conventional livestock (horses, alpaca and others) operations. Provide technical assistance to non-traditional livestock operations to assist with waste management to improve water quality.

Strategy:

- Inventory non-traditional livestock operations.
- Educate non-traditional livestock operators about state pollution abatement laws (LEAP).
- Develop low-cost waste storage plans for use by non-traditional livestock operators.

4. AGRICULTURAL CROP PRODUCTION

Sheet and rill erosion from agricultural lands results in pollution from sedimentation and nutrients. This use of best management practices (BMPs) is the recommended method to improve water quality.

Strategy:

- Encourage the use of permanent conservation practices (grass waterways, wascobs, erosion control structures), conservation tillage, filter strips, nutrient management as the primary BMPs to control erosion manage fertility and improve water quality.
- Utilize controlled drainage on tillable land to increase the effectiveness of conservation tillage and reduce nutrients and sedimentation to streams. Utilize cover crops on low-residue crop fields (soybeans, corn sillage) to control erosion.

5. CHANNELIZATION

Ditch cleaning has traditionally been a double-edged sword. Residents feel it is needed to control localized flooding. Environmentalists discourage it because of its impact to stream biology and wildlife. Local SWCDs are attempting to take a more balance approach to these opposing viewpoints when conducting drainage activities. They advocate limited drainage ditch improvement that mitigates local flooding issues without complete disruption to the stream corridor and surrounding habitat. This would include low-impact technique such as one-sided construction, maintaining natural vegetation on one bank, seeding of wildlife grasses and maintaining stream pools (where practical). This type of approach is the most practical solution to this complicated issue.