

The St. Joseph River Basin Commission exists to conserve, enhance, and promote the natural resources and benefits of the Watershed for present and future generations by providing vision, leadership, and means

### Winter 2015

#### 2015 ST. JOSEPH RIVER BASIN COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

MARCH 3  
JUNE 2  
SEPTEMBER 1  
DECEMBER 1

All meetings are open to the public and begin at  
10:00 a.m.

Elkhart County Public Services Building  
4230 Elkhart Road (US 33), Goshen, Indiana

May 15, 2015--Annual Indiana-Michigan St. Joseph River  
Basin Symposium

Consult website for agendas and possible meeting changes--  
Meeting presentations are also linked at this site when available.

#### “THE GR\$N OF EROSION CONTROL” CONTRACTOR’S WORKSHOP

February 24, 2015

7:30 – 10:30 AM

Dal-Mar Banquet Hall, Nappanee, Indiana

Free breakfast and CEUs available

The St. Joseph River Basin Commission has partnered with Greater Elkhart County Stormwater Partnership, Michiana Stormwater Partnership, City of Warsaw, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Elkhart, Kosciusko, and St. Joseph County to put on a contractor’s stormwater workshop in Nappanee, IN on February 24, 2015. The workshop will be primarily geared towards any contractors working with IDEM Rule 5 or



Rule 13 permits. It will offer a chance to network, visit with sponsoring vendors, and attend presentations on a variety of topics, including the financials of erosion control, innovative materials, and more. Breakfast and continuing education credits (CEUs) will be provided. Register for free by going to <http://goo.gl/KRiXA0>, email at [lora.callahan@in.nacdnet.net](mailto:lora.callahan@in.nacdnet.net), or call 574-533-4383, ext 3.

#### \$6.8 MILLION GRANTED TO OUR WATERSHED

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Conservation Partnership Program announced January 14th, that the St. Joseph River Watershed Conservation Partnership project has been awarded \$6.8 million to address water resource concerns in the St. Joseph River Basin. This partnership project is a bi-state initiative



led by the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and over 30 partnering agencies, including the St. Joseph River Basin Commission. The project's main area of focus will be developing innovative solutions to combat increasing groundwater withdrawals and sediment and nutrient loading while providing economically stable alternatives for farmers that also produce multiple conservation benefits.

Partnering agencies will work together to develop education and outreach campaigns, provide financial and technical assistance to farmers, determine critical areas of implementation, as well as coordinate existing monitoring efforts to report current and future project outcomes. While the project funds will not be dispersed until later this year, the St. Joseph River Basin Commission intends to be a significant contributing partner in this project and the Commission is excited to work with other project partners on improving our water resources management.

#### NEW SJRBC WEBSITE ONLINE

After several months of hard work, the Michiana Area Council of Governments has finally completed and released the St. Joseph River Basin Commission’s new website. While the URL has not changed, [www.sjrbc.com](http://www.sjrbc.com), the updated site offers a more modern look and user inter-face, and is viewable on either desktop, tablet, or mobile devices,

which provides the public with more opportunities to stay more connected with the Commission and stewardship efforts within the Basin. The Commission's website will continue to serve as an easily accessible resource to find information on the St. Joseph River Basin, the Commission and its programs, and to keep up with upcoming events and news in our watershed. So feel free to go check it out and let us know what you think!

### **IDEM MS4 GOOD HOUSE-KEEPING AUDIT**

The New Year marks the kick-off of an Indiana Department of Environmental Management audit of all currently permitted municipal separate storm sewer (MS4) communities in Indiana. The audit will consist of evaluation of each community's compliance with one of six minimum control measures established under 327 IAC 15-13 (Rule 13), "Municipal Operations Pollution Prevention and Good House-Keeping". This control measure requires MS4 communities to address stormwater issues and alter operations to control potential pollutants that are generated from municipal operations. The audit will be conducted in two parts: an evaluation of documentation and site visits. Each permittee will be notified of their audit date two weeks in advance. For information on resources to best prepare your facilities for the upcoming audit, feel free to contact MACOG via telephone or email. For questions pertaining directly to audit procedure or

documentation, please contact Reggie Korthals, MS4 Coordinator with IDEM's Office of Water Quality (317-234-1601, [rkorthal@idem.in.gov](mailto:rkorthal@idem.in.gov)).

### **RAIN GARDENS**

If you're an avid gardener, this winter season may be the perfect time for you to start planning new projects for the upcoming spring, such as a rain garden. A rain garden is a land depression planted with deep-rooted native plants and grasses that facilitates the path of stormwater runoff. Rain gardens are planted down



slope from runoff sources, such as downspouts or driveways, to capture rainwater runoff and prevent the untreated water from flowing into storm drains and surface waters. Not only can rain gardens reduce nonpoint source pollution in surface waters by up to 30%, but they have also been known to improve groundwater recharge, decrease erosion and flooding, and can make for a beautiful yard piece full of native vegetation. For more information on how you can start planning your rain garden visit [www.lowimpactdevelopment.com](http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.com). Happy planning and planting!

## **Upcoming Events**

### **February 24, 2015 – Contractor's Stormwater Workshop**

7:30 – 10:30 AM, Dal-Mar Banquest Hall, Nappanee, Indiana

### **March 3, 2015 – SJRBC Meeting**

Presenter: SNRT, Inc. recapping the Commission's first round of water quality testing results

### **May 15, 2015 – Annual Indiana-Michigan St. Joseph River Basin Symposium**

Fernwood Botanical Garden, Niles, Michigan

### **St. Joseph River Basin Commission**

227 W. Jefferson Blvd.--#1120

South Bend, IN 46601-1830