



Quick Facts

The use of lawn fertilizers in urban areas can be significant sources of phosphorus runoff into surface waters. This spring consider using phosphorus-free fertilizer, which is available at most hardware stores.

Upcoming Events

Our next steering committee meeting will take place on **March 28th** at the **Plymouth Public Library** (201 N. Center St.). The meeting will begin at **1:00pm** in the Laramore A Room.

The Draft Headwaters Yellow River Watershed Management Plan is currently available for review on the Marshall County SWCD webpage.

For more information on the Headwaters Yellow River Project feel free to contact:

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Headwaters Yellow River Watershed Planning Project

Spring 2016

Urban Conservation Practices

While the majority of the Headwaters Yellow River watershed is rural there are populated areas such as Plymouth, Bremen, Nappanee, Lakeville, and La Paz located in the watershed. Traditional stormwater runoff conveyance systems in urban areas are often designed to quickly move runoff to a centrally located management device.

These conveyance systems include roads, roofs, gutters, downspouts, driveways, curbs, drainage swales, and pipes. In contrast, low-impact development (LID) practices decrease the travel time of water and increase the infiltration of runoff. LID refers to systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes. These practices protect surface water, maintain the integrity of ecosystems, and preserve the physical integrity of receiving streams.

In 2000 the City of Chicago installed a demonstration green roof on the Chicago City Hall. The project was designed to test the benefits of green roofs and how they affect temperature and air quality. This green roof also retains 75% of a 1 inch rainfall before there is stormwater runoff

into the sewers. While a green roof may not be a viable option in the Headwaters Yellow River watershed the project demonstrates the benefit of LID practices. In addition to green roofs there are a variety other urban conservation practices that are beneficial to water quality.



Figure 2. Rain barrels can be installed to collect stormwater from gutters.



Figure 1. Photo of Chicago City Hall (MyRWA 2016).

The use of rain gardens, rain barrels, pervious paving materials, and vegetated conveyance systems are all urban conservation practices that are designed to retain, absorb, and filter stormwater runoff. The native plants used in rain gardens and vegetated conveyance systems remove pollutants from stormwater, recharge local aquifers, reduce flooding, and provide valuable habitat. For more information regarding the installation of urban conservation practices and financial assistance please contact your local SWCD office.