

THE COURT CREEK WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN: THE WATERSHED
PLANNING APPROACH

An Abstract of an Applied Project
Presented to the
Department of Geography
Western Illinois University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

by

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December 2008

ABSTRACT

In 1997 a pilot watershed protection program was initiated by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to combat the growing concern for, and degradation of Illinois water quality in our streams, rivers, and lakes. Watershed protection has many positive outcomes, not just improved water quality, but improved communication among stakeholders, better soil control techniques, cost-share funding by the state and federal government for participating watersheds, improved habitat for wildlife, and cleaner drinking water. By conducting a watershed inventory and setting up sampling stations along streams in the watershed, a good sense of future water quality needs can be identified. After the inventory was completed and a plan of attack was decided by a technical committee and volunteer steering committee, project implementation began along with sampling and surveys to document progress.

During the pilot program, four watersheds throughout Illinois were selected as test watershed protection sites. The Court Creek Watershed was one of the selected sites and is the focus of this applied project. This applied project is an account of what goes into writing a watershed protection plan by using Court Creek as a model and couching this study in a review of watershed protection research literature.

The watershed approach is bringing together science and citizens in a holistic, comprehensive manner that is beneficial to both the natural and man-made communities.