

ROOT RIVER CITIZEN CONVERSATIONS—JUNE 2014

Question 1: How do you think this watershed approach will benefit the future of the watershed?

Chatfield 1: (June 10, 2014, 8 people)

- Essential char. Of the watershed – higher or lower quality
- Changing behavior
- Info to general public
- Partnering w/ other agencies
- More impact on how \$ is spent (by indiv.)
- Appropriate actions/eval
- Fishable and swimmable easily understood by lay people
- Do lobbyist's money override citizens?

Preston 1: (June 17, 2014, 7 people)

- 5yr baseline data collection is good – legitimate basis for determining problems – creditable case for action
- Local citizens input
- Keeps ideas w/in own area – know issues locally and what to do
- Monetary benefit – local contractors hired to improve watershed
- More involvement of people – meeting info published – know benefits
- 5 yr. of data – detect improvements
- Basis for funding of projects
- Maps of impairments – more understanding – need more public involvement

Rushford 1: (June 18, 2014, 18 people)

- Needs to be more flexible rules for animal ag – best for landscape
- People in the watershed help make decisions
- Looking at whole watershed incl. tributaries – not just main stem
- Watershed identified – people take ownership – defined area
- Legacy standpoint – what's going to happen in the future for next generation
- Tool for educating people involved – placemat a great tool
- Address big picture issues not just stream near us
- Long term view
- Can see what hasn't worked and learn from that – accommodate for climate change
- Pull in more people in broad sense – more interest
- Cultural issues – not just science

Question 2: Thinking about the best management practices that were shared with you, what can we do as a watershed community to support implementation to protect and restore water quality?

Chatfield 2:

- Recognize economic impact of river in community
- Enforce policies – difficult in small communities policies – not Big Brother but what community agrees is good
- Watershed taxes – community advocate for tax - \$ for financial incentives
- Keep sustainable farmers on the land
- Educating younger children imp't – what is a watershed, negative effects of personal choices, Earth Day, fishing, 4-H, FFA
- Updating community websites – practices to improve
- Grants for BMPs – how to get \$
- Regulate ag practices

Preston 2:

- Offer incentives – adjust CRP based on what is being done
- Talk, talk, talk – communication
- Placemats – every restaurant
- Partner w/ other organizations, e.g. NTC
- Match practices w/ audience – leaves, grass clippings out of river
- Economic incentives
- Modes for advertising – co. fair, newsletters, parades, events, local programming and cable channels
- Person-to-Person
- Stress long term – over many generations – leave it better than you got it

Rushford 2:

- Local control – give clout to address situation
- Clear demonstration of economics of efficiency and sustainably farming
- Take away incentives that cause problems
- Education – starting young in schools
- Visiting with neighbors, e.g. gullies
- Serve as role models – “local heroes”
- Advocacy – go to co.bd.
- Takes \$ to enforce rules – if not following rules – support \$ to enforce
- Funding to promote conservation – all have a part in implementation

Question 3: What I can do to improve and protect our watershed? (Think in terms of an action/behavior and/or a skill/talent or resource YOU can contribute to this effort?)

Chatfield 3:

- Remind people of the uniqueness of this area
- Field days re: BMPs: cover crops, no till, forestry
- Network of contacts re: clean waterways, practices
- Community outreach and volunteering
- Volunteering to help others appreciate the outdoors – sr. volunteers w/ experience
- HEL – direct seeding – host field day re: what can be done on small parcels
- Connect spirituality w/ creation care
- Project GO – 3rd and 4th gr.
- Purchase food from sustainable farms
- Tie to \$ - economic incentives at county level
- Connect to local officials and with people may not agree with
- Advocate for clean water
- Advocate for controlling frac sand mining

Preston 3:

- Talk to neighbors about long – term benefits
- Field days – hands on experience seeing practices
- Rain barrels – inexpensive but big benefit
- Pass information on to others – what can be done – what is possible (family and friends)
- More positive influence – lead by example
- Attend local mtgs – city, twp. – benefits passed along
- Rented land – landowners stipulates conditions (BMPS)
- Stay on top of research
- Water stays in yard
- Hay
- Cover crops
- Waterways maintained
- Bring a guest to next mtg

Rushford 3:

- Rain barrels, rain gardens
- Cover crops
- Less fertilizer
- Buffer strips
- Renter's agreement
- Talk w/ state leaders re: stormwater runoff
- Basins, filter strips
- Managed grazing
- Soil health
- Good practices personally
- Local control

Question 4: Who else can we invite into this effort to protect and restore our watershed?

Chatfield 4:

- All farmers and landowners incl. people renting their land – expect conservation
- Businesses – fundraising
- Eco tourism – tour unique landscape e.g. Amish
- Hunters, birdwatchers, nature enthusiasts
- Clergy
- Graduating seniors
- Children’s programs – short betw. work and bedtime
- Watershed ed. for young people
- Candidates for office

Preston 4:

- NTC
- Driftless Fly Fishing
- Kayak rental – outfitters
- Home extension groups
- 4-H
- FFA
- Lions
- Community Fdn
- Eagle Bluff
- City Councils, Twps., Co. Bd.
- State reps/sen
- Young people and HS curriculum
- New ideas more acceptable

Rushford 4:

- Youth groups – 4-H, FFA, Scouts
- Chambers of Commerce
- More urban inclusion – city officials
- Church groups
- Congressional representatives
- Sportsmen groups, TU, WTF, local sportsmen groups
- Engaging media to point out good operators and bad operators
- Legion, Lions, e.g. sell rain barrels
- Wildlife and civic groups – advocacy
- Partners to stabilize stream banks
- Recreational businesses, fishing, canoeing, camping
- Legislators