

4th Quarter
December 6, 2016



Opening Business

- Call to Order
- Roll Call/Introductions
 - **Affiliation/Representation**
- Approval of Minutes
 - **September 6, 2016**



Financials

- Financial Report
- Approval of Claims



Organizational Announcement

- **New River Basin Program Director**
 - **Matt Meersman**
 - BasinDirector@macog.com
 - Phone: 574-287-1829 xt.800



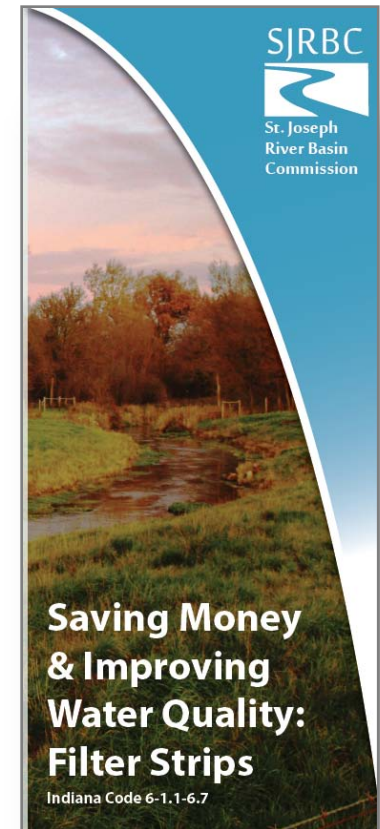
Old Business

- Basin Updates
 - Announcements from Commission Members



Old Business

- Basin Updates
- **St. Joseph River Basin Filter Strip Initiative**
 - **Proof being finalized at printer**
 - **Budgeted to print 7,500**



Benefits of Filter Strips

Water Quality

A filter strip, paired with other conservation practices, can filter out up to 95% of sediments, 87% of phosphorus, & 75% of nitrogen attached in surface water runoff.

Stable Ditch Banks

Deep rooted vegetation in filter strips stabilizes stream banks, providing a safer environment for maneuvering farm equipment.

Easy Ditch Access

In the event the land-owner or county surveyor require access to the ditch, no precious row-crops will be lost in the process.

Reduced Ditch Maintenance

Eroded soils from stream banks and topsoil deposit in areas down stream from their source. Filter strips stabilize soils and capture sediments before they enter the stream, reducing drain maintenance and saving tax payers money.

Wildlife Habitat

Native plants established in filter strips provide food and habitat for several species of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and pollinators.

Visual Appeal

A well established filter strip gives ditch banks some character and provides high visibility of good land stewardship.

Sign Up Today!

Who to Contact

Technical Assistance & Funding
Local SWCD & NRCS staff

Attaining a Parcel Plat & Application
County Surveyor

Information on IC 6-1.-6.7 & Assessments
County Assessor


Visit www.sjrbc.com/resources
for more information

Keep in mind...

- Every two (2) years the parcel will be inspected by the local SWCD staff to document compliance with maintenance requirements.
- If a parcel is removed from classification, monies will be collected based on tax benefits received during the duration of filter strip classification.



227 W. Jefferson Blvd - #1120
South Bend, IN 46601-1830
574-287-1829
www.sjrbc.com

SJRBC

St. Joseph
River Basin
Commission

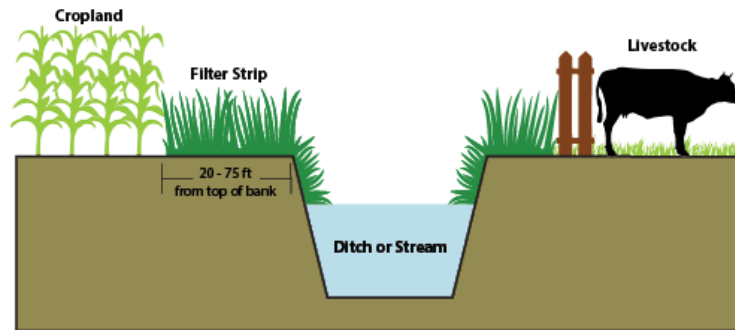
**Saving Money
& Improving
Water Quality:
Filter Strips**

Indiana Code 6-1.1-6.7

The Indiana Filter Strip Law

In 1991 the Indiana General Assembly approved the Indiana Filter Strip Law (IC 6-1.1-6.7) defining what qualifies as a filter strip, how it will be maintained, who approves specifications, and how classification will be recorded.

Above all, the land designated as a "classified filter strip" **will be assessed property tax at a rate of \$1.00 per acre** compared to the current method of assessments for agricultural land.



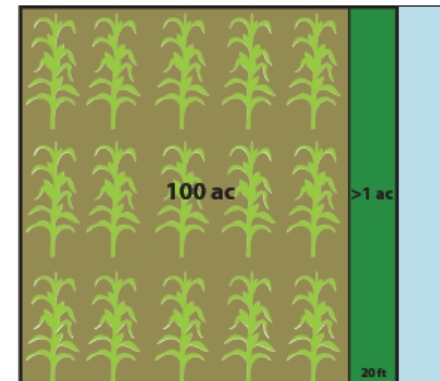
Follow these steps to to save money under the Indiana Filter Strip

- 1 Consult with your local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) staff on filter strip design and maintenance.
- 2 Attain a described parcel plat from County Surveyor or any liscence surveyor.
- 3 Obtain an up-to-date assessment of proposed filter strip parcel
- 4 Submit an application to your County Surveyor with following documents:
 - The parcel plat
 - The county assessment
 - Signatures of land owner, County Surveyor, County Assessor
 - A letter of filter strip approval from your local Soil and Water Conservation District
- 5 Approved application is returned to applicant.
- 6 Land entered for taxation at the assessed value of one dollar (\$1.00) per acre.

Tax Savings Eample

Mr. Smith works with his local SWCD and NRCS staff to attain cost-share funds to install a 20 foot wide filter strip along a ditch running the length of his 100 acre square plot. The information below outlines the filter strip specifications and Mr. Smith's projected annual tax savings based on Indiana State averages, on top of the farmland monies he received. It's easy to see that the Indiana Filter Strip Law can provide a significant tax break for any farmer, large or small.

Filter Strip Specs

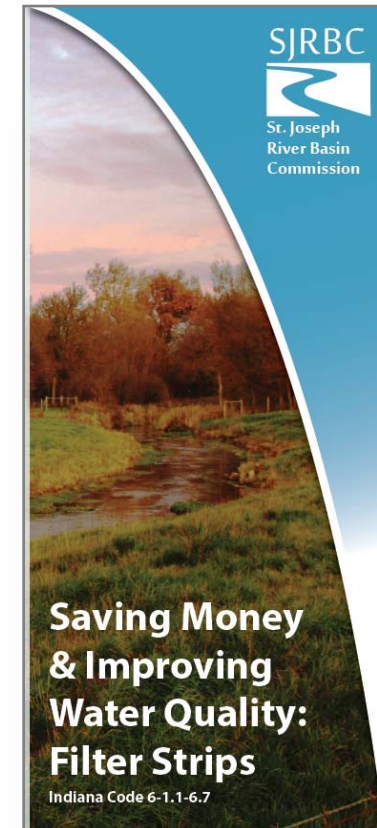


Old Taxes*	New Taxes	Tax Savings	Tax Reduction
\$34.29	\$0.96	\$33.39	97%

**Old Taxes calculated using the following information
 Property Tax = Base Rate Value * Soil Productivity Factor *
 (1.0 - Deduction Factor) * Tax Rate
 Agricultural Land Base Rate \$1,960/ac (2016 IDLGF Rate)
 Soil Productivity Factor: 0.951 (2014 Indiana County Avg)
 Deduction Factor = 0.0
 Tax Rate: 1.92% (2016 Indiana Township Avgs)*

Old Business

- Basin Updates
- **St. Joseph River Basin Filter Strip Initiative**
 - **Proof being finalized at printer**
 - **Budgeted to print 7,500**
 - **Distribute to SWCDs, Farm Bureau, Surveyor, etc**
 - **Organize committee meeting to determine next steps**



Old Business

- Basin Updates
- St. Joseph River Basin Filter Strip Initiative
- **2017 IWLA Scholarship**
 - **Alicia Czarnecki – Bowman Creek Educational Ecosystem**

Indiana Watershed



Leadership Program

Old Business

- Basin Updates
- St. Joseph River Basin Filter Strip Initiative
- 2017 IWLA Scholarship
- **Cobus Creek Watershed Diagnostic Study**




Cobus Creek Project - Timeline

Winter 2015	✓ Summarize historical watershed data
Spring 2016	
Summer 2016	✓ In-the-field data collection
Fall 2016	
Winter 2016	✓ Analyze/model data & develop recommendations
Spring 2017	Final document approved

Cobus Creek Project - Initial Findings

- **Baseflow – elevated levels of Phosphorus, but healthy and stable**
- **Stormflow – flashy spikes in *E. coli*, Suspended Solids & Phosphorus**
- **Tributaries to Cobus are main sources of pollutants**
- **Sites with poorest QHEI values also had worst pollutant levels**

COBUS CREEK WATERSHED DIAGNOSTIC STUDY
ELKHART AND ST. JOSEPH COUNTIES, INDIANA AND CASS COUNTY, MICHIGAN



Prepared for:

St. Joseph River Basin Commission
227 W. Jefferson Blvd.
1120 County-City Building
South Bend, Indiana 46601

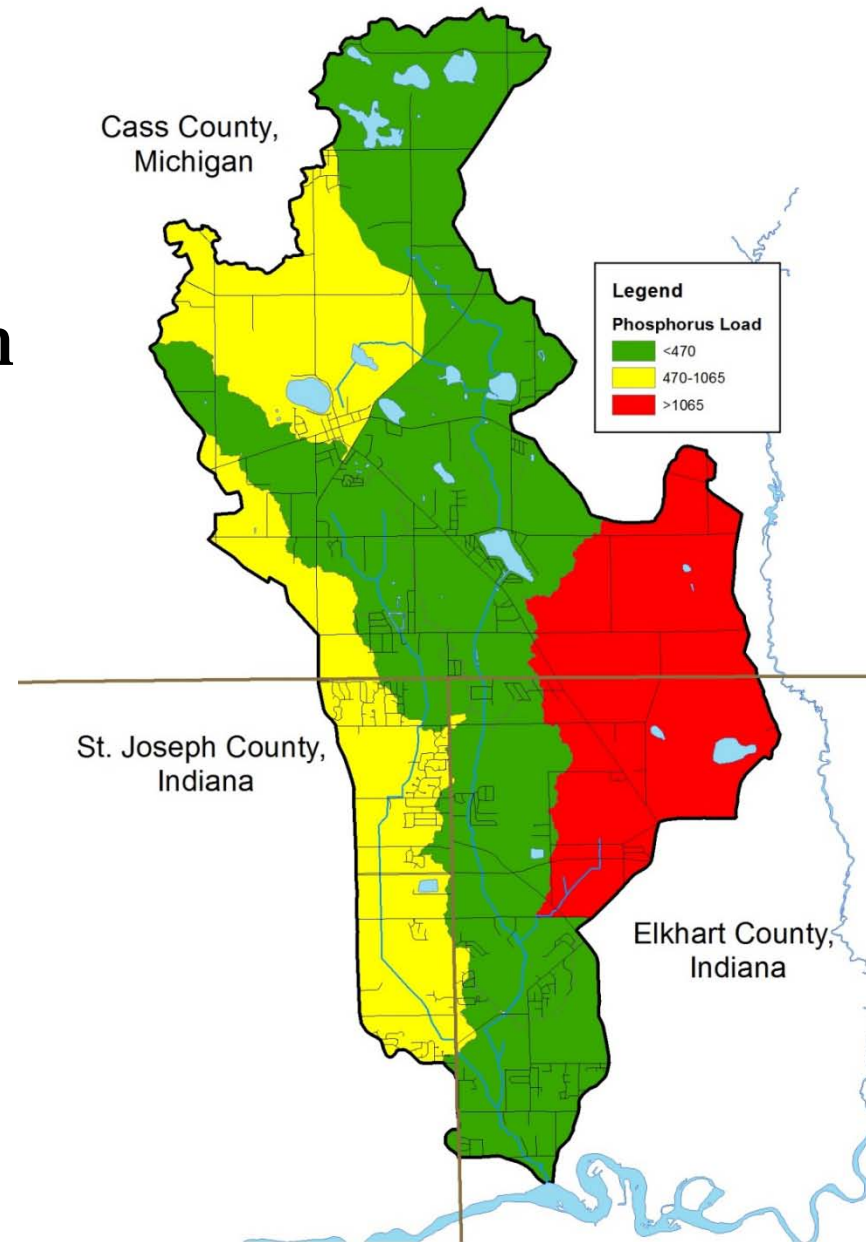
Prepared by:

Sara Peel, CLM
Arion Consultants, Inc.
609 N. Columbia Street
Warsaw, Indiana 46580

Greg Bright
Commonwealth Biomonitoring
8802 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46231

Recommendations

- Focus conservation efforts in red and yellow areas
 - Implement soil heath programs
 - Urban BMPs
 - Septic system management
 - Stream bank stabilization and habitat restoration

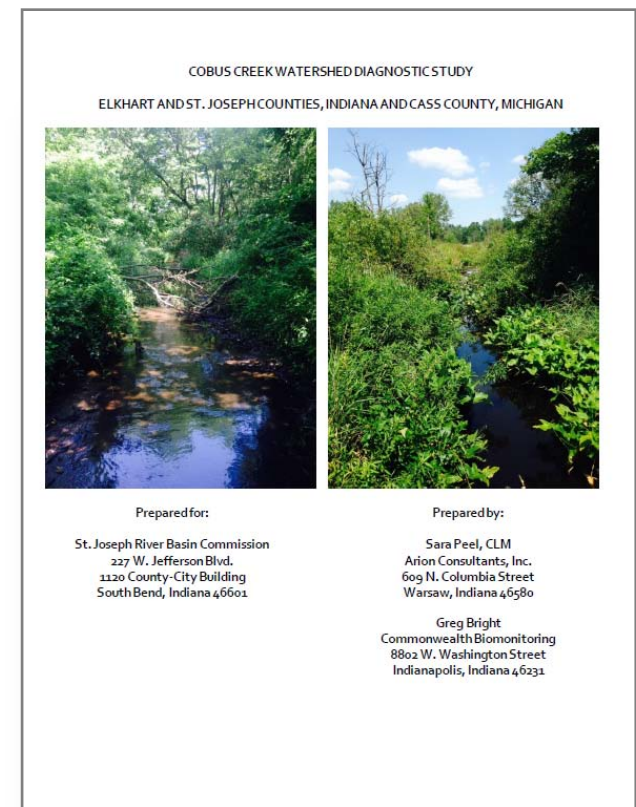


Public Meeting - November 15, 2016

- Presenting initial findings of study
- Over 40 people in attendance – 2 news channels
- Public had opportunity to prioritize management recommendations
 1. Zoning ordinances – overlay zone septic/sewer
 2. Target BMPs to reduce sediment inputs
 3. Target BMPs to reduce E. coli concentrations
 4. Implement landowner education
- Results of prioritization activity incorporated into final study

Cobus Creek - Next Steps

- Next draft of study goes out for public comment
 - In next month or so
 - Will be available on website
- Public education handout in review currently
- Final will be presented for approval in March 2017
- Begin identifying grants and lead partners to implement recommendations

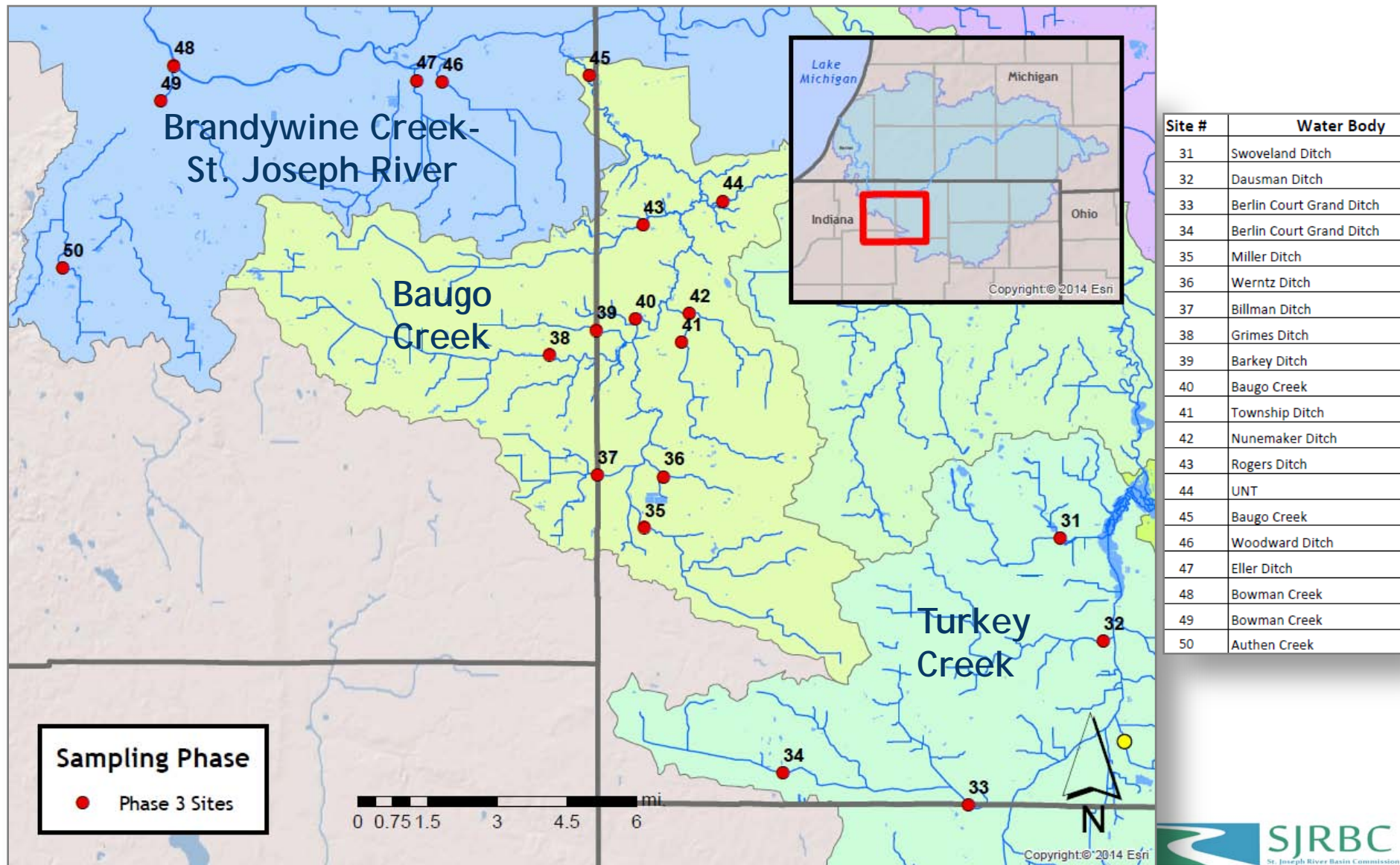


Old Business

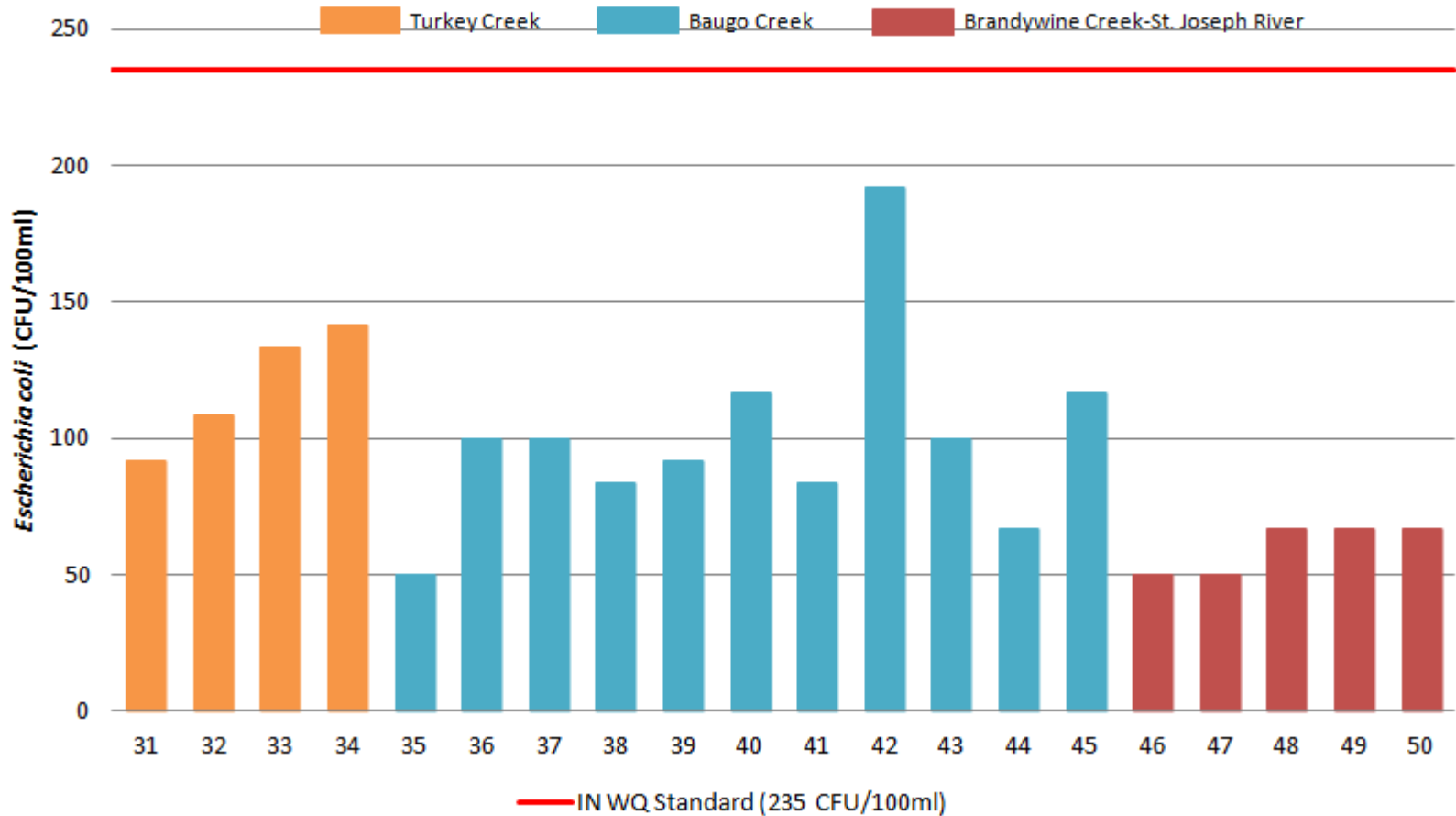
- Basin Updates
- St. Joseph River Basin Filter Strip Initiative
- 2017 IWLA Scholarship
- Cobus Creek Watershed Diagnostic Study
- **Water Monitoring Program Update**
 - **All Phase 3 sites meeting target values**



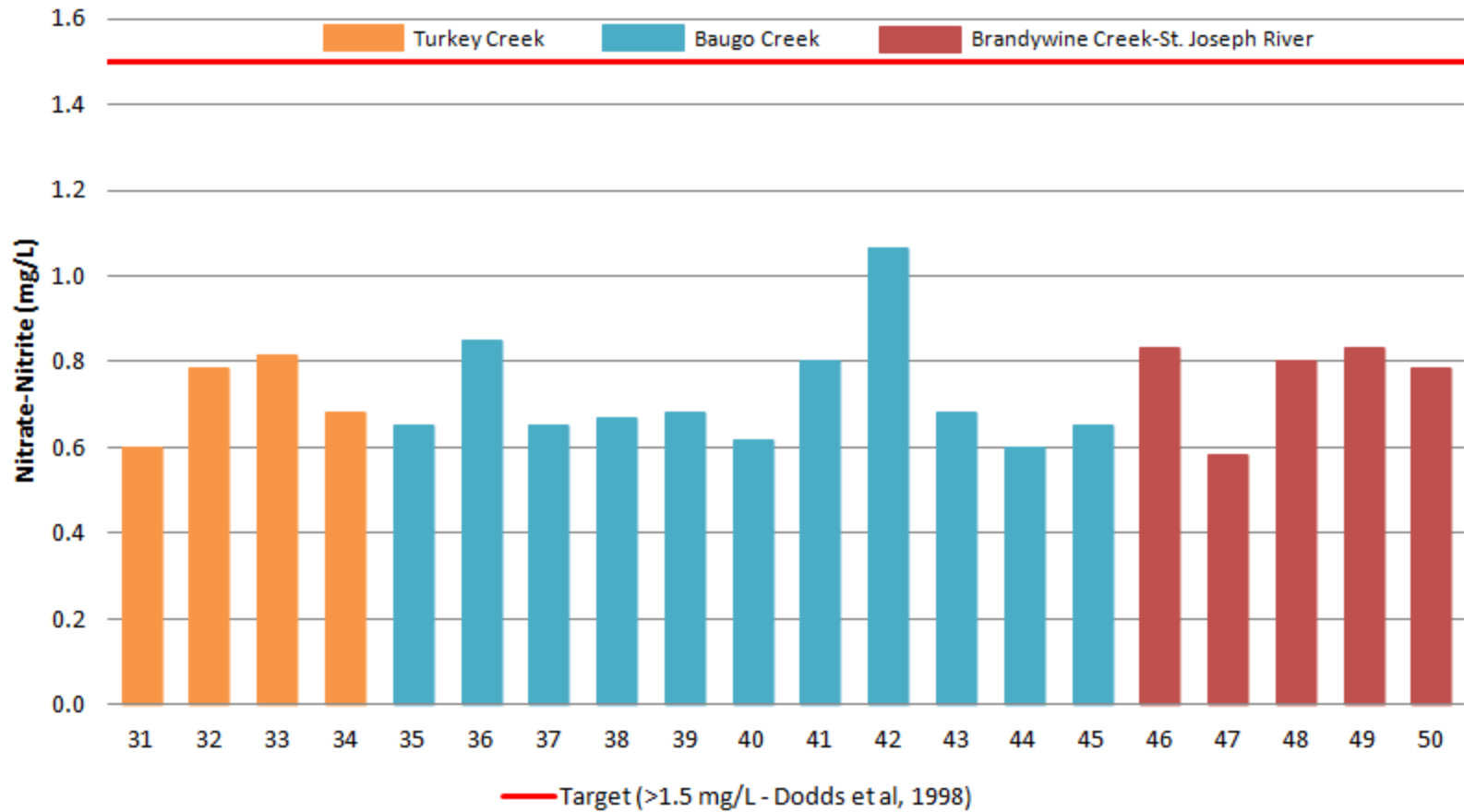
2016-2017 Water Monitoring Sites (Phase 3)



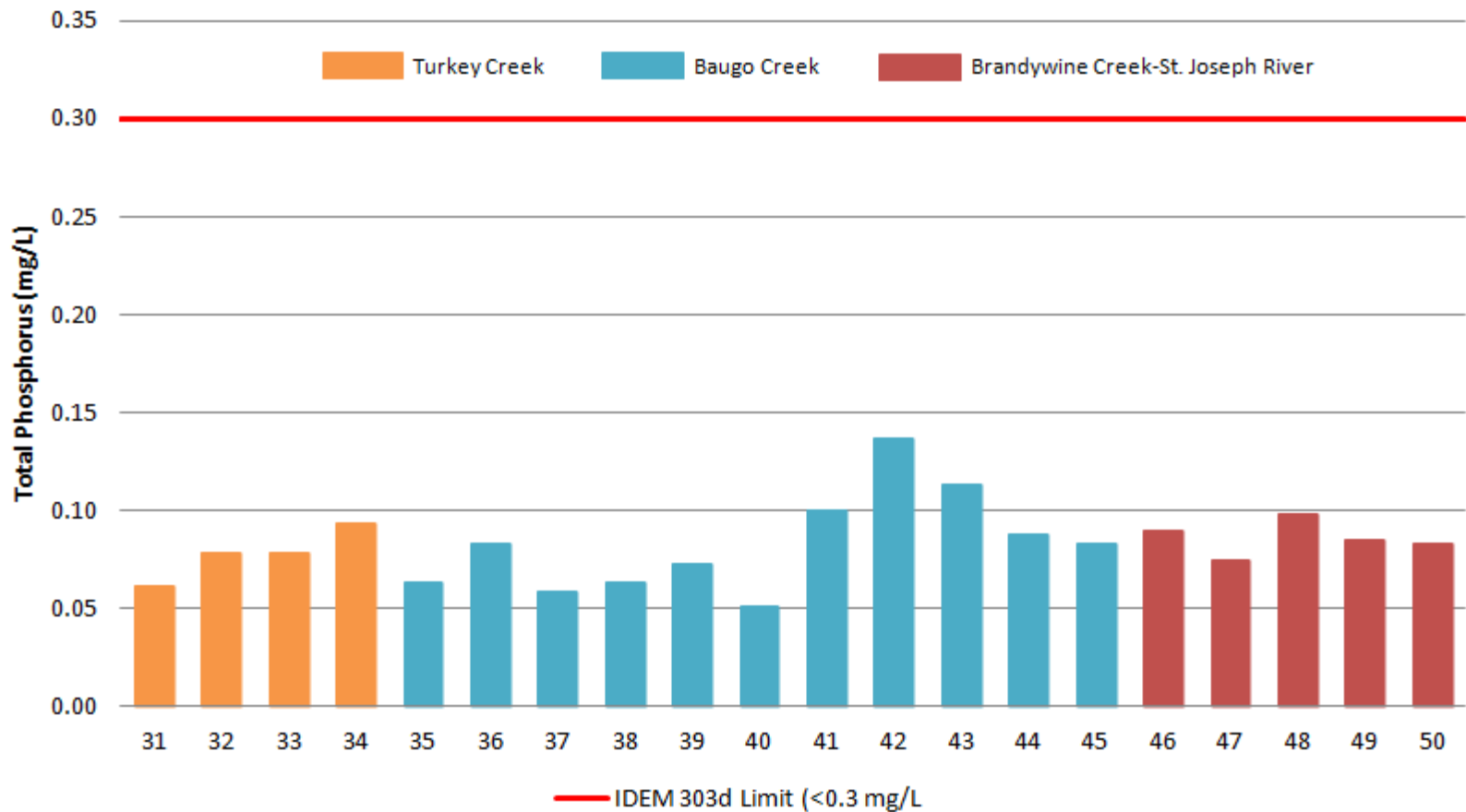
Phase 3 *E. coli* Averages by Subwatershed (April - September 2016)



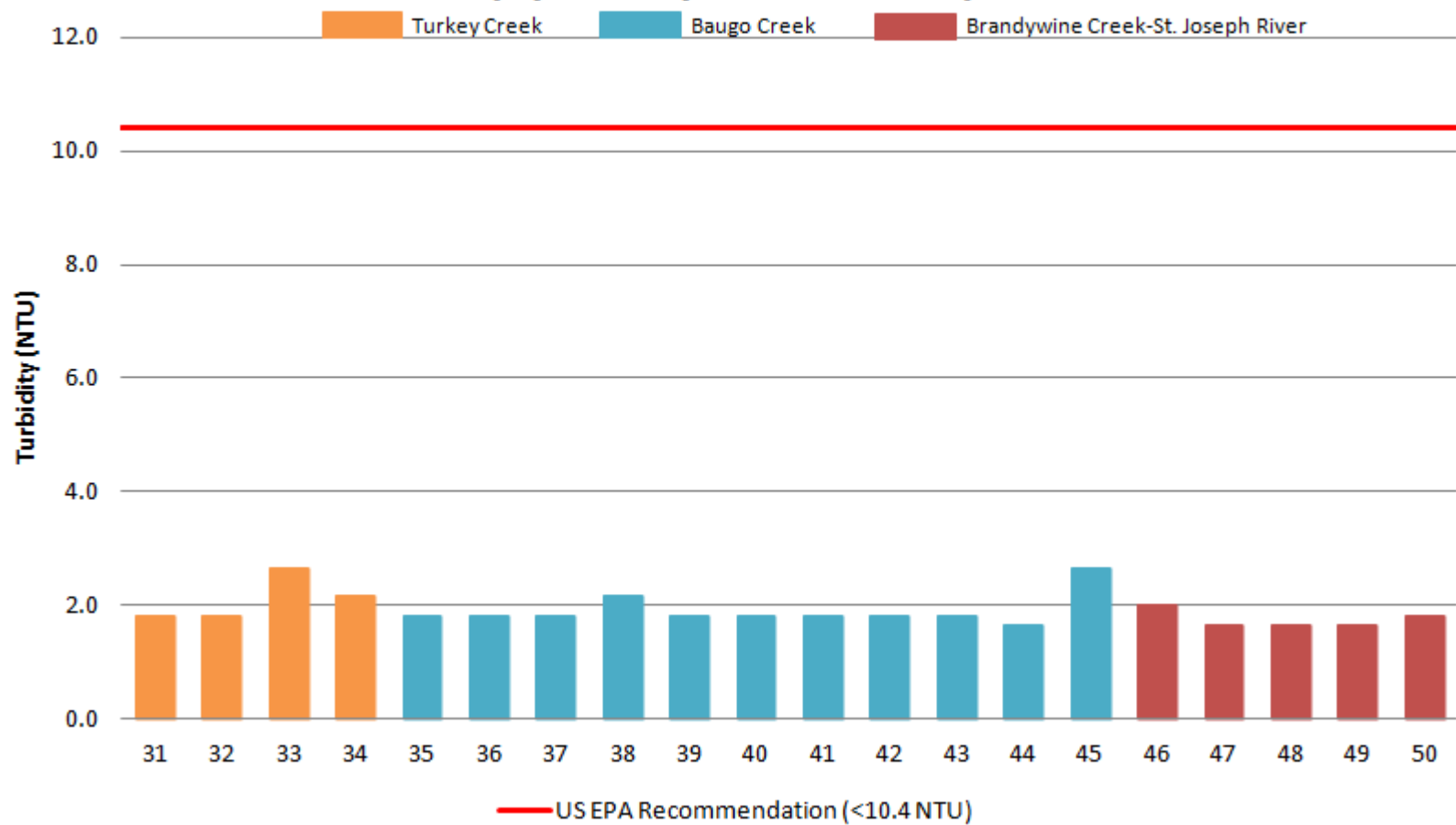
Phase 3 Nitrate-Nitrite Averages by Subwatershed (April - September 2016)



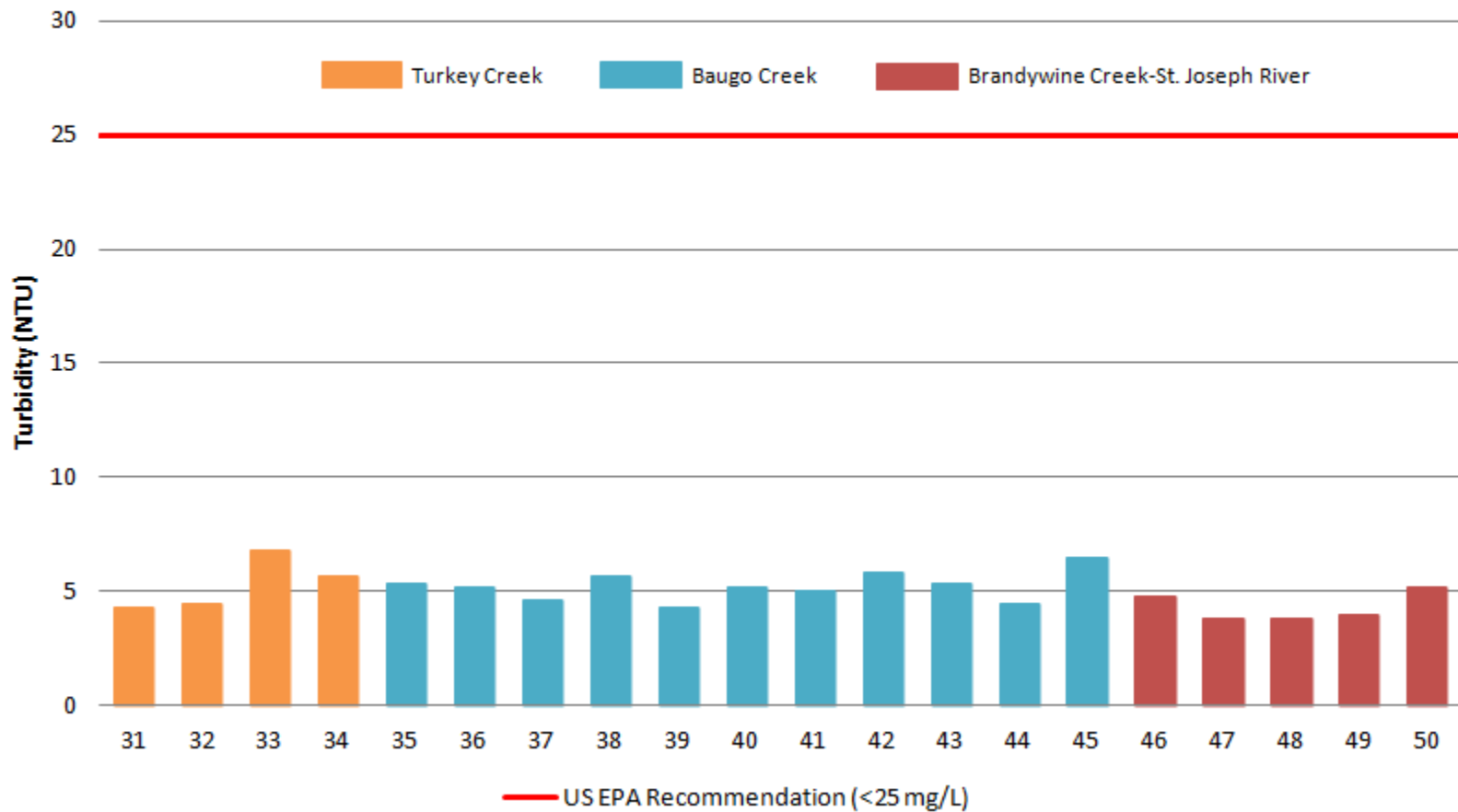
Phase 3 Total Phosphorus Averages by Subwatershed (April - September 2016)



Phase 3 Turbidity Averages by Subwatershed (April - September 2016)

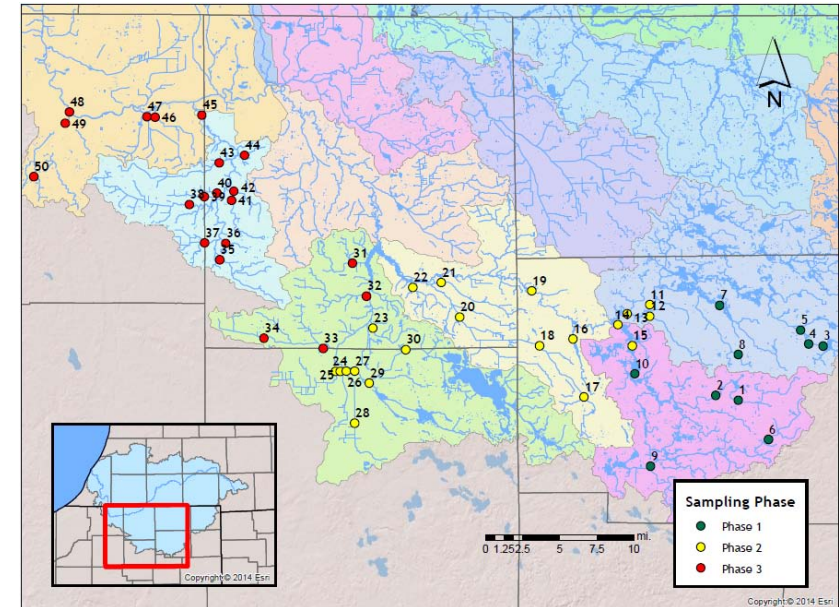


Phase 3 Total Suspended Solids Averages by Subwatershed (April - September 2016)



Water Monitoring Program - Next Steps

- No Phase 2 Final Report completed yet
- 3 year contract w/ SNRT ends March 2017
- New RFQ needed to continue sampling April 2017
- **Form Committee to discuss future monitoring**



Old Business

- Basin Updates
- St. Joseph River Basin Filter Strip Initiative
- 2017 IWLA Scholarship
- Cobus Creek Watershed Diagnostic Study
- Water Monitoring Program Update
- **Elkhart River Conservation Initiative**
 - **A collaborative effort to implement sustainable projects in Elkhart River Watershed**

Elkhart River Conservation Initiative

- Developed a list of potential projects
- Projects have been prioritized based on cost and benefit to the watershed
 - High priority, lower priority, long-term priority

Initiatives	D	A	U	NL	Priority	Funding	Responsibility
Distribute information on Indiana Filter Strip Law to producers in the Elkhart River Watershed 13		X		X			
Implement covercrops, conservation tillage, filter strips and other BMPs in Elkhart River Watershed (heavy focus on headwaters) 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 13	X	X		X			
Restrict livestock access to all surface waters in Elkhart River Watershed 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 13		X					
Host a joint lake association workshop education on watersheds, water quality, and shoreline bmps 2, 13	X		X	X			

New Business

- Meeting Schedule for 2017
 - 10am @ Elkhart Co. Public Services Building
 - March 7, 2017
 - June 6, 2017
 - September 12, 2017
 - December 5, 2017



New Business

- Meeting Schedule for 2017
- Election of 2017 Officers
 - President: Jon Roberts
 - Vice-President: Paula Reinhold
 - Secretary-Treasurer: Martin Franke



Next Meeting
March 7th, 2017



SJRBC
St. Joseph River Basin Commission