

## **Lower Kankakee Watershed Initiative 2024-2026 Implementation Program - Conservation Best Management Practices Eligible for Cost Share Consideration**

### **Priority 1 Practices**

Cover Crop  
Critical Area Planting/Conservation Cover  
Field Border/Buffer or Filter Strip  
Forage/Biomass Planting  
Grassed Waterway/Mulching/Subsurface Drain  
Nutrient/Pest Management  
Conservation Tillage  
Manure Management Planning  
Pollinator Habitat  
Rain Garden

### **Priority 2 Practices**

Livestock Restriction including Access Control/Prescribed Grazing/Livestock Pipeline/Alternative Watering Facility  
Heavy Use Protection Area  
Stream Crossing  
Streambank Stabilization  
Infrastructure retrofits  
Composting Facility

### **Priority 3 Practices**

Bioreactor  
Drainage Water Management  
Grade Stabilization Structure  
Saturated Buffer  
T&E Species Protection (Habitat Improvement)  
Tree/Shrub Establishment/Planting  
Two Stage Ditch  
Waste Storage Facility  
Water and Sediment Control Basin  
Wetland Creation/Enhancement/Restoration  
Windbreak Establishment  
Bioretention  
Pervious pavement  
Rain Barrel  
Animal Mortality Facility

### **Description of Practices**

#### **Animal Mortality Facility**

An animal mortality facility is an on-farm facility for the treatment or disposal of livestock and poultry carcasses for routine and catastrophic mortality events. This practice can reduce impacts to surface and groundwater resources and decrease the spread of pathogens. This practice is applicable to operations where animal carcass treatment or disposal is needed. However, these facilities may not be used for

catastrophic mortality resulting from disease. All runoff is diverted away from such facilities, which should be located down gradient from springs and wells and above the 100-year floodplain if possible to prevent contamination (FOTG Code 316).

### **Bioreactors**

Bioreactors use bacteria to digest organic materials including manure, remnant plant material, and woody debris. Bioreactors typically generate energy, water, and fertilizer. Bioreactors use a series of tanks and treatment processes to separate cellulose-based materials from oils and gases. Materials are then broken down into carbon dioxide or methane gas and ethanol.

### **Composting Facility**

A composting facility is a structure to facilitate the controlled anaerobic decomposition of manure or other organic material by microorganisms into a biologically stable organic material that is suitable for use as a soil amendment. It can reduce the pollution potential and improve the handling characteristics of organic waste solids and produce a soil amendment that adds organic matter and beneficial organisms, provides slow-release plant-available nutrients, and improves soil conditions (FOTG Code 317).

### **Conservation Tillage (No-till)**

Conservation tillage refers to several different tillage methods or systems that leave at least 30% of the soil covered with crop residue after planting (Holdren et al., 2001). Tillage methods encompassed by conservation tillage include no-till, mulch-till, ridge-till, and strip till. The purpose of conservation tillage is to reduce sheet and rill erosion, maintain or improve soil organic matter content, conserve soil moisture, increase available moisture, reduce plant damage, and provide habitat and cover for wildlife. The remaining crop residue helps reduce soil erosion and runoff volume.

Several researchers have demonstrated the benefits of conservation tillage in reducing pollutant loading to streams and lakes. A comprehensive comparison of tillage systems showed that no-till results in 70% less herbicide runoff, 93% less erosion, and 69% less water runoff volume when compared to conventional tillage (Conservation Technology Information Center, 2000). Reductions in pesticide loading have also been reported (Olem and Flock, 1990).

### **Cover Crops/Critical Area Planting/Conservation Cover**

Cover crops include legumes, such as clover, hairy vetch, field peas, alfalfa, and soybean, and non-legumes, such as rye, oats, wheat, radishes, turnips, and buckwheat which are planted prior to or following crop harvest. Cover crops typically grow for one season to one year and are typically grown in non-cropping seasons. Cover crops are used to improve soil quality and future crop harvest by improving soil tilth, reducing wind and water erosion, increasing available nitrogen, suppressing weed cover, and encouraging beneficial insect growth. Cover crops reduce phosphorus transport by reducing soil erosion and runoff. Both wind and water erosion move soil particles that have phosphorus attached. Sediment that reaches water bodies may release phosphorus into the water. Runoff water can wash soluble phosphorus from the surface soil and crop residue and carry it off the field. The cover crop vegetation recovers plant-available nutrients in the soil and recycles them through the plant biomass for succeeding crops.

### **Drainage Water Management/Subirrigation**

Subsurface tile drainage is an essential water management practice on highly productive fields. As a result of tile drainage, nitrate carried in drainage water enters adjacent surface waterbodies. Drainage

water management is necessary to reduce nitrate loads entering adjacent surface waterbodies from tile drainage networks. Drainage water management uses water control structures within lateral drains to vary the depth of tile outlets. Typically, the outlet is raised after harvest to limit outflow from the tile and reduce nitrate transport to adjacent waterbodies; lowered in the spring and fall to allow tile water to flow freely from the field to adjacent waterbodies; and raised in the summer to help store water making it available for crops (Frankenberger et al., 2006). Drainage water management can be used in concert with a suite of other conservation practices including subirrigation, cover crops and conservation tillage to promote a systems approach and be better stewards of water quantity.

### **Field Border/Buffer Strip/Filter Strip**

Installing natural buffers or filters along major and minor drainages in the watershed helps reduce the nutrient and sediment loads reaching surface waterbodies. Buffers provide many benefits including restoring hydrologic connectivity, reducing nutrient and sediment transport, improving recreational opportunities and aesthetics, and providing wildlife habitat. Sediment, phosphorus, nitrogen, and *E. coli* are at least partly removed from water passing through a naturally vegetated buffer. The percentage of pollutants removed depends on the pollutant load, the type of vegetation, the amount of runoff, and the character of the buffer area. The most effective buffer width can vary along the length of a channel. Adjacent land uses, topography, runoff velocity, and soil and vegetation types are all factors used to determine the optimum buffer width.

Many researchers have verified the effectiveness of filter strips in removing sediment from runoff with reductions ranging from 56-97% (Arora et al., 1996; Mickelson and Baker, 1993; Schmitt et al., 1999; Lee et al., 2000; Lee et al., 2003). Most of the reduction in sediment load occurs within the first 15 feet of installed buffer. Smaller additional amounts of sediment are retained and infiltration is increased by increasing the width of the strip (Dillaha et al., 1989). Filter strips have been found to reduce sediment-bound nutrients like total phosphorus but to a lesser extent than they reduce sediment load itself. Phosphorus predominately associates with finer particles like silt and clay that remain suspended longer and are more likely to reach the strip's outfall (Hayes et al., 1984). Filter strips are least effective at reducing dissolved nutrients like those of nitrate and phosphorus, and atrazine and alachlor, although reductions of dissolved phosphorus, atrazine, and alachlor of up to 50% have been documented (Conservation Technology Information Center, 2000). Simpkins et al. (2003) demonstrated 20-93% nitrate-nitrogen removal in multispecies riparian buffers. Short groundwater flow paths, long residence times, and contact with fine-textured sediments favorably increased nitrate-nitrogen removal rates. Additionally, up to 60% of pathogens contained in runoff may be effectively removed. Computer modeling also indicates that over the long run (30 years), filter strips significantly reduce amounts of pollutants entering waterways.

Filter strips should be designed as permanent plantings to treat runoff and should not be considered part of the annual rotation of adjacent cropland. Filter strips should receive only sheet flow and should be installed on stable banks. A mixture of grasses, forbs, and herbaceous plants should be used. In more permanent plantings, shrubs and trees should be intermingled to form a stable riparian community.

### **Forage and Biomass Planting**

Forage and biomass plantings establish adapted and/or compatible species, varieties, or cultivars of herbaceous species suitable for pasture, hay or biomass production. Purposes include: Improve or maintain livestock nutrition and/or health; provide or increase forage supply during periods of low forage production; reduce soil erosion; improve soil and water quality; produce feedstock for biofuel or energy production.

### **Grade Stabilization**

A grade stabilization structure is used to stabilize and control soil erosion in natural and artificial channels. It can prevent the formation or advance of gullies, enhance environmental quality, and reduce pollution hazards. Special attention is given to maintaining or improving habitat for fish and wildlife.

### **Grassed Waterway**

Grassed waterways are natural or constructed channels established for transport of concentrated flow at safe velocities using adequate channel dimensions and proper vegetation. They are generally broad and shallow by design to move surface water across farmland without causing soil erosion. Grassed waterways are used as outlets to prevent rill and gully formation. The vegetative cover slows the water flow, minimizing channel surface erosion. When properly constructed, grassed waterways can safely transport large water flows downslope. These waterways can also be used as outlets for water released from contoured and terraced systems and from diverted channels. The amount of precipitation that runs off the soil surface rather than infiltrating down into the soil profile is increased by tillage and other farming activities that increase soil compaction and decrease soil organic matter and macro-pore content. For these reasons, the establishment or refurbishing of a grassed waterway should, when possible, be coupled with other practices that aim to increase the rate of water infiltration into the soil. This BMP can reduce sediment concentrations of nearby waterbodies and pollutants in runoff. The vegetation improves the soil aeration and water quality due to its nutrient removal through plant uptake and absorption by soil. The waterways can also provide wildlife corridors and allows more land to be natural areas.

### **Heavy Use Protection Area (HUAP)**

HUAP is used to stabilize a ground surface that is frequently used by people, animals, or vehicles and to protect water quality.

### **Livestock Restriction/Rotational Grazing/Lined Waterway or Outlet**

Livestock that have unrestricted access to a stream or wetland have the potential to degrade the waterbody's water quality and biotic integrity. Livestock can deliver nutrients and pathogens directly to a waterbody through defecation. Livestock also degrade stream ecosystems indirectly. Trampling and removal of vegetation through grazing of riparian zones can weaken banks and increase the potential for bank erosion. Trampling can also compact soils in a wetland or riparian zone decreasing the area's ability to infiltrate water runoff. Removal of vegetation in a wetland or riparian zone also limits the area's ability to filter pollutants in runoff. The degradation of a waterbody's water quality and habitat typically results in the impairment of the biota living in the waterbody.

Restoring areas impacted by livestock grazing often involves several steps. First, the livestock in these areas should be restricted from the wetland or stream to which they currently have access. If necessary, an alternate source of water should be created for the livestock. Second, the wetland or riparian zone where the livestock have grazed should be restored. This may include stabilizing or reconstructing the banks using bioengineering techniques. Minimally, it involves installing filter strips along banks or wetland edge and replanting any denuded areas. Finally, if possible, drainage from the land where the livestock are pastured should be directed to flow through a constructed wetland to reduce pollutant loading, particularly nitrate-nitrogen loading, to the adjacent waterbody. Complete restoration of aquatic areas impacted by livestock will help reduce pollutant loading, particularly nitrate-nitrogen, sediment, and pathogens.

A livestock exclusion system is a system of permanent fencing (board, barbed, etc) installed to exclude livestock from streams and areas not intended for grazing. This will reduce erosion, sediment, and nutrient loading, and improve the quality of surface water. Landowners can additionally section off the pasture land and move the animals from one paddock to the next, ensuring adequate vegetation growth for nutrient removal. Using this system of rotational grazing no one piece of land gets overgrazed and ensures a high quality food for the livestock and adequate ground cover for nutrient and sediment retention. Education and outreach programs focusing on rotational grazing and exclusionary fencing are important in the success of this BMP.

### **Manure Management Planning**

Large volumes of manure are generated by both small, unregulated animal operations and by confined feeding operations located throughout the Big Pine watershed. Many entities have manure management plans in place and are currently using these plans to manage the volume of manure produced on their facility. Manure management planning includes consideration of the volume and type of manure produced annually, crop rotations by field, the volume of manure and nutrients needed for each crop, field slope, soil type, and manure collection, transportation, storage, and distribution methods. Manure management planning uses similar techniques to nutrient management planning with regards to nutrient budgets.

Animal waste is a major source of pollution to waterbodies. To protect the health of aquatic ecosystems and meet water quality standards, manure must be safely managed. Good management of manure keeps livestock healthy, returns nutrients to the soil, improves pastures and gardens, and protects the environment, specifically water quality. Poor manure management may lead to sick livestock, unsanitary and unhealthy conditions for humans and other organisms, and increased insect and parasite populations. Proper management of animal waste can be done by implementing BMPs, through safe storage, by application as a fertilizer, and through composting. Proper manure management can effectively reduce *E.coli* concentrations, nutrient levels and sedimentation. Manure management can also be addressed in education and outreach to encourage farmers to participate in this BMP.

### **Nutrient/Pest Management Planning including Variable Rate Application and Waste Storage Facility**

Nutrient management is the management of the amount, source, placement, form, and timing of the application of plant nutrients and soil amendments to minimize the transport of applied nutrients into surface water or groundwater and can be in commercial/non-manure fertilizer or manure-based fertilizers. Nutrient management seeks to supply adequate nutrients for optimum crop yield and quantity, while also helping to sustain the physical, biological, and chemical properties of the soil. A nutrient budget for nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium is developed considering all potential sources of nutrients including, but not limited to, animal manure, commercial fertilizer, crop residue, and legume credits. Realistic yields are based on soil productivity information, potential yield, or historical yield data based on a 5-year average. Nutrient management plans specify the form, source, amount, timing, and method of application of nutrients on each field in order to achieve realistic production levels while minimizing transport of nutrients to surface and/or groundwater.

### **Prescribed Grazing/Fencing/Alternate Watering Systems**

Fencing livestock out of stream systems allows for the restoration of the stream channel. Alternative watering systems provide an alternate location for livestock to seek water rather than using a surface water source. This removes the negative impacts of livestock access to streams including direct deposit of manure and bank erosion and destabilization, while improving the health of livestock by providing a

clean water source and better footing while drinking. This results in less *E. coli*, phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediment entering a surface waterbody. Alternative watering systems may include pump systems or gravity systems connected to a well, or running pipe from a pond or spring.

### **Saturated Buffer**

Saturated buffers are an option in situations where a field is bordered by a riparian buffer. The conventional practice is to extend the tile main line from the field, through the buffer and discharge the water directly into the receiving stream. Subsurface drainage water, therefore, bypasses the buffer and has no opportunity for interaction with the biota in the buffer. Saturated buffers provide a means for distributing some or all of the drainage water through the buffer. For the purpose of utilizing the buffer, a diverter box, or control structure, is installed on the tile main line at the edge between the field and the buffer. The diverter box is used to direct the water into a subsurface distribution pipe running parallel to the stream along the edge of the field. The distribution pipe is regular perforated drainage pipe. The drainage water can then seep out of the distribution pipe and into the soil and make its way down gradient to the stream. The nitrate in the water is removed by the buffer through denitrification, immobilization in bacterial biomass and plant uptake. An overflow discharge pipe to the stream is connected to the diverter box to allow bypass flow during times of high drainage flow rates, thereby ensuring that no water is being backed up in the main tile line.

### **Streambank Stabilization**

Streambank stabilization or stream restoration techniques are used to improve stream conditions so they more closely mimic natural conditions. The most feasible restoration options return many of the stream's natural functions (flood storage, nutrient removal, etc.) without restoring the stream completely to its original condition. However, even a partial restoration of this type is extremely expensive, takes quite a bit of land to accomplish, and is likely unrealistic as a large scale strategy in this watershed. Our efforts will focus primarily on two-stage ditch construction, which is a cheaper way to incorporate a small floodplain into the ditch itself in the form of benches on either side of the main channel that allow for increased capacity in the ditch resulting in slower moving water along the banks resulting in reduced bank slumping and failure. Restoration and stabilization options are limited by available floodplain, modifications to natural flows, and development structure locations. Reestablishment of riparian buffers, restoration of stream channels, stabilization of eroding stream banks, installation of riffle-pool complexes, and general maintenance can all improve stream function while reducing sediment and nutrient transport into and within the system.

### **T&E Species Protection (Habitat Improvement)**

Threatened and endangered species are those plant and animal species whose survival is in peril. Federally and state listed species identified within the Lower Big Blue River Watershed are highlighted in the Watershed Inventory. Threatened species are those that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future. Federally endangered species are those that are in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range. A state-endangered species is any species that is in danger of extinction as a breeding species in Indiana.

Protecting threatened and endangered species requires consideration of their habitat including food, water, and nesting and roosting living space for animals and preferred substrate for plants and mussels. Corridors for species movement are also necessary for long-term protection of these species. Protection of habitat can include providing clean water and available food but likely requires protection of the physical living space and associated corridor. Conservation management plans should be developed for each species, if they are not already in place. Such plans should consider habitat needs including purchase

or protection of adjacent properties to current habitat locations, hydrologic needs, pollution reduction, outside impacts, and other techniques necessary to protect threatened and endangered species .

### **Tree/Shrub Establishment/Reforestation including Invasive Control/Timber Stand Improvement**

Reforestation is the establishment of forests, usually accomplished through the planting of tree seedlings. It is important to match the species being planted to the site chosen for reforestation. Control of competing vegetation and invasive plants is often necessary to ensure establishment and survival of planted trees. This is usually done through mowing and/or herbicide application. Reforestation can provide many benefits to the landscape. Increasing the amount of forest through tree planting provides more habitat for forest dependent species, improves water quality by reducing erosion, decreases nutrient loading and lowers floodwater velocity.

### **Two-Stage Ditch**

When water is confined to stream or ditch channel it has the potential to cause bank erosion and channel down-cutting. Current ditch design generates narrow channels with steep sides. Water flowing through these systems often result in bank erosion, channel scour and flooding. A relatively new technique focuses on mitigating these issues through an in-stream restoration called a two-stage ditch. The design of a two-stage ditch incorporates a floodplain zone, called benches, into the ditch by removing the ditch banks roughly 2-3 feet above the bottom for a width of about 10 feet on each side depending on the size of the channel. This allows the water to have more area to spread out on and decreases the velocity of the water. This not only improves the water quality, but also improves the biological conditions of the ditches where this is located.

The benefits of a two-stage ditch over the typical agricultural ditch include both improved drainage function and ecological function. The two-stage design improves ditch stability by reducing water flow and the need for maintenance, saving both labor and money. It also has the potential to create and maintain better habitat conditions. Better habitats for both terrestrial and aquatic species are a great plus when it comes to the two-stage ditch design. The transportation of sediment and nutrients is decreased considerably because the design allows the sorting of sediment, with finer silt depositing on the benches and coarser material forming the bed. A recent study by the University of Notre Dame found that the average two-stage ditch reduces the amount of sediment transported annually by over 100,000 pounds per half mile of two-stage (Tank, unpublished data).

### **Waste Storage Facility**

A waste storage impoundment made by constructing an embankment and/or excavating a pit or dugout, or by fabricating a structure. The purpose of this practice is to temporarily stores wastes such as manure, wastewater, and contaminated runoff as a storage function component of an agricultural waste management system. (NRCS Code 313).

### **Water and Sediment Control Basin**

A water and sediment control basin is an earthen embankment constructed across the slope of a minor watercourse to form a sediment trap and water detention basin with a stable outlet. This practice can reduce watercourse and gully erosion, trap sediment, and reduce downstream runoff. It is particularly applicable where watercourse or gully erosion is a problem and where sheet and rill erosion is controlled by other conservation practices. It can help in areas where sediment in runoff is severe, though it needs to be placed where adequate outlets can be provided (FOTG Code 638).

### **Wetland Creation/Enhancement/Restoration**

Visual observation and historical records indicate at least a portion of the Otter Creek watershed has been altered to increase its drainage capacity. Riser tiles in low spots on the landscape and tile outlets along the waterways in the watershed confirm the fact that the landscape has been hydrologically altered. This hydrological alteration and subsequent loss of wetlands has implications for the watershed's water quality. Wetlands serve a vital role in storing water and recharging the groundwater. When wetlands are drained with tiles, the stormwater reaching these wetlands is directed immediately to nearby ditches and streams. This increases the peak flow velocities and volumes in the ditch. The increase in flow velocities and volumes can in turn lead to increased stream bed and bank erosion, ultimately increasing sediment delivery to downstream water bodies. Wetlands also serve as nutrient sinks at times. The loss of wetlands can increase pollutant loads reaching nearby streams and downstream waterbodies.

Restoring wetlands in the watershed could return many of the functions that were lost when these wetlands were drained. Through this process, a historic wetland site is restored to its historic status. These restored systems store nutrients, sediment, and *E. coli* while also increasing water storage and reducing flooding. Wetlands also provide additional habitat, stormwater mitigation, and recreational opportunities.

#### **6.1 Urban Best Management Practice Descriptions**

Though only 8% of the watershed is classified as urban land use, there are some best management practices which could be considered for helping to improve water quality where development and impervious surfaces are more prevalent. The best way to mitigate the impacts of impervious surfaces is to infiltrate, store, and treat stormwater onsite before it can run off into nearby streams and tributaries.

#### **Bioretention**

Bioretention practices use biofiltration or bioinfiltration to filter runoff by storing it in shallow depressions. Bioretention uses plant uptake and soil permeability mechanisms in a variety of manners typically in combination. Potential practices include sand beds, pea gravel overflow structures, organic mulch layers, plant materials, gravel underdrains, and an overflow system to promote infiltration. Bioinfiltration can also be used to treat runoff from parking lots, roads, driveways and other areas in the urban environment. Bioretention should not be used in highly urbanized areas rather, it should be used in areas where on-site storage space is available.

#### **Infrastructure Retrofits**

Typical stormwater infrastructure includes pipe and storm drains, or hard infrastructure, to convey water away from hard surfaces and into the stormwater system. Retrofitting these structures to implement low impact development techniques, use green practices, and introduce plants and filters to reduce sediment and nutrient concentrations contained in stormwater.

#### **Pervious Pavement**

Pervious pavement comes in many forms including porous pavement and modular block pavement. Both types of pervious pavement can be installed on most any travel surface with a slope of 5% or less. Pervious pavement has the approximate strength characteristics of traditional pavement with the ability to percolate water into the groundwater system. The pavement reduces sediment and nutrient transmission into the groundwater as water moves through the pores in the pavement. When installed, porous pavement includes a stone layer, filter fabric, and a filter layer covered by porous pavement. Correctly mixed porous pavement eliminates fine aggregates found in typical pavements. Porous asphalt



is a type of porous pavement which includes a mix of Portland cement, coarse aggregates, and water that results in the formation of interconnected voids.

Modular pavement consists of individual blocks made of pervious material such as sand, gravel, or sod interspersed with strong structural material such as concrete. The blocks are typically placed on a sand or gravel base and designed to provide a load-bearing surface that is adequate to support personal vehicles, while allowing infiltration of surface water into the underlying soils. They usually are used in low-volume traffic areas such as overflow parking lots and lightly used access roads. An alternative to pervious and modular pavement for parking areas is a geotextile material installed as a framework to provide structural strength. Filled with sand and sodded, it provides a completely grassed parking area.

### **Rain Barrel**

A rain barrel is a container that collects and stores rainwater from your rooftop (via your home's disconnected downspouts) for later use on your lawn, garden, or other outdoor uses. Rainwater stored in rain barrels can be useful for watering landscapes, gardens, lawns, and trees. Rain is a naturally soft water and devoid of minerals, chlorine, fluoride, and other chemicals. In addition, rain barrels help to reduce peak volume and velocity of stormwater runoff to streams and storm sewer systems. Although rain barrels don't specifically reduce nutrient or sediment loading to waterbodies, their presence can reduce the first flush of water reaching storm drains. This impact is great especially in portions of the watershed where combined sewers are still in operation. Although a high percentage of urban residents indicated a general knowledge of rain barrels, only 3% of survey respondents indicate that they have installed a rain barrel. Furthermore, 75% of respondents indicate a willingness to consider installing a rain barrel.

### **Rain Garden**

Rain gardens are small-scale bioretention systems that can be used as landscape features and small-scale stormwater management systems for single-family homes, townhouse units, some small commercial development, and to treat parking lot or building runoff. Rain gardens provide a landscape feature for the site and reduce the need for irrigation, and can be used to provide stormwater depression storage and treatment near the point of generation. These systems can be integrated into the stormwater management system since the components can be optimized to maximize depression storage, pretreatment of the stormwater runoff, promote evapotranspiration, and facilitate groundwater recharge. The combination of these benefits can result in decreased flooding due to a decrease in the peak flow and total volume of runoff generated by a storm event. Additionally, rain gardens can be designed to provide a significant improvement in the quality of the stormwater runoff.

### **Septic System Care, Maintenance, and Upgrades**

Septic, or on-site waste disposal systems, are the primary means of sanitary flow treatment outside of incorporated areas including most of the small towns and unincorporated areas in the Lower Big Blue River Watershed. Because of the prohibitive cost of providing centralized sewer systems to many areas, septic tank systems will remain the primary means of treatment into the future. Annual maintenance of septic systems is crucial for their operation, particularly the annual removal of accumulated sludge. The cost of replacing failed septic tanks is about \$5,000-\$15,000 per unit based on industry standards.

Property owners are responsible for their septic systems under the regulation of the County Health Department. When septic systems fail, untreated sanitary flows are discharged into open watercourses that pollute the water and pose a potential public health risk. Septic systems discharging to the ground surface are a risk to public health directly through body contact or contamination of drinking water sources. Additionally, septic systems can contribute significant amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus to

the watershed. Therefore, it is imperative for homeowners not to ignore septic failures. If plumbing fixtures back up or will not drain, the system is failing. Funding for this practice is limited. Our efforts will include developing an education plan for homeowners in the watershed and hosting a series of septic system care and maintenance workshops.

## 6.2 Urban Best Management Practice Selection and Load Reduction Calculations

Table 51 details selected agricultural and urban best management practices and reflect those parameters which NRCS eFOTG indicate can be utilized to impact each parameter. The critical area and the selected best management practices are based on subwatershed characteristics and available water quality data. The steering committee identified BMPs that would be of interest to local producers, while the project coordinator calculated volume of BMPs necessary to meet project goals.

**Table 51. Suggested Best Management Practices to address high and medium priority critical areas.**

Practice	Nutrients	Sediment	Pathogens
Animal Mortality Facility			X
Bioreactor	X		
Bioretention			X
Composting Facility	X		X
Conservation Tillage	X	X	X
Cover Crop/Critical Area Planting/Conservation Cover	X	X	X
Drainage Water Management	X	X	
Field Border/Buffer Strip	X	X	X
Forage/Biomass Planting	X	X	X
Grade Stabilization Structure	X	X	
Grassed Waterway	X	X	X
Heavy Use Area Protection			
Infrastructure Retrofit	X	X	X
Manure Management Planning	X		X
Nutrient/Pest Management	X		
Pervious Pavement	X	X	
Prescribed Grazing (Livestock restriction, alt watering)	X	X	X
Rain Barrel	X	X	
Rain Garden	X	X	
Septic System Care/Maintenance	X		X
Streambank Stabilization	X	X	
Tree/Shrub Establishment	X	X	
Two Stage Ditch	X	X	X
Variable Rate Application	X		
Waste Storage Facility	X		X
Water and Sediment Control Basin	X	X	
Wetland Creation/Enhancement/Restoration	X	X	X