



NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Together We Make The Difference

6100 Southport Road Portage, Indiana 46368

Telephone (219) 763-6060
Fax Messages (219) 762-1653

On the Internet www.nirpc.org
E-mail Messages nirpc@nirpc.org

NEWS FROM NIRPC

Contact: Joe Exl
219-763-6060; jexl@nirpc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 4, 2014

Deep River-Portage Burns Waterway Initiative

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) will be holding another public input meeting for those that were not able to attend the Deep River-Portage Burns Waterway Initiative project kick-off on January 21st in Hobart because of the winter storm. The meeting is being held at the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District office located at 880 E. 99th Ct. in Crown Point on Thursday, February 13th, 2 p.m. (CST). NIRPC will be providing a brief overview of the four year project and documenting water quality and aquatic habitat concerns raised by attendees. NIRPC will use this information and the guidance of a steering committee to draft a watershed management plan to help guide upcoming restoration and conservation efforts.

“I was extremely excited by the turnout we had for the project kick-off a few weeks ago despite all the snow. We got some great feedback.” says Joe Exl, a water resource planner with NIRPC. “But with a project like this it’s important to provide as many opportunities as possible for the public, communities and local organizations to participate. Watershed restoration and conservation is a community effort it’s not just for those living next to a stream or lake. Everybody matters.”

NIRPC identified the Deep River-Portage Burns Waterway watershed as a priority area in a 2011 study due to the nearly 125 miles of stream in the watershed listed as “impaired” by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). The impairment designation means portions of these streams do not currently meet state water quality standards or their ability to support swimming and fishing are at risk. NIRPC has been awarded a \$455,550 grant from IDEM to develop and begin implementing a watershed management plan to address the negative impacts associated with storm water runoff from urban and agricultural areas that carry pathogens, sediment, and nutrients into nearby streams.

Anyone interested in the project and that would like to receive future meeting announcements and project updates may contact Meredith Stilwell at mstilwell@nirpc.org to be added to a project information e-mail distribution list.

NIRPC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and regional council of local governments for the three counties of Northwest Indiana. NIRPC provides the forum for local elected officials, regional, leadership, and citizens to address regional issues relating to transportation, the environment and community and economic development. NIRPC seeks to develop consensus solutions with the broadest participation.

###