

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Next Stage in Planning Effort to Focus on Land Use

The Wildcat Creek Watershed Alliance, Inc. (WCWA) was awarded a Section 319 Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program grant to study water quality in the Wildcat Creek Stahl Ditch – Kitty Run watersheds in Kokomo and Howard County. Planning for this 30-month project began in November 2004 and will wrap up with the development of a watershed management plan in May 2007. The Wildcat Creek Stahl Ditch - Kitty Run watersheds include the majority of the City of Kokomo's municipal jurisdiction as well as the primarily rural and agricultural areas located to the east and west of the City.

To guide the planning process, a Steering Committee made up of local water quality resource experts and interested citizens has been created to assist with identifying and evaluating water quality problems in the watersheds. To date the planning process has focused more on agricultural and rural issues. However, beginning at the January 26, 2006 meeting, the Steering Committee will change gears and begin focusing primarily on urban issues. Topics that will be discussed at upcoming meetings include land use planning, erosion and sediment control, and stormwater management.

These issues are critical to the development of a successful watershed management plan. By evaluating the potential impact that land-disturbing activities and future land uses might have on water quality and natural resources within the watersheds, the Watershed Management Plan can help ensure that water quality and natural resource considerations are included in all future development projects occurring within the Wildcat Creek Stahl Ditch – Kitty Run watersheds.

As part of this process, the Steering Committee will need to evaluate how existing planning documents and local ordinances handle water quality and natural resource issues, in order to ensure that recommendations made in the Watershed Management Plan are consistent and complimentary to those existing documents.

All Steering Committee Meetings are open to the public. For additional information, please visit www.wildcatalliance.org or contact Sheila McKinley at 317-266-8000 or smckinley@cbbel-in.com.

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