

Get Involved

- **No minimum acres**
- **No cost for custom application**
- **Improve water quality in your watershed**

Are you interested in enrolling your acres, or would like more information about the Lake Bloomington Watershed Pilot Project?

Contact:

Jackie at SWCD - 309.452.3848 ext. 3
Don at BCS, LLC - 309.727.1500

Deadline to enroll November 1, 2017



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LAKE BLOOMINGTON WATERSHED PILOT PROJECT

Reducing nitrogen loss
& improving water quality





BACKGROUND

Lake Bloomington serves as the primary drinking water supply reservoir for the City of Bloomington. The roughly 43,000 acre Lake Bloomington watershed is predominately row crop agriculture in corn/soybean rotation with extensive tile drainage.

As stated in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS), nitrogen loss and runoff is a major threat to water quality in Illinois, such that increased adoption of effective agricultural nitrogen loss reduction practices will be critical for protecting our local fresh water sources.

In order to meet the goals and milestones reported in the NLRS, it is important to encourage adoption of practices that are proven to be effective at reducing nitrate loss to surface waters.

THE PROJECT

The primary objective of this pilot project is to reduce agricultural nitrogen loss into Lake Bloomington watershed by reducing reliance on fall anhydrous application and increasing implementation of pre-plant/ side dress nitrogen application practices in the watershed. Historical impairments from high nitrogen and phosphorus are directly associated with tile drainage and agricultural practices within this intensively farmed subwatershed.

An overarching guidance principle in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy is to encourage voluntary adoption of practices that are incentive-based, practical and cost-effective. One component of this pilot project will be to monitor and document economic and practical aspects of changing from fall to spring application.

Brucker Crop Services, LLC (BCS) will operate the side dress application for participating producers in order to minimize potential concerns with applying nitrogen at the opportune time.



A critical component of improving water quality in the Lake Bloomington watershed is to implement proven practices at a scale that significantly reduces agricultural runoff.

THE PLAN

Over the next two years we hope to provide the agricultural community with a greater understanding of the benefits associated with switching from fall to spring nitrogen application.

Steps towards achievement

- Shift participating watershed acres from fall to spring pre-plant/side dress application
- Collect and analyze data through soil and stalk nitrogen tests, crop yields, and nitrogen fiscal results
- Provide outreach and education to address concerns and promote a more comprehensive understanding of the benefits and economics related to spring application

Project Partners

McLean County SWCD

BCS, LLC

Illinois EPA

The Nature Conservancy

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