

Livingston County Watershed Advisory Group

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the “Watershed Advisory Group?”

The Watershed Advisory Group (WAG) is a collaborative membership group that was originally formed to develop watershed management plans for the Huron Chain of Lakes and Upper Shiawassee River watersheds in Livingston County. The plans describe current conditions of natural resources and land use impacts, explore existing and future threats to the river systems, and prescribe actions for protection and restoration. The WAG now meets to discuss ways to implement activities that were recommended by those plans. They are also interested in adding the Red Cedar River watershed.

Who are the WAG “members?”

The WAG members are local municipalities and county agencies that share legal responsibility for county waters with the State of Michigan. Individuals are appointed or recommended by each member authority to participate in WAG activities. Additionally, other interested organizations or individuals can participate in discussions and activities.

Is membership required by some state regulation?

No. It is true that the watershed management plans were originally developed to address federal and state stormwater regulations. Some entities such as Livingston County, the City of Brighton, the City of Howell, the Village of Pinckney and Brighton, Hamburg and Hartland Townships are still regulated by these stormwater laws. However, the WAG has broadened its scope to address all watershed issues in which their membership is interested. Membership is voluntary.

What does the WAG do?

The WAG meets quarterly to discuss water resource issues and report on progress under a number of ongoing projects. These meetings and projects are informal, held in member facilities, last a couple hours and are coordinated by water resource professionals. Projects are developed in response to priority issues identified in the watershed management plans and at the request of WAG members. Some projects may be independently led by members as pilot efforts. The WAG coordinators also develop project proposals for grant funding. Project examples include:

- Volunteer monitoring programs
- Educational and training workshops
- Site tours of innovative practices
- Local natural resource protection ordinance development
- Watershed signage and storm drain labeling
- Community events
- Site restoration

What are the benefits to my community?

Member municipalities benefit in a number of important ways:

- Learn about cutting-edge water treatment and management

- Get advice and support on water infrastructure development and management
- Obtain information about the quality of your waters and the surrounding natural resources
- Get help installing visible, innovative projects that project a positive community image
- Learn about new developments in state and national water resource policy
- Achieve cost reductions through economies of scale and grant opportunities
- Gain access to educational materials for community residents
- Develop your water resources into community assets that generate greater tax revenue

So, what is the catch?

There is a nominal fee to become a member. Currently, each member community contributes a participation fee of \$1,000 for two years (\$500 per year). That's all. The communities and organizations with responsibilities under stormwater regulations cover the rest of the costs.

How does my municipality become a member?

Contact Matt Bolang (517-552-6870 or mbolang@co.livingston.mi.us) in the Livingston County Drain Commissioner's Office or Ric Lawson (734-769-5123 ext. 609 or rlawson@hrwc.org) with the Huron River Watershed Council to find out about the next meeting or workshop. Attend the meeting, talk to the other members and determine for yourself if WAG membership would be beneficial. Matt will talk to you about participation fees and that's it.

Please consider joining the Livingston County WAG. The more we work together, the better our water resources will be for generations to come.