STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

What is Watershed Planning

Watershed planning is important because it specifically addresses water problems in your community and watershed. Because clean and abundant water, healthy lakes and streams, and safety from flooding are important for residents and businesses - and generally the economic and environmental health of Lake County - it is also important to community leaders.

How water flows and collects in streams, wetlands and lakes is based on landform. Water flow generally does not follow political jurisdiction boundaries so most water resource problems need to be addressed at the watershed level, which frequently involves several political jurisdictions. The watershed planning process brings together municipalities, townships, county and the broader community of homeowner associations, businesses, institutions, non-profit organizations and residents that live or work in the watershed together to plan for managing and improving the land, lakes, streams and wetlands of the watershed.

As a resident, landowner, business or community official your actions make a difference in keeping water clean, reducing flooding, and protecting natural areas that help do both as well as providing habitat and places for people to recreate. A comprehensive management plan summarizes the overall condition of the watershed (present day and into the future) and recommends actions as Best Management Practices that you as a stakeholder, individually or in collaboration with others, can take to protect watershed resources that are still in good shape - and restore those that are degraded.

Common Watershed Goals

- Protect and restore natural resources
- Improve water quality
- Reduce flood damage
- Enhance and restore stream health
- Guide new development to benefit watershed goals
- Preserve green infrastructure
- Enhance education and stewardship
- Improve watershed coordination and collaboration

Components of a Watershed Plan

- Watershed assessment
- Local stakeholder involvement
- Project implementation