

LAKE DECATUR WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE REGIONAL
CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (RCPP)

Farmer Led Lake Decatur Advisory Watershed Board *Call for Nominations*



The City of Decatur is the recipient of a \$9.8-million-dollar United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant focused on improving water quality in key areas across the Lake Decatur watershed.

The 5-year program provides substantial cost-share and flexibility to landowners and growers for certain practices aimed at reducing sediment and nutrient losses to the lake. Funding is being directed to key counties, drainage areas and fields in the watershed. Counties prioritized in the initial years of the program include **Macon, Piatt and DeWitt**.

In an effort to ensure stakeholder feedback is incorporated, the **City of Decatur is seeking nominations for area Farmers/Growers, Land Managers, Retailers, and other members of the agricultural community to serve as voting members on the Lake Decatur Watershed Agriculture Advisory Board that will assist the City of Decatur, RCPP partners and managers deliver program components, conduct outreach to peers, and provide hands-on technical assistance.** RCPP partners hope to develop a 5-7 person committee, with opportunities for additional leadership and engagement.

Roles and purpose of the Board include:

1. Assist the City and RCPP team on program promotion, messaging, and overall execution.
2. Assist with ranking project applications.
3. Advise/guide technical staff on outcomes of RCPP.
4. Oversee farmer-to-farmer non-USDA technical mentoring and training pilot program. This innovative approach includes providing assistance to secure additional local farmers/grower mentors and Technical Service Providers to subcontract with the City.
5. Coordinate and conduct landowner/grower contact and communication for priority areas and fields. This includes assistance securing additional local farmers/growers to subcontract with the City and introducing the RCPP team to prospective landowners.

Compensation for voting members is **\$20-\$50/hr plus mileage**. The upper range of compensation will be for those providing mentoring and technical assistance to cost-share recipients. The lower end will be applied to those only providing general advisory services and for meeting attendance. A minimum commitment of 5 hours per year is expected for up to 5 years. The minimum term of Board service is 2 years.

Nominations are being accepted up until **September 30th, 2023**. A decision will be made by October 15th, 2023. The City and the RCPP team will be responsible for final Board Selections.

Nominations shall include the following:

1. Name and contact information of nominator and nominee.
2. County(s) of residence and farming operation if applicable.
3. A list of conservation practices currently being applied to farming operation, if applicable.
4. A brief paragraph stating why the individual should be selected to serve and motivation for doing so.
5. A brief paragraph addressing the following ranking criteria:
 - a. Proximity to priority subwatersheds.
 - b. Number of years' experience with conservation practices, specifically cover crops, no-till/strip-till, and nutrient management.
 - c. Experience with USDA/FSA/NRCS/SWCD cost-share programs (if any).
 - d. Experience mentoring/assisting other farmers with conservation practices.
 - e. Extent of involvement in the local farming community including relationships, knowledge of and connections with other area landowners, growers, and land managers.

Questions and nominations can be directed to the following county representatives.

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| Piatt County | Jeff Boeckler | Northwater Consulting | 217-725-3181 | jeff@northwaterco.com |
| Macon County | Jennifer Gunter | City of Decatur | 217-424-2834 | JGunter@decaturil.gov |
| DeWitt County | Shane Ravellette | City of Decatur | 217-450-2131 | sravellette@decaturil.gov |