

To Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority Board Members:

RE: Fiscal Year 2024 Upper Wapsipinicon River WMA donation request

Dear Sir or Madam,



In 2015, 32 political cities, counties and soil and water conservation districts in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed came together as a board to reduce the risks of flooding and to improve and protect water quality in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. Since that time, dozens of projects have been implemented across the watershed to move toward these goals. As a part of the State-wide Iowa Watershed Approach Project, we helped the Iowa Flood Center prove their flood prevention models in the entire watershed, while at the same time proving to ourselves that implementation of private and public structures in a watershed can reduce flooding. Our UWRWMA Board is active in the state WMAs of Iowa organization, which advocates for dedicated state funding for WMA plan implementation.

The UWRWMA Board stresses the need for coordination and technical assistance to guide and inform the efforts of our multijurisdictional group. Northeast Iowa RC&D has provided exceptional coordination and technical assistance in the past. As a nonprofit, the RC&D was able to provide coordination, technical assistance and will help us secure project funding by writing and helping us write state, federal and private grants. However, funding to support coordination efforts will expire at the end of fiscal year 2023.

The UWRWMA Board feels that continued *coordination and technical assistance is vital for several reasons*. 1) There are now 28 WMAs. WMAs are the way of the future. 2) In Iowa, state and federal partners and funders recognize the importance of the WMAs and are discussing continued allocation of dedicated funding to *active* WMAs. At the same time, they are also discussing that WMAs will need to demonstrate local support. Several WMAs now pay for ongoing coordination and technical assistance through voluntary member contributions. 3) The UWRWMA Board has engaged in a learning process since its formation and as a result has become one of the most respected and knowledgeable group of watershed advocates in Iowa. 4) We currently have momentum that would be difficult to regain if lost. 5) Without coordination and technical assistance, we are unlikely to develop new projects and secure future grants.

The UWRWMA Board unanimously agreed to ask each UWRWMA city, county and soil and water conservation district member for an annual *voluntary* financial contribution. In order for the UWRWMA to reach our annual goal, we are asking each member entity to *voluntarily* contribute **\$600** annually, for coordination and technical assistance from the RC&D. Our goal is to, raise at least **\$18,000/year** for continued coordination from Northeast Iowa RC&D. This funding will allow the RC&D to have dedicated funding to pay a part-time UWRWMA Coordinator to conduct the following tasks identified in **Attachment A**, which is included with this letter.

We are sending you this letter because we want to remind your board to consider donating to the Upper Wapsi WMA for FY2024. We truly appreciate your participation and support in our continued effort in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. If you would like to talk to an existing Board member about the role Northeast Iowa RC&D currently plays, or about the Upper Wapsi WMA in general feel free to contact any of the people below.

John Kurtz, Independence City Councilman, WMA Board Chair	Tori Nimrod or Ross Eversizer, Northeast Iowa RC&D, Upper Wapsi WMA Coordinators
Email: <a href="mailto:jkurtz@indytel.com">jkurtz@indytel.com</a> Phone: 319-240-1937	Email: <a href="mailto:tori@northeastiowarcd.org">tori@northeastiowarcd.org</a> <a href="mailto:ross@northeastiowarcd.org">ross@northeastiowarcd.org</a> Phone: 563-864-7112

You may send your financial contribution to Northeast Iowa RC&D at PO Box 916 Postville, IA 52162 or your representative may deliver your contribution to the UWRWMA Board at the next WMA meeting. If you need to be invoiced, please contact RC&D.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Kurtz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a stylized "K".

John Kurtz, UWRWMA Board Chair

# Attachment A



The **UWRWMA Coordinator**, hired through Northeast Iowa RC&D will be responsible for the following tasks as time and funding allow.

**Goal Amount: \$18,000/year**

- **Task 1: Coordinate and Facilitate UWRWMA Quarterly and Annual Board Meetings**
  - Work with UWRWMA Board Chair to develop and distribute agendas, which are by law required to be publicly posted by members
  - Record and distribute UWRWMA Board minutes
  - Help the UWRWMA Board track and manage appointed representatives, reappointments, and contact information
- **Task 2: Coordinate and Facilitate UWRWMA Executive Committee and Other Committee Meetings as Assigned**
- **Task 3: Support and Represent the UWRWMA Board at Statewide Meetings and Conferences**
  - Prepare and provide supporting materials and presentations for UWRWMA Board members as needed
  - Attend and present on behalf of the UWRWMA Board as needed
    - Attend meetings as the UWRWMA Coordinator: WMA Coordinators from all Iowa WMAs are asked to attend and report or present at *WMAs of Iowa* meetings and Iowa DNR statewide WMA meetings (the WMA Coordinator is a designated voting member)
    - Attend and present as needed at other statewide meetings held by partners, including but not limited to meetings of potential funders for WMAs, SWCDs, cities and counties.
    - Attend and present at other conferences (Conference organizers who bring together our partner entities such as ISAC, Iowa League of Cities, Iowa Water Conference, etc., have asked us to develop presentations and present at their conferences.)
- **Task 4: Website Maintenance for [www.upperwapsi.org](http://www.upperwapsi.org), the UWRWMA's Main Communication Method**
  - Post agendas and minutes, news and events relevant to the UWRWMA or Iowa WMAs
  - Maintain website functionality and update data and maps as needed
- **Task 5 Grant Identification (up to 2 per year)**
  - Research and identify grants that fit priorities of the UWRWMA Board as detailed in the Resiliency Plan
  - Maintain a Data Base of potential grants for the UWRWMA Board
  - Distribute information about potential grants to the WMA members at WMA Board meetings
  - Work with UWRWMA Board and/or committees to identify specific priority grants
- **Task 6 Grant Proposal Development and Coordination**
  - Work with the UWRWMA Executive Committee to identify priority project goals, areas, and potential partners for specific grants
  - Identifying and secure matching funds for grants as needed
  - Develop proposal narratives and required documents to complete and grant applications
  - Submit grant applications through state and federal grant submission programs and other means
- **Task 7: Coordinate Yearly Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed water sampling efforts**
  - Includes cost of analysis for 21 sampling sites throughout the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed
  - Work with UWRWMA Partners in each county to continue water sampling efforts by organizing volunteers
  - Develop a yearly water quality report from water sampling data results
  - Update water quality database on the Upper Wapsi WMA website.
- **Task 8: Grant Proposal Development for Member Entities (up to 3 per year)**
  - Work with the UWRWMA member entities to identify priority project goals, areas, and potential partners for specific grants
  - Identifying and secure matching funds for grants as needed
  - Develop proposal narratives and required documents to complete and grant applications
  - Submit grant applications through state and federal grant submission programs and other means

*Note: Competing grant applications from WMA member entities will be prioritized by the WMA board*

• **Task 9: Coordinate Watershed Outreach**

- Develop presentations, and promotional materials for distribution by WMA Members and Watershed Coordinator
- Develop a Quarterly Newsletter that outlines WMA tasks, watershed news and up-coming events.
- Attend City Council, Commissioner, and Supervisor meetings as requested to inform WMA member entities about WMA activities, implementation progress and partnership opportunities.
- Work with the WMA board to design, determine location and develop a funding strategy for watershed boundary signage throughout the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed.

