

To Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority Board Members:  
RE: 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. Thanks to WMA entities previous donations, last year coordinators were able to bring in an additional \$360,000 in grants for watershed improvements. Despite the efforts of the RC&D, 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 the City of Independence to *voluntarily* contribute **\$4,400** (\$5,000 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 grant writing services, water quality monitoring, and to facilitate WMA meetings.

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@co.buchanan.ia.us">JKurtz@co.buchanan.ia.us</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".

John Kurtz, UWRWMA Board Chair