

The Water Drop

Volume 1

March, April, May 2021



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Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality

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The Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality is a group of five local governments working together to meet our National Pollution Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Permit. Our mission is to bring stormwater pollution awareness, preventions and solutions for the residents of Morgan County through public education and community involvement.

Did you know that The Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality

has a new website, Facebook page and Instagram?

<https://mcpwq.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/Morgan-County-Partnership-for-Water-Quality-106226147941275>

<https://www.instagram.com/mcpwq46151/>



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White River

As we approach the White River Clean Up date, let's take time to reflect on the pollution and clean ups in and around the White River.

For many years, the White River has had water quality issues. Toxic discharge, sewage, litter, agricultural runoff, mix with the river's water. Over time measures have been and are being taken to help our waters.

According to the article from the Indy Star, The White River Series, September 23, 2019, water pollution has plagued the White River for more than a century. In 1916, the Morgan County portion of the White River was considered so filthy that people did not want to remain in their homes, livestock would not drink the river water, and fish died.

Up until 1972, there were no laws or regulations on controlling water pollution. In that year the Clean Water Act was established. The Clean Water Act and state regulations made it illegal to discharge pollutants into waters without a permit. ([EPA](#))

Non-point source pollution is tricky. Non-Point source pollution generally comes from land runoff, precipitation, drainage, and seepage. This pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt runoff moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, depositing them into waterways. The pollutants are then part of our local lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and ground waters. ([EPA](#))

With so many agricultural fields near the river, there are nutrients, chemicals, and soils washing into the river. People choosing to not dispose of items properly such as, household furniture, tires, garbage, hazardous chemicals, amongst other pollutants are dumped along the river. Not only do those items take away from the beauty of the White River, it pollutes the waters.

Polluted waters make it unsafe for people to swim and eat the fish. Litter and soil sediment that washes into the river create poor habitats for aquatic life to survive. Chemicals from agricultural fields and lawn treatments wash into local waterways, including the White River.

With federal and state regulations, along with aware citizens the pollution of White River is less polluted than in the past. The White River has potential to become cleaner. Community members can commit to helping the river by disposing of litter properly. Hazardous household chemicals, such as, paints and cleaners can be taken to the local tox-a-way days in the spring and fall of the year. Choosing to reduce the amount of lawn treatment put on lawns can make a difference as well.

Sources:

<https://www.indystar.com/in-depth/news/environment/2019/09/23/white-river-biggest-problem-hiding-plain-sight-toxic-stormwater-runoff-pollution/2207338001/>

<https://www.indystar.com/in-depth/news/environment/2019/12/19/guide-corp-s-toxic-discharge-killed-millions-fish-white-river/4385458002/>

https://www.hoosiertimes.com/reporter_times/news/indianas-worst-environmental-disaster-20-years-later/article_269de7c8-2e58-11ea-b9c9-e7f07d9e7ee2.html

[Summary of the Clean Water Act | Laws & Regulations | US EPA](#)

[Basic Information about Nonpoint Source \(NPS\) Pollution | Polluted Runoff: Nonpoint Source \(NPS\) Pollution | US EPA](#)

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Phosphorus and Its Impact to Water Quality

What is phosphorus? Why is phosphorus a problem in the water shed? What can you do to help?

Phosphorus has been used for many, many years to help crops and lawns grow, and help livestock thrive. Though phosphorus has been known to help in the agricultural world and help homeowners with their lawns, it also, has the potential to impact water negatively. It is a nutrient for plants and animals, helping with growth and performance.

Fertilizer for crops use a large amount of Phosphorus. The application of phosphorus helps the crops grow stronger. It is also used as a supplement for livestock. Many feeds contain phosphorus in the ingredients to improve animal performance.

Lawn fertilizer usually contain nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. Those applying the lawn treatment need to be aware of the potential environmental impact. As it rains the runoff from treated lawns can wash into waterways causing harm.

Phosphorus makes an impact on the environment. Since it is used to promote growth in lawns and agricultural fields, it can cause unwanted growths in waters. Larger amounts of phosphorus that can be washed downstream create problems. Runoff from lawn treatments and agricultural sites wash into waterways causing algae to grow and/or the need for special water treatment. It gets moved through the environment and is considered a pollutant. Phosphorus transported from agricultural soils can promote eutrophication, which is enrichment with nutrients that leads to increased algae growth, and decreased dissolved oxygen. (nracs). This can cause noxious aquatic growth downstream.



Eutrophication occurs when the water environment becomes enriched with nutrients, increasing the amount of plant and algae growth to estuaries and coastal waters. Some of the effects of Eutrophication in the water can be:

- harm to wildlife and livestock drinking the water
- reduces high quality fish
- sedimentation increases impairing navigational and recreational use of waters (lake depth reduced because of sedimentation and vegetation growth reduces navigability)
- Algae that decays and produces surface scum and unpleasant odors
- Insect population tends to increase
- The cost to purify water increases

What can you do?

Phosphorus can be damaging to water quality. Fortunately, there are steps homeowners, landowners, farmers – everyone can do to help reduce phosphorus.

- Consider having your lawn or agricultural field soil tested and see if there are nutrient deficiencies.
- If you are going to have your lawn treated be educated about the treatment.
- The use of native landscaping reduces the need for chemicals
- Only apply nutrients when needed to your crops or lawn
- Don't not apply nutrients if a storm is predicted to coming

By educating yourself on phosphorus and other soil nutrients you can help reduce water quality issues!

Sources:

https://cfpub.epa.gov/npstbx/files/marc_lawnchemicals.pdf
<https://www.in.gov/idem/algae/>
<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/indiana/stories-in-indiana/white-river-journey-to-renewal/>
<https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/sources-and-solutions-stormwater>
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs143_019096.pdf
<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/eutrophication.html>
<https://www.in.gov/idem/nps/2577.htm>

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Virtual Clean Up

This year the Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality had a Virtual Clean Up. This clean up encouraged community members to get outside and clean up some local waterways. A virtual clean was chosen to help meet the COVID-19 guidelines of social distancing.

We had 11 participants. 5 of the participants were under the age of 18! Individuals and family groups participated. Participants cleaned up water ways in local parks, along the White River, and on private property that had a waterway flow into the Lambs Creek watershed in Morgan County.

The Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality asked participants to collect litter from local waterways and take a picture and submit it to us through google forms.

A big thank you to the following for participating in The Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality's first Virtual Clean Up. The participants each received a t-shirt.

- David Mow
- The Whiteleather Family – Rena, Sam, Eli, Ester, and Eva.
- Stan Diamond
- The Peine Family – Rich & Dee Ann and granddaughters Violet & Charlee



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GET INVOLVED!

It is time for another White River Clean Up day! The Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality is looking for volunteers to come help clean up the White River. We had to postpone the original clean up date from December 2020.

The White River Clean Up date is **Saturday, March 13, 2021.**

Please meet at Three Rivers S.R.A. (located: at 4715 IN-67, Martinsville, IN) to register and a brief meeting. After the meeting people will either go to Henderson Ford, Three Rivers, or Paragon Public Access Sites.

We will have t-shirts for all participants. We are planning for lunch at Gatti's Pizza in Martinsville. **However, that may change based on current COVID-19 status.**

The efforts in previous White River Clean Ups have been very appreciated. In 2019, 2018, 2017, and 2016 the volunteers of White River Clean Up fill an 18-yard dumpster. Our goal for 2021 is to fill the 18-yard dumpster again! You can help us with that goal!

The Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality's are asking that those who are interested in participating in this event to RSVP online - <https://mcpwq.org/events>, so that we may have a head count. You may also email the Public Educator for the Morgan County Partnership for more information swed@morgancounty.in.gov

For more information contact:

Rachel Peine – Public Educator
email: swed@morgancounty.in.gov

We hope to see you there!


**SATURDAY,
MARCH 13, 2021**

**MORGAN COUNTY
WHITE RIVER
CLEAN - UP**

**Henderson Ford, Three Rivers and Paragon
Public Access Sites**

9am-12Noon

Meet at THREE RIVERS S.R.A.
(4715 IN-67, Martinsville, IN 46151)
Lunch is provided following the clean up at Gatti's Pizza
in Martinsville, IN



CALL BILL DIALS FOR MORE INFORMATION
765-342-1064
BDIALS@MORGANCOUNTY.IN.GOV

PLEASE REGISTER BY VISITING OUR
WEBSITE: [HTTPS://MCPWQ_ORG](https://MCPWQ_ORG)

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GET INVOLVED!

Weed Wrangle® Indiana 2021 in Morgan County

Submitted by David Mow

Morgan County Soil and Water Conservation District

Weed Wrangle® Indiana is part of a national program to control invasive plant species in public spaces throughout our state. Local Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs) work with partners to educate the public about invasive species, why they are harmful to the environment, and the best methods to control invasive plants during these family friendly educational events.

The Morgan County Native & Invasive Plant Partnership (MC NIPP), formally Invasive Management Cooperative of Morgan County, has been hosting weed pulling events for 7 years now at parks around Morgan County, even before the official Weed Wrangle® program started in Indiana back in 2017. Most recently, MC NIPP was the winner of the statewide Weed Wrangle® Indiana contest in 2020!

This year the group is hosting 4 different Weed Wrangles at three local parks in order to help beautify the natural areas of Morgan County and educate interested landowners on how to manage invasive plants on their own property. Weed Wrangles will be held at Jimmy Nash City Park for the first time this year! The first even on March 13th event, from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm, will be for adults only to help reduce the amount of Wintercreeper vine in the park. Due to the use of sharp tools and chemicals they ask that children not attend this event. They will be back at the Jimmy Nash City Park on May 8th to pull Garlic Mustard during this all-ages, family friendly Weed Wrangle.

On April 10th, from 9:00 am to 12:00pm, MC NIPP will continue the work that has taken place at Old Town Waverly Park for the last 4 years. This is also an all-ages, family friendly event and children are welcomed to join in on the fun!

Burkhart Creek Park was the starting point of the group's efforts, and this will be the 7th year that Garlic Mustard has been removed from the park, which is helping to rid the property of this invasive species that grows and spreads so

easily by seed. The Weed Wrangle at Burkhart Creek Park will be held on April 17th, from 12:00 pm to 4:00pm.

Thanks to the many sponsors of these Weed Wrangles, each participant will have the opportunity to receive a free tree or shrub seedling and some native wildflower seeds as a thank you. Bottled water and plastic collection bags will also be provided to volunteers. Though the Garlic Mustard itself is not toxic, attendees should wear long sleeves, pants, and gloves to protect your skin from other plants that may be irritating. Help the Morgan County Native and Invasive Plant Partnership pull even more Garlic Mustard this year than they did in 2020!



weed wrangle®
Indiana

DO YOUR PART TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES IN OUR COUNTY!

ADULT ONLY WEED WRANGLE (due to tool and chemical use)	Kid Friendly WEED WRANGLES
Jimmy Nash City Park March 13, 2021 Noon to 4 pm	Old Town Waverly Park April 10, 2021, 9 am-Noon
	Burkhart Creek Park April 17, 2021, Noon-4 pm
	Jimmy Nash City Park May 8, 2021, Noon-4 pm

Our sponsors will be providing free tree seedlings and native seed packets to all Weed Wrangle Participants.

Register at : www.MorganCountySWCD.org

Email Questions to: Invasivesmorgancounty@gmail.com

Weed Wrangles are hands on workshops where you will learn more about the common invasive Garlic Mustard Plant and work together with friends and neighbors to pull the plants from the natural areas of our parks. Please dress according to the weather. Gloves, long sleeved shirts, and pants are recommended.

Thank You to Our Sponsors:



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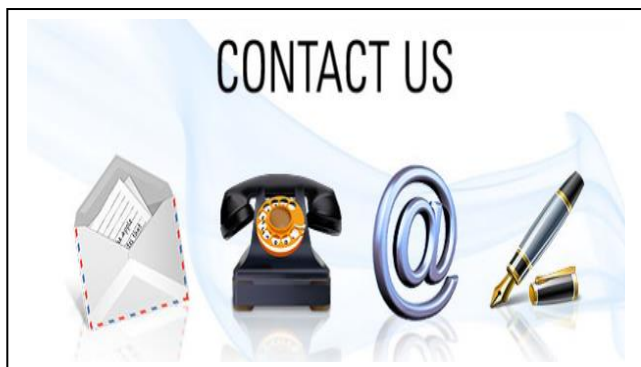
Community Event Calendar

<i>Date</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Meeting Time</i>	<i>Additional Info</i>
March 2, 2021	MC NIPP Morgan County Native and Invasive Plant Partnership	(virtual) 6 pm	
March 10, 2021	Soil & Water Conservation District Annual Meeting	(virtual) 6 pm	Board Meeting to Follow
March 13, 2021	Morgan County Partnership for Water Quality WHITE RIVER CLEAN UP	9:00a	Meet at Three Rivers S.R.A. Children welcome For more info email: swed@morgancounty.in.gov
March 13, 2021	Weed Wrangle – Jimmy Nash City Park		Wintercreeper Wrangle Due to Chemicals and Tools – Adults preferred
April 6, 2021	MC NIPP Morgan County Native and Invasive Plant Partnership	6p	
April 10, 2021	Weed Wrangle – Old Town Waverly Park		Children welcomed
April 14, 2021	Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting	6p	
April 17, 2021	Weed Wrangle – Burkhart Creek		Children Welcomed
May 4, 2021	MC NIPP Meeting	6p	
May 8, 2021	Weed Wrangle – Jimmy Nash City Park		Children Welcomed
May 12, 2021	Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting	6p	
June 26, 2021	Tox Away Day	8a – 1P	Mooreville

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<https://mcpwq.org>

Morgan County Soil and Water Conservation District

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<https://www.morgancountyswcd.org/>