

# **Polk County 319 Grant Water Quality Improvement Demonstration**

**Project Update – September 18, 2008**

**Carla Vaught – County Extension Agent – Staff Chair**

# **Location of Project:**

**Two subwatersheds in Polk County**

- 1. Cedar Creek – Mountain Fork (MF)**
- 2. Briar Creek – Prairie Creek (PC)**

**Both are on the impaired waterbodies(303d) list – MF for temperature and PC for siltation/turbidity**

# **Project Description:**

**Identify and recruit a landowner in each watershed willing to work with the 319 grant committee to implement water quality BMP's on a cost share basis as a demonstration farm.**

**Use the sites to showcase these practices through educational efforts such as field days, public meetings, tours, and newsletters.**

**Encourage adoption of BMP's by other landowners in the watershed based on information learned from demonstration farms.**

# **Objectives of Project:**

**Demonstrate to landowners the value and importance of protecting and improving the water quality by encouraging adoption of environmentally and economically sound production practices, selected BMP's, and similar beneficial practices that protect and improve water quality.**

# Tasks to reach goals:

- ✓ **Steering committee selection**
- ✓ **Farm selection**
- ✓ **Equipment purchase**
- ✓ **Technology transfer through education**
- ✓ **Economics of implementation**
- ✓ **Reporting of tasks**
- ✓ **Financial audits**

## **Progress to Date:**

- **Committee selected and meeting as needed – quarterly preferred**
- **BMP's identified and approved by committee**
- **Farms identified and recruited**
- **Producers and ANRC worked together to develop a management plan and BMP's to meet plan**

# **Progress, continued:**

- **BMP's are being implemented**
- **Equipment purchased or in process of bidding**
- **Reporting up to date with ANRC**
- **Planning for educational efforts are underway with FY09**

## **Results to Date:**

- Fencing**
- Pasture planting**
- Brush and weed control**
- Forest buffer planting**

**2009 will be the focus year to showcase the demonstrations on each of the farms. Results determined by participation and adoption of BMP's by other landowners in the watersheds.**



## **“opportunities” to overcome:**

- **Economy has affected the inputs from the farmer side of the cost share – dollars don’t go as far as they did! Farmers not willing to spend money.**
- **Equipment costs have increased.**
- **NRCS DC involved with the initial agreement has retired.**
- **Co-PI and instrumental party in the grant writing has moved out of the Extension district**

## **Next Steps:**

- **Provide equipment for rent in watershed areas so producers can implement some of the BMP's on their farms.**
- **Continue the “conversations” about water quality preservation and improvements within all watersheds in Polk County.**
- **Complete the second year of the project with tangible results for next years review.**

## **What I would change:**

- Drop the “whole” farm approach and go with implementing “individual” practices in the neighborhood to reach more producers and get more money spent in the watershed.**
- Rationale – it has been very hard to get producers to spend the maximum amount of money to be matched per farm - \$20,000.**
- More folks are willing to spend money for an individual practice.**

## **What I Appreciate:**

- Opportunity to get some much needed equipment and dollars into our area**
- Opportunity to allow a couple of producers to double the “bang for their buck” with cost share**
- Opportunity to bring awareness to our local producers about the fine points of water quality and practices to protect what we have**

# **What I Appreciate – continued:**

- Opportunity to tell local stakeholders about our efforts within the watershed.**
- Ability to share water quality successes with the public across the county.**
- Opportunity to network more closely with others working in NPS projects and administration of those projects.**

# The End

## Questions?

**For more information:  
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