

# What's a Watershed Action Team?

## Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust



The Southeastern Wisconsin Watersheds Trust (“Sweet Water Trust”) is a collaborative effort to achieve healthy and sustainable water resources throughout the Greater Milwaukee Watersheds and nearshore Lake Michigan. The Sweet Water Trust is a non-governmental, non-taxing, voluntary partnership. The Trust will achieve its primary purposes by prioritizing, supporting and facilitating the implementation of cost-effective projects that result in measurable improvements in our water resources. With membership open to all, the Sweet Water Trust is becoming a regional force for stewardship of our water resources, advising and cooperatively implementing projects throughout the Greater Milwaukee Watersheds, simultaneously recognizing the autonomy of its members. Nowhere is Sweet Water Trust project planning and implementation more important than at the **Watershed Action Team** level.

**Watershed Action Teams** are open collaborations that provide input to the watershed planning process and implement its science-based, cost-effective recommendations. In fulfilling its roles, the **Watershed Action Teams** will:

1. Ensure that a wide range of interests are considered in all watershed discussions
2. Focus on issues that cut across existing lines of authority to achieve watershed objectives
3. Work with watershed interests to develop Watershed Restoration Plans based on the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission’s update to the Regional Water Quality Management Plan.<sup>1</sup>
4. Based on the Watershed Restoration Plans, annually prepare and identify issues in a priority list of watershed-specific projects and programs to be supported by the Trust, and recommend the list to the Executive Steering Council for their review and approval
5. Identify and make recommendations on watershed-specific issues
6. Undertake projects or offer to advise on member projects that have been chosen by the Executive Steering Council
7. Record **Watershed Action Team** meeting notes and report to the Executive Steering Council

**Watershed Action Team** appointments will be made through self-identification, will not include term limits, and will not be subject to committee size limitations. **Watershed Action Team** members will be expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding, attend meetings to be held 2-4 times per year, and commit time to understanding and implementing good watershed science.

**Watershed Action Teams** or WATs will be configured to represent watershed interests, and members may belong to one or more WAT. Two WATs will initially come together, one each to cover the Menomonee River and the Kinnickinnic River watersheds. Ultimately WATs will also be created to cover the watersheds (or subwatersheds) of the Milwaukee River, Root River, Oak Creek, and direct Lake Michigan Drainage.



For more information about the Sweet Water Trust or Watershed Action Teams, please visit us at: <http://www.swwtwater.org/> or contact Bernadette Berdes at 414-225-2161.

<sup>1</sup> SEWRPC recently updated the regional water quality management plan (RWQMP) for the Greater Milwaukee Watersheds. That document provides the overall framework for the Watershed Restoration Plans. The update can be accessed at <http://www.sewrpc.org/waterqualityplan/chapters.asp> .  
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