

What is the Upper Iowa River Watershed Project?

The Upper Iowa River Watershed has been recognized on local, state, and national levels as an important natural and economic resource. Recognizing the importance of water quality in this sensitive watershed, local agencies, organizations, and landowners united to form the Upper Iowa River Watershed Alliance in 1999.

The mission of the Upper Iowa River Watershed Alliance (UIRWA) is to improve the water quality in the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries, and improve the health of the Upper Iowa River Watershed.

The UIRWA has conducted research, and recruited educational institutions to conduct research, throughout the watershed. This research has allowed the Alliance to identify current and potential sources of water pollution and prioritize strategies for improvement.

The Trout Run Reforestation Project is a sub-project identified as a priority by the UIRW Alliance.



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For More Information

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This project was supported in part by a grant from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry, the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry of the USDA Forest Service, Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, The McKnight Foundation, and Northeast Iowa RC&D, Inc.

Northeast Iowa RC&D Inc.

Trout Run Reforestation Project



A Project of the
Upper Iowa
River Watershed

Why Have a Reforestation Project?

As landowners in Northeast Iowa, we take pride in our scenic limestone bluffs, winding rivers, and cool springs that are characteristic of the region. We also are aware of the natural and economic impact of our waters, which are enjoyed by thousands of fishers, canoers, tubers, and other water recreationists each year.



A local angler enjoys the products of the Upper Iowa River.

Recent water quality data has indicated that our streams are in danger. Thousands of tons of soil are being eroded and lost to the river each year. By taking action now, we can work to improve the quality of our water, and protect our investment in the long term health of our land. In addition, landowners can enjoy the long-term economic investment of timber.

What is the Trout Run Reforestation Project?

The Trout Run Reforestation Project is a sub-project of the Upper Iowa River Watershed. The goal of this project is to reforest designated “hot spots” in an effort to decrease soil erosion in the Trout Run Watershed. Landowner incentives have been secured through the project funders, including the Iowa Farm Bureau, the U.S. Forest Service, the State of Iowa, and the McKnight Foundation. The project is being coordinated through the Northeast Iowa RC&D Inc.

Why is Trout Run Targeted for Reforestation?

Trout Run has been identified as the sub-watershed contributing the greatest volume of sediment and phosphorus to the Upper Iowa River. A Geographical Information System (GIS) analysis of the sub-watershed has revealed the greatest number of “hot spot” acres of any sub-watershed in the Upper Iowa River Watershed. Hot spots are defined as cropped acres, with over 14% slope, on forest formed soils. These areas are particularly high contributors of sediment and phosphorus to the Upper Iowa River.

Program Incentives

It typically costs \$600 to reforest one acre, which covers the cost of seeds or seedlings, the planting, and maintenance for one year. For eligible landowners, that cost can be reduced to \$60 per acre

Incentives are available for installation, maintenance, as well as annual rent. The Trout Run Project Coordinator is available to provide you with information on the incentives and to facilitate the sign-up process.



Who is eligible for these incentives?

To be eligible for reforestation incentives:

- 1) The land must currently be cropland,
- 2) The slope of the land must be equal to or greater than 14%,
- 3) The soils must be forest formed,
- 4) You must have land ownership for one year,
- 5) The land had a commodity crop for 4 of 6 years

In addition, the landowner must agree to take the land out of crop production for 10-15 years and plant native hardwood trees to qualify for cost share incentives.

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