



## News release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** March 9, 2015

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### **ACWA WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT TO FOCUS ON ELK RUN WATERSHED**

**Ankeny, Iowa** — Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance (ACWA) is leading a \$713,000 Water Quality Initiative (WQI) in the Elk Run Watershed to engage farmers in parts of Sac, Calhoun and Carroll Counties in discussion and implementation of water conservation practices outlined in the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

"As agriculture retailers, we recognize the need to reduce nutrient loss across the agricultural landscape and elevate the awareness and adoption of water quality practices," Ray Carpenter, ACWA president, said. "Through our water monitoring program, we recognized a need in this watershed and are excited about the opportunity to demonstrate practices and create one-on-one dialogue with farmers."

Through on-farm evaluations, collecting water samples, implementing practices from the Nutrient Reduction Strategy and uniting farmers, partners and urban entities the Elk Run WQI will strive to further awareness and ultimately implementation of water quality conservation practices.

"We will complement the conservation practices already established in the area and add new ones to create an environment where farmers can learn what practices will have the most impact on their operations," said Roger Wolf, ACWA executive director. "We hope to have meaningful collaboration throughout the watershed with crop and livestock producers and project stakeholders."

Outreach events across the watershed will highlight various technologies that significantly reduce loss of nutrients while maintaining productivity. Additional conservation practices to be implemented include bioreactors, saturated buffers, cover crops, nitrification inhibitors and drainage water management.

"We will target and showcase both in-field and edge-of-field practices that reduce nutrient loss to surface waters," said Harry Arenholtz, ACWA chairman. "The WQI funding and industry collaboration make

this possible.”

The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Services (IDALS) provided \$354,000 to the project as part of the latest WQI projects announcement. The IDALS funding will be dispersed over the course of the three year project in addition to partner and landowner contributions.

Other project partners include the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation, Iowa Soybean Association, Iowa Corn Growers Association, Iowa Pork Producers Association, Iowa Cattlemen’s Association, Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance, Crop Production Services, Farmers Cooperative Company, West Central Cooperative, Iowa State University Extension, USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service, Sac Soil and Water Conservation District, Carroll Soil and Water Conservation District, Calhoun Soil and Water Conservation District and Practical Farmers of Iowa.

For more information about the ACWA, visit [www.acwa-rrws.org/](http://www.acwa-rrws.org/).

-30-

***The ACWA** is an association consisting of 12 ag retailers and three associate members operating in the Des Moines and Raccoon River basins. ACWA focuses on creating a better understanding how water, weather, landscape and farm management interrelate. Their work on direct, targeted watershed projects create a baseline for current conditions and enable measured evaluation of new or change practice implementation. Since 1999, ACWA members have invested more than \$1 million in funding for water quality monitoring in the Raccoon River and, since 2008, in the Des Moines River and their largest tributaries.*