



Photo courtesy of Jordan Krome - Decorah, Iowa

Project Background

In 2016 the State of Iowa secured a \$96.7M federal FEMA Disaster Resilience Grant issued through Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to address flooding issues throughout the state.

The money was then split up amongst watersheds in the state that qualified for assistance. **The Upper Iowa River (UIR) Watershed** was one of selected watersheds and received **around \$4 million to implement water retention projects**. In order to maximize the effect of these projects, four sub-watersheds within the UIR watershed were selected to concentrate practices in.

The selected sub-watersheds are: Ten-Mile Creek, North Canoe Creek, Canoe Creek, and Coon Creek.

Input from many professionals (NRCS/SWCD staff, DNR, local emergency management services, County Engineers, Northeast Iowa RC&D, FWS, Iowa Flood Center, etc.) as well as info from landowner surveys and public comments were used to select the watersheds. Some factors that helped determine the watersheds included eligible areas, areas that are frequently damaged during heavy rain events, potential for projects, landowner interest, and areas of significant public value/awareness.



The Iowa Watershed Approach (IWA) is a vision for

Iowa's future that voluntarily engages stakeholders throughout the watershed to achieve common goals, while moving toward a more resilient state. It is a replicable model for other communities where the landscape has lost its natural resilience to floods. This program is not only about Iowans helping Iowans, but also about demonstrating Iowans' commitment to agricultural stewardship, to the environment, to their neighbors, and to the future. The goals of the IWA include the following:

- Reduction of flood risk;
- Improvement in water quality;
- Increased resilience;
- Engagement of stakeholders through collaboration, outreach, and educa-