

# *Big Pine Creek Watershed Project*

## *Best Management Practices Fact Sheet*

### *Prairie Restoration*



The majority of Big Pine Creek watershed was prairie at the time of European Settlement. The deep roots of prairie plants facilitate the penetration of water into the ground by building soil structure and hummus. And thereby reduce overland flow of water, and sediment from migrating to the creek channel.

Purposes of restored prairies include, but are not limited to:

- Habitat for wildlife including pheasants, quail and songbirds.
- Food sources for bees and other pollinators.
- Soil building capacity for improved production.
- Water retention and nutrient and sediment reduction.

Not only do prairies provide all these benefits, but people with restored prairies on their land have been shown to be happier people (Nyberg 2014).

*Contact Info for the Soil & Water Conservation Districts in the Big Pine Creek Watershed*

*Benton County: Jon Charlesworth    765-884-1090 x3    jon.charlesworth@in.usda.gov*

*Warren County: Deb Lane    765-762-2443 x3    debra.lane@in.nacdnet.net*

*White County: Sharon Watson    574-583-5962 x3    sharon.watson@in.nacdnet.net*

Available financial assistance:

The Big Pine Creek Watershed group will be offering cost-share incentives to help producers adopt best management practices (BMPs) aimed at reducing the amount of nutrients, sediment and bacteria entering our surface waters. **Prairie restoration** is one of the BMPs we want to encourage. The financial incentive for nutrient management will come in the form of reimbursement of 75% of the total prairie restoration costs not to exceed \$400/acre.

- Applications for cost share assistance are available from the Soil & Water Conservation District offices in Benton, Warren and White counties.
- Closing dates for ranking periods are still to be determined. Please check the watershed group's webpage which can be accessed via the Benton County SWCD website [bentoncountyswcd.org](http://bentoncountyswcd.org)
- Applications will be ranked based on merit. Pairing Prairie restoration with other conservation practices such as no-till/strip till, filter strips or cover crops will increase the ranking score of the application.
- Successful applicants will sign a contract outlining the terms of the cost-share agreement.
- Assuming the restoration work meets NRCS practice standards, and the area passes visual inspection, the applicant will be mailed a reimbursement check.