

# Partnership policies provide solutions for our communities to meet watershed regulations



## Federal and state regulations require our communities to improve water quality.

Our region must comply with multiple mandates on water quality. Being good stewards of our environment is also the right thing to do.

- **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** – EPA enforces federal clean water laws and takes part in pollution prevention efforts aimed at protecting watersheds and sources of drinking water. The agency carries out regulatory and voluntary programs to fulfill its mission to protect the nation’s waters. EPA also is a source for Best Management Practices (BMPs), or water quality and water quantity practices, programs or projects designed to control or reduce the adverse impacts from discharges or stormwater runoff.
- **Clean Water Act (CWA)** - CWA is the primary federal legislation that protects surface waters such as rivers and lakes. It contains a number of provisions and programs, including the two programs described below, for states to play key roles in the protection of these waters. Compliance with these regulatory programs often means undertaking comprehensive watershed management planning.
- **The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program** – Mandated by the EPA, NPDES requires anyone discharging a pollutant from a point source into U.S. waters to obtain a permit, and that communities reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. Treated industrial and municipal wastewaters, combined sewer overflows and some stormwater discharges are subject to the NPDES permit program. The Phase II NPDES permitting requirements, initiated in 2003, expanded the program to include construction sites and additional urbanized areas, including those in Douglas and Sarpy County.

- **Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ)** - NDEQ is charged with enforcing water quality related program requirements, including permitting programs mandated under the CWA and EPA, that need to be met by the various communities and individuals in the watershed. This implies that it is necessary for communities to attend to their own program requirements, as well as be willing to enforce against violations to local ordinances and policies.

## Many watershed communities have limited resources and need help to meet regulatory requirements.

### *Cost*

There are penalties if communities do not comply with mandates, such as administrative orders that require facilities to correct violations and monetary penalties. For those that have permits through NDEQ, knowingly ignoring permit conditions could result in penalties in the amount of \$27,500 per day. Over time, refusal to comply could lead to criminal charges.

Failure to comply can also mean becoming ineligible for grants or other government dollars, potentially increasing the tax burden or utility cost for residents.

### *Expertise*

The regulatory and stormwater management expertise available through the Partnership has benefited all members. Smaller communities without water quality, flood prevention or watershed regulatory expertise or resources have greatly benefited from the cooperation and sharing of information.

Working together in a watershed effectively addresses stormwater issues. The Partnership has provided that forum.

# The Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership has developed policies that provide our communities with water quality and flood prevention solutions.

The following policies were developed to meet stormwater management regulatory requirements and have been adopted by nine of the 11 partners. The Partnership is investigating the best ways to implement these policies.



1. **Stormwater Management Financing.** A dedicated, sustainable funding mechanism shall be developed and implemented to meet capital and operation and maintenance obligations as a result of new stormwater management regulations and to implement “Watershed by Design” policies to accommodate new development and significant redevelopment within the Papillion Creek Watershed.



4. **Landscape Preservation, Restoration, and Conservation.** Utilize landscape preservation, restoration, and conservation techniques to meet the multi-purpose objectives of enhanced aesthetics, quality of life, recreational and educational opportunities, pollutant reduction, and overall stormwater management. This policy encourages the use of low impact development.



2. **Peak Flow Reduction.** Maintain or reduce stormwater peak discharge during development and after full build-out land use conditions from that which existed under baseline land use conditions.



5. **Erosion and Sediment Control and Other BMPs.** Promote uniform erosion and sediment control measures throughout the Papillion Creek Watershed, including the adoption of the Omaha Regional Stormwater Design Manual and by implementing consistent rules for regulatory compliance pursuant to State and Federal requirements.



3. **Pollution Control.** Reduce pollution from contributing sources, including but not limited to, agricultural activities and combined sewer overflows, such that waters of the Papillion Creek Watershed can meet applicable water quality standards and community-based goals, where feasible.



6. **Floodplain Management.** Participate in the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program, update FEMA floodplain mapping throughout the Papillion Creek Watershed, and enforce floodplain regulations to full build-out, base flood elevations.

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**Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership**  
[www.papiopartnership.org](http://www.papiopartnership.org)  
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Photos: (Front) Rumsey Station Wetland Site (Approx. 56th St. & Cornhusker); (Back) Big Papillion Creek and levees next to Happy Hollow Golf Course, One Pacific Place and Regency