



**Black Earth Creek
Watershed Association**

9580 Union Valley Road
Black Earth, WI 53515



"For the wise management
of the land and water
resources in the Black
Earth Creek Watershed"

**BLACK EARTH CREEK
WATERSHED**
-
**YOUR WATERSHED
IS *SOMEPLACE SPECIAL!***



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Introducing...

the Black Earth Creek Watershed!

Black Earth Creek (BEC) is a gem set in a beautiful landscape of rolling hills, wooded slopes, and quality farmland. The scenic beauty of Black Earth Creek and the surrounding watershed has captivated people for generations. Today, local residents, fishers, hikers, and tourists alike mention the beauty of this special place as one of the top reasons they want to see it protected.

"The tree-covered ridges and the creek flowing through the rich farmland in the valley between them have long been a treat for the eye and the spirit."

- Tom Ehler, watershed resident

Encompassing 103 square miles west of Madison in Dane County, Wisconsin, BEC is a high quality, cold-water trout stream. Trout densities of more than 2000 fish per mile, including the naturally reproducing brown trout population, earned it a place on Trout Magazine's list of the 100 best trout streams in the nation. The high quality of water also qualifies six of the 27 miles of stream to be listed on the state's list of Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters (ORW/ERW). Its status is particularly striking given that it flows through the second most populous region of Wisconsin and along a corridor handling some of the highest traffic volumes in the area.

Forested slopes, plus some key internally drained areas, provide excellent infiltration of rainwater and subsequent groundwater recharge. Groundwater recharge is responsible for the baseflow of Black Earth Creek (80% of the total stream flow) and most of its tributaries.

The urban-rural character of the region in which the Black Earth Creek flows makes the stream an exceptional resource for stewardship. Through the stewardship of farmers in the watershed, a walk along Black Earth Creek exemplifies the important rural nature of our State. Generally, farmers throughout the Watershed have maintained a strong commitment to health of the Creek.

The watershed residents, trout fishers, farmers and businessmen, resource managers, cyclists, and hikers who know and love the Black Earth Creek Watershed have come together to protect this special place. Stewardship of BEC watershed is not a one time project, but a long term commitment to caring for the landscape we call the Black Earth Creek Watershed —communities connected by water.



*Photo courtesy of the WI DNR.

What is BECWA?

The Black Earth Creek Watershed Association (BECWA) was founded in the early 1980s in response to an immediate problem recognized by virtually everyone - a hazardous landfill. Because that landfill threatened many aspects of the Black Earth Creek Watershed, a variety of different groups came together for its protection. At the time, the need to protect Black Earth Creek was widely accepted because the Creek itself represented one of the "jewels" of the southern Wisconsin environment.

BECWA is one of the oldest community-based watershed associations in Wisconsin, and it believes that by increasing and enhancing the sense of stewardship among the residents of the Black Earth Creek Watershed, the stream will ultimately be protected for the benefit of everyone.

BECWA Goals

- To protect, conserve, support and advocate for the wise, long-term management of the physical, biological, environmental, cultural, and historical resources that constitute the heritage and future assets of the Black Earth Creek Watershed.
- To foster and encourage citizen and locally-based stewardship among the many members of the watershed community.
- To provide a forum for informed public discussion of issues and problems in the watershed.
- To educate and enhance the awareness of the watershed and its natural resources and heritage

Black Earth Creek Watershed



BECWA Activities

BECWA works each year to provide a semi-annual newsletter, "Thinking Like a Watershed," facilitate multiple public forums on issues impacting watershed health, host environmental education activities educating individuals about the watershed, as well as working with local residents, governments, and businesses to promote the wise management of the land and water resources in the Black Earth Creek Watershed.

BECWA Board Members

BECWA's volunteer Board of Directors includes:

Barbara Borns, President
Porter Martin, Vice President
Jeffrey Postle, Secretary
David Lucey, Treasurer

Richard Anderson, Greg Hyer
Steve Born, Carl Jones, Jr
John Mulligan, Wayne Rounds
Barbara Peckarsky,



Join BECWA Today!

"For the wise management of the land and water resources in the Black Earth Creek Watershed"

By joining BECWA today you become part of a dedicated community of people who recognize the importance of protecting this amazing rural watershed.

Your membership will support BECWA's:

- Public Forums and Environmental Education Events
- Annual Earth Day Creek Clean-Up
- *Thinking Like a Watershed* semi-annual newsletter

Please lend your support to protecting this outstanding creek which runs through the heart of our community!

Membership:

- Watershed Patron \$25
- Household \$15
- Basic \$10
- Other \$_____

Yes!
I'm interested in
volunteering my
time to BECWA.

*All donations are tax deductible.

Name _____ Date _____

Organization/Guest Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Mail this form with your check to:

BECWA- Treasurer
David Lucey
7952 County Hwy K
Cross Plains WI 53528

For more information contact our Watershed Coordinator:

Briana Burns
Phone: 608-767-1475
Fax: 608-262-2273
Email: brianaburns@yahoo.com
www.madison.com/communities/becwa/

Why a watershed?

Picture a raindrop making its way from the very top of the hill, through and over the land, joining more water on a journey down through the woods and valleys into Garfoot and Brewery creeks, then Black Earth Creek, and finally to the Wisconsin River. The land where the water flowing in Black Earth Creek comes from comprises the Black Earth Creek Watershed.



It's easy to see that what the water picks up on its journey downstream will affect the receiving waters, including lakes, rivers, and wetlands

*Photo courtesy of the WI DNR.

Because watersheds are defined by natural hydrology, they represent the most logical basis for protecting water resources. The challenge is that political boundaries cross-cut these geographic boundaries so that decisions made upstream impact communities downstream.

Black Earth Creek Watershed is your watershed and we all agree it is, someplace special. True stewardship of this special place will require thinking about the cumulative impacts of all the activities in the watershed on the natural resources that make this watershed special.



*Photo courtesy of the WI DNR.