



Photo by Elisabeth Spratt

*PRIORITY WATERSHED SELECTION FOR  
EXPANDING REGENERATIVE GRAZING*

MARCH 2021



**Pasture Project**

AT THE WALLACE CENTER

## Introduction

The Delta Institute and the Pasture Project, part of the Resilient Agriculture & Ecosystems initiative of the Wallace Center at Winrock International, have partnered on a second year of shared work of a project to expand grass-fed value chains in the State of Illinois. Support for this project was provided through Food:Land:Opportunity, an initiative of Kinship Foundation and The Chicago Community Trust, funded through the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust. Following a statewide grass-fed value chain analysis, the project aims to work more deeply in a watershed near Chicago to support grass-based production, expand processing and distribution, and connect producers and aggregators to buyers in Chicago, particularly institutions.

The purpose of this memo is to describe the rationale for selecting a watershed(s) for deepening place-based engagement. Three components for assessing watershed suitability for regenerative grazing were explored: mapping analysis of 14 spatial datasets, stakeholder feedback, and additional research. Watersheds were ranked and prioritized for further engagement.

## Mapping

The Resilient Agriculture and Ecosystems (RAE) initiative of the Wallace Center at Winrock International has completed a prototype tool for identifying priority watersheds for further outreach on regenerative grazing. This tool combines 14 datasets across the categories of biodiversity, water quality, economics, infrastructure, and suitability for Chicago markets. A summary map with each layer and the combined suitability layer can be found [here](#).<sup>1</sup> Additionally, farms known to be producing grass-fed beef are also shown on the map for informational purpose, however, were not included in the analysis due to incompleteness and potential bias of this data set.

For deeper analysis, we selected a subset of watersheds due to their proximity to Chicago and location on the suburban-rural divide. The results are reported below for the five selected watersheds: Upper Fox, Kishwaukee, Lower Fox, Upper Illinois, and Kankakee. Higher scores correspond to conditions more advantageous to grazing.

The mapping analysis showed that Kankakee and Upper Fox have the highest cumulative scores, indicating them to be most suitable for further engagement.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/fb9071b6e08b47098ba4a755f873b796>

**Table 1. Spatial watershed criteria**

Category	Dataset	Rationale/Scoring	Aggregate HUC 8 Watershed Scores*
Biodiversity	Agricultural lands without nearby pollinator habitat by HUC 12 watershed (EPA)	Low = All crop acres in HUC 12 have nearby pollinator habitat (within 2.8km) High = Some crop acres in HUC 12 do not have nearby pollinator habitat	Upper Fox: Low Kishwaukee: Low Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: High Kankakee: Medium
Biodiversity	Common bird species in decline by HUC 12 watershed (EPA)	Low = 0 to 15 species Medium = 15 to 18 species High = >18 species	Upper Fox: Medium Kishwaukee: Low Lower Fox: Low Upper Illinois: Medium Kankakee: Medium-High
Economics	Interest payments as percent of operating expenses by county (USDA)	Low = 0 to 5% Medium = 5 to 10% High = >10%	Upper Fox: Low Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Low Upper Illinois: Low Kankakee: Low
Economics	Fertilizer expenses as percent of operating expenses by county (USDA)	Low = 0 to 14% Medium = 14 to 20% High = >20%	Upper Fox: Low Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: High Kankakee: High
Economics	National Commodity Crop Productivity Index for corn per soil unit (USDA)	Low = >0.8 Medium = 0.6 to 0.8 High = <0.6 (lower corn yields are advantageous for grazing economics)	Upper Fox: High Kishwaukee: Low Lower Fox: Low Upper Illinois: Medium Kankakee: High
Economics	Average age of principle operator by county (USDA)	Low = >60 Medium = 55 to 60 High = <55	Upper Fox: Medium Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: Medium Kankakee: Medium

Infrastructure	Cattle density per pixel/0.08 decimal degrees (FAO)	Low = 0 to 10 head per pixel Medium = 10 to 30 head per pixel High = >30 head per pixel	Upper Fox: Low Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: Low Kankakee: Low
Infrastructure	Distance to small USDA-inspected beef slaughter facilities (USDA)	Low = 30 to 50 miles Medium = 12 to 30 miles High = 0 to 12 miles	Upper Fox: Medium Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: High Upper Illinois: High Kankakee: Low
Infrastructure	Distance to state-inspected beef slaughter facilities (IL Department of Agriculture; Bureau of Meat and Poultry Inspection)	Low = 30 to 50 miles Medium = 12 to 30 miles High = 0 to 12 miles	Upper Fox: High Kishwaukee: High Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: Medium Kankakee: Medium
Infrastructure	Pastureland as percent of cropland by county (USDA)	Low = <5% Medium = 5 to 30% High = >30%	Upper Fox: Low Kishwaukee: Low Lower Fox: Low Upper Illinois: Low Kankakee: Low
Water quality	Nitrogen loss from agricultural lands by HUC 12 watershed (EPA)	Low = 0 to 36 lb./ac/yr. Medium = 36 to 54 lb./ac/yr. High = >54 lb./ac/yr.	Upper Fox: Medium Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: Low Kankakee: Medium
Water quality	Phosphorus loss from agricultural lands by HUC 12 watershed (EPA)	Low = 0 to 2 lb./ac/yr. Medium = 2 to 5 lb./ac/yr. High = >5 lb./ac/yr.	Upper Fox: Medium Kishwaukee: Low Lower Fox: Low Upper Illinois: Low Kankakee: High

Suitability for Chicago Markets	Trucking proximity to Chicago	Low = 100 to 150 miles Medium = 50 to 100 miles High = 0 to 50 miles	Upper Fox: High Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: Medium Kankakee: High
Suitability for Chicago Markets	Illinois population within 100 miles (US Census Bureau)	Low = >7 million Medium = 7-9 million High = >9 million	Upper Fox: High Kishwaukee: Medium Lower Fox: Medium Upper Illinois: Medium Kankakee: High

*\*Aggregate HUC 8 watershed scores combine the scores from all the areas they contain (e.g., multiple HUC 12 watersheds, counties, or pixels)*

## Stakeholder Feedback

We have further gathered feedback through surveys and interviews about the selected watersheds with stakeholders in Northern Illinois representing a variety of sectors including academia, government, advocacy, and current graziers. Those who have provided feedback so far are listed below:

- Nathan Aaberg (Liberty Prairie Foundation)
- Spring Duffey (McHenry-Lake County SWCD)
- Matt Bunger (NRCS)
- James Theuri (University of Illinois Extension)
- Josh Franks (Boone and Winnebago County NRCS)
- Liz Rupel (IL Stewardship Alliance)
- Jen Walling (IL Environmental Council)
- Emy Brawley (The Conservation Fund)
- Russ Higgins (University of Illinois Extension)

Feedback from the stakeholders about the five selected watersheds is summarized in Tables 2-6 below. Direct quotes are in quotations; other comments are summarized from phone interviews.

**Table 2. Upper Fox**

Metric	Stakeholder Feedback
Overall	<p>Tied top watershed choice for one stakeholder, 2nd watershed choice for one stakeholder; both said to apply their feedback to both Kishwaukee and Upper Fox.</p> <p>One stakeholder said this watershed would be difficult to work in due to development pressure and limited remaining agricultural land base.</p>
Historical Projects	<p>One stakeholder felt that there was not much grazing activity in the Illinois half of the Upper Fox, except for some farmland owned by McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD). MCCD recently brought out some grazing experts to their site to get advice. If the district decided to convert this land to rotational/holistic grazing, that would convert over 300 acres to grassland in the watershed. The stakeholder expressed that they felt MCCD is trying to be thoughtful about what happens to that land.</p> <p>One stakeholder mentioned potential in this watershed due to proximity to Chicago and busy nearby farmers markets that are currently being served by graziers from Wisconsin. However, this stakeholder observed that land costs can be a problem if the agricultural model requires a lot of land. This stakeholder mentioned alternative models, like Greg Judy in Missouri who farms primarily leased public land. For these models to work, more knowledge and resources are needed around grazing leases. Private sector livestock partners will also be important.</p>
Adoption and Re-Enrollment Rates of BMPs	<p>One stakeholder mentioned several known graziers. This stakeholder knows at least one landowner who has mostly corn, but recently transitioned some acreage to grazing in the watershed. There are also a few existing graziers who are moving into holistic grazing. One grazer is leasing from Kane County Forest Reserve. Another producer worked as apprentice with All Grass Farms, a known grazing operation. Another younger couple is starting to graze further west (15-20 Belted Galloways). This stakeholder believes that Wisconsin NRCS may be more efficient than Illinois NRCS for supporting grazing practices.</p> <p>This stakeholder also mentioned that McHenry County is digitizing their management system and is now requiring cover crops on all highly erodible land. In addition, Liberty Prairie Foundation held a specialty grains workshop in November 2019, and though specialty grains producers have previously felt like “outcasts” from farming community, they are beginning to see interest from area producers.</p>

<p>Problem Salience</p>	<p>One stakeholder felt McHenry County was most interested in water quality, drinking water, and flooding. MCCD is most focused on grassland habitat and water quality. Kane County is most interested in preserving water quality and grassland habitat. Izaak Walton League is interested in preserving habitat. Angelic Organics is primarily concerned with farmer success.</p>
<p>Collaboration and Trust</p>	<p>One stakeholder felt that capacity is limited, though watershed stakeholders are interested in partnership. This stakeholder mentioned speaking with the St. Croix River Association in Minnesota and Wisconsin who is taking a holistic approach with land trusts, farmers, and government agencies, which the stakeholder contrasted with the Upper Fox and Kishwaukee watersheds which do not have that level of coordination between partners. This stakeholder observed that people are social, so if there's no community of people to work together with the work suffers.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Commitment/Project Interest and Supportive Farm, Sportsmen, And Wildlife Organizations</p>	<p>One stakeholder mentioned several potential initial partners, including likely interest on the part of Kane County Forest Preserve District and MCCD, who are both interested in farm conservation. This stakeholder observed that Kane County Forest Preserve District has "less politics" because the board is separate from the conservation district. Kane County is experimenting with patch burn grazing. This stakeholder also mentioned that the Land Conservancy of McHenry County is interested in agriculture and grazing and that the Izaak Walton League is interested in using their network to encourage landowners to influence their leasees to use better practices. This stakeholder mentioned the IDEA farm network (and that Liberty Prairie serves as its organizer for northeastern Illinois), and while grazing is not a lead practice, they are not unfriendly to it. This stakeholder also mentioned Angelic Organics, which used to be focused on vegetables but had leadership transition recently. Angelic runs the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (CRAFT) network, which includes graziers. Finally, the McHenry County planning department is working on a watershed plan for the county and is starting to realize that agriculture is an important land use for managing water quality.</p>

**Table 3. Kishwaukee**

Metric	Stakeholder Feedback
Overall	<p>Top watershed for 4 stakeholders.</p> <p>Miscellaneous comment: "The cost of land is prohibitive if you don't inherit the ground for grazing. Most folks can't pay \$5,000-10,000 per acre to graze. Unfortunately, this leads to a lot of sensitive acres going to row crop production."</p>
Biophysical Impairment	<p>One stakeholder mentioned that the most salient concern in this watershed is nutrient loading. This stakeholder said: "There is a fair amount of grazing with the creek corridors of this watershed, but most of the streams are not fenced off, so while there is not commercial ag[riculture]--more could be done."</p>
Historical Projects	<p>Stakeholders mentioned several recent grazing efforts and other historical projects. One stakeholder mentioned Eat for Good, a group of landowners (many from this watershed) putting on educational potlucks around grazing, local food, and soil health. One absentee landowner is working with her leasee on grazing.</p> <p>Another stakeholder mentioned recent grazing efforts by the MCCD (see Upper Fox "Historical Projects" section for full comments). This stakeholder also reiterated the need for land leasing models rather than ownership models, similarly to the Upper Fox comments.</p>
Adoption and Re-Enrollment Rates of BMPs	<p>One stakeholder said, "We have had good luck promoting the CRP 10-year set aside program to native grasslands--mostly within the watershed in heavily flood prone or excessively wet areas." Another stakeholder mentioned an expansion of cover crops and no-till in this watershed but noted that most are done without financial assistance. However, stakeholders felt that short leases and absentee landowners were an impediment to conservation practices.</p> <p>One stakeholder noted the importance of other NRCS programs in the watershed, saying: "Producers interested in grazing seek assistance from NRCS for technical and financial assistance. Some of the practices applied include: Prescribed grazing, fence, water facility, pipeline, forage and biomass planting. The practices have been used by many producers for many years."</p>



	<p>Other stakeholders mentioned knowing a handful of existing graziers and some active efforts by Kane and McHenry counties for public land grazing.</p>
<p>Problem Salience</p>	<p>One stakeholder felt that the biggest resource concern was nutrient loading. Two stakeholders named bird/grassland habitat as a concern for MCCD, but one felt that water quality was an equal concern.</p> <p>One stakeholder felt McHenry County was most interested in water quality, drinking water, and flooding, while Kane County is most interested in preserving water quality and grassland habitat. Izaak Walton League is interested in preserving habitat. Angelic Organics is primarily concerned with farmer success.</p> <p>One stakeholder said the soil and water conservation districts are most concerned with erosion control, soil health, flooding, and wetland loss.</p>
<p>Collaboration and Trust</p>	<p>One stakeholder mentioned a skepticism on the part of graziers with government programs, saying: "Grazing is tough, most producers who do "grazing" are very independent and often don't want to work with programs/government." Another stakeholder said "[Trust] varies by landowner but with some very strong, others not so much."</p> <p>However, several stakeholders pointed out that there are several strong partnerships present in the watershed between producers and organizations, with one mentioning that a watershed grazing group relies on UI Extension to assist in planning the yearly pasture walk and Graziers Dinner.</p> <p>One stakeholder felt that capacity is limited, though watershed stakeholders are interested in partnership. This stakeholder mentioned speaking with the St. Croix River Association in Minnesota and Wisconsin who is taking a holistic approach with land trusts, farmers, and government agencies, which the stakeholder contrasted with the Upper Fox and Kishwaukee watersheds which do not have that level of coordination between partners. This stakeholder observed that people are social, so if there's no community of people to work together with the work suffers.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Commitment/Project Interest and Supportive Farm, Sportsmen, And Wildlife Organizations</p>	<p>One stakeholder reiterated their Upper Fox comments, which mentioned several potential initial partners, including likely interest on the part of Kane County Forest Preserve and MCCD, who are both interested in farm conservation. This stakeholder observed that Kane County Forest Preserve has "less politics" because the board is separate from the conservation district. Kane County is experimenting with patch burn grazing. This stakeholder also mentioned that the Land Conservancy of McHenry County is interested in agriculture and grazing and that the Izaak Walton League is interested in using their network to</p>

	<p>encourage landowners to influence their leasees to use better practices. This stakeholder mentioned the IDEA farm network (and that Liberty Prairie serves as its organizer for northeastern Illinois), and while grazing is not a lead practice, they are not unfriendly to it. This stakeholder also mentioned Angelic Organics, which used to be focused on vegetables but had leadership transition recently. Angelic runs the Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training (CRAFT) network, which includes graziers. Finally, the McHenry County planning department is working on a watershed plan for the county and is starting to realize that agriculture is an important land use for managing water quality.</p> <p>Another stakeholder listed active supportive groups as Boone County Conservation District, NRCS, Farm Bureau, McHenry County Land Conservancy, Natural Land Institute, Pheasants Forever, and the SWCDs. This stakeholder felt that most of these do not overly focus on grazing, except NRCS.</p> <p>Another stakeholder listed supportive groups as SWCDs, Eat for Good, Land Conservancy of McHenry County, McHenry County Conservation District, and NRCS. This stakeholder felt that all promote grazing.</p>
Farmers as Conservation Leaders	<p>Regarding active farmer leaders, one stakeholder mentioned Cody Brook as an early adopter and advocate of cover crops in this watershed. See also Adoption of BMPs section.</p>

**Table 4. Lower Fox**

Metric	Stakeholder Feedback
Overall	2nd ranked watershed for one stakeholder.
Biophysical Impairment	One stakeholder mentioned awareness that several segments are impaired in this watershed.
Adoption and Re-Enrollment Rates of BMPs	One stakeholder reiterated their comments from the Kishwaukee watershed, noting the importance of NRCS programs in the watershed: "Producers interested in grazing seek assistance from NRCS for technical and financial assistance. Some of the practices applied include: Prescribed grazing, fence, water facility, pipeline, forage and biomass planting. The practices have been used by many producers for many years."
Collaboration and Trust	One stakeholder said, "I believe the relationships are good between farmers/producers and all agencies. [We] just need everyone to be on the same page and try to work toward a collaborative effort in regenerative grazing."
Stakeholder Commitment/Project Interest and Supportive Farm, Sportsmen, And Wildlife Organizations	<p>One stakeholder listed the active supportive organizations as UI Extension, NRCS, SWCD, likely IL Beef Association, and maybe IL Farm Bureau.</p> <p>Another watershed mentioned existing watershed working groups, saying: "Based on my knowledge, this watershed has a lot of activity and/or interest. All Illinois County SWCDs should be leading a local lead working group to identify priority watersheds within their county. NRCS aids in the working group process."</p>
Farmers as Conservation Leaders	One stakeholder mentioned that "Alan Adams, past IL Beef Association President, and family has participated in EQIP for Confinement and for a Grazing Management System."

**Table 5. Upper Illinois**

Metric	Stakeholder Feedback
Overall	No stakeholder votes or feedback.

**Table 6. Kankakee**

Metric	Stakeholder Feedback
Overall	Top watershed for 2 stakeholders.
Historical Projects	<p>Two stakeholder comments summarized the grazing and conservation history in this watershed:</p> <p>"I have worked with the local NRCS field offices in this watershed over the years. There was a lot of activity in Will and Kankakee Counties, but not sure lately on the activity. There is a local Grazing Group that is active. All the other watersheds I believe are gaining momentum with smaller operations looking for assistance with infrastructure and improving production."</p> <p>"Kankakee SWCD has really stepped up and they are doing a great job with overall conservation, regenerative (sustainable) outreach and education to farmers. They are focusing mostly on cover crops and have secured funding by participating in the National Wildlife Federation's Cover Crop Champions grant."</p>
Adoption and Re-Enrollment Rates of BMPs	In terms of producer adoption of grazing, one stakeholder said "Kankakee has quite a few small grazing operations, but there are far more folks growing crops on the ground versus grazing cattle. Kankakee does support grazing, but through contracts. I believe they only have 1 or 2 grazing contracts."
Stakeholder Commitment/Project Interest and Supportive Farm, Sportsmen, And Wildlife Organizations	One stakeholder noted that this watershed might have more political support for agricultural conservation practices than other watersheds, saying: "Elected officials [in these counties] are leaning towards supporting environmental issues and would be swayed by learning more about what is happening in their watersheds. The McHenry watershed doesn't have lawmakers that would be influenced by the data positively and the Lake County lawmakers are already supportive." Another stakeholder named the active supportive organizations as Kankakee County Graziers, UI Extension, NRCS, SWCDs, and possibly IL Beef Association and IL Farm Bureau.
Farmers as Conservation Leaders	One stakeholder mentioned knowledge of existing several grazier leaders: "Rick Adams and Dave Suprenant are a few [graziers] that come to mind, but there are more!"

## Additional Research

### EPA 319 Funding

The EPA 319 data set is a compilation of projects that have received federal funding to implement best management practices (BMPs) to reduce pollution from nonpoint sources or to perform watershed assessment and planning between 2000-2019. We filtered the data set by watershed and found the below number of funded projects in each watershed:

- Upper Fox: 18
- Lower Fox: 8
- Kishwaukee: 4
- Upper Illinois: 3
- Kankakee: 0

This gives an indication of funded agricultural and hydrologic work already taking place in the watershed and how our project can be complementary to work that has already happened or in progress.

To fill in possible gaps from the data and stakeholder feedback, we conducted general internet searches looking for any historical or current agricultural conservation, grazing, water quality, or funded watershed groups in each watershed. Internet searches revealed moderate historical and current activity, such as watershed planning efforts or publications, in the Upper Fox and Lower Fox watersheds, lower activity in Kishwaukee and Kankakee, and no activity in Upper Illinois.

### Water Quantity

We reviewed EPA's "[How's My Waterway](https://mywaterway.epa.gov/)"<sup>2</sup> tool and EPA Watershed Quality Assessment reports to analyze water quality issues in priority watersheds. All five watersheds contain significant stretches of impaired waterways. The Upper Fox, Kishwaukee, and Lower Fox watersheds in particular had a high total proportion of impaired waterways. Leading causes of water quality impairment in the three watersheds (Upper Fox, Lower Fox, and Upper Illinois) were significant macrophyte growth, phosphorus runoff, high turbidity, and fecal coliform, to which agriculture is a leading contributor. Some watersheds also had significant impairments caused by non-agricultural sources such as polychlorinated biphenyls (Upper Fox, Lower Fox, and Upper Illinois), mercury (Lower Fox), and flow regime alterations (Upper Fox, Kishwaukee, and Lower Fox).

- Upper Fox: high (Lakes: 97% impaired; Rivers: 94% impaired)
- Lower Fox: high (Lakes: 100% impaired; Rivers: 32% impaired)
- Kishwaukee: high (Lakes: 21% impaired; Rivers: 72% impaired)
- Upper Illinois: medium (Lakes: 6% impaired; Rivers: 30% impaired)
- Kankakee: null (unassessed)

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<sup>2</sup> <https://mywaterway.epa.gov/>

## BMP Adoption

We analyzed agricultural conservation practice adoption from Illinois Department of Agriculture field transect reports to get a sense of BMP use across the five priority watersheds. The five watersheds had varying degrees of conservation practice adoption. The Upper Fox had the highest rates of cover crop residue and mulch till on corn and soy acres. The Kankakee also had high levels of adoption of no-till on soy acres. The Kishwaukee watershed had high adoption of conservation practices relative to the other watersheds, particularly cover crops and mulch till. The Lower Fox and Upper Illinois had low relative adoption of conservation practices.

- Upper Fox: high (high cover crop, high reduced tillage)
- Lower Fox: low (low cover crop, medium reduced tillage)
- Kishwaukee: high (medium cover crop, high reduced tillage)
- Upper Illinois: low (low cover crop, medium reduced tillage)
- Kankakee: high (medium cover crop, high reduced tillage)

## Summary and Watershed Selection

All the factors and their associated scores are summarized in Table 7. Scores below represent suitability relative to the other watersheds considered in the selection process rather than all the watersheds in Illinois. Green represents a high score (increased potential for engagement), yellow represents a medium score, red represents low score, while gray represents that data was not available to evaluate. Each factor had the same weight in determining the overall ranking.

**Table 7. Summary of selection criteria; green = high score (increased potential for engagement), yellow = medium score, red = low score, gray = data was not available to evaluate.**

Upper Fox	Kishwaukee	Lower Fox	Upper Illinois	Kankakee
Spatial Analysis: Infrastructure	Spatial Analysis: Infrastructure	Additional Research: Historical Projects	Spatial Analysis: Economics	Spatial Analysis: Water Quality
Spatial Analysis: Water Quality	Stakeholder Feedback: Overall Preference	Additional Research: Salient WQ Issues	Spatial Analysis: Biodiversity	Spatial Analysis: Suitability for Chicago Markets
Spatial Analysis: Suitability for Chicago Markets	Stakeholder Feedback: Interested Orgs/Collaboration in Watershed	Known Partners	Spatial Analysis: Suitability for Chicago Markets	Spatial Analysis: Economics
Additional Research: Historical Projects	Stakeholder Feedback: Farmers as Conservation Leaders	Spatial Analysis: Suitability for Chicago Markets	Spatial Analysis: Infrastructure	Stakeholder Feedback: Farmers as Conservation Leaders
Additional Research: Adoption/Readoption of BMPs	Additional Research: Salient WQ Issues	Stakeholder Feedback: Overall Preference	Stakeholder Feedback: Overall Preference	Additional Research: Adoption/Re-Adoption of BMPs
Additional Research: Salient WQ Issues	Known Partners	Spatial Analysis: Infrastructure	Spatial Analysis: Water Quality	Spatial Analysis: Biodiversity
Known Partners	Spatial Analysis: Suitability for Chicago Markets	Spatial Analysis: Water Quality	Additional Research: Historical Projects	Additional Research: Historical Projects
Stakeholder Feedback: Overall Preference	Additional Research: Historical Projects	Additional Research: Adoption/Re-Adoption of BMPs	Additional Research: Adoption/Re-Adoption of BMPs	Stakeholder Feedback: Overall Preference
Stakeholder Feedback: Interested Orgs/Collaboration in Watershed	Additional Research: Adoption/Re-Adoption of BMPs	Spatial Analysis: Biodiversity	Additional Research: Salient WQ Issues	Spatial Analysis: Infrastructure

Stakeholder Feedback: Farmers as Conservation Leaders	Spatial Analysis: Economics	Spatial Analysis: Economics	Known Partners	Known Partners
Spatial Analysis: Biodiversity	Spatial Analysis: Water Quality	Stakeholder Feedback: Interested Orgs/Collaboration in Watershed	Stakeholder Feedback: Interested Orgs/Collaboration in Watershed	Additional Research: Salient WQ Issues
Spatial Analysis: Economics	Spatial Analysis: Biodiversity	Stakeholder Feedback: Farmers as Conservation Leaders	Stakeholder Feedback: Farmers as Conservation Leaders	Stakeholder Feedback: Interested Orgs/Collaboration in Watershed

The top two watersheds identified based on these factors were **Upper Fox** and **Kishwaukee**. Because the Upper Fox covers areas that are primarily urban/suburban, only a small portion of the watershed, the northwestern part of the watershed, seems appropriate for considerations for agricultural land use. As such, we decided to combine and select both the Upper Fox and Kishwaukee watersheds for further analysis.