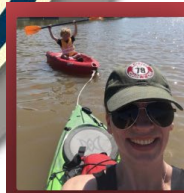




NEWSLETTER

MARCH - APRIL 2024



Podcast Episode

NEIWT President Kyle Quandt

The Newt

The Newt podcast is now available on Spotify, Amazon, and NEIWaterTrails.com!

The first episode of The Newt podcast features an interview with our board president, Kyle Quandt. Kyle discusses the history and mission of NEI Water Trails, and tells a funny story about a time she took her young son out on a paddling trip.

Subscribe to our channel on Spotify or Amazon, or [click here](#) to listen to this episode directly through our website. The next episode, airing on April 3rd, will be a discussion with ecologist and teacher, Paul DeRolf of [Beautiful Bait](#), an educational photography blog featuring the fascinating fish and aquatic invertebrates that he studies in our local rivers and streams!



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HOW TO SUPPORT US

Donate your time and skills
Financial contributions
Sponsorship opportunities



NEI Water Trails, PO Box 327, Huntertown, IN 46748-9998

NEXT PODCAST



The next episode will air on April 3rd, featuring Paul DeRolf. Paul is a local high school teacher and stream ecologist who graduated from Ball State University. He enjoys taking photos of the beautiful fish and insects that he studies, and sharing them on his website, [Beautiful Bait](#), along with fascinating facts about each species' role in the ecosystem. Find the podcast on [Spotify](#), [Amazon](#), or [NEIWaterTrails.com!](#)



NEXT PADDLE SOCIAL

Date: Saturday, April 27th, 2024
Time: 11:00 am
Put-in/Take-out: [Mallard Roost #1 / South Branch Elkhart River at SR6](#)
Total Miles: 4 miles
Estimated paddle: 2- 2.5 hours

The Mallard Roost - Elkhart River public access sites are owned by the IN Department of Natural Resources: Division of Fish and Wildlife.

Mallard Roost #3 is closed so we will be going out and back to the same access point, Mallard Roost #1. We have confirmed with the DNR that site #1 is open.

Along the way you are sure to see a variety of awesome NE Indiana Wildlife including deer, beaver, muskrat, raccoon, river otter, an array of birds and more while floating downstream through the Mallard Roost Wetland Conservation Area. No registration required. We hope to see you there! Be sure to dress in warm layers!



Pedal



Paddle



Play

[EVENT DETAILS](#)

July 20, 2024

Promenade Park, Downtown Fort Wayne

[REGISTRATION](#)
Begins March 21st

[SPONSORSHIP FORM](#)

[VENDOR FORM](#)

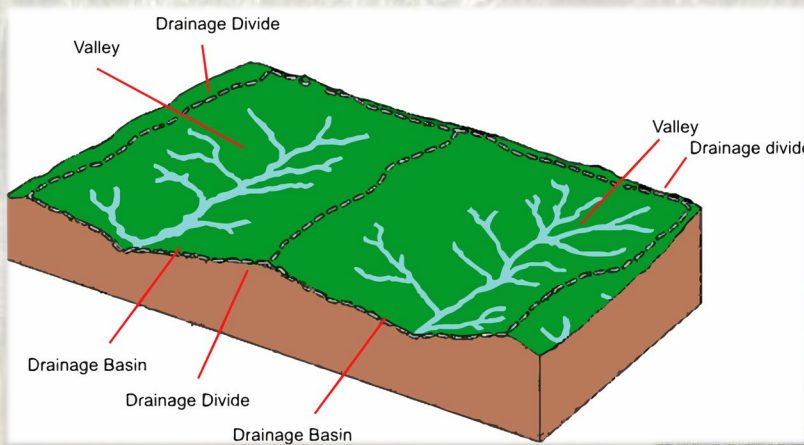


WATERSHEDS



What is a Watershed?

Every square inch of land on Earth is part of a watershed, also known as a drainage basin. A watershed is simply an area of land where all the water drains to a common outlet, such as a river, lake, or ocean. Picture a large bowl-shaped area of land bounded by higher elevations, where rainwater and melting snow gather and flow downhill, eventually converging into a network of streams and rivers. The boundary of a watershed is defined by the highest points of elevation, known as divides or ridgelines, which separate one watershed from another. Large watersheds that empty into lakes and oceans can be broken down into sub-watersheds that feed each spring, pond, creek, stream, and river. Areas with extreme elevation changes like mountains and valleys may have obvious watershed boundaries, while watersheds in flatter areas are harder to discern.



Continental Divides

A continental divide is a watershed boundary where water flows in opposing directions, ultimately to different oceans that border the continent. Northern Indiana is home to a section of the St. Lawrence continental divide, where water to the south and west flows to the Mississippi River and down to the Gulf of Mexico, while water to the north and east flows to the Great Lakes and out to the Atlantic Ocean. You can walk along a section of this divide on a marked trail at [Eagle Marsh](#) in Fort Wayne.



Credit: LRWP Facebook Page

The Importance of Healthy Watersheds

From a human perspective, healthy watersheds are essential for ensuring water security and sustaining livelihoods. They supply freshwater to an area for irrigation, sanitation, and industrial processes, supporting agriculture and economic activities. Additionally, many recreational activities such as fishing, boating, and hiking depend on healthy watersheds, attracting tourists and contributing to local economies.

Based on the shape of the land, the precipitation that falls onto a given area flows in a particular direction, whichever way is downhill. Healthy floodplains and riparian zones (the land along rivers) act as natural filtration systems, purifying water as it percolates through soil and is absorbed by vegetation, removing pollutants and replenishing aquifers. Urbanization creates runoff by replacing natural, permeable surfaces made up of plants and soil with impermeable surfaces like roads and buildings. The water that runs off these surfaces picks up pollution that does not get filtered before it drains into the rivers. Other human activities such as agriculture, deforestation, and turf lawns can also disrupt the natural filtration features of the ecosystem, leading to degraded water quality, loss of biodiversity, and increased vulnerability to erosion.

Climate change exacerbates these challenges, altering precipitation patterns, increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, and disrupting hydrological cycles. These changes pose significant risks to water availability and quality, further straining already stressed watersheds.

Sustainable Watershed Management

To address the complex challenges facing watersheds, effective and holistic management approaches are needed. Sustainable watershed management focuses on preserving the ecological integrity of watersheds while meeting the diverse needs of human communities. Key principles of sustainable watershed management include:

- **Integrated Planning:** Developing comprehensive management plans that consider the interconnectedness of land use, water resources, and ecosystems within a watershed.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Involving diverse stakeholders, including local communities, government agencies, NGOs, farmers, and businesses, in decision-making processes to ensure inclusive and participatory management.
- **Land Use Practices:** Promoting sustainable land use practices such as reforestation, soil conservation, and low-impact design to reduce erosion, preserve habitat, and protect water quality.
- **Water Conservation:** Implementing measures to reduce water consumption, improve efficiency, and minimize waste through practices such as rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, water reuse, using a dishwasher rather than handwash, and turning the faucet off while brushing.
- **Pollution Prevention:** Implementing pollution control measures to reduce the input of contaminants into watersheds, including regulations on industrial discharge, agricultural runoff, and waste management.
- **Climate Resilience:** Building resilience to climate change by enhancing natural infrastructure, protecting and restoring wetlands, and implementing adaptive management strategies that anticipate and respond to changing conditions.

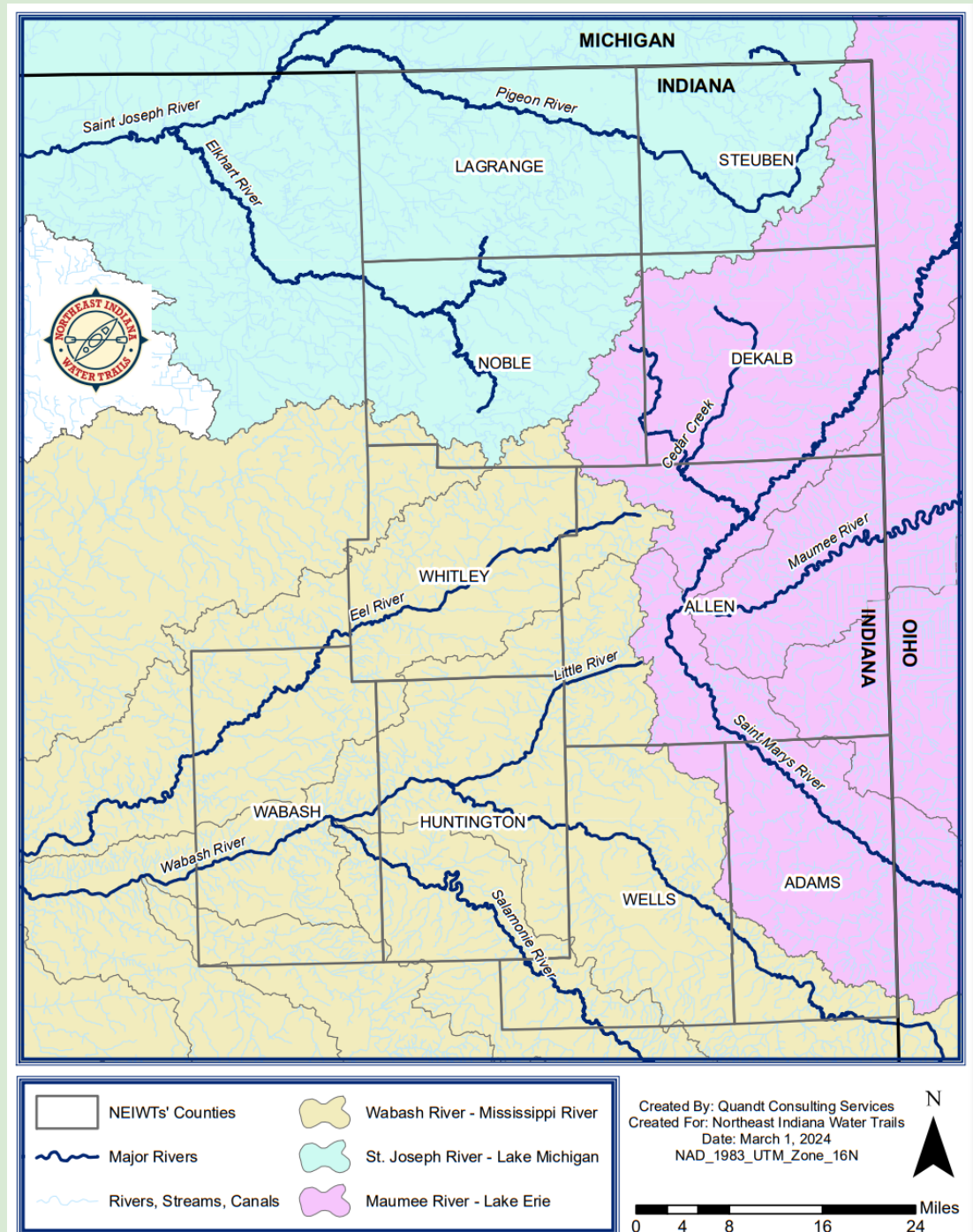
NORTHEAST INDIANA WATERSHEDS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Northeast Indiana has three main watersheds: The St. Joseph River - Lake Michigan, the Maumee River - Lake Erie, and the Wabash River - Mississippi River watershed. If you'd like to find out which watershed you live in, or learn more about watershed management and how you can help in your area, check out these great local organizations and all the resources they have to offer!

[IDEM Interactive Watershed Map](#)
[Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts](#)
[Friends of the St. Joe River](#)
[Maumee Watershed Alliance](#)

[Wabash River Defenders](#)
[St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative](#)
[Save Maumee Grassroots Organization](#)
[Wabash River Defenders](#)

Click the map to
view a larger version
on our website





HOW TO SUPPORT NEIWT



Join Us! We're looking for new members!

Are you passionate about our natural water trails? Do you have skills that could help us meet our mission? Do you want to help out at our events? Email us at neiwatertrails@gmail.com and find out how you can become part of our team!



**Click the logo to become
an official NEIWT supporter!
Show your support with a sticker
on your car, bottle, or boat!**

We are now offering NEIWT Supporter stickers for donors who contribute at least \$250 to our organization. Of course, it will be fun to show off your expensive new sticker, but being a supporter is so much more! It provides fuel for the organization to continue its mission of increasing access to and safety of paddle sports on 566 miles of flowing water in NE Indiana by underwriting our costs for computer services, keeping our website going, and providing support for our staff. This is just one small way that we can say "THANK YOU!"

Become a sponsor of Pedal Paddle Play!

Your company can sponsor our annual Pedal Paddle Play event and have your logo placed on signs, banners, pamphlets, shirts, on our website, social media, and in this newsletter! We offer three different levels of exposure for sponsors, each for a great value.

Click here to view the fillable [Pedal Paddle Play sponsorship form!](#)

[Click here to donate any amount you'd like! Every dollar counts! THANK YOU!](#)



The Northeast Indiana Water Trails is a regional partnership working to increase recreation opportunities on our waterways by promoting boat access, water safety and stewardship, and the development of regional water trails that will empower our citizens to become more active and unified.

