

## Open Streams Management Workshop

At the end of the last Ice Age when glaciers melted off the landscape, current Shelby County rivers were born. Glacial meltwater formed channels that we recognize today as the Big Blue and Little Blue Rivers. Prehistoric folks probably didn't care much if the river meandered or beavers cut logs to alter the flow. However today, many landowners care very much if the river starts to change direction, especially if it eats away the edge of their cornfield or causes the streambank to slump in front of their house.

Obstructions caused by logjams are one reason why river flow patterns change. Sometimes landowners want to clear logjams to prevent damage to their property, but they've heard confusing information about what can be done and what permits are required. So some people do nothing, hoping the next flood will take out the jam. This technique is usually disappointing. Others joke that they might sneak out at night and quietly remove the logjam so people in authority don't see. This attitude is also based on insufficient or incorrect information. The best results come from removing logjams when they are small using the proper equipment and techniques.

That's why the Little Blue River Watershed Project along with the Rush, Shelby and Hancock County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Purdue Cooperative Extension, and Clean Water Indiana have teamed up to sponsor a free Open Streams Management Workshop to be held Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 PM, at the Manilla Fire Station community room just east of Manilla on State Road 44.

George Bowman, Assistant Director, Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Division of Water, is the featured speaker at the workshop. He will discuss the different classifications of logjams and what procedures are recommended if removal is desired. The primary message for the evening will be to encourage landowners to practice good stewardship by taking care of problems when they are small rather than letting a logjam grow into a serious obstruction. Usually category one, two and in some cases category three logjams don't require an IDNR permit, although notification by the landowner is requested.

Some of the questions that will be answered at the workshop include:

- When a tree falls into the river, should it be removed as soon as possible?
- Is it legal to clear a pile of logs and debris that is causing the river to leave its channel?
- Which situations need a permit and which ones don't?
- What equipment and techniques should be used?
- How do I apply for a permit if it is needed?

There will be plenty of time for individual questions, too. All interested people are welcome to attend. No prior registration is required. Light refreshments will be served. For more information contact the Shelby County SWCD at 317-392-1394 x 3 or visit [www.shelbycountyswcd.org](http://www.shelbycountyswcd.org).