

## Appendix 2: Listening Session Input

Listening sessions were held throughout the watershed to notify residents about the planning process, to introduce the topic of watershed management, and to solicit input. Sessions were held as follows:

March 10, 2014	Stanhope Community Center
March 11, 2014	Gilbert City Hall
March 13, 2014	Iowa State University (Squaw Creek Watershed Coalition)
April 28, 2014	Ames City Hall
April 29, 2014	Iowa State University

The input received at the listening sessions can be generalized as to falling into the following five major categories;

- **Coordination and Partnerships** – Residents feel it is important to recognize that there are many other entities involved in conservation efforts in the watershed and that coordinating efforts was important.
- **Current Watershed Management Efforts** – Residents felt that there was already a great deal of progress being made towards enacting conservation practices and cleaning up the creeks.
- **Funding/Financing** – The primary concern for residents about any new protection efforts in the watershed was the financial impact.
- **Resource Concerns** – Many specific concerns about the health/safety of the creeks in the watershed were mentioned.
- **Tools/Approaches to Solutions** – The question of ‘how’ can we improve the health of the creeks was commonly raised.

### Coordination and Partnerships

Comment	Session
Need to coordinate with existing NRCS assistance programs.	Gilbert
Requirements of federal programs can be an obstacle for some conservation practices	Gilbert
Important to recognize the authority of Drainage District.	Gilbert
Addressing stream erosion on own is difficult because of permit fees and requirements of NRCS	Gilbert
FSA is doing a great deal but can't help in low production areas; away from field, i.e. timber pasture areas.	Gilbert
Watershed Authority could help bridge gap where other programs don't apply	Gilbert
Important for Ag and urban areas to understand what each other are doing in terms of conservation. Suggest a tour	Gilbert
Having a watershed coordinator would be helpful	Gilbert

Comment	Session
Important role for WMA would be to build partnerships and provide support for willing landowners	Gilbert
Important for WMA to not overlap with other organizations	Gilbert
Hamilton County has the most drainage districts in the country	Stanhope
Drainage Districts assess for maintenance and improvements that are made. Not an annual tax	Stanhope
I-DNR does not do a good job with conservation practices on their land	Stanhope
Important that the WMA work with people not fight with them	Stanhope
Important to work together	Stanhope
Importance of working with areas that are not currently covered by an assistance program	Stanhope
Need to work with other agencies	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important of partnering and multi-agency agreements	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important to have a coordinator for multiple agencies and groups in the watershed	Squaw Creek Coalition
Plan must have buy-in across the watershed for the WMA to be successful and long-lasting	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important to have crossover between farmers, rural and urban residents	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important to engage landowners and renters of ag lands	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important to make face to face contact with people to engage them and encourage them to try new things	Squaw Creek Coalition
Partnering will be critical to success	Ames
Importance of bridging gaps where NRCS funding is not available - conservation on non-ag areas	Ames
Importance of local groups versus large entities like NRCS	Ames
Hamilton County has over300 drainage districts and no rural zoning.	Ames
Researchers at Iowa state willing to assist in technical work, specifically modeling and addressing groundwater	ISU
Importance of coordinating and learning from other WMAs throughout state	ISU
Partnering will be critical to success	ISU
ISU is an MS4 and has their own requirements and programs for stormwater management	ISU
“Authority” in name of organization is concerning	Ames/Stanhope

## Current Watershed Management Efforts

Comment	Session
Lawn care practices play a role in nutrients getting to stream but are not regulated; Ames has been working with lawn care professionals	Gilbert
Farmers are currently asked to meet Nutrient Reduction Strategy to comply with farm programs eligibility	Stanhope
Iowa is looked at as a leader in the area of Nutrient Reduction Strategies	Stanhope
Farmers are very conscious about the amount of nutrients they put on their land.	Stanhope
There is a CREP wetland for Nitrate removal in Northern Boone County	Stanhope
Farmers in the area are already doing a great deal of things to prevent nutrients from washing into stream	Stanhope
People want to be recognized for what they've been doing already	Stanhope
Some farmers are using "stabilized nitrogen" that holds in the soil better	Stanhope
Ag retailers are working with farmers to meet nutrient reduction goals.	Stanhope
Similar effort in the Boone Watershed has caused a mind shift; credit given to monitoring to demonstrate benefits	Ames
City of Ames is working hard to make improvements to the creek	Ames
City of Ames adopted post-construction stormwater rules recently that include requirements for water quality treatment, rate and volume control, soil management	Ames
City of Ames has been actively implementing stormwater BMPs; bio-retention, raingardens, pervious pavement, rainbarrel program, planting natives	Ames
City encourages use of green infrastructure	Ames
Ames has low impact design alternative for sensitive areas	ISU
Pervious pavements have been installed within the City of Ames and have held up well to snow plowing	ISU

## Funding/Financing

Comment	Session
Financial and/or technical assistance should be available to help landowners stabilize stream on their property	Gilbert
Important to identify future funding sources and position the WMA to be a competitive for them	Gilbert
Solutions need to be cost effective and sustainable	Gilbert
Crop and livestock production should be prioritized in the plan	Stanhope

Comment	Session
Need to have a cost benefit analysis done for conservation practices	Stanhope
Need to consider that the value of land changes day to day	Stanhope
Concern that the Plan could eventually lead to taxation	Stanhope
Concern that local tax money may be used for watershed program	Stanhope
Concern that Plan money could have been better spent	Stanhope
Costs for implementing practices need to be covered	Squaw Creek Coalition
Could City of Ames money be spent up in the watershed	Squaw Creek Coalition
How will WMA be sustained financially after plan is developed	Squaw Creek Coalition
Finding financing for the plan needs to be a priority	Squaw Creek Coalition
Importance of looking for cost share programs and funding opportunities	Ames
Funding opportunities need to be exploredm for example Iowa Code 418	Ames
WMA should be more successful in getting grants and funding than the individual members	ISU

## Resource Concerns

Comment	Session
Bank erosion on North Onion Creek	Gilbert
Large storm events washed down woody material; causes log jams and local damage	Gilbert
Concern about potential impact of cornstover removal - less residue left on fields	Gilbert
Concern about building within the floodplain	Gilbert
Building within the floodplain led to flooding problems	Stanhope
Concerned that the primary focus of the WMA is flood control NOT water quality	Stanhope
Recognize need to stabilize creek banks	Stanhope
Important to separate flooding issues from water quality issues	Stanhope
Farmers are interested in reducing nutrients but not flow of water	Stanhope
Brookside Park is an important area to the community	Squaw Creek Coalition
Wildlife buffer strips are important	Squaw Creek Coalition
More areas of the stream could be used for fishing if quality was improved	Squaw Creek Coalition
Game fishing and aquatic recreation are important	Squaw Creek Coalition
Need to consider the value of ecological diversity and habitat for birds, and pollinating insects	Squaw Creek Coalition

Canoeing used to be common in Northridge Heights but increased bank erosion and related tree-fall has limited opportunity. Would use more if creek were 'cleaned up'	Ames
Meandering of the stream is natural and important	Ames
Ditching and connection of stormsewer is not helping flooding	Ames
Streambank erosion is an issue for smaller farmers	ISU
Importance of understanding the hydraulics that influence flooding in Ames	ISU
Low base flow conditions having an impact on biological health of streams	ISU

## Tools/Approaches to Solutions

Comment	Session
Concern about potential impact of large "dams" on creek	Gilbert
Need to target strategic areas- model to determine high priority areas and work there first; ag and urban	Gilbert
Concern that best practices be tailored to specific areas not one-size-fits-all approach	Gilbert
Land use policy plans are an important tool for watershed management	Gilbert
Natural background nutrient levels need to be considered	Gilbert
Important to look into the various sources of Bacteria getting into streams	Gilbert
WMA needs to report back on what the plan becomes	Gilbert
Concern that having the plan may put a "bulls-eye" for further enforcement	Gilbert
Farmers do not want to slow water down, they want to drain it off faster so that they can work the soils	Stanhope
Concern that the WMA may be considering a dam that would raise the water table	Stanhope
Concern that drain tiles may become regulated	Stanhope
One size does not fit all when it comes to conservation practices	Stanhope
There are a lot of opportunities for people to do "one more thing"	Stanhope
Education is a critical component	Stanhope
Not interested in having a sign at farm stating that they are a certified conservation farmer	Stanhope
There needs to be more education and outreach to help people understand the watershed and their role in its quality	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important to be able to demonstrate the benefits of conservation practices	Squaw Creek Coalition

Comment	Session
Important that accurate information is delivered to residents of the watershed	Squaw Creek Coalition
Demonstration projects would be a valuable tool in gaining acceptance of conservation practices	Squaw Creek Coalition
Need to monitor the effectiveness of conservation practice	Squaw Creek Coalition
Dry basins should be considered as an option for capturing and storing heavy rainfalls	Squaw Creek Coalition
Would like to see the lower portion of the creek reshaped from Duff to mouth to lower flood levels but also to improves wildlife and quality of stream	Squaw Creek Coalition
Important to state what the goals of the WMA are and what activities will be used to meet those goals	Squaw Creek Coalition
Reduction in fertilizer and other chemical use should be a priority	Squaw Creek Coalition
Voluntary actions are not likely to make a difference, regulation will be needed	Ames
Encourage conducting field trips so ag and urban practices can be shared - see what each other are doing	Ames
Flood improvement project in City includes increasing capacity through Hwys 30 and 35	Ames
City is committed to work with their residents to install conservation practices	Ames
Additional, improved monitoring is needed to establish impairment on Squaw and tributaries	Ames
Important to determine priority areas throughout the watershed, both ag and urban and site appropriate practices accordingly	ISU
The Ames surface water management ordinance ordinance should be expanded to all of the developed/developing parts of the watershed	ISU
Groundwater/surface water interaction is important to understand.	ISU
CREP wetlands are a critical tool for reducing nitrate and there is room to build more in the watershed	ISU