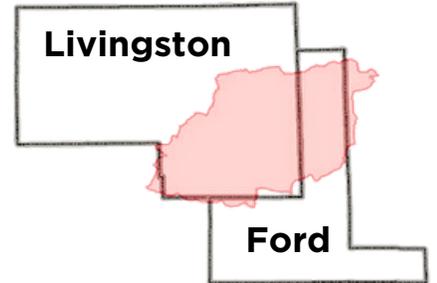


# VERMILION HEADWATERS COVER CROPS

The headwaters of the Vermilion-Illinois River Basin drain over 254,000 acres of Ford and Livingston Counties. These acres form the Vermilion Headwaters Watershed (VHW) which was identified by the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (IL NLRS) as one of the highest non-point source nitrogen (N) loading watersheds in Illinois. Farmers in the region are already responsible land stewards but meeting the water quality goals set by the IL NLRS will require management changes on nearly all farmed acres across the state.

Scan to learn more & see our new Watershed Plan!



The producers, ag professionals, area residents, government and non-profit agencies that comprise the VHW Partnership are working to increase the health of our local soils and streams. Planting cover crops is one of the most efficient management options for increasing soil health while decreasing nutrient and soil loss from fields. Read on to see how you can maximize the on-farm benefits of cover crops for your operation!

## MAXIMIZING COVER CROPS BENEFITS ABOVEGROUND...



### Soil Temperature & Moisture Regulation

Soils insulated by residues and living covers are more resistant to temperature fluctuations, reducing stress on plant and microbial communities and loss of soil moisture through evaporation.



### Reduced Soil Loss from Wind & Water

Cereal rye cover crops planted after corn and soybean harvest have proven effective in reducing sediment in runoff water by over 60%!



### Winter Annual & Early Season Weed Suppression

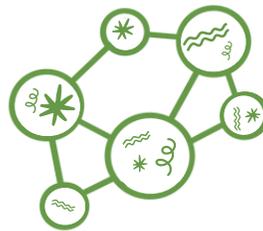
Species capable of producing high amounts of biomass provide the highest potential for weed suppression. Early planting and delayed termination of overwintering cover crops increases biomass and provides more effective weed control.

## ...AND BELOWGROUND



### Improved Soil Structure

Formation of stable soil aggregates offers increased infiltration and water storage capacity, enhanced ability to resist compaction and erosion, and protection of soil organic matter.



### Increased Diversity of Soil Biological Communities

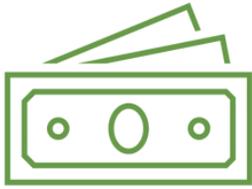
Living roots provide an energy source for soil organisms. Soil biodiversity enhances productivity by reducing pest pressures, improving nutrient cycling, and contributing to disease suppression.



### Nutrient Capture & Availability

Living roots scavenge residual soil nutrients through the fall, preventing nutrients from leaching out of the soil profile and keeping valuable nutrients in the field, making them available for following crops.

# MAXIMIZING YOUR RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Economic returns from cover crops are generated most rapidly in fields where soil organic matter content has been depleted. If you are new to covers, start in low yielding fields with oats or cereal rye as these species deliver the highest biomass return for seed investment.

## COVER CROP RESOURCES

RESOURCES (LOCATION)	CONTACT	Cover Crop Services		
		Cover Crop Seed	Broadcast Seeding	Custom Application
Brandt (Fairbury)	Brad Schmidgall		*	
Nutrien Ag Solutions (Fairbury)	Matt Durdan		*	
Evergreen FS, Inc. (Forrest)	Matt Thomas	*	*	
Ifft Yorkshires (Fairbury)	Jim Ifft	*		*
Evergreen FS, Inc. (Cullom)	Glenn Zehr	*	*	
Nutrien Ag Solutions (Saunemin)	Eric Green	*	*	
Proharvest Seed (Flanagan)	Jay Whalen	*		
Proharvest Seed (Ashkum)	Doug Hanson	*		
Full Throttle Ag Service (Milford)	Trenton Carley	*		*
Saddle Butte (Princeville)	Eric Green	*		
Sun Ag, Inc. (Cullom)	George Mayo		*	



*Did you know? Cover crops can reduce nitrate loss from farm fields by 30%, with some studies demonstrating a nitrate reduction from cereal rye over 60%. Cereal rye cover crops can increase water infiltration by over 40% during rainfall events!*

For more information about the VHW Partnership and how you can get involved please contact:



farmland.org

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VERMILION HEADWATERS  
WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP