

Finding community solutions to Indiana’s water pollution

The study of fertilizer and animal waste runoff from farm or livestock operations may not typically excite students. But when students understand the challenges this and other non-point source water pollution pose to our communities – and have the opportunity to connect with students in other districts and community experts to learn about environmental science – excitement is keen.

“A Community Solution to Pollution” Vista brings students from six schools who are studying a variety of water pollution problems in dialogue with experts in the field. They tackle questions such as: How much will it cost? Will the solution meet federal and local laws and guidelines? How long will it take? When will we see results?

After researching their topics using videoconferencing and other types of communications technology, students form recommended community solutions that take into account financial considerations. Each group presents



its recommendations to a panel of policymakers, environmental and community organizations, and scholars. As a result, students are empowered to improve their community, their environment, and their future.



“Students become empowered, and communities across Indiana will benefit from improved water quality and community relationships.”
 – Indiana State Museum

Impact on Learning

- n Students use critical thinking and problem solving to determine the value of an idea to them personally.
- n Students have greater opportunity to recall real-life situations that relate to their lesson of study.
- n The Vista process challenges students to justify their ideas and reasoning strategies.
- n Vista investigations help students determine the value of an idea to them, personally.

Event Stats

Number of participating students110
 Number of participating schools6
 Community partners:
 Center for Earth and Environmental Science (IUPUI), Fairholme Farms, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Indiana State Museum, former First Lady of Indiana Judy O’Bannon, Project Wet, Nature Conservancy