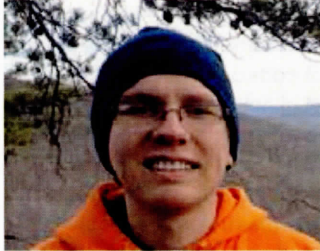

PUBLIC POLICY STUDENT, CHANCE FINEGAN ASSISTS IN SECURING THE MILLER CREEK WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT GRANT



Chance Finegan, an intern with the Waterloo Black Hawk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and MPP student, recently helped secure the Miller Creek Water Quality Improvement Project Grant.

Finegan, a soil conservation aide with SWCD, served as the

primary grant writer and project coordinator for the grant which aims at increasing the adoption of conservation practices on local farms, in turn improving water quality. The grant, funded by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship's Iowa Water Quality Initiative (IDALS), provides nearly \$500,000 for the project over the next three years. The Initiative was announced by Gov. Terry Branstad in 2013 as part of the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy, designating eight priority watersheds across Iowa for immediate attention and the creation of watershed demonstration projects.

Working to secure the grant involved not only extensive effort, time and energy from Finegan but also from the SWCD and commissioners, IDALS staff, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as well as private landowners. The funding Finegan helped secure will primarily be used to serve the southern portion of Black Hawk County. It will address the challenge of improving water quality by demonstrating the installation and effectiveness of conservation practices through the use of a demonstration watershed. The ultimate goal is to foster adoption of conservation practices on farms in the area. Secured funding will also introduce an innovative education campaign featuring a digital learning

commons, social media efforts, quarterly webinars, workshops, and networking events.

Finegan completed his undergraduate coursework at the University of Tennessee at Martin in natural resources management. His background is primarily in natural and cultural heritage interpretation. The Miller Creek grant is Finegan's first introduction to grant-writing and he attributes his graduate coursework as preparing him for his internship with the SWCD. Finegan specifically cites Dr. Chris Larimer's course on public policy process as a major factor in his ability to examine literature and discover new, innovative ways of designing this conservation program.

Currently Chance is working with Dr. Leisl Carr-Childers in the history department and researching public lands history in Alaska, specifically the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and the impact it has had on the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

More information about the Miller Creek Water Quality Improvement Project can be found at:

- <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/press/2013press/press12062013.asp>
- <http://www.cleanwateriowa.org>
- <http://www.nutrientstrategy.iastate.edu/>
- <http://www.cleanwateriowa.org/farm-practices.aspx>

On behalf of the Graduate College, we would like to congratulate Chance for all his success!