

## VU BIOLOGY CLUB ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT

The environmental action of the biology club has primarily focused on trout stream restoration projects. While it is not widely known, there are indeed several cold water fisheries within an hour's drive of Valparaiso offering sustainable populations of brown trout. Two locations where we have frequently worked are Cobis Creek and Dowiagiak Creek. These projects are conducted with Mr. Joseph Mitchell (CEO of Rivertenders, who has obtained all the necessary state permits) and often with the Elkhart Conservation Club, a non-profit citizens group which runs a trout hatchery providing Indiana with tens of thousands of trout fingerlings annually. Our restorations are typically a day-long project involving a small group of students working to improve the conditions of one of these streams. This may include relocating debris, removing garbage, and lining the banks with pine trees or stones to redirect the flow of the water to increase the stream depth and speed, making it more habitable for fish. Since 1998, our club has participated in a restoration at least once a semester. Recently, the club has been approved to adopt a portion of the Little Kankakee River under the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Hoosier Riverwatch program. Adoption of the Little Kankakee will involve at least four visits by the biology club per year to monitor the chemical and biological quality of the stream with water monitoring equipment provided by the IDNR. The club intends to implement restoration projects at this new location as well. This undertaking should provide more opportunities for student involvement and awareness of the local environmental conditions and stream ecosystems.

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