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What Motivates Landowners to Maintain Best Management Practices?

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Abstract:

There has been a lot of work focusing on the adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs). Installing a BMP, however, is only the first step towards mitigating the effects of nonpoint source (NPS) pollution. Because of its diffuse nature, NPS pollution generally takes a long time to degrade an aquatic system. It can take decades for an effective BMP to facilitate the restoration of a waterway. The BMP must be functional during this entire period, which requires maintenance. It is this upkeep that is overlooked in the BMP literature.

Working in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management and the Indiana Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, we identified landowners who installed vegetative BMPs on their property between 1990 and 2004. Extending the work of the EPA Region 5 Social Indicator Team to BMP maintenance, I surveyed these individuals in order to measure their awareness, attitudes, constraints, capacity, and behaviors intended to reduce NPS pollution.

Impact Statement:

The end result is a framework that can help explain why some landowners take better care for their BMPs than others.

Category: Human Dimensions

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