

WHAT IS AN OXBOW?

An oxbow is a meander of a stream that has been cut off from the present flow of water. Over time oxbows fill in with sediment and lose the benefits they once provided.



A river meander along White Fox Creek, a tributary of the Boone River, in the 1950's



The same location in 2008, the meander has been abandoned by the river and the oxbow has silted in.



The same location in 2013, after the oxbow has been restored.

BENEFITS:

- Improved water quality:

- Oxbows can remove an estimated **45-90% of the nitrates**



from intercepted tile water.

- Floodwater storage:

- Each oxbow provides an estimated **250,000 gallons of flood water** storage each year.

- Wildlife habitat:

- Critical habitat for the rare and endangered Topeka shiner minnow.

- **Thousands of fish** representing **23 species** of fish have been found utilizing restored oxbow habitat.



- **54 species of birds** have been identified at restored oxbows., 9 of which would not have been present at unrestored oxbows.



RESTORATION:

- Excavate soil to historic riverbed depth.
- Re-slope and re-seed banks.
- Average surface area size of 1/4 acre.
- Typically located in low lying wet areas not currently in production.
- Reconnect to river only during floods.

