



**ISA's Multi-level Approach** | *zeroing in on water quality solutions through water quality monitoring*

ISA has been sampling water quality in Iowa for several years, most intensively in the Raccoon and Des Moines River watersheds. The work is at the foundation of a multi-level approach to improving water quality.

**Level One** | *data collection in large watersheds*

Baseline data is collected in large watersheds. This helps identify baseline conditions throughout larger watersheds and helps target sub-watersheds for monitoring and program implementation.

**Level Two** | *scaling down the focus*

Specific water quality concerns are identified from trends and possible emerging target areas. Data is gathered more intensively in sub-watersheds and also starts looking at possible management changes that could impact water quality.

**Level Three** | *identifying and implementing solutions*

Paired micro-watershed analysis begins, where the environmental performance of different management strategies (such as conservation tillage, controlled drainage, improved nitrogen management efficiency, or cover crops) is evaluated in pairs of similar 600-1,000-acre micro-watersheds. Water monitoring is conducted over several years providing data to evaluate the performance and ecological value of the tested practice(s) under local conditions.