



Rock River Reflections

A publication of the Rock River Coalition in cooperation with the Rock River Stormwater Group and the University of Wisconsin-Extension

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Zeloski Marsh Fall Update

By Jeanne Scherer

The Rock River Coalition has wrapped up several activities at Zeloski Marsh for 2012, but life in the marsh is anything but quiet as we slip into fall. Our citizen scientists have completed surveys monitoring frogs, dragonflies, and plants. However, with migrations underway, Zeloski Marsh is alive with birds that stop to feed as they move through southern Wisconsin.

Until the water freezes, we'll be taking water quality measurements. AND a "Boots on the Ground" call is also going out for ongoing monitoring assistance.

The bird team led by Brad Webb will continue monthly counts as long as the weather and trail conditions allow. In December, consider participating in the Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count

drought impacts it will be interesting to repeat sampling during all four months next year.

If you have your "Boots on the Ground" at Zeloski Marsh, consider sharing your sightings of wildlife. Technically, it should be boots and rubber on the ground, since anyone hunting, hiking or biking the area may participate. There are so many interesting species that live in or visit Zeloski Marsh, and we'd like to know about all of them, not just those on the current monitoring agenda. Participate by emailing Jeanne at wetlands@rockrivercoalition.org information about what you've seen. Photos and GPS data are very useful. If sending photos, please indicate if RRC has your permission to use them for Facebook and RRC publications, including press releases. Photo credits will be given.

As of September 25th, we have had 275.5 hours contributed by our 27 current volunteers and 34 hours donated by three professionals at Zeloski Marsh.



Madeline Dexter, UW-Whitewater student and Dr. Nicholas Tippery, UW-Whitewater Biology Department Botanist.

Photo by Jeanne Scherer

(CBC) on December 14th. The marsh is included in the Waterloo Circle. In the past, CBC counts at Zeloski Marsh were used for the December count. Karen Etter Hale is the coordinator for this event. Contact her at 920-648-8195 or chimneyswift1@frontier.com if you would like to count in the marsh or other local areas. To participate during other months, contact Jeanne Scherer, 920-382-6123 or wetlands@monitoring.com. Dates will also be announced on the RRC Facebook page.

Water monitoring was conducted in July and will be done again in November to replicate pre-restoration monitoring. The data in 2005 included May, June, July and November. Due to possible



Eagle Scout Aaron Wendt created a Zeloski Marsh bird list in July and put the boxes up at each of the parking lots. The list is also available online at <http://www.lakemills.org/>. Aaron is planning on continuing to support his project for the next 3 years while in High School. After that, the LM Chamber of Commerce will take it over.

Photo by Kristi Wendt

Frog data for 2012 was submitted to the DNR in July. You can explore birding data by visiting eBird.org and searching Lake Mills, WI or Lake Mills SWA. Dragonfly data will be added to the Wisconsin Odonata Survey at <http://wiatri.net/inventory/odonata/>. The method of sharing plant survey data is still being developed. Thank you to everyone who has participated so far in 2012!



The September Rock River SWEEP was a success from the headwaters of the Rock down to its confluence with the Mississippi. Picking up in Beloit is Mike Ramsden (L) and Mike Peterson (R) in the boat and Dillion Marshall on shore. See Page 4 for more photos.

Photo by Sheila DeForest.

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Rock River Coalition President's Message

Working with a multitude of partners is an integral part of the Rock River Coalition's mission to improve the Rock River Basin. Even our mission (found in the sidebar to the right) underscores the role of partnerships to the RRC as we strive to "bring people together of diverse interests." Because it is part of our every day work, it is unfortunately all too easy to take these partnerships for granted.

So, I want to highlight the importance of partnerships to our organization.

The newsletter you are now reading is a product of a crucial partnership. Rock River Stormwater Group and the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX) help fund the production and mailing of this newsletter as we work hard to provide you with basin news and programs.

Our stream and wetland monitoring programs work in collaboration with a variety of entities to ensure that our volunteer citizen monitors have the training, equipment, and support that they need to gather and document vital data.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and UWEX are our primary partners, but many others partners contribute to making the monitoring programs a success. Nancy Sheehan and Jeanne Scherer have been working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, University of Wisconsin-Madison, county Land & Water Conservation Departments, city sewerage districts and many other water resource organizations.

Certainly much of our work could not be done without a variety of funders including the Quirk Foundation, Wisconsin Energy Foundation, Alliant Energy Foundation, UWEX and DNR.

But there are also entities who work with us on implementing our grant-funded projects including Town and County RC&D, U.S. Geological Survey, and the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge to name a few.

Perhaps our most valuable partnership is with our members. Our members have a passion for the Rock River Basin that fuels our board and staff to make our existing programs the best

they can be and also to constantly search for new ways to improve the economic, environmental, cultural, and recreational resources of the Rock River Basin.

Member dues and donations are the foundation of sustaining our work. Without this support, we would not be able to continue our volunteer monitoring programs, host the Send Your Legislator Down the River event, hold the biennial Confluence of citizen monitors, search and apply for grants, and produce new ideas for improving the basin.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank all of our members and partners for their dedication to the Rock River Basin!

If you would like to learn how you can partner with the Rock River Coalition, please contact me at 920-674-7121 or patricia@rockrivercoalition.org.

Patricia Cicero,
RRC President



Rock River Coalition Board Welcomes Karla Eggink

The Rock River Coalition is delighted to welcome Karla Eggink, administrator for the Walworth County Metropolitan Sewerage District, to the Rock River Coalition board. Karla has spent almost thirty years in the wastewater treatment industry from plant operator to system administrator.

She is currently involved with implementation of the TMDL for the Rock River and evaluating the best way local wastewater treatment facilities can meet the limits set out in the Rock River TMDL; but most importantly how the implementation will meet the goal of a Rock River that meets its designated use.

Karla developed a love and fascination with creeks and ponds growing up in central Minnesota.

Karla's knowledge and experience will be a significant asset to the Coalition.

The Rock River Coalition 2012 Board.

Back row, left to right: Joleen Stinson, Karla Eggink, Scott Taylor and James Kerler.

Front row, left to right: Suzanne Wade, Jane Carlson, and Patricia Cicero. Not pictured: Jim Koepke.

Photo by Gail Roberts



Global Resources, Our Responsibility

By Lisa Conley, Town and Country RC&D

Wisconsin embraces the headwaters of some of the world's greatest freshwater resources – the upper Great Lakes and the mighty Mississippi. I hope you feel as passionately as I do that we have a responsibility to protect these global and critically important water resources where they begin, here in Wisconsin.

The mining bill that was defeated by only one vote in the past legislative session would have put more mercury in our air, polluted drinking water, weakened wetland protections, threatened tribal wild rice beds, reduced local financial benefits from mining operations and weakened the ability of the public to be heard as the permits are developed that will certainly change their communities and those downstream.

Mining is a messy business, but our current mining laws have enabled mines in our state to be operated, closed, and the land restored to good use. The kind of closed door, fast tracked bill proposed in the last session is bad both in terms of policy and process - we deserve better from our elected officials. -continued on page 7



Mission

"To educate and bring together people of diverse interests to protect and improve the economic, environmental, cultural, and recreational resources of the Rock River Basin in Wisconsin"

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Next deadline is January 4, 2013.

A letter-sized color version of this newsletter is available at www.rockrivercoalition.org.

Sign up for a monthly email update at <https://lists.uwex.edu/mailman/listinfo/rock-river-basin-update>.

Contact Marie Rubietta at marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov if you'd prefer a pdf of the newsletter emailed to you.

RRC is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, providing equal opportunity in employment & programming.

TTY: 711 for Wisconsin Relay

If you need special accommodation for programs please contact the RRC at least two weeks in advance.

Rock River Water Trail Inventory, Analysis and Plan Complete

By Greg Farnham Wisconsin RRTI Coordinator

The summer newsletter described efforts by the Rock River Trail Initiative (RRTI) to create a plan for the Rock River Water Trail. The water trail is one of three trails planned for the initiative; the other two include a bike and hike trail and a scenic and historic automobile route along highways in proximity of the river through Wisconsin and Illinois.

The Rock River Water Trail Inventory, Analysis and Plan was completed in August. The plan describes a vision for the water trail and unifies under the service mark ROCK RIVER WATER TRAILSM a framework for identifying suitable carry-in access sites and boat launches, parks, campsites and cultural facilities that enhance the water trail experience. The plan addresses water trail and corridor management needs, dam safety, opportunities for connecting with other regional trail systems and approaches to marketing and promoting the water trail.

A unique element of the plan is a consistent set of standards developed to identify segments of the river with common characteristics and facilities and to link each segment with an appropriate water trail experience. The set of skill level and environmental type for each water trail segment provides to users an easy way of selecting routes that meet their needs and interest and match their abilities and expectations.

The plan recognizes the Rock River Water Trail as a recreation resource for many users in addition to those with paddle craft. Users of motorized boats for pleasure cruising, water skiing, fishing and hunting; boaters who wish to access parks and overnight camping sites from the river; and individuals accessing the river shore for fishing, bird watching or hiking will all benefit from a water trail plan for the Rock River.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Beloit opening of the Rock River Water Trail. From left, Brigit Brown, WDNR State Trails Coordinator; Sheila DeForest, Beloit City Councilor and member of RRTI Council; Mark Spreitzer, Beloit City Councilor; and Brian Ramsey, Parks & Leisure Services Director, City of Beloit.

Photo by Mark Preuschl

The plan was presented to the Wisconsin and Illinois Departments of Natural Resources and the National Park Service for review. The RRTI Council is currently preparing an application to the National Park Service for consideration of the Rock River Water Trail under the new National Water Trails System established as part of a federal effort under America's Great Outdoors Initiative of 2010.

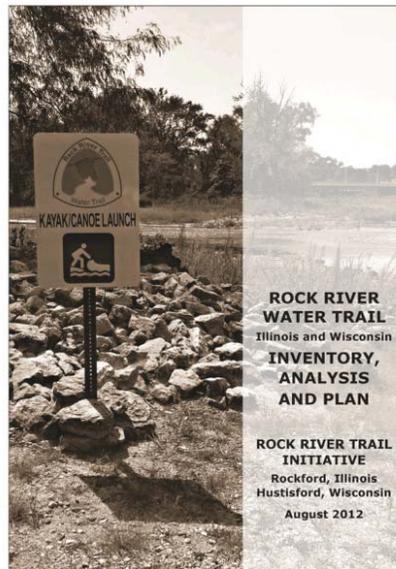
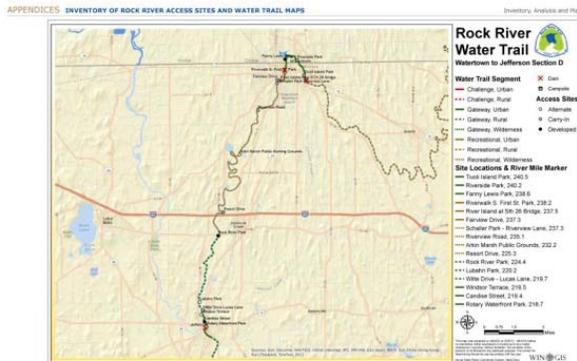
The six Wisconsin sections of the water trail have been officially

opened with ceremonies at the major river communities. The last trail opening ceremony was held in Beloit on September 12th and included state Senator Tim Cullen and Brigit Brown, WDNR state trails coordinator.

A copy of the plan can be viewed at www.rockrivertrail.com. The inventory of access sites is posted separately on the website so a paddler planning a trip can download just the river segment needed.

The plan has detailed maps of the various sections, shown below is the Watertown to Jefferson segment.

To the right, the cover of the report. Download a copy of the report at www.rockrivertrail.com.



Rock River Recovery Education & Outreach Plan

The Rock River TMDL Education and Outreach team is wrapping up the draft of that section of the Rock River Recovery Plan.

The purpose of the Education and Outreach section is to assist in the communication, coordination and implementation of educational efforts leading to improved water quality in the Rock River Basin.

Primarily the plan addresses educational needs to achieve the reductions in phosphorus and total suspended solids as identified in the report and approved by the EPA in 2011: *Total Maximum Daily Loads For Total Phosphorus And Total Suspended Solids In The Rock River Basin*.

This is also known as the Rock River Basin TMDL Report.

The ultimate goal of the Rock River Recovery effort is improvement within the basin for all water resources including wetlands, shorelines, and groundwater, and for basin lakes and rivers to meet their designated uses.

The overall recovery plan is initially driven by reaching permit reduction goals; the education section first addresses educational needs for the regulated community: municipal wastewater treatment plants, municipal separated storm sewer systems (MS4s) and industrial dischargers.

The watershed adaptive management process as a means to reach permit goals provides a path to fishable, swimmable waters never available before. That pathway requires a partnership between agriculture and permittees, primarily wastewater treatment plants. Therefore the second major audience addressed in the plan is agriculture.

Of course a plan of this magnitude can't be successful without a strong base of support. Therefore, a basin-wide outreach effort is also an important component.

Since there are many aspects of implementation still being worked out, this section will remain draft until it is integrated into the full Rock River Recovery effort.

Our goal is to begin the education effort while the remainder of the plan is written.

If you would like an electronic copy of the plan email your request to: suzanne@rockrivercoalition.org.

Rock River Sweep

The Rock River Sweep is a river clean-up conducted in each and every community along the river for its entire 285 miles, reaching from Horicon, Wisconsin to Rock Island, Illinois, simultaneously. To learn more, visit www.rockriversweep.org.

Here are some highlights from the third annual event, which was held September 8th, 2012.



Rockford, IL: Tom Lindblade, President and Safety Chair of the Illinois Paddling Council, organized the Rockford section of the Rock River Sweep. The Rockford section had 30 volunteers with seven boats. They collected 65 trash bags, 38 tires and a large child's ATV for an estimated weight of 2,000 pounds of trash!

Photo by Tom Lindblade



The Sterling Illinois section had 41 volunteers of which 21 were from the Illinois Army National Guard 1644th. Total garbage (not including 52 tires) weighed approximately 5,000 pounds.

Photo by James Marks



From the Beloit, WI SWEEP Above: Seth Birkelo wondering how a pool ladder ended up in the Rock River.

Right: Beloit youth volunteers can't wait to get started picking up trash with their grabbers.

Photos by Sheila DeForest



Left: Mark Paulson examines the chipmunk youth rocker that he pulled from the Rock River. This section had 7 volunteers that collected 17 bags of trash, 2 tires, 2 bikes, 2 partial metal barrels, a child's chipmunk rocker and a baby buggy.

Photos by Joleen Stinson



Rock County, WI clean-up was based out of Happy Hollow Park in Janesville: Right: Amy Friend, Mark Paulson and Billy Froeschner stand proud behind the rubble they collected from the river and shoreline.

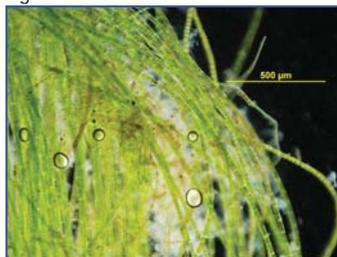
Nutrient Removal with Algae Assist - Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Research

By Beth Gehred, Town & Country RC&D

Town and Country RC&D, headquartered in Jefferson and serving thirteen counties in southeastern Wisconsin, champions ideas that offer solutions to multiple environmental and social challenges.

We favor solutions that solve a multiplicity of problems. In the scientifically grounded language of The Natural Step Sustainability framework, these solutions are labeled synergistic satisfiers. One such synergistic satisfier that Town and Country RC&D has been promoting is the concept of integrating algae cultivation into wastewater treatment, particularly for nutrient removal.

Town and Country RC&D has been working with AlgaXperts, LLC, a small for-profit algae research and engineering firm that believes nutrient removal via algae offers an alternative to conventional technologies such as Bardenpho-5 and MLE. Moreover, algal biomass generated by algae treatment yields biomass that may be converted to value-added products such as biofuel. This concept is slowly becoming mainstream and being adopted by the larger professional wastewater community.



Coarse algae 30000 microns as opposed to 2 - 10 .
Photo courtesy of AlgaXperts

After completing a 2-year R&D project with researchers at UW-Madison, AlgaXperts is collaborating with UW-Milwaukee on piloting an algae nutrient

removal and biofuel system at the Milwaukee Metro Sewerage Department's Jones Island plant. Due to many variables that need to be studied, the pilot plant is expected to operate for 2.5 years.

Inquiries may be addressed to Jun Yoshitani bioandenv@sbcglobal.net.

Monitoring Season Closes

Sadly, October marks the end of our stream monitoring season for most monitors.

Here are a few winter storage tips for Level I stream monitors:

- Do not store your HACH dissolved oxygen kits where they can freeze.
- Check the expiration dates on your chemicals. If they have expired, dispose of them and let me know so I can order replacements before spring.
- If you have a short transparency tube (60 cm), please contact me so we can replace it with a 120 cm tube.
- Rinse your transparency tube and allow it to dry.
See how to make a transparency tube storage sheath: watermonitoring.uwex.edu/pdf/level2/TTubePattern.pdf
- For D-nets, remove the netting and soak in water with a capful of bleach. The nets must be stored clean and dry. Also, re-mark tenths of inch lines, if needed.
- If your kit is older than two years, test your thermometers for accuracy by one of two ways: 1) contact me and we will compare yours with a reliable one that I have, or 2) put your thermometer into ice water, it should read within 2 degrees C of the freezing point of water (0 degrees C), and then into room-temperature water, again compare its reading to the room's temperature.

Thank you Level 2 Monitors: Jeanne Scherer, Samantha Foster, James Kerler, Carl Glassford, Suzanne Wade, Carol Holden and Jeanine Mason. Nancy Sheehan will contact you to retrieve and store your equipment.

Friends of Badfish Creek

A major focus during this busy year was to increase awareness of the Badfish Creek Watershed, with emphasis on local government officials.

We completed the following major milestones this year.

Finalized Communication Materials

- Five-year Strategic Plan
- 2011 Status Report
- Business cards with QR codes containing a link to our website and one to a map
- A local governments insert for our brochure that highlights why they might want to take note.



Reinforce Partnerships

The Dane County Parks and Opens Space (POSP) now includes portions of the Badfish Creek Watershed as a Natural Resource Area.

This will allow protection measures at key points near the creek through such means as land acquisition, financial assistance for conservation practices, and the valuable expertise of professional land managers.

Connect with Rock County

- The Rock County Parks Department agreed to add a FBCW website link, and solicit input from FBCW for their 2014-19 strategic plan. Badfish Creek is already a canoe trail on their Natural Resource map.
- We are working with Joleen Stinson of Rock County Parks and the Town and Country RC&D Invasive Species Issue Team on a Riley Road stop on their May 11, 2013 Wheel Against the Weeds bike tour of invasive species sites.
- Al Sweeney, Rock County Supervisor who lives and farms near Casey Road and Badfish Creek attended a meeting to share what Rock County is doing about invasive species and water quality efforts.

Al was nominated for a Gathering Waters award, is enrolled in Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements Program (PACE), and is on the Town of Porter Plan Commission and a member of the Rock County Land Conservation Committee.

- Members presented to the Land Conservation Committee, giving an overview of the creek and the Friends' efforts to improve and protect the environment

around the creek. We shared the communication materials and showed a Google Earth flyover video.

Contacts with Townships

Members also delivered our communication materials to the townships of Dunkirk, Porter and Union. Presentations were given to Rutland and scheduled for Dunkirk.

Usage Survey (see sidebar)

In order to find out if people know about the Badfish Creek area and its recreational opportunities, how they use it and what, if any, change they'd like to see, we created a survey, the link is on our website at: <http://rockrivercoalition.org/badfish/surveys/>.

We invite you to take the survey even if you are not familiar with the area.

Invasive Plants

The Japanese knotweed at Riley Road Bridge is greatly reduced because of our stem injections and foliar spraying over several years! We also continue to clear wild parsnip at the popular Old Stone Road canoe landing.

Adopt a Highway

Our second 2012 Adopt-a-Highway cleanup is scheduled for October 27.

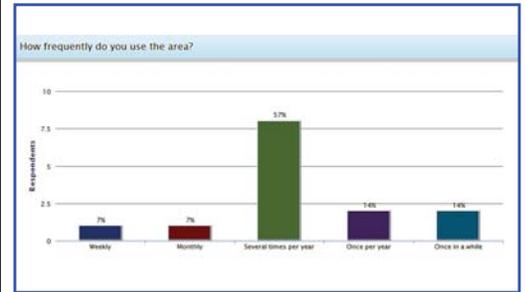
Potential Recreational Plan

Jim Danky and Lynne Diebel met with Professor John Harrington, UW Landscape Architecture, to discuss his class possibly creating a recreational plan for the Badfish, which could be presented to Chris James of Dane County and other officials.

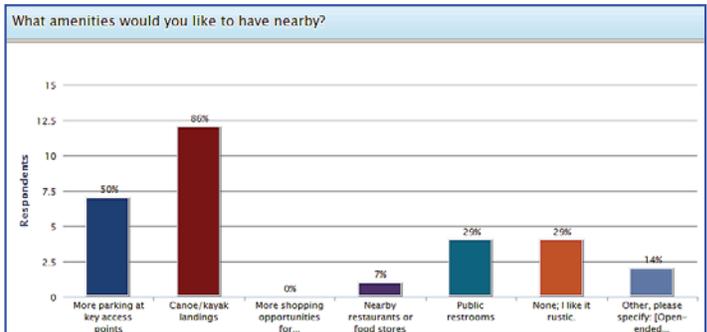
Badfish Creek Usage Survey Results as of September 2012

While the number of completed surveys is modest to date, the Friends of Badfish Creek are already gaining insight and making contact with participants. The challenge will be to improve access while retaining the wild and rustic nature of the creek. It is our hope that as more people become aware of and appreciate the creek, they will be willing to take steps to enhance the watershed as a whole and preserve this wonderful resource in Southern Wisconsin.

Here we share some of the more interesting responses.



Rank the qualities that are most important to you when deciding where to go for recreation						
	1 - Not Important	2 - Least Important	3 - Neutral	4 - Somewhat Important	5 - Most Important	Total
Proximity to home	0 0%	1 6%	0 0%	12 67%	5 28%	18
Novelty/newness	5 29%	2 12%	6 35%	4 24%	0 0%	17
Ease of access	0 0%	1 6%	5 28%	12 67%	0 0%	18
Variety of things to do	3 18%	4 24%	6 35%	4 24%	0 0%	17
Cleanliness	0 0%	0 0%	3 18%	10 59%	4 24%	17
Mostly rustic	0 0%	0 0%	3 17%	8 44%	7 39%	18
Amenities (parking, restrooms, food, etc.)	3 19%	1 6%	7 44%	5 31%	0 0%	16
Total	11	9	30	55	16	121



About RRC Chapters

A RRC Chapter is a non-incorporated group of individuals working towards improving the environmental, economic, cultural or recreational resources within a specific area or watershed in the Basin. The RRC develops a Charter with the interested group establishing roles and responsibilities.

Chapters, while working to make a local difference, are part of well-recognized non-profit receiving administrative support and other benefits. If Chapter members are also RRC members, 25% of their RRC membership dues are designated for the Chapter's use.

Our first chapter is the Friends of Badfish Creek Watershed.

A Day of “Sloughing” on the Bark River

By Dave Marshall and Patricia Cicero



Temporary floodwaters along the Bark River in April will not sustain off-channel fish species.
Photos by Dave Marshall

As part of a state wildlife grant, Rock River Coalition President Patricia Cicero and Treasurer Suzanne Wade joined DNR Fisheries Biologist Laura Stremick-Thompson and Underwater Habitat Investigations LLC aquatic ecologist Dave Marshall on a survey of off-channel fish populations along the Bark River at Princess Point State Wildlife Area.

The goals of the survey included gathering information on off-channel fish populations and environmental conditions in habitats that are rarely sampled. These types of habitats can support a number of rare species in this part of the state including state special concern banded killifish, pugnose shiner, lake chubsucker and least darter.

Our survey was conducted on August 1, 2012, another hot day during a severe drought. The extended drought caused most of the off-channel habitats to dry up and typical off-channel fish populations were either pushed into the channel or perished.

While we didn't find rare fish species during the survey, we found a moderately diverse fish community including bowfin, blackstripe topminnows, pumpkinseed sunfish, orangespotted sunfish, green sunfish, black crappie, bluegill, largemouth bass, brook silverside, emerald shiner, spotfin shiner, bluntnose minnow, golden shiner, brook stickleback, yellow bullhead, white bass and common carp along the banks of the river channel.

We also found one off-channel pond that is artificially managed for wildlife. The water levels in the wildlife pond are maintained with a

berm and water control structure. Unfortunately the off-channel pond was very turbid and was full of common carp. This is a stark contrast to high quality oxbows and sloughs along the Lower Wisconsin River that hold diverse off-channel fish communities and few carp. Recent research has demonstrated that common carp are suppressed in high quality oxbow lakes that intercept groundwater and support diverse aquatic plant communities. To mimic a natural oxbow, this pond could be de-watered to remove carp and then filled and stocked with native off-channel fish species. Once established, the native fishes could suppress carp reproduction if adults enter during flood events. Preventing winterkill conditions would be critical for this management to work.



Slough pirates Laura, Patricia and Suzanne on berm next to wildlife pond.

Overall, off-channel habitats are very scarce along the Bark River and in most other rivers in southern Wisconsin. Floodplain aggradation (sediment deposition) has resulted in incised river channels and most off-channel oxbows and ponds had filled in with sediment. The loss of storage capacity limits fish population survivability both during wintertime and during droughts.

The biodiversity of rivers depend on healthy off-channel habitats such as oxbows, sloughs, delta ponds and beaver ponds. This issue is no less important than managing nutrient levels. There are opportunities for expanding these habitats by selectively excavating former oxbows to the original depths. This effort could reconnect the off-channel habitats with groundwater that is important for sustaining fish populations.

Currently, most oxbows lie perched above the groundwater flows and are susceptible to winterkill and desiccation. Dave Marshall recently completed four years of floodplain lakes surveys and will be preparing a final report documenting the distribution of rare fish extending from the Chippewa River in Pepin County to the Des Plaines River in Kenosha County. The report will contain recommendations for protecting and restoring off-channel habitats that are critical for many rare fish species, other forms of aquatic life and biodiversity of river systems.

For more information, contact Patricia Cicero at patricia@rockrivercoalition.org or 920-674-7121 or Dave Marshall at underh2ohab@mhtc.net.

Stream-side Notes

Nancy Sheehan, RRC Stream Monitoring Coordinator

Fall Monitoring Days

I could not have wished for a better way to spend the recent Rock River Coalition Snapshot Day than at the headwaters of the Rock River, where the South and West branches meet. Thanks to local history experts at Marsh Haven Nature Center, I learned of a Native American fishing weir at my monitoring site, which I now see with new eyes.

If you have an interesting story or photograph from Snapshot Day, please share it with me - and don't forget to enter your data.

September was also a month for a late season training session. Nine participants attended our recent workshop in Cambridge. Janice Redford and Don Nettum – members of the Friends of Cam Rock Park – shared how they have become a voice for Koshkonong Creek. Students from UW-Whitewater, a father and son from Sullivan (Jefferson Co.) and two Madison residents are excited to start stream monitoring in the spring.

Thank you Janice, Don and RRC Board President, Patricia Cicero, for assisting in this workshop.

We also welcome these folks as they join our class of 2012 Level I stream monitoring volunteers: Tim Enright, Jacob Munger, Joe Vance, Erin Olshefski, Mary Ellen Gabriel, Frankie Fuller, Kent Walhberg, Sarah Streed, Kim Ness, Lindsey Schulte, Dea Larsen Converse, Lisa and David Griffin, Jeff Bodendorfer and Nate Glover.

Spring Is Just Around the Corner

More volunteers are needed and always welcome! If you want to learn how to become a stream monitor, please contact me. I am already working on the spring training schedule...stay tuned.

Questions, Concerns, Stories and Photographs to Share

Send them to me at:

Nancy Sheehan: 608-233-7758
monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org

Information for stream monitors, regarding storage of equipment over winter and other important details can be found on page 4.

Water Star Wisconsin Webinar Series Underway

The Municipal Water Resource Management 2012 Webinar Series from Water Star Wisconsin is underway. Eight programs to guide, inspire and recognize Wisconsin Water Star municipalities for exemplary efforts in surface water, groundwater and recreation, with an emphasis on Wisconsin case studies, are being led by Wisconsin professionals and offered conveniently over the lunch hour every other Thursday for the remainder of the year. Viewers can watch from any computer with internet access.

The first three webinars have been attended by over 200 municipal engineers, consultants, DPW staff, DNR staff, educators and others from around the state and beyond interested in protecting and restoring Wisconsin's waters. Real world information about pervious pavement applications, BMP practices for maintenance ponds over the long haul, and an overview of tested leaf and lawn waste disposal strategies has been well-received.

If you missed any of the webinars, archived copies are available with a few clicks of the mouse, at waterstarwisconsin.org.

Registration is free and on-going. To sign up for the series, which is held every other Thursday in October, November and December, go to <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/146709673>. Andy Yencha is the program coordinator. The webinar series is supported by the Wisconsin DNR, UW-Extension, the Rock River Coalition, Town and Country RC&D and others.



Andy Yencha, program coordinator of Water Star

Remaining topics and dates include:



Signs warn of reduced salt use in this area. Photo courtesy of Mark DeVries

The Utility of Stormwater Utilities (Plus Wellhead Protection Incentive Program)

Eric Thompson, of MSA Professional Services; Joe Eichsteadt, Wisconsin Rapids and John Edlebeck, Waupaca. Thurs. Oct. 18, noon - 1 pm

Salt & Deicing that Gets the Job Done & Minimizes Environmental Impact

Ben Jordan, UW-Madison Engineering; Scott Weber, Hanover Park, IL and Moe Norby, Polk County. Thursday Nov. 1, noon - 1 pm



Photo courtesy of Ben Jordan

Waste to Fuel - Energy Capture from Wastewater Treatment

David Botts and Joe Zakovec, Janesville. Thurs. Nov. 15, noon - 1 pm

Illicit Discharge, Detection and Elimination – Guidance from WDNR

Pete Wood and Chuck Boehm, Racine. Thursday Nov. 29, noon - 1 pm

Dam Removal and Maintenance – A Tale of Three Dams

Dave Murphy and Dale Buser, Grafton; and Kent Fish, General Engineering. Thursday Dec. 13, noon - 1 pm

Global Resources, Our Responsibility continued from page 2 by Lisa Conley Town and Country RC&D

It's not over! One or more new mining bills will most probably be introduced in January. The newly re-formed Senate Committee on Mining is thankfully shedding light of day on the issues and discussions that will shape state policy in this critical area.

The recent series of the Senate Mining Law hearings are more interesting and worth listening to, just go to www.wiseye.org and type in "mining" in the search box. I recommend the two sessions on Sept. 20 if you don't have time to see the whole series. They include civil and informative presentations from a number of viewpoints – the Wisconsin Mining Association, the DNR and Army Corps, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, the Great Lakes Intertribal council, electric workers, environmental and business organizations as well as discussion between the Senators themselves.

Did you know that there is both a miner and a sailor on our state flag? It's recognition of our rich heritage of minerals and waters. We need to be sure that our policies to use and protect these resources will grow healthy and prosperous communities long into the future. Elections are coming soon. As voters, we need to elect representatives who will listen to us, and who will shape a future for our state that we can look forward to. You can see how your Senator and Assembly Representative scored on environmental and conservation issues at: <http://conservationvoters.org/index/scorecard>.

Watch Your Government Action! WisconsinEye.org provides live coverage and archived tapes of important legislative sessions, committee meetings and debates – a chance to see your government in action.

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In addition to supporting RRC work, members receive newsletters, notices of conferences, and special events. To become a member, complete the following:

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Affiliates*	\$ 50
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*Includes small businesses, organizations, lake districts, small municipalities and individual municipal departments
 **Covers entire municipality including all departments, administrative staff and elected officials

Any donation or membership of \$150 or more will be recognized and linked to your website from our website: www.rockrivercoalition.org

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Please mail this completed form with check to:

Rock River Coalition
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or register and pay online with PayPal at:

www.rockrivercoalition.org/membership.asp

Send Your Legislator Down the River

The sunset was picturesque, the weather was warm, the water calm and the legislators were well informed and good listeners, all making August's Send Your Legislator Down the River a tremendous success! Legislators included Tammy Baldwin's Field Rep. Helen Forbeck, Senator Mark Miller, Representatives Chris Taylor and Evan Wynn, Monona Mayor Bob Miller, and several Jefferson County board members.



Jeremy Balousek from the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department led an "on-water" discussion on the issues of a narrow railroad crossing at the Yahara River's Upper Mud Lake entrance into Lake Waubesa. This railroad bridge holds back water during flood events, which is one of the water level management challenges for the Yahara chain of lakes. It can also be a navigational problem on busy boating days. The crossing opening will be widened as part of a bike trail that will connect McFarland and Lake Farm Park. This should do two important things, remove the bottleneck for water flowing out of the Madison lakes and improve safety for boats traveling through the area.



Above: Monona Mayor Bob Miller welcomes the RRC and describes the water-related efforts they are taking in 2012 including becoming a Wisconsin Water Star, proclaiming 2012 the Year of Water and establishing a water conservation challenge.

To the right: A flotilla of canoes listens to Jeremy Balousek of Dane County discuss water issues and concerns in the Madison lakes, especially the problems of water flow under a railroad trestle in this part of the watershed.

Photos by James Kerler

Thirty-seven participants enjoyed the delicious meal at Bourbon Street Grille during the town hall meeting before heading out on the water. We're already looking forward to next year's event, so stay tuned for details!



Mason Jar Jamboree

By Kevin Wiesmann

The Mason Jar Jamboree, held at Dorothy Carnes Park on September 22, was a great success with over 150 visitors! Even with the poor weather in the morning, the day really did turn out well. The event raised awareness and funds for the Mason Log Home located at the park, as well as promoting the Glacial Heritage Area, Jefferson County Parks and Friends of Rose Lake.



Before the event was held, the Mason family of Fort Atkinson offered a matching donation of \$25,000 for the restoration of the historic home. The event raised over \$4,000 for the project which will be matched dollar for dollar by the Masons.

Julia Ince put together a great presentation of historic materials and handouts for the property and the home, and Lyle Lidholm and Craig Roost demonstrated the intricacies of hand hewing logs and making time accurate pegs and other materials. The music provided by the Merry Horde and Peter Mulvey was exceptional.



There was a life-sized kids log cabin that went together like Lincoln logs. The parents enjoyed putting it together as much as the kids did! The log cabin was built by Stew Helwig of Jefferson.

Jefferson County Parks hopes to make this an annual event.



Top photo: The crowd listened to foot stomping music by the Merry Horde.

Middle: Youth and adults enjoyed building a cabin out of life-sized Lincoln logs.

Bottom photo: Lyle Lidholm demonstrates squaring a log.
Photos by Kevin Wiesmann

Interested in learning more about the Yahara river watershed?

Join the community discussion on Friday, November 9th at the Yahara Lakes: Implementing a Vision session of the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) symposium. This will be NALMS' 32nd International Symposium and it will be held at the Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison.

The Yahara River watershed contains more than 22,000 acres of lakes and streams that are vitally important to the region's economy and quality of life. The Yahara Lakes session will include presentations by local scientists, managers, and conservation groups on successes and challenges of implementing the water quality improvements highlighted during the 2005 NALMS symposium and in subsequent studies.

There is a special one-day rate of \$45 for those who register for the Yahara Lakes session by October 26, 2012, and a \$65 rate thereafter. These special rates are supported by sponsors to encourage participation by local residents. The registration fee includes the full day of presentations, lunch, and a closing reception. Registration information and a conference agenda are available at the NALMS web site, www.nalms.org (click on Conferences).

The Clean Lakes Alliance is hosting a Yahara Lakes Community Breakfast at the NALMS conference facilities just prior to the Yahara Lakes session. Individual tickets may be purchased for \$100, or tables of 10 may be purchased for \$1,000. This will be a farm-to-table breakfast with discussion focused on the community-wide effort to fix water quality problems in the Yahara lakes.

For more information about the event, to become a sponsor, or to buy a ticket, visit the CLA web site at www.cleanlakesalliance.com.

The Rock River Coalition, will soon begin working with the Clean Lakes Alliance, Dane County, USGS, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District and others on a strategy to use citizen volunteer monitors in the Yahara WINS adaptive management pilot area as described in the summer 2012 Rock River Reflections newsletter.

Don't forget to renew your Rock River Coalition membership.

Letters will be sent out beginning in November.

Please, consider an additional gift to celebrate our 10 years of monitoring.

Renewing your membership and making a donation to our monitoring program is an important way for you to partner with the Rock River Coalition and its great efforts in the basin.



See something interesting, link directly to our website by using this QR code and your smart phone. Or go to the site at <http://www.rockrivercoalition.org>