



Rock River Reflections

A publication of the Rock River Coalition in cooperation with the Rock River Stormwater Group, Town and Country Resource, Conservation & Development and the University of Wisconsin-Extension

Spring 2010 Volume 13, Number 2

Water Star Community Program debuts April 22, 2010

by Patrice Kohl, Water Star Program Assistant & Suzanne Wade, Water Star Coordinator

Water conservationists wanting to honor state municipalities that go above federal and state regulations are rolling out a new program on Earth Day. The new program, Water Star, will recognize cities, villages, towns and counties that have done exemplary work to protect surface water and groundwater including activities that strengthen stormwater controls, ensure water quality, protect habitats and encourage residents to conserve water.

During a March pilot test of the program's application process in Madison, 26 participants, including representatives from eight municipalities, expressed enthusiasm over the prospect of having a program that would both recognize municipalities doing great work and help municipalities identify new ways of improving water resource protections.

Mukwonago, a village in Southeastern Wisconsin, has been generally recognized as a strong example for water protections in the state. But despite this recognition, Paul Moderacki, village administrator, clerk and treasurer, said he thought the Water Star program should push municipalities, including his own, to do more in order to receive a Gold Star designation.

"Knowing how much we still have to achieve, I don't think our community is worthy of a gold," Moderacki

said, referring to the Water Star program's highest recognition.

Based on how well a municipality meets its recommended standards, the Water Star program will rank municipalities with strong water resource protections by identifying them as gold, silver or bronze star communities. Representatives from municipalities, the DNR, the University of Wisconsin-Extension and other organizations that participated in the pilot testing, said they hoped that when the program begins to show how Wisconsin municipalities stack up, municipalities might think twice about defaulting to the lowest common denominator when it comes to protecting water resources.

Jim Congdon, Upper Rock Watershed DNR supervisor, said DNR regulations represent a floor beneath which municipalities can't fall rather than optimal water resource protections. In addition to pushing communities to do more, the program would also recognize municipalities that have achieved exemplary protections, like those achieved by some of the pilot test participants.

City of Fitchburg Engineering and GIS specialist,

continued on page 3



Water Star pilot workshop attendees after the successful day of testing the new Water Star application include from right, holding the silver Water Star sign, Jayne Jenks, Waukesha County; holding the bronze sign Janet Sosnosky, Manitowoc; and with the Gold Water Star sign Jeremy Balousek, Dane County. Second row: Anne Anderson, NRC Consulting, Ann Hirekatur, MSA Professional Services, Michael Huck, Manitowoc; David Botts, Beloit; Bob Salmi, Darlington; Pete Jopke, Dane County; Brian Standing, Dane County. Third Row: Becky Olson, Montgomery Associates; Reid Wronski, River Falls; Bill Frisbee, Beloit; Jeremy Williams, Darlington; Paul Moderacki, Mukwonago; Back Row: Steve Wurster, Ruekert & Mielke; Felipe Avila, Fitchburg, Jim Congdon, DNR and Suzanne Wade UWEX.

photo by Patrice Kohl

Return Service Requested
NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
JEFFERSON, WI
PERMIT NO. 7

Jefferson, WI 53549-1976
864 Collins Rd
Rock River
Coalition
In cooperation with
Jefferson County
UW
Extension

RRC President's Message

Dear Rock River Coalition Friends and Members,

March 21 - Ice Out! The lake is back, and with it the wonderful spring migration of water birds. Goldeneyes and buffleheads – those beautiful little diving ducks – are chasing their lady friends and doing their best to impress with heads bobbing back and forth. The loons and mergansers will be here soon – I'm always thrilled to see them and remember how interconnected our waters are. These birds need not only one healthy lake, but a whole string of stopping points where they can rest, feed and do their courtship dances as they follow their ancestors' journeys north.

The Rock River Coalition has many partners, one of which is the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative, which works to map out and protect the key habitats birds need in our basin and throughout the state. Our Zeloski Marsh monitoring project, our support of the Glacial Heritage Area Plan, and our work to monitor

water quality in the great Horicon Marsh will help improve and preserve the special places that support the lives of the birds that share our river basin. You can find a guide to the best places to see them at www.wisconsinbirds.org/trail/.

I always get the urge to follow a trail, myself, in the springtime. Hot off the press is the Glacial Heritage Area Watertrails map. It's a guide to paddling this beautiful area of our basin and we are proud to help sponsor this map – we hope you have a chance to do some exploring this spring too.



We will have the maps available at our Annual Membership Meeting, May 4th - Hope to see you there!

Lisa Conley, RRC President

More from the President

Outgoing Board Members I would like to thank outgoing board members, Ken Wiesner and Jan Ruster. Ken has directed our long range planning, and his administrative experience has been invaluable, as well as his leadership in planning events. His dedication and sense of humor will be greatly missed. Jan has served as our treasurer, and her banking experience has been important to keeping our finances in order.

Bill Biesmann has taken a new job that precludes his participation on our board, and resigned his position in February. Jim Kerler has been appointed to fill the remaining year of Bill's term. We welcome Jim, and appreciate his interest in water policy and water quality monitoring programs.

Spring Elections We are looking for a few good people to serve a three-year term on the Rock River Coalition Board of Directors. If you have time and energy, and would like to volunteer your talents, or know a good candidate who would like to get further involved, please call Lisa Conley, 262-567-5947. Elections will take place at our Annual Membership Meeting, May 4th.

Two important pieces of legislation to protect our groundwater are being introduced this spring:

SB 620: Update the Groundwater Protection Act

Groundwater provides water for 70% of Wisconsin citizens, supplies water for industries and businesses in 97% of Wisconsin's communities, sources nearly all crop irrigation, and sustains springs, lakes, rivers, and wetlands. In 2004, the Groundwater Protection Act was passed as a first step to address the demands that were being placed on our groundwater resources. However, the current law does not ensure responsible and equitable use of groundwater resources and does not address how to resolve conflicts among competing water-users, if pumping causes nearby wells and/or surface waters to go dry. SB 620 would create a statewide plan that puts local communities in charge of managing their water supplies and ensures that everyone in Wisconsin has access to plentiful water resources.

SB 632: Protect Wisconsin's Drinking Water

Groundwater is the main source of drinking water for most Wisconsinites. In large parts of Wisconsin, especially in the so-called 'karst' areas, the land above our freshwater is quite porous. When manure or industrial sludge is spread on that land, it can get into cracks and holes in the ground that act as direct tunnels to our drinking water. SB 632 would protect drinking water in karst areas by creating special management areas at greater risk for contamination and provide a framework for landscape-specific pollution standards.

The Rock River Coalition Board and over 80 other Wisconsin conservation and environmental groups support both of these bills. Please contact your state Senator and Representative and ask them to support the passage of these two bills before the session ends.



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"

PRESIDENT:
Lisa Conley, lconley@wi.rr.com

DIRECTORS:
Scott Taylor, President Elect
Patricia Cicero, Secretary
Jan Ruster, Treasurer
Joe Dorava, Past President
Peter Hartz
Jim Kerler
Jim Koepke
Suzanne Wade
Ken Wiesner

Volunteer Monitoring Director:
Ed Grunden, 920-648-2673, ed@rockrivercoalition.org

Volunteer Monitoring Assistant:
Stephanie Hoffmann, monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org

GFLOW Coordinator:
Vierbicher Associates, 608-524-6468

Water Star Community Program Coordinator:
Suzanne Wade, 920-674-8972
waterstar@rockrivercoalition.org
<http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org> (after 4/22/2010)

RRC Address:
864 Collins Road
Jefferson, WI 53549-1976
info@rockrivercoalition.org (new email!)
www.rockrivercoalition.org
Social network: rockrivercoalition.ning.com

Newsletter Editor:
Suzanne Wade, 920-674-8972
suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu

Photo credits: Patrice Kohl, Carl Glassford, Stephanie Hoffmann, Ed Grunden, Suzanne Wade,

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

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

Thank you to Water Star sponsors

Water Star could not have been developed without a dedicated steering committee and funding sources. The majority of the funds have come from DNR River Protection Grants and a University of Wisconsin Program Innovation Fund Grant.

Sponsors are always needed to provide leadership, in improving the program and in helping support it financially. You can become a Water Star Sponsor by either being an active member on the Water Star Steering Committee or by providing \$500 of in-kind or cash support.

Sponsors will be named in media releases, will be invited to assist with designation ceremonies and will be invited to all events, webinars and programs.

Additionally, the sponsor's name, logo and link will be on the Water Star website.

Water Star Sponsors as of April 10, 2010 are:

- Rock River Coalition
- Town and Country RC&D
- UW Cooperative Extension
- Dane County
- MSA Professional Services
- UW-Extension Environmental Resources Center
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Natural Resources Consulting, Inc.
- Ruekert-Mielke

Steering Committee Members:

Elaine Andrews, UW Environmental Resources Center
Jim Congdon, WI Department of Natural Resources
Lisa Conley, Rock River Coalition
Ann Hiraketur, MSA Professional Services
Craig Ficenc, Town and Country RC&D
Pete Jopke, Dane County
Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension
Ken Wiesner, Rock River Coalition & Wis. Lakes Ass'n

Become a Water Star Endorser

Sign on as an endorser to the program on the Water Star website. Your name will be added to the website's endorser list and may be used in publicity efforts.

Anyone can endorse: whether an individual, municipality, organization or business.

A special thank you to those who helped develop the Water Star program.

More than 200 people have helped develop or review program materials. A full list of these elected officials, staff, consultants, university faculty and staff and state agency staff can be found on the website.

Water Star Mission is to guide, inspire and recognize municipalities for exemplary efforts for surface water, groundwater and recreation.

Water Star kicks off April 22, 2010 continued

Felipe Avila, said it'll be nice to have a program that recognizes the steps Fitchburg has taken to more rigorously protect local waters.

He said Fitchburg has established regulations prohibiting septic tanks, limits development to areas that can be served by gravity-fed sewer systems, is installing a stormwater basin to protect marshlands from pollution and trash, and is planning to irrigate its Nine Springs Golf Course with wastewater effluent to conserve water.

Darlington, the smallest municipality that participated in the pilot test, has improved its water system to limit leaks and dramatically reduce the need for pumping, cutting the costs associated with pumping in half. The Great Lakes city of Manitowoc has made great strides in educating the public on the importance of water resources with its storm drain stenciling program, rain garden demonstration site, educational paddling trips and, more recently, a rain barrel workshop. Manitowoc Stormwater Aid, Janet Sosnosky, said the programs have generated a lot of community interest and huge demand for rain barrels. Sosnosky said programs that recognize municipal work like Manitowoc's water resource education efforts help demonstrate to municipality aldermen that investing in water resources beyond what is

required by regulation is worthwhile.

Sosnosky said she's always looking for leverage in convincing alderman the city could be doing more to protect water resources. She said she would be pleased if Water Star could grow to include even stronger incentives such as points that could be used toward earning grants.

At the March pilot testing, other participants made similar remarks and program coordinators said they aim to strengthen the program's incentives as it grows. Program coordinator Suzanne Wade said that one day she would even like to see the program extend beyond state borders.

Pilot Workshop Results

Gold Water Star
Fitchburg
Dane County
River Falls

Silver Water Star
Beloit
Mukwonago
Waukesha County

Bronze Water Star
Darlington
Manitowoc

In addition to Manitowoc, Fitchburg, Darlington and Mukwonago, municipalities that participated in the pilot testing of the Water Star program application included River Falls, Beloit and Waukesha and Dane counties.



Paul Moderacki, with phone, gets information from staff back at the office during the pilot workshop. Also present are Steve Wurster from Ruekert & Mielke and Todd Polachek from Applied Ecological Services, who along with other consultants, provided professional assistance to the municipalities at the workshop.

How to become a Water Star Community

The Water Star Community Program is for municipalities, particularly cities, villages and counties. Urban towns may also find they are doing enough actions to protect and improve their surface and groundwater resources to receive Water Star designation.

Municipalities can register and begin the application process starting April 22, 2010 by going to <http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org>.

The survey is tailored to the individual municipality through a series of questions developed in a municipal overview section. If a municipality doesn't have a wastewater treatment plant, they'll check that in the overview and those questions won't appear as they fill in the application.

Since the application covers all aspects of municipal government, the application is set up so different people can fill in different parts of the survey. Thus, the parks department head can do their portion while the public works department head works on questions regarding roads and public infrastructure.

It is expected that the entire application will take about 3 hours to complete.

Once the application is completed, a tentative score is generated. It takes 40% of the applicable questions to receive a Bronze Water Star, 50% for a Silver Water Star and 65% to be a Gold Water Star Community.

There are a few requirements: A municipality can't be in default of any permits or have a history of being in default of its stormwater, wastewater or public water supply permits. A municipality can't have a history of making land use decisions that conflict with their comprehensive plan or other stormwater or groundwater protection goals. Once this has been checked, a bronze or silver designation is given automatically. A Gold Water Star designation will go through a further validation process.

Successful municipalities receive a street sign proclaiming them as a Water Star Community, a designation certificate and logos they can use on the web and in printed materials.

Glacial Heritage Area unveils new watertrails map and guide

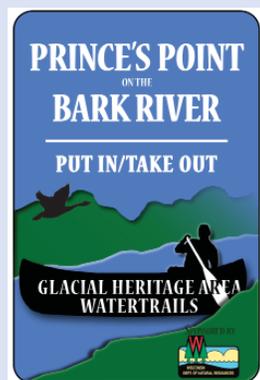
The Glacial Heritage Area (GHA) is a network of recreation and conservation lands centered primarily in western Jefferson County, Wisconsin. The project seeks to help meet the growing demand for a wide range of outdoor, nature-based land and water recreation activities while protecting natural habitats.

Watertrails are recreational waterways on a lake, river or creek, between specific points, containing access points for the boating public. Watertrails emphasize low-impact use and promote stewardship of natural resources.

The Jefferson County Parks Department received a \$5,000 grant from the Wisconsin DNR to develop a print-ready, fold-out map containing wayfinding and route guidance information including existing put-in/take-out (PiTo) sites, water trail distances, route descriptions, places of interest along paddlable waters, and suggested route options on river and stream systems in the project area. Rebecca Mehrlinger, consultant, was hired to coordinate and produce the map. A Paddling Committee was formed and the rest is history. Committee members scouted sites, contacted property owners, raised

the money, etc. The Jefferson County Parks Department and the Wisconsin DNR sincerely appreciate the hard work of the volunteers and the businesses and organizations that partnered together for a common goal.

Opportunities are still available for Put-In/Take-Out Sign sponsorships (\$200). For more information or to obtain a map, call



920-674-7260 or janes@jeffersoncountywi.gov.

Committee members: John McKenzie, James Kerler, Carl Glassford, Rachel Primmer, Chad Dallman, Dick Wanie, Steve Grabow, Kim Grunow, Greg David, Dick David, Steve Cline, Gerald Kokkonen, Andy Erdman, Steve Miller, John Pohlman, Rebecca Mehrlinger, Peter Jacobs, Chad Dallman, Joe Nehmer

Sponsors of the project: Café Carpe, Ducks Unlimited, Earl & Eugenia Quirk Foundation, Fort Atkinson Community Foundation, Fort Community Credit Union, Fort Health Care, Fort Wisconsin Club, Friends of Aztalan, Heather's Rockdale Bar and Grill, Jefferson County Bicycle Club, Johnson Bank of Fort Atkinson, Jellystone Park, Lake Koskonong Wetlands Association, Modern Woodmen Insurance, Norm's Hideaway Bar & Grill, Pickets Country Store, Rock Lake 4-H Club, Rock River Canoe Company, Rock River Coalition, Inc., Rotary Club of Jefferson, Schreiber Anderson Associates, Inc., Subway, Sunset Bar & Grill, Town & Country RC&D, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Rock River Stormwater Group: Targets stormwater education

by Rebecca Dill, RRSB Stormwater Education Coordinator

Stormwater is a hydra, a multi-headed beast from ancient Greek mythology.

Metaphors, even mythological ones, are a good way to explain the complexity of stormwater pollution. This serious pollution has many sources and cannot be solved with one comprehensive solution. Because stormwater pollution comes from our everyday activities—driving our cars, mowing our lawns and walking our dogs—it is up to each of us to do our part. In order to fight against the threat of stormwater pollution in the Rock River basin, the Rock River Stormwater Group (RRSG) is holding workshops and activities on a variety of topics and for a variety of audiences this spring.

On April 8, the Rock River Stormwater Group held a free lawn care workshop at the Rotary Gardens in Janesville, Wisconsin. This workshop is just one of the educational activities designed for homeowners in the Rock River basin. Homeowners looking to keep a lush, green yard without using harmful chemical fertilizers and pesticides learned what they can do, starting this year, to keep extra nutrients and chemicals out of the local waters ways.

Suzanne Wade, the Rock River Basin Educator, and Amy Joyce, Co-Founder of the Healthy Communities Project in the north side of Milwaukee, speakers at the workshop explained how healthy, natural lawns are not only good for the local rivers and streams, but, more directly, are also good for our

families. When chemicals are put on lawns, they are easily tracked inside houses and get on children and pets as they play outside. If you missed the workshop, you can learn more at www.healthycommunitiesproject.org

As contributors to the problem, each individual yard, home, park and public building needs to be managed to reduce stormwater pollution. On April 13, the RRSB hosted a two-part series on stormwater pollution for municipal employees.



This series was for members of public works, parks and enforcement departments and any other employees who have responsibility over stormwater issues. The inset picture shows Kelly Mattfield of AECOM discussing illicit discharge at the workshop.

As many of the RRSB members are municipalities, the first goal of this workshop was to update and educate municipal employees on the best practices to curb stormwater pollution within municipal operations. The second goal was to increase the capacity of enforcement departments by showing all employees that work out in the field, in parks or on roads, the major pollution sources they should watch out for. By increasing the number of municipal staff who know the correct way to handle stormwater issues and common problems to report, the RRSB hopes to use these valuable employee resources to make a positive impact on water quality.

As homeowners and municipal employees work together on stormwater pollution issues, we can kill the hydra that threatens our rivers and lakes, one head at a time.

Freshmen for Freshwater: New partners in the Rock River Basin

The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater is partnering with the Rock River Stormwater Group to bring stormwater education to the students, and then put those students to work!

Freshmen for Freshwater is a learning community that uses an interdisciplinary approach to understand water issues. This program focuses on project-based learning where students work with faculty, industry and community groups to research issues, test solutions and share their findings. With the Rock River Stormwater Group, these freshmen and a class for seniors on water law, are volunteering their time to paint storm drains in Whitewater and are participating at an all-day rain garden event on *Make a Difference Day* on April 23.

The students are planning, researching and ordering plants for a rain garden to be installed in a public park in Whitewater. The students will then get their hands dirty and create a garden that will collect the water coming off of a picnic shelter, allowing it to soak into the ground instead of running into Cravath Lake. These and other projects provide students with a solid foundation in the array of water quality issues we face in our region and the role of non-profits, municipalities and governments in addressing and regulating these issues.

Rock River Recovery kick-off held March 10

by Jim Congdon, WDNR Upper Rock Basin Supervisor

Eighty-five Rock River Basin stakeholders who attended the kick-off meeting for the Rock River Recovery Plan at the Lake Mills Community Center on March 10 were asked to help the Department of Natural Resources develop a plan to restore water quality in the basin. The meeting was scheduled in anticipation of the completion of the draft Rock River Basin TMDL in May. Consultants hired by U.S. EPA have been working with DNR since December, 2006 to complete a very complex pollution reduction model for this large river basin.

The U.S. Clean Water Act requires DNR to identify waters not meeting water quality standards (termed impaired waters) and then develop a restoration plan. The first step, a TMDL (acronym for Total Maximum Daily Load), is a computer model that estimates the phosphorus and sediment load reduction necessary to meet water quality standards. The Rock River Recovery Plan will recommend ways and means to restore water quality in the Rock River Basin.

"I was very pleased with the positive attitude and constructive suggestions that stakeholders provided in the break-out sessions", Jim Congdon said. "Our Implementation Planning Team will study the input we received and will

soon announce the next steps for the recovery planning process. We propose to appoint five sector teams (agriculture, municipal/industrial source, urban stormwater, education/outreach, assessment) of technical experts and key basin stakeholders that will work with Department staff to recommend methods to accomplish water quality restoration. We are proposing that the planning process be "community-based"; in other words, that basin stakeholders (people who live, work and play in the basin) actively participate in developing and implementing plan recommendations to restore water quality in the lakes and rivers in the basin. It only makes sense that those who caused the problems, that is all of us who live here, be the ones to correct the problems".

The Rock River Recovery Plan will look for established methods and will explore new ways to achieve the water quality goals. It is anticipated the planning process may take two years to complete. The plan will recognize that a long-term solution is necessary to address the problems that resulted from 150 years of development and land abuse. Innovative ideas and "thinking outside the box" will be necessary to achieve these water quality goals.

Hearing on Phosphorus Rule

The Department of Natural Resources will hold public hearings on proposed revisions to chs. NR 102 and NR 217, Wis. Adm. Code, relating to phosphorus water quality standards criteria and limitations and effluent standards.

The proposed rule has two parts. The first is a set of phosphorus water quality standards criteria for rivers, streams, various types of lakes, reservoirs and Great Lakes. The second is procedures for determining and incorporating phosphorus water quality based effluent limitations into Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permits under chapter 283, Wis. Stats.

Pursuant to 40 CFR 131.11, states are required to adopt water quality standards criteria that are protective of the designated uses of surface waters. Pursuant to § 303(c)(4) of the Clean Water Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency may step in and promulgate the criteria for the state, if the state does not. Development of point source permit procedures is required as part of the state's point source permit delegation agreement. EPA approval of state water quality criteria is required under 40 CFR §§ 131.5, 131.6 and 131.21.

The Department has made a preliminary determination that this action does not involve significant adverse environmental effects and does not need an environmental analysis under ch. NR 150, Wis. Adm. Code. The proposed rule revisions and supporting documents, including the fiscal estimate may be viewed and downloaded and comments electronically submitted through the Wisconsin Administrative Rules Web site. Written comments on the proposed rules may be submitted via U. S. mail to Jim Baumann, DNR-WT/3, PO Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921 or by e-mail to james.baumann@wisconsin.gov. Comments may be submitted until April 30, 2010. Written comments whether submitted electronically or by U. S. mail will have the same weight and effect as oral statements presented at the public hearings. More information or a copy of the proposed rules and supporting documents, including the fiscal estimate may be obtained from Jim Baumann, DNR-WT/3, P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921, or by calling (608) 266-9277.

The hearings will all begin at 1 p.m. on the following dates at locations listed:

- o April 20, Green Bay - Green Bay City Hall, Council Chambers, Room 203, 100 N. Jefferson,
- o April 21, Oconomowoc - Olympia Resort and Conference Center, 1350 Royale Mile Road.
- o April 27, Eau Claire - Ramada Inn, Lower Ballroom, 205 S. Barstow St.

Stream and wetland monitoring news

Project RED Training (Riverine Early Detectors)

April 24, 2010, 9:00am to noon, at the Dane County Lyman F. Anderson Agriculture and Conservation Center, One Fen Oak Court Madison. The training will focus on identifying invasive plants from a canoe. There is an optional paddle on Badfish Creek from 1:00pm - 4:00pm to practice protocols in the field. To reserve your space, please contact Patricia Cicero with the Jefferson County LWC Department at (920) 674-7121 or patriciac@jeffersoncountywi.gov.

Visit www.wisconsinrivers.org for more information about Project RED.

Become a WAV monitor New monitor training workshops May 17 and 22, 2010

A training session for individuals interested in stream monitoring will be held in Johnson Creek on May 17 contact Ed Grunden 920-648-2673 or ed@rockrivercoalition.org and at Waterville, WI on May 22, contact Jayne Jenks at 262-896-8305 or jjjenks@waukeshacounty.gov.

These all day training sessions will include how to measure dissolved oxygen, flow, temperature, water clarity and habitat. Monitors will also learn how to determine water quality by identifying stream insects, crustaceans and other invertebrates and then to determine a biotic index of water quality. Participants will also learn when to take samples and other aspects of the Rock River monitoring program.

Monitors can then participate in our monthly monitoring program, at a nearby wadeable stream.

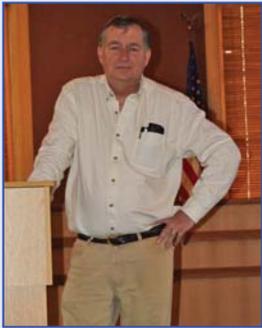
Snapshot Days - May 8, 2010

Anyone who has fond memories of traipsing through creeks or streams as a child, splashing around and looking for crawdads and minnows, will enjoy participating in Rock River Coalition's new monitoring event: Snapshot Days. It's a one day volunteer effort to gather information on the condition of streams within Wisconsin's Rock River Basin. Data collected is recorded and used by local and state agencies regarding management decisions about WI waterways.

Snapshot Days occur one Saturday morning in May and again in September. On the designated days, trained volunteers don boots and climb into nearby streams to find out what's there. Be a part of Snapshot Days and explore bug life, water conditions, and nearby plants and animals.

No experience is needed. It's a great way to spend the day with friends or family while discovering a local treasure near your home! If interested or want to learn more, contact Ed Grunden at 920-648-2673 or ed@rockrivercoalition.org

New Mussel Monitoring Program



Ed Grunden, RRC monitoring director welcomed veteran and interested monitors to the Confluence. As always, there was a lot to talk about. The Confluence is held every other year and is a chance for monitors to learn about new programs, receive advanced training about the ecology of the Rock River Basin

and to become certified in specific protocols so they can begin their annual monitoring of local streams and rivers. These extra steps that the Rock River Coalition takes, results in better, more usable data. To learn how citizen monitoring data is used check the article by Dan Helsel on page 8.

Mussel Monitoring Program

Heel splitters, pimple backs, muckets, pcket books - sound intriguing? Lisie Kitchell of the DNR is looking for enthusiastic people who are interested in getting out and hunting up mussel shells and mussels with names like those above. This new program raised considerably interest with the monitors.

Mussel surveys can be done on any river lake or stream in Wisconsin. Shells can be picked up, by



DNR mussel expert, Lisie Kitchell examines stream monitor Chuck Heidt (right) collection of shells from the Turtle Creek. Discovering such wonders is a side benefit of being a monitor. photos by Suzanne Wade

hand, anytime. They should be rinsed clean before storing. Live mussels can be photographed and replaced at the site. Live mussels are generally not active until the water warms up - late spring to early fall. Mussel monitors should contact John White at john.white@wisconsin.gov, if they collect empty shells or photograph live ones. The RRC is considering holding a mussel monitoring training this summer. If you think you would be interested please email monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org. The Bark River and Turtle Creek along with other smaller creek are a treasure chest of mussels that we would like to get cataloged and to better understand. Check out the DNR website for a summary of mussel or clamming regulations.

Send Your Legislator Down the River

Monday June 7, 2010

Nau-ti-gal Restaurant - Cherokee Lake and Marsh

Organized by the Rock River Coalition:

Sponsored by UW-Extension, Department of Natural Resources & Rutabaga Paddling Sports



The Cherokee Lake and Marsh in Dane County is the location of this year's Send Your Legislator Down the River paddle and town hall meeting. The event will start at the Nau-ti-gal Restaurant where we will enjoy a picnic dinner (indoors) and conversations with legislators. Afterwards, we will drive to the School Road boat landing on Cherokee Lake and Marsh. We will put-in and take-out at the same boat landing, so shuttling will not be necessary. The paddle will be approximately 4 miles in length and is expected to take about two hours.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own canoes or kayaks for the paddle. Others can rent canoes or be a paddler on one of the two 25 foot-long Voyageur replica canoes (space for up to 14 people). Paddles and life jackets will be provided for canoe rental and for the Voyageur canoes.

Russ Hefty, the Conservation Resource Supervisor with the City of Madison Parks, will be our special guest during the paddle. Russ will share his work on various restoration efforts to restore wetlands in the Cherokee Marsh. The work accomplished has included planting aquatic plants to protect the sedge marsh from erosion caused by wave action.

Regardless of weather, the dinner and roundtable will be held.

Agenda

- 4:00 - 6:00pm Registration
- 4:00 - 5:30pm Buffet picnic dinner served
- 4:45 - 5:30pm Welcome and River Town Hall Meeting: a chance to talk to your local elected officials and state legislators.
- 6:00 - 8:00pm Paddle Cherokee Lake and Marsh

More information on Cherokee Marsh can be found in the Yahara Waterways Water Trail Guide (<http://www.danewaters.com/articles/guideDownload.aspx>) and on the Friends of Cherokee Marsh website (<http://cherokeemarsh.org/>).

Dinner: Hamburgers, cheeseburgers and chicken breasts sandwiches, pasta salad, potato salad, chips, desert and beverage. Beverages will also be provided for the paddle.

Cost

- \$13 for RRC members.
- \$18 for non-members.
- \$11 for youth (6-12).
- \$ 7 for children five or under.

Plus canoe rental fee of \$5/person up to \$10/canoe

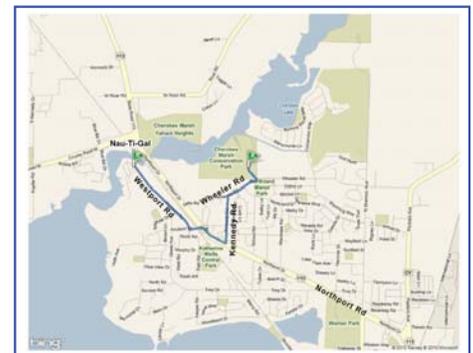
You're encouraged to bring your own canoe or kayak.

Late fee \$5 after May 31.

Pre-registration requested we cannot guarantee meals or canoe space for walk-in registrants.

Rock River Coalition T-Shirts available for \$15 if ordered in advance or \$17 at the door.

Register by filling in and returning the form on page 7 or at www.rockrivercoalition.org with payment via PayPal.



B = Nau-ti-gal Restaurant 5360 Westport Rd

A = Cherokee Marsh, canoe launch site



To till or not to till?

By Jim Koepke, RRC Board member and owner of Koepke Farms

This was the question we asked ourselves at Koepke Farms 24 years ago. We planted corn into alfalfa sod in the spring of 1986 and have been no-tillers ever since.

In the early 1980's I served on an advisory committee for the University of Wisconsin-Madison called the Fertilizer Research Council. The committee listened to soil and agronomy professors present their research results and new proposed projects. The research projects about tillage versus no-tillage were always the same. There was no crop yield advantage for tillage over no-tillage, except if you had corn following corn for two years in a row. We thought that since the University did the research and we trusted their findings, so we thought why not try it ourselves?

Koepke Farms is a dairy farm and we grow corn, soybeans, and alfalfa to feed our cattle. We have many soil types on our farm. Some need drain tiles to improve growing conditions, some are flat and well-drained, and some are rolling hills that could be highly erodible if heavy rainfall were to occur and create run-off. No-till farming works extremely well for us on all these soils and crops, and it has reduced run-off and erosion tremendously.

The dairy cattle produce manure, an extremely valuable fertility resource, but this manure also helps us to reduce run-off and soil erosion. In nature, the soil is always covered with grass, brush, or some kind of plant growth. Even in a dense forest, the leaves fall off the trees in the fall and cover the soil. When rain drops hit the unprotected bare soil in normal agricultural field conditions, the soil particles can be broken up. If there is water run-off, the soil sediment can look like chocolate milk, carrying soil and phosphorus into our lakes and streams.

We want to no-till to reduce and prevent erosion. My father used to say, "The land is your bank, and your bank is your land." He meant that if you take good care of your soil, it will take good care of you.

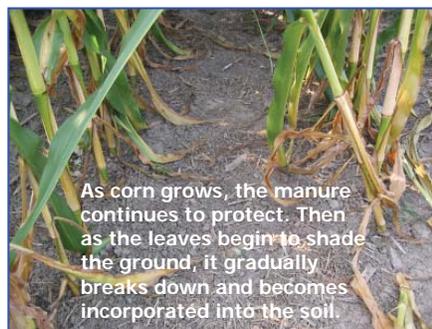
Our observations over the years have helped us fine-tune our manure applications to reduce and almost eliminate erosion. In our crop rotation of alfalfa, corn, and soybeans we have noticed that the year we plant corn into the soybean stubble is one of the most vulnerable for erosion. The soil is not protected well from rain-drop impact. To protect the soil surface, we apply manure. In a highly erodible area, we first apply manure with a high straw content and then apply solid manure from our free-stall milking cow barns on top of the straw manure. When this dries together, we have an erosion-proof environment for the corn crop to grow in. As the growing season progresses and the corn plant and leaves get big enough to protect the soil from rain drop impact, the soil life breaks down the manure and by fall it is totally incorporated.

We have worked with the University of Wisconsin Discovery Farms and they discovered that we have very little run-off, sediment loss, and phosphorus loss. One of their representatives is a long-term no till farmer, as well as an extension agent. About six years ago he encouraged us to try no-till where we grew corn after corn. We discovered there was NO yield reduction.

I feel that we are cooperating with nature rather than fighting nature. The soil life works at no cost to us, saves great amounts of fuel, soil, and nutrients. We will plant this spring with a tractor that we bought 41 years ago and the no-till corn planter and grain drill last a long time also. We replace the disk openers once in a while, but there is very little expense with no-till. Low cost to a farmer—and low cost to the environment!



Manure applied to fields, hardens and protects the soil.



As corn grows, the manure continues to protect. Then as the leaves begin to shade the ground, it gradually breaks down and becomes incorporated into the soil.



No yield reduction in no-till fields.

photos by Jim Koepke

The Confluence:

A gathering of monitors

This semi-annual event was held on April 10 with 30 of our stream monitors in attendance.

They heard stirring keynotes from four of our exemplary groups in the basin who are monitoring including the Friends of Allen Creek, the Friends of Badfish Creek, Friends of Swan Creek and the Friends of Cam-Rock Park. The Rock River Basin is extremely blessed to have so many dedicated people working together in groups to learn about, protect and advocate for local waters.



For more information on monitoring projects you can become involved with check out page 5.

Anyone who has a project, or a group of people interested in learning what they can do, should contact the Rock River Basin Educator, Suzanne Wade at 920-674-8972 or by email at suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu.



Top photo: Janice Redford of Friends of Cam-Rock Park highlights their successes. Middle photo: Ann Miller, Rock County monitoring coordinator helps Butch Powell and Cat Coberly become certified in measuring dissolved oxygen. In the lower photo a young monitor examines the life of a stream.

Top photo by Carl Glassford, Middle by Suzanne Wade, Lower photo by Stephanie Hoffmann

DNR use of your citizen monitoring data

By Dan Helsel, DNR Watershed Program Supervisor, Black River Falls, WI

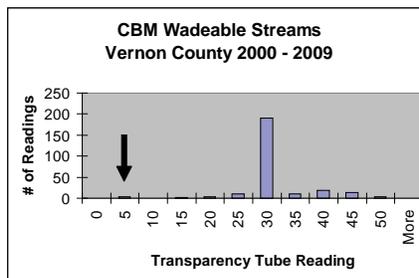
The content of this talk was presented at the Spring Stream Citizen-based Monitoring Conference in Stevens Point. This article highlights the general monitoring goals and monitoring framework for the collection of stream information currently implemented by DNR field biologists across the State and a number of examples of how citizen collected monitoring data can be useful to DNR staff.

First, it is somewhat daunting to be writing about Citizen Monitoring for the Rock River Coalition newsletter. Your organization is the premiere example of volunteer monitoring in the State of Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) appreciates the efforts of the Rock River Coalition and all the other volunteer monitors across the State. With the extraordinary help of Kris Stepenuck from UW-Extension, we'll continue to mesh volunteer stream monitoring data with DNR needs.

As you might guess, the DNR gathers and collects a tremendous amount of environmental data. Recently, our ability to monitor and estimate deer herds numbers was highlighted in the news media -- not necessarily in a favorable light. However, many other types of data are comprehensively collected and successfully used to make many different environmental management decisions. You can see the results of our air monitoring program when air quality warnings are issued. You can see the results of contamination monitoring in our guidelines for fish consumption. You can see the results of our waterbody monitoring through the listing of trout streams and impaired waters submitted to the EPA. These are only a few results of our comprehensive monitoring programs across the DNR.

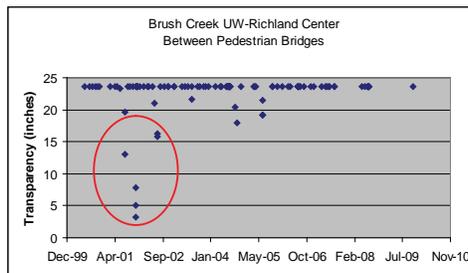
The DNR has a number of challenges in developing and implementing a comprehensive monitoring program for our lakes and streams. Table 1 represents the major programs and data needs of the DNR Watershed Bureau. With over 15,000 lakes and 45,000 miles of streams (80,000 miles if you include all the water courses across the State), meeting the data needs for all of our programs requires careful planning and strategic use of resources. Even with a well-prepared water monitoring strategy (<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/monitoring/>), it is still difficult to balance the DNR resources among all of the programs and even more difficult to find the resource to conduct that monitoring. And that's where citizen or volunteer collected data can help out.

Water Action Volunteers (WAV) across the state have established over 700 stream monitoring sites and collected information from over 100 sites in 2009. This broad, state-wide coverage of information is easily accessed by citizens and DNR water quality biologists and can be used for multiple purposes including flagging sites for follow-up, targeted sampling by the DNR. For example, the approximately 300+ transparency readings collected by citizens from Vernon County over the last nine years shows the majority of the readings at the maximum transparency measurement of 30 centimeters. However, there are a small number of readings less than 5 centimeters indicating very poor water clarity. According to the on-line Water Action Volunteer database, these poor readings are from three



sites in Vernon County that would be candidate sites for follow up, targeted DNR monitoring.

In some instances, the data may require closer examination before flagging for follow-up monitoring. Transparency tube readings from Richland County for a nine year period shows one site with poor readings below 5 centimeters: Brush Creek. Upon further review of that data, the poor readings were collected in April 2001, yet all the other transparency readings from the site were clearly pretty good, at or approaching 24 centimeters (maximum reading on the transparency tube). The April 2001 readings could have been associated with a run-off event or misreading. Subsequently this site would be



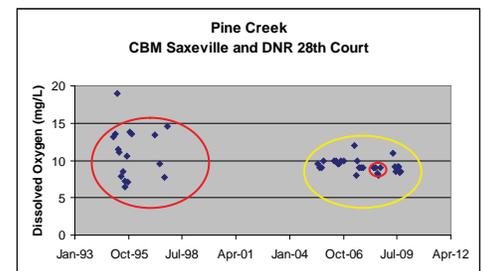
considered a lower priority for DNR follow-up, targeted monitoring.

Given the extraordinary commitment of many of our citizen monitors, it's not surprising to find many of the volunteer monitoring sites have many years of data. These long-term data sets can be used to identify trends and supplement sparse DNR data sets. The long-term data set from Pine Creek in Waushara County is a great example. The red or dark ovals represent DNR data showing a wide scatter of dissolved oxygen readings in the mid-1990s and only one reading in July 2009. Based solely on the DNR data, you might conclude that wide fluctuations in dissolved oxygen is present, indicative of organic pollution loading. Yet if you consider the data collected by volunteer monitors from June 2005 through 2009 (yellow or light oval), the data consistently shows dissolved oxygen levels in the acceptable range between 8 and 10 parts per million.

In the future, the DNR will rely more heavily on biological metrics like aquatic insects (macroinvertebrates) and fish community

Indices of Biological Integrity (IBIs). Because of the technical skills and standardized equipment necessary for these types of data, it's unlikely that volunteers will be collecting this information. However, when more rigorous water quality or temperature data are needed to identify pollutants or establish Total Maximum Daily Loads, volunteer can assist with the routine collection of those samples and save DNR staff time and travel money. This type of partnering has always occurred on numerous projects. As DNR continues to refine our monitoring framework for streams and lakes across the state, it will be critical to work with our volunteer friends.

Editor's note: This last type of monitoring is exactly what the RRC will be piloting in the Horicon Marsh.



DNR Programs and Data Needed

EPA State of the Waters: Represented samples from across the state.

EPA Impaired Waters Lists: Targeted samples identifying the impairment and the pollutant.

EPA Total Maximum Daily Load Plan: Targeted samples identify the amount of the pollutant load reduction.

State Regulatory Assessment: Targeted samples collected based upon regulatory permits and enforcement (Stormwater, Point Source, Combined Animal Feeding Operations).

State Human Health: Targeted samples identifying human health risk (mercury, bacteria, pcb, etc.).

State Waterbody Trends: Targeted samples over a long-term period.

State Metric Development: Targeted research samples collected to improve condition metrics (Index of Biological Integrity, Water Quality Standards, etc.).

State Spill Response: Targeted samples collected in response to contamination and hazardous spills.

Table 1

Blue-green algae: a health risk

Information taken from Wisconsin DNR website at <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/bluegreenalgae/>

Does your pond, slow moving river or lake look like someone spilled blue or green paint on it? Is it scummy? Does it smell bad?

Then STAY OUT!

This might be a blue-green algae bloom. Blue-green algae, also known as Cyanobacteria, are a group of photosynthetic bacteria they are most often blue-green in color, but can also be blue, green, reddish-purple, or brown. Blue-green algae generally grows when the water is warm and enriched with the nutrient, phosphorus.

When environmental conditions are just right, blue-green algae can grow very quickly in number. In Wisconsin, blooms generally occur between mid-June and late September.

Toxins are naturally produced chemical compounds that sometimes are produced inside the cells of certain species of blue-green algae. These chemicals are not produced all of the time and there is no easy way to tell when blue-green algae are producing them and when they are not. When the cells are broken open, the toxins may be released. Sometimes this occurs when the cells die off naturally and they break open as they sink and decay in a lake or pond.

Cells may also be broken open when the water is treated with chemicals meant to kill algae, and when cells are swallowed and mixed with digestive acids in the stomachs of people or animals. The only way to be sure if the toxins are present is to have water samples analyzed in a laboratory using sophisticated equipment.

Even if you can't see blue-green algae floating on the surface of the water, that doesn't mean they aren't there. Many species of blue-green algae have evolved to be able to control their buoyancy as the availability of light and nutrients change with the time of day and local weather conditions. At night, when there is no light, cells are unable to adjust their buoyancy and often float to the surface, forming a surface

scum. So this scum can literally appear overnight and may linger until wind and waves scatter the cells throughout the water body.

Should I treat a blue-green algae bloom with a chemical to get rid of it?

No. Treatment of a surface water that is experiencing a blue-green algae bloom with an herbicide or algacide may kill the blue-green algae, but any toxin(s) contained in the cells will be released at once, resulting in a slug of toxin(s) in the water. So while the bloom may no longer be visible, toxin(s) may be present for some period of time following treatment. It is best to stay out of a water experiencing a bloom and wait for the bloom to dissipate on its own.

Blue-green algae can produce toxins that can make you or your pets sick, or even cause death.

Can blue-green algae make me sick?

Yes, it is possible for blue-green algae to cause illness. Blue-green algae are capable of producing several different toxins. People may be exposed to these toxins through contact with the skin (e.g., when swimming), through inhalation (e.g., when motor boating or water skiing), or by swallowing contaminated water. Potential health effects include:

- allergy-type reactions such as rashes, eye/nose/throat irritation, and asthma, as well as headaches, fever, and gastroenteritis (nausea, stomach cramps, vomiting, diarrhea).
- tissue damage, muscle weakness,
- tumors, and possibly liver cancer (with long-term, chronic exposure).
- chromosome loss or breakage, and damage to organs.
- seizures, paralysis, respiratory failure or cardiac arrest.

Are children more vulnerable than adults?

Yes. Children may be at greater risk than adults for two primary reasons: Children love to play in the water, but typically do not understand the health risks as well as adults. As a result, they may drink the water because they are thirsty or swallow it

accidentally while swimming. Children weigh less, so a smaller quantity of toxin may trigger a reaction.

Can blue-green algae make my pet sick?

Animals are not necessarily more sensitive to blue-green algal toxins than humans. However, many animals, such as dogs and cattle, enjoy being in the water, even if there is an unsightly green scum layer floating on top. When such a bloom is present, animals may consume large quantities of blue-green algae if they drink the water, and if those blue-green algae happen to be producing toxin(s), the animals can become very ill, and even die. Symptoms of blue-green algal toxin poisoning may range from lethargy and loss of appetite to seizures, vomiting, and convulsions. Dogs are particularly susceptible to blue-green algal poisoning because scums can attach to their coats and be swallowed during self-cleaning.

Should I let my pets or livestock drink or swim in water containing algal blooms?

No. Animals can become extremely ill, and even die, after swallowing water containing blue-green algae. As public awareness has increased, so has the number of reports from veterinarians that blue-green algal toxins may have played a role in the deaths of dogs where other causes were not obvious. It is possible that the number of dogs that die from exposure to blue-green algae is underreported.

What can be done to reduce the frequency and intensity of blue-green algae blooms?

Regulatory agencies like the Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection are working with communities around the state to reduce stormwater runoff, and to encourage agricultural practices that reduce soil erosion while maintaining high crop yields. Locally, landowners and interested citizens can help minimize the problems associated with algal blooms by working together with partners in their watershed to reduce the amount of nutrients that reach nearby streams and lakes.

There are no quick or easy remedies for the control of blue-green algae once they appear in a lake or pond. Reducing the amount of nutrients that wash into our lakes and ponds will eventually reduce the frequency and intensity of blue-green algae blooms, but it may take a long time and a lot of community involvement to effectively change the nutrient concentrations in a water body, as there may be large amounts of nutrients in the sediment at the bottom that may continue to serve as food for the blue-green algae.

You can help reduce nutrient concentrations by promoting the following practices in your community:

Prevent yard debris (e.g., leaves, grass clippings, etc.) and fertilizer from washing into storm drains.

Plant and maintain vegetative buffer strips of native species along shorelines of lakes, ponds and streams.

Blue-green Algae Surveillance Program

The Wisconsin Division of Public Health is working with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to collect information about human and animal illness and death resulting from exposure to blue-green algae. This information will provide a better understanding of the public health problem posed by algae blooms in our lakes and river and enhance efforts to prevent exposure from occurring.

Health Department staff are asking the public to notify them of any known or suspected human or animal exposures to blue-green algae that may have resulted in illnesses such as breathing problems, vomiting or skin rashes. Researchers will collect information about symptoms and any treatment received. They will also collect exposure information such as date and location and may collect water samples.

People should not swim or boat through heavy algal blooms. Keep children and pets away from algal blooms. Individuals experiencing symptoms of blue-green algae exposure should seek medical attention.

For more information or to report a case go to <http://dhs.wi.gov/eh/bluegreenalgae> or call 608-266-1120.

Two programs from the southern half of the Rock River - Illinois

Editorial: Rock River Times, Rockford:

A vision, a challenge, a proposal...The Rock River Trail: hike it, bike it, kayak it, canoe it!

By Frank Schier, Editor and Publisher

Ready for a hike, a little bike riding? How about some boating the old-fashion style with a paddle and even some camping gear?! You can hike the Appalachian or Pacific Coast trails. Rock River native Tom Bauschke did and wrote about each journey in this paper. Let's blaze a new trail on land and water! The Rock River Trail: Hike it, bike it, kayak it, canoe it!

Imagine traveling down from just under Lake Winnebago to the Mississippi River on or along the 287 miles of the Rock River, through 10 counties and 33 cities and villages. You could visit what was once the largest man-made sea in the country, the Horicon Marsh, camp in six state parks, float around three lakes and see two pyramids—not counting the one that's supposed to be at the bottom of Lake Mills! By the way, there's at least 48 creeks to explore off the river, too.

Along the Rock River in Winnebago and Ogle County (IL) alone, you could enjoy three state parks, 11 forest preserves, 14 prairies and 15 creeks.

Just think of the huge inventory of natural areas and municipal and county parks in the 10 counties graced by the Rock River in Wisconsin and Illinois! Each (Illinois) county has a forest preserve district, and the

major municipalities all have park districts.

Talk about tourism! Every chamber of commerce, convention and visitors' bureau, hotel-motel and restaurant association should be thrilled with a Rock River Trail for hiking, biking and boating.

The states of Wisconsin and Illinois both have their state park systems and department of natural resources to help with such a project. Of course, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would have to be included because the Rock River is an international waterway, being a tributary to the Mississippi River, which feeds into the Gulf of Mexico.

Yes, we can build the Rock River Trail, and many will be surprised how much of it already exists! We just have to market what we have.

RRR Editor's note: More information should be able to be found at: <http://www.rockrivertimes.com> or by emailing frank.schier@rockrivertimes.com. An exploratory meeting was held on April 16.

The Rock River Coalition is not currently involved with either of these activities and is providing this as information for those who might be interested.

Rock River Sweep proposed for July 31, 2010

Rock River Sweep.org is a grass roots, not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving the health and ecosystem of the Rock River and its tributaries in Wisconsin and Illinois by partnering the communities along its banks into a unified, volunteer effort of river revitalization and annual clean-ups.

Currently Rock River Sweep is most active in Oregon IL, but they are hoping to expand through the entire basin in both Wisconsin and Illinois.

They propose holding a the Great Rock River Sweep clean-up along the entire 285 miles on Saturday July 31.

Volunteer stream coordinators are needed for this to happen. Founder Frank Masterman says organizations, groups, clubs, businesses and individuals are encouraged to volunteer to fill the positions of section coordinator in each community along the river, from Horicon, Wis., to Rock Island, Ill.

Larger communities will require multiple sub-sections and coordinators to head up each sub-section.

For more information about the Rock River Sweep or to volunteer as a section coordinator, visit at www.rockriversweep.org or e-mail Masterman at contact@rockriversweep.org.

Section coordinators will be coordinating and conducting the cleanup in their local section. Some of the duties include:

- Work closely with Rock River Sweep.org organizers to assure a uniform and successful cleanup.
- Acquire cleanup supplies and other support from local businesses (T-shirts, gloves, flyers).
- Work with your local media to recruit volunteers for cleanup day.
- Work with neighboring section coordinators to prevent overlapping of sections.
- Use the "Organizer's Handbook" provided by Rock River Sweep.org to assure a successful cleanup effort.
- Register your section of the Rock River Sweep with Rock River Sweep.org and with American Rivers.
- Recruit, assemble and register volunteers on the cleanup day.
- Coordinate "post-cleanup" recyclable-sort and trash disposal.
- Arrange for proper disposal of all material collected.
- Report cleanup results to Rock River Sweep.org organizers and American Rivers.

Local bakery helps Rock River Coalition with fundraising

Tuesday, March 16th was an exciting day at Water House Foods Café & Bakehouse in Lake Mills, WI. RRC board members and staff spent the day meeting and greeting customers and sharing the work of RRC, answering questions and promoting the coalition's work in the basin. Water House Foods donated a portion of the day's proceeds to the Coalition. The Rock River Coalition wishes to express our gratitude and thanks to Water House Foods for the opportunity to partner with them for the day. In addition, RRC extends our thanks to The Wine Vineyard & the James J. Chocolate Shop, both located in Lake Mills, WI for their donations used as door prizes. We look forward to working with new volunteers, recruited during the event for our monitoring program.



RRR Board Member Patricia Cicero and Water House Foods owner, Rae Rediske after a very successful fundraising event.

photo by Ed Grunden

RRC to be honored at River Alliance Confluence

On May 1, at the River Alliance annual Confluence, the Rock River Coalition will be one of ten groups honored as an outstanding river organization who has effectively used the DNR River Protection Grants to support creative and important projects.

We hope our members and supporters can join us in the celebration. The cost is \$30/ person and includes heavy hors d'oeuvres and entertainment. The event will be held from 6:30 - 9:30pm at the Madison Club.

Learn more at the River Alliance of Wisconsin website: wisconsinrivers.org

Business casual attire - no jeans or athletic shoes please.



Send Your Legislator Down the River - 2010 Registration Form

Please make checks payable to the Rock River Coalition.

Send signed forms and payment, along with membership form if desired to:

Rock River Coalition, ATTN SYLDR, 864 Collins Road, Jefferson WI 53549. Registration can also be done on-line at <http://www.rockrivercoalition.org> with payment through PayPal.

For questions call Marie at 920-674-7297 or email marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov

Name(s) _____
 Organization _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Phone _____ email _____

adults attending RRC Member _____ @ \$13 \$ _____

adults attending not an RRC Member _____ @ \$18 \$ _____

attending age 5-12 _____ @ \$11 \$ _____

attending age 5 or under _____ @ \$7 \$ _____

needing space in a canoe, Voyageur or boat _____ @ \$5 \$ _____

(Maximum \$10/canoe: includes paddle and PFD; no canoe charge for youth not paddling or children under 5)

Late registration fee (after May 31) \$5 \$ _____

RRC membership (category _____) \$ _____

of T-shirts (many sizes and colors available) _____ @ \$15 \$ _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

_____ I would like a vegetarian dinner

_____ I will only be at the Roundtable & dinner

_____ I/We have a canoe/kayak which we will use, _____ I do not have a canoe, please provide space in one for me.

partner name (if any) _____

_____ I would like a spot in the Voyager Canoe (if available)

_____ I would like a spot in the motor boat (if available)

I am an elected official representing _____

In consideration of the "Sponsors" (as defined below) accepting this registration, I, the undersigned entrant, intending to be legally bound, do hereby agree not to sue and hereby waive and release all sponsors, governmental bodies, organizations, officials, elected officials and individuals associated with the 'Send Your Legislator Down the River' canoe and motor boat event (the "Event") and each of their respective officers, directors, employees, heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns from any and all claims, actions, damages or injuries suffered or incurred by me or which arise out of my participation in the Event, unless caused by the willful misconduct of any of the Sponsors. I hereby agree to the use of my voice or picture or any other record of the Event for any purpose whatsoever. This release applies to and binds the undersigned entrant, his/her heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns and is for the benefit of all of the Sponsors. This registration is invalid unless signed by the entrant. If entrant is under 18 years of age, the parent or legal guardian of the entrant must also sign the form.

Participant 1: _____ Age (if under 18): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (under 18): _____ Date: _____

Parent Name/Guardian (printed): _____

Participant 2: _____ Age (if under 18): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (under 18): _____ Date: _____

Parent Name/Guardian (printed): _____

One hold harmless clause must be signed for each person attending. Extra forms will be available at the event.

Become a RRC Member

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

Name _____

Title _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone (____) _____

E-mail _____

I am a member of _____ Chapter.

Memberships Fees		
Individual	\$ 25	_____
Family	\$ 35	_____
Student/Senior Citizen	\$ 15	_____
Classroom	\$ 25	_____
Affiliates*	\$ 50	_____
Corporate	\$ 200	_____

*Includes small businesses, organizations, lake districts, and municipal departments

Any donation of \$100 or more will be recognized and linked to your website from our website: www.rockrivercoalition.org

Donors of \$500 or greater will receive an ad in this newsletter. Check out website for more information.

Tax deductible donation	
Amount	Purpose
_____	General Support
_____	Citizen Monitoring
_____	Rain Gardens
_____	Other:

Donations are greatly appreciated and can be targeted towards specific projects.

Please mail this completed form with check to:

Rock River Coalition

823 Lucas Lane

Jefferson, WI 53549 -1182

or register and pay online with PayPal at:

www.rockrivercoalition.org/membership.asp



RRC Annual Meeting to highlight Horicon Marsh efforts

Tuesday May 4 5:00 - 8:00pm

1855 Saloon and Grill, County N, Cottage Grove

5:00 Meet and Greet, complimentary appetizers

5:30 Annual Meeting and Election of Board Members

6:00 Dinner

6:30 Announce 2010 Officers and Special Presentations:

Rock River Recovery Plan: Jim Congdon, DNR Upper Rock Basin Supervisor
Phosphorus and sediment are the major impairments to the Rock River Basin, learn how the DNR, working with a diverse partnership effort, will develop a plan to meet water quality goals for the basin.

Horicon Marsh Water Quality Project: Erv Lesczynski, Fond du Lac County Land Conservation
Learn about the amazing successes Erv has had working with farmers in the headwaters of the Horicon Marsh. His work has led to many best management practices being installed along streams and on farmland protecting one of the world's most important freshwater marshes.

Horicon Marsh Volunteer Monitoring by Ed Grunden, RRC Volunteer Monitoring Director.
Learn how the Rock River Coalition, in partnership with the United States Geological Survey, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of Natural Resources, are working together on a new monitoring effort to collect data that will help document water quality achievements.

All RRC members are encouraged to attend, enjoy and meet with others involved in RRC activities. The public is also welcome to attend! The event is free; however, meals are the responsibility of the participant.

Please RSVP to Jennifer Hanneman by April 30 at info@rockrivercoalition.org or 920-674-9380.

Hope to see you there!



Enjoy the waters of the Rock through paddle sports

Three great opportunities await you!

Send Your Legislator Down the River on June 7, in the wonderful Cherokee Marsh on the north side of Lake Mendota: more information on page 5.

Rotary Rock River Regatta - Fun Family Float on May 15 from 9 - noon City B to Jefferson kicks off the release of the new Glacial Heritage Watertrail Guide. Cost is \$25/canoe for 2 people which includes 2 T-shirts, To rent a canoe for \$25 contact Jefferson Chamber at 920-674-4511 or email slewis@jeffersonabc.com. Refreshments and prizes. More information on the watertrail guide on page 3.

Friends of Badfish Creek Watershed Canoe Outing & Picnic on June 12 9am - 1pm, Casey Road to Fulton Park; Sign up with Lynne Diebel at 608-873-7910 or Isdiebel@gmail.com

April 22, Earth Day turns 40: 1970 - 2010



Celebrate this important anniversary by following suggestions from Amy Taylor with the Healthy Community Project, who talked at the Rock River Stormwater Group's April Natural Lawns Workshop.

Four Simple Things to Do to Help the Earth:

Mow High: 3-3.5 inches mower height will help keep weeds down, keep moisture in the ground and grow good strong roots for healthy turf.

Sharpen Your Mower Blades: Not just once a year, but several times, will keep you from injuring your grass when you cut it.

Vigorously Over Seed: Get ahead of the weeds by over seeding every year with mixed grass seed. Be sure to find ones without fungicide applied.

Aerate your lawn: Use a plug aerator to prevent compaction and to oxygenate the plant roots.

Learn more at their informative website at www.healthycommunitiesproject.org

Calendar of Events

April 23 **Evansville Earth Day Environmental Fair**

April 24 **Project RED Workshop:** 9:00 to noon.
See page 5 for more information.

May 4 **RRC Annual Meeting:** 1855 Saloon and Grill, Cottage Grove 5:00 - 8:00pm

May 1 & 8 **Orvis Days:** RRC display at Greenway Station in Middleton

May 8 **Snap Shot Day:** Stream Monitoring. See page 5.

May 12 **Friends of Badfish Creek Watershed Plan Committee Meeting:** 6:30-8pm, Stoughton Ancora Coffee

May 15 **Citizen stream monitoring training:** Johnson Creek, contact Ed Grunden at ed@rockrivercoalition.org. See page 5.

May 22 **Citizen stream monitoring training:** Waterville, contact Jayne Jenks at jjjenks@waukeshacountywi.gov. See page 5.

June 5 **Wild Parsnip Work Day:** 10am - 2pm, Badfish Creek Wildlife Area; to volunteer contact Lynne Diebel at 608-873-7910 or Isdiebel@gmail.com

June 7 **Send Your Legislator Down the River:** Nau-ti-gal Restaurant and Cherokee Marsh. See page 7.

June 12 **Friends of Badfish Creek Watershed Canoe Outing & Picnic:** 9am - 1pm, Casey Road to Fulton Park; to sign up, contact Lynne Diebel at 608-873-7910 or Isdiebel@gmail.com

Look Inside to Find Articles on:

Water Star Debuts (continued page 3)	Pg 1
RRC President's Message	Pg 2
RRSG targets stormwater education	Pg 4
Glacial Heritage Area Watertrails	Pg 4
UW-W Freshmen for Freshwater	Pg 4
Rock River Recovery Plan kick-off	Pg 5
Hearing on phosphorus rule	Pg 5
Monitoring updates & Snapshot Days	Pg 5
Send Your Legislator Down the River	Pg 6 & Pg 11
Confluence and Mussel Monitoring	Pg 6 & Pg 7
To till or not to till	Pg 7
DNR use of citizen monitoring data	Pg 8
Blue-green algae: a health risk	Pg 9
Rock River Trail and Rock River Sweep	Pg 10
RRC fundraiser at Waterhouse Foods	Pg 10
RRC honored by River Alliance	Pg 10
RRC Membership Form	Pg 11

Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the summer newsletter is July 6, 2010. To submit, e-mail suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu.

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

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