

TESTING THE WATERS A PADDLE AND PROBE ADVENTURE

During May of 2016, the RRC hosted a unique monitoring effort, paddling 130 river miles from Mayville to Beloit over 11 days.

The goal was to engage communities of the Rock River Basin by exploring water quality issues, recreational opportunities and the role of the public in water conservation. This was accomplished by collecting, analyzing and sharing water quality data with specially designed equipment mounted on a kayak. (see photo on next panel) The water testing component was paired with inviting the community to paddle along with our probe each day, organizing educational community events and providing educational programs in local schools.

The probes tested for pH, conductivity, temperature and dissolved oxygen every ten seconds and uploaded the results via smartphones to a real-time map at www.testingwaters.org. Periodic grab samples for analysis of nutrients were also taken at key locations along the route.

The associated educational community events focused on water quality in the Rock River, what is being done to improve it, and what communities and people are doing to make a difference.

Overall, the event was a success! The Rock River Coalition gathered essential water quality data as well as increase awareness of water quality in communities within the Rock River Basin. A full report is available on the RRC website.

What We Accomplished:

- 11 days of paddling
- 30,000 datapoints
- 56 phosphorus samples
- 10 outreach meetings
- 429 students in 7 schools



2016 Annual Report



Eric Compas, RRC Board member and UW-Whitewater Professor, lead the RRC key 2016 event: Testing the Waters a Paddle and Probe Adventure.

Trying new approaches to learning about, and protecting, our water resources is a major strength of the Rock River Coalition.

Mission

To educate and provide opportunities for people of diverse interests to work together to improve the environmental, economic, cultural and recreational resources of the Rock River Basin.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2016 was another impressive year for the Rock River Coalition.

Testing the Waters: a Paddle and Probe Adventure was the highlight of the year, and there were numerous other accomplishments related to water quality monitoring and improvement that are listed in this report.



At tonight's annual meeting, we will present our well-deserved biennial awards to Basin Protectors and Rock River Coalition Friends. I would like to thank each one of them for their outstanding contributions. I would also like to thank our hard-working board members who volunteer their time to support the good works of the RRC; our talented employees Nancy Sheehan and Tara Callis; and our enthusiastic citizen monitors. I am humbled by all the good work these folks do for the Rock River Coalition and beyond.

The future looks bright. This year we will be working on existing grant-funded projects, making our citizen monitoring program even stronger, and exploring hiring an executive director. With your participation and support, we will continue to make the Rock River Basin a better place recreationally, economically, culturally, and environmentally!



Jane Carlson, 2016 RRC President

ROCK RIVER COALITION FINANCIAL SUMMARY

for fiscal year ending 12/31/2016

Support and Revenues

Memberships/Donations	\$13,707
Grant and Restricted Income	\$36,736
Total Revenue	\$50,443

Expenses

Program Services	\$58,211
Management and General	\$ 6,983
Total Expenses	\$65,194
Revenues over Expenses	-\$14,751

Net Assests - Unrestricted Funds

Beginning of the year	\$ 9,042
End of the year	\$ 8,834

Net Assests - Project Funds

Beginning of the year	\$19,571
End of the year	\$ 5,029



2016 Board of Directors and Staff

Jane Carlson, President
 Joe Zakovec, President Elect
 Dave Hoffman, Secretary
 Patricia Cicero, Treasurer
 Karl Brandstaetter, Student Director
 Eric Compas, Director
 Carl Korfmacher, Director
 Lyndsey Schreiner, Director
 Andy Selle, Director
 Tara Callis, Admin. Assistant & Bookkeeper
 Nancy Sheehan, Stream Monitoring Prog. Coord.
 Suzanne Wade, Newsletter Editor

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info@rockrivercoalition.org, 920-650-0966
 A pdf of this annual report is at: www.rockrivercoalition.org

2016 STREAM MONITORING

The mission of the stream monitoring program is “to protect and improve stream and river health through our citizen based stream monitoring program.” Our volunteers are committed to ensuring that our streams and rivers are swimmable and fishable for our children and our grandchildren. This is no small task when over 65% of our 2,932 stream miles are listed as “impaired” by the WDNR due to pollutants such as phosphorus.

We will know when we have succeeded in fulfilling our mission when waterways are removed from the WDNR impaired waters list. We are taking some important first steps toward fulfilling this mission. Our volunteer stream monitors are collecting the kind of water quality data necessary for science-based decision making.

We accomplished much together in 2016:

- The RRC stream monitoring program equipped, trained, and supported 127 volunteer stream monitors who donated an estimated 2,400 volunteer hours to our clean streams movement. This is an estimated monetary contribution of \$53,000.
- Volunteer teams monitored 99 stream sites which resulted in an 4,572 discrete water quality results entered into the WDNR database called the Surface Water Data Viewer (SWIMS).
- Volunteers collected nutrient samples at 56 sites funded through WAV/WDNR as well as through a Yahara WINS grant.
- Our volunteers installed continuous stream temperature gages at 55 stream sites throughout the Rock River Basin.
- The RRC stream monitoring program completed a Rock River Basin report card which provides grades for each stream monitoring site. The report card interactive map is available on the RRC website: www.rockrivercoalition.org.

- Over 40 volunteers and partners working in the Yahara River watershed attended a workshop in March 2016, hosted by the City of Fitchburg.
- In October 2016, 38 volunteer stream and lake monitors attended our biennial conference. The WDNR Horicon Marsh Visitors Center was a perfect location to share stories and learn how our monitoring data is being used.

No one state or federal agency has the resources to collect sufficient data necessary to ensure that water quality standards are being met. The RRC and our volunteer stream monitors are proud to play a critical role in protecting our streams. Help us to support our volunteers by becoming a member and donating to our stream monitoring program.

CHAPTER REPORTS

The Friends of Badfish Creek Watershed - FBCW

Badfish Creek is a 22-mile long tributary of the Yahara River. FBCW members made great progress on a new canoe landing of Badfish Creek at Old Stage Road. They also worked on an interactive on-line paddling map with detailed information and numerous waypoints. The map should be fully functioning in 2017.

Johnson Creek Watershed Alliance - JCWA

The JCWA hosted an invasive species identification workshop and a stream clean-up in fall of 2016. A significant amount of trash was collected along the shoreline.



JCWA also hosted a dinner and provided updates on their work during the spring Testing the Waters a Paddle and Probe Adventure.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2016 MEMBERS, DONORS AND GRANTORS

Over \$1,000

Anonymous
DNR - State of Wisconsin
Madison Metropolitan
Sewerage Dist

\$100 to \$999

American Transmission
Company
Amy Callis
Anne Miller
Carl & Peggy Glassford
City of Hartford
City of Janesville
Wastewater Utility
City of Stoughton - Utilities
City of Waupun
City of Whitewater
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Cynthia Chmell
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Friends - Capital Springs
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Jane Carlson & Family
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UW-Whitewater College of
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Watertown Rotary Club
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Agribusiness Council
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American Institute of
Professional Geologists

\$35 to \$99

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David Musolf & Roger
Packard
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Jim Post
Jon Lowrey
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Karen Margelofsky-
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\$1 to \$34

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Thor Backus
Walter Christensen
William Boettge

These are the donations, memberships and grants to the RRC and its Chapters from 1/1/16 - 12/31/16