



Rock River Reflections

A publication of the Rock River Coalition
in cooperation with the Rock River Stormwater Group

Winter 2018 Volume 21, Number 1

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Ready for Kayaking!

A canoe/kayak launch! The Friends of Badf sh Creek Watershed are excited to announce that the canoe/kayak launch at Old Stage Road was completed in October 2017. Contractor Mark Rosenbaum of Stoughton did the heavy machine work of dredging and reshaping the eroded bank on October 4. The next day, FBCW members spread grass seed and erosion control mats. By October 11, the grass was up and thriving and the stream bank showed no more signs of erosion, despite high water levels from the year's persistent heavy rains. The trail and the bank now slope gradually and naturally to the creek, making it easier to launch a canoe or kayak. Building this great new launch pad was made possible by a generous gift from longtime FBCW members Jim Danky and Christine Schelshorn. The landing is at the southern tip of the Badf sh Creek Wildlife Area, where paddlers and hikers can park off-road in

the DNR parking lot on Old Stage Road. FBCW and DNR partnered to plan the project.

A watershed poster launch! In the spring of 2018, FBCW will be posting their new informational poster—Postcards From Badf sh Creek Watershed—in the DNR kiosk at the Old Stage Road landing. The poster project was funded by a grant of \$402 from the Dane County Environmental Council's Community Partners Program and a grant of \$750 from Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (FYI: treated eff uent from MMSD is about 50 percent of the Badf sh's total f ow.) FBCW member Jim Post gathered information and photos



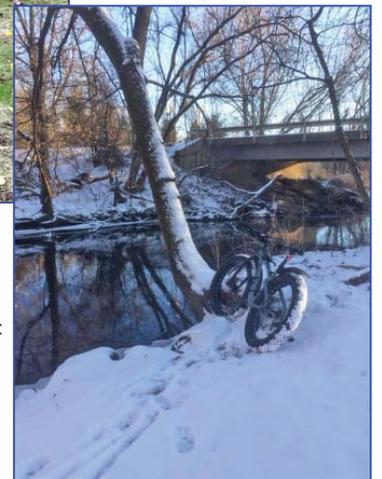
Test-driving the poster in the kiosk.

Photo by Jim Post



Canoe landing on October 15 (Above) Photo by Lynne Diebel
Canoe Landing on December 30 (Right) Photo by Jim Post

We can't do the poster justice in this newsletter, You can view it on the Rock River Coalition Website



and used his GIS skills to underlay the poster design. Graphic designer Lauren Brown of LV Brown Studio lvbrownstudio.com, an ecological landscape design firm in Madison, created the f nal product: a beautiful overview of the eighty-f ve square-mile watershed.

At a celebratory event in the spring of 2018,

FBCW will launch both the canoe/kayak launch and the poster. The public is welcome. Watch for the date and details on FBCW's Facebook page.

Also in the spring, FBCW will be holding a workday to clear deadfalls from the Badf sh reach that runs through the wildlife area to facilitate canoe/kayak passage. Watch for the date and details on the FBCW Facebook page.

If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Lynne Diebel at lsdiebel@gmail.com.

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Rock River Coalition President's Message

I write this message as 2017 comes to a close and reflect on what the RRC accomplished this year.

Our stream coordinator, Nancy Sheehan, had a very successful year for volunteer recruitment and monitoring. Also, she is very involved with the continuing Yahara WINS project, which in 2018 will mark the sixth year of RRC involvement in citizen monitoring in the Yahara River Watershed in Dane County.

But what are we monitoring? Water. Water is very essential for life; we all need to preserve our most valuable resource.

I had a tour this fall at the treatment

plant and they were in awe of what actually happens at a treatment plant. Most people tend to flush it and forget it. It simply doesn't go down the drain and disappear.

The wastewater is collected, pumped, screened, settled, treated by microscopic organisms, filtered, disinfected, and returned to a local lake, river, or stream cleaner than the existing body of water.

If you have not yet joined or renewed your membership, please do so soon and consider making an additional donation to support our basin-wide citizen monitoring program.

These donations greatly help us to

monitor the Water that is so precious to us.

Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering your time or talking about future programs. You can reach me at joe@rockrivercoalition.org.

I wish you a happy, prosperous, and healthy New Year!

Joe Zakovec

RRC
President



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:

Joe Zakovec
joe@rockrivercoalition.org

DIRECTORS:

Dave Hoffman, Secretary
Patricia Cicero, Treasurer
Jane Carlson, Past President
Eric Compas, President Elect
Carl Korfmacher
Bob Hansis
Andy Selle

Stream Monitoring Coordinator:

Nancy Sheehan
nancy@rockrivercoalition.org

RRC Administrative Assistant

Tara Callis

RRC Address:

864 Collins Road
Jefferson, WI 53549-1976
920-650-0966
info@rockrivercoalition.org
www.rockrivercoalition.org

Newsletter Editor:

Suzanne Wade, 608-334-4517
suzanne@rockrivercoalition.org

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

If you'd prefer a pdf of the newsletter emailed to you contact info@rockrivercoalition.org.

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.

Solar Power at a Discount for Residents and Businesses

Wouldn't it be great if you could buy solar energy at a discounted price? Here's how we can make that happen:

A group of people are uniting to initiate a solar group purchase in Jefferson County and surrounding areas. We are spurred by the City of Fort's recent exploration and purchase of a large solar array for one of its well stations, and by a grant that Heart of the City in Fort Atkinson received last year to do assessments for businesses in the Fort Atkinson area to see how much it would cost them to install solar energy for their property.

A presentation from the Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA) and further information on this project was provided to Sustain Jefferson who have agreed to be a sponsoring organization as has Maker-space from Whitewater and the Rock River Coalition.

The project is tentatively being called Glacial Heritage Solar. A group buy uses the power of volume discount to bring the best possible price for turnkey solar on photo-voltaic (PV) installations to individuals and small commercial projects.

Because there is an advisory board of solar engaged people leading the effort, the power of education is at work, increasing buyers' confidence that the company they are working with is reputable and the components are vetted.

Finally, a group buy capitalizes on solar's contagious qualities and modeling to make the case for going solar and why now. Roughly 40% of people are more inclined to purchase solar energy when their neighbors purchase it.

MREA has lead similar projects in the Midwest, most recently in Iowa County in Wisconsin where they recruited over 30 participants.

We have every reason to believe that there is sufficient interest to pursue this course of action in Jefferson County and surrounding areas.

We are inviting Friends groups, municipalities, wellness groups, water quality groups and other environmental and sustainable-minded folks to jump in with both feet or one toe, as their time permits.

Right now we are putting out the call for the following:

1. Group endorsements of the effort.
2. People to serve on the Advisory Board (overseeing the RFP and bidding process). This will only be a small group and people with solar experience are encouraged to respond.
3. People to serve on the Program Committee (overseeing the Power Hour education and outreach). An enthusiastic handful of communicators would be greatly appreciated.
4. Organizational liaisons to this group so Glacial Heritage Solar promotional efforts are maximized. We need people to update and encourage those in their spheres of influence.

We expect this to result in a large number of PV solar arrays to be installed throughout the region beginning in late Spring 2018. We'd like to smash the MREA record, and that will depend in large measure on your participation.

If you would like more information, please contact Beth Gehred at beth.gehred@gmail.com or 920-728-3170 or Frankie Fuller at frankiefuller10@gmail.com or 608-445-0809.

Wisconsin Nutrient Reduction Strategy 2015-2016 Report Released

Wisconsin's Nutrient Reduction Strategy is a broad overview of nutrient management activities for both point sources and nonpoint sources in Wisconsin. This strategy documents ongoing activities whether they are implemented by federal, state or local agencies. It identifies areas where further progress is needed.

The Wisconsin Nutrient Reduction Strategy Implementation Progress Report, covering activities in 2015-16 is now final and on the Wisconsin DNR website:
<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/surfacewater/nutrientstrategy.html>

The Nutrient Reduction Strategy news was taken from the Rock River Basin TMDL Monthly email newsletter. For over eight years the Rock River Coalition has offered an email update, which included this type of news. However, our stellar volunteer, Marie Rubietta has retired from this duty.

We encourage everyone who wishes to keep up with Rock River Basin TMDL efforts to subscribe through DNR Gov Delivery at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIDNR/subscriber/new?preferences=true#tab1>

New Urban Environmental Learning Center in South Beloit: Nature at The Confluence



"Nature at the Confluence" is a new urban environmental center at the confluence of the Rock River and Turtle Creek in South Beloit. The project was spearheaded by Beloit 2020 and is a wonderful addition to the Rock River Basin.

Photo by Therese Oldenburg

Nature at The Confluence (NATC) is a new urban environmental learning center located along Turtle Creek where it meets the Rock River in South Beloit, Illinois, adjacent to Beloit, Wisconsin. Located at exactly the half-way point of the Rock River Trail, the 72 acre property has over 1 mile of undeveloped waterfront and includes a 17 acre uninhabited island that provides safe haven for a nesting pair of eagles.

Programs at the center bring life and activity to the former derelict property in the heart of the South Beloit. The land is intersected by both Canadian

Pacific and Union Pacific rail lines, so the sounds of nature are intermingled with the occasional wail of a train horn, and the sounds from a nearby foundry.

The NATC campus was assembled through a combination of public land and private property purchases.

The \$2.2 million project was spearheaded and funded by Beloit 2020. This private organization raised all funds for land acquisition and construction of the center and then donated it to the City of South Beloit.

The environmental learning center opened in June 2017 on a 12 acre

parcel at the campus and operates as an independent non-profit nature center.

The Confluence Campus is situated on historically significant land.

Until 1832 the area was the site of a major Winnebago village called "Ke-chunk" or "Turtle". Government surveys at that time show Turtle Village at the confluence and it was reported that it included 35 lodges and over 600 inhabitants, the largest in the Illinois and Wisconsin territory.

The Confluence project tells a very important story about urban ecology and restoration.

The confluence land was used as a dumping ground for over 80 years. Hundreds of tires have been dumped on the land and waste foundry sand and other solid waste was regularly deposited on the land for several decades, leading to over 8 feet of fill and debris.

A natural resources inventory in early 2014 found the site's ecology severely impacted by previous land uses; an abundance of invasive species; inappropriate bank stabilization techniques; and declining ecological health of the site. However, nature continues to persist and evidence of many special organisms and vegetation can be found on site. Projects and programming at NATC will focus heavily on water quality and habitat restoration. A 5-acre prairie recreation has been planted and learning gardens and a pollinator garden have been installed.

It is expected that the Nature at The Confluence project will stimulate adjacent and regional redevelopment.

The prospect of creating a visitor and regional attraction by cleaning up the land, improving the aesthetics, and providing community access to derelict and abandoned lands at the Confluence creates a powerful story and argument for the improvement of adjacent property. In fact, plans for a proposed Library/City Hall near the center on the campus property already demonstrate how the development of the campus could improve South Beloit's main thoroughfare, which is the southern entrance to Beloit's city center.

Examples of the type of programming offered at NATC:

Citizen Science Programs & Stream Monitoring; Prairie Restoration; Monarch Waystation & Habitat Development; Safe Paddling Programs & Paddle Tours; Student Scientists & STEM programming; Yoga at the Confluence; Learning Gardens; Boy Scout and Girl Scout Badge Programming.

Learn more about Nature At The Confluence at:
www.natureattheconfluence.com.

Contact organizers through email at info@natureattheconfluence.com or call (815) 200-6910.

Nature At The Confluence Location:
306 Dickop Street, South Beloit, Illinois
61080

Producer-Led Watershed Group Awarded Grant

The Dodge County Farmers for Healthy Soil-Healthy Water was awarded a Producer-Led Watershed Protection Grant from the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. Operating in the Upper Rock River Watershed, this group's long-term goal is to increase cover crop use and decrease sediment and nutrient runoff. The grant will enable the group to research the methods and grains that will result in the best cover crops and yields, and provide incentive payments for cover crop establishment. The group will hold two winter workshops, a summer field day, and an autumn tour for farmers, lake associations and the general public. For more information, please contact Loretta Ortiz-Ribbing with the Dodge County University of Wisconsin-Extension at 920-386-3790.

The Dodge County Farmers for Healthy Soil-Healthy Water are partnering with the Dodge County Alliance to host the 2nd annual Healthy Soil-Healthy Water Workshop on February 7 and an on-farm session on February 8. Results from on-farm cover crop trials will be shared. National and State experts Ray Archuleta, Justin Morris, and others will be speaking on soil health and clean water relationship. The registration brochure is now available at: www.dodgecountymfarmers.com.

A free SAVE OUR LAKES program will be held from 6:30pm to 8pm on February 7 at the Administration Building in Juneau. This program is an opportunity for lake property owners, producers, and the general public to network, learn, and share conservation practices.

More information will be available soon, to register, call 920 356 1200 or email: info@bdlia.com.

Looking Back at 2017 & Ahead to 2018 - An Update from the Rock River Stormwater Group

Protect Wisconsin Waterways

2017 was an exciting year for the Rock River Stormwater Group (RRSG) as we rolled out a new brand (Protect Wisconsin Waterways) and related public education outreach efforts targeting community members and the K-12 audience.

We are looking forward to 2018, with more involvement across the Rock River Basin through our continued partnership with UW-Whitewater students.

While we are excited about the new direction established through the Protect Wisconsin Waterways brand, we wanted to emphasize two key initiatives from the past year with bigger plans for 2018 to highlight how Rock River Coalition readers can get involved with our efforts.

Rock River Sweep

On September 9, 2017, Protect Wisconsin Waterways participated in the Rock River Sweep (a river clean-up) initiative across three RRSG member communities.

A team of over 30 volunteers helped clean up trash from the Rock River, its tributaries, and other nearby areas in Beloit, Janesville, and Waupun. Volunteers included students

from UW-Whitewater, community members, and municipal workers.

From basic trash like plastic bottles to the more exotic – rubber tires, a boot, TV, and parks and recreation barrier – the volunteers had a lot of fun while making a difference cleaning up our area waterways.

Involve More Communities

So how can you help us make more of an impact in 2018? Our goal is to involve all eight RRSG member communities on a single weekend and engage more of the general public in participating.

Next year's event will be held the first full weekend in September following Labor Day. Mark your calendars for September 8th and 9th and plan on joining us in one or more locations around the Rock River Basin to clean up our waterways. For more information or if you are interested in volunteering during the 2018 event, please visit our page at <http://protectwiwaterways.org/2018-rock-river-clean-sweep/>.

K-12 Outreach

Our second major initiative from 2017 involved educational outreach efforts to school districts and other youth-oriented groups across the Rock River Basin.



Classrooms across the Rock River Stormwater Group municipalities experienced the EnviroScape model, learning how to protect our waters from runoff.

RRSG photo

Protect Wisconsin Waterways representatives visited area elementary schools to give a presentation and interactive demonstration of an enviroscape model.

The presentation focuses on explaining our cause in a kid-friendly and educational fashion with our Stormwater 101 videos featuring our character, *Rain*. The team uses the enviroscape model to demonstrate how stormwater affects kids and their community.

Beyond Schools

Plans for 2018 include more outreach beyond schools. Besides looking for more opportunities for school visits, we are available for presentations to other groups including after school programs, Boy/Girl Scouts, library or other community events, and more.

Have an event where it makes sense for some kid-friendly stormwater education? We try to accommodate all requests! Teachers, Scout leaders, Librarians, and other community members can send us an email at protectwiwaterways@gmail.com.

Keep Up-to-Date with Runoff Rundown

Interested in keeping tabs on our latest events or learning more about our monthly focus? Check out The Runoff Rundown – our monthly e-newsletter about the Rock River Stormwater Group.

To catch up on past articles or subscribe, visit <http://protectwiwaterways.org/home/the-runoff-rundown/>



Protect Wisconsin Waterways' team collected trash from the Rock River and its tributaries this fall. The next Rock River Sweep will be held on the weekend after labor Day in 2018

RRSG Photos



Native Grasses, Forbs and Oak Savannas Aplenty Wildlife Habitat Flourishes Through SAFE Program Partnership

By Tivoli Gough, Wisconsin State Public Affairs Specialist

David and Jessica Gales own property located in the Glacial Habitat Safe Acres for Wildlife Enhance (SAFE) area in Fond du Lac County, Wis. The Gales restored their 36 acres into upland nesting cover on five fields, and added a shallow water area to complement the adjacent wetland acreage, just north of the west branch of the Fond du Lac River. This restoration was in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA), National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), Ducks Unlimited, Wings over Wisconsin, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "All the local partners pulled together to make this project possible and provide assistance for planning, seed, planting, and more. We couldn't have done this project without NRCS and FSA's key partnership along with all the partner's cooperation," said Erv Lesczynski, Rock River Watershed Planner.



Wildlife enjoying the shallow water habitat.

The Glacial Habitat Restoration SAFE Area offers FSA's Conservation Reserve Program Practices and NRCS technical planning assistance to provide enhanced habitat for bobolinks, eastern meadowlarks, grasshopper sparrow, Henslow's sparrows, and ring-necked pheasant. The goal is to establish a mosaic of grasslands and wetlands in a predominately agricultural landscape, resulting in more favorable habitat conditions for self-sustaining populations of waterfowl, pheasants and grassland songbirds. "We were looking for potential sites that would do well with native grasslands and savannas and also allow shallow scrapes in the Fond du Lac area to add wildlife habitat. The Gales property was a great place for the SAFE program to work effectively. NRCS specifically worked to design and locate the 1/3 acre scrape, overseeing construction in the winter," said Brian Kind, NRCS Soil Conservation Technician. "We were worried about soil erosion with the rented, conventionally farmed fields; we feel like we're giving back to the land by turning it into a more native habitat," said Jessica.

"We heard about the SAFE program through a conservation partner, the Wild Turkey Federation," said David. "Setting the timelines is very important for SAFE. We planned a year in advance with the Gales and involved them every step of the way," said Erv. With SAFE, project contracts can begin anytime of the year. The Gales started their contract in October 2015, enrolling 20 acres for 15 years, and did their first planting the following spring. Jake Vande Berg, Fond du Lac County Executive Director with the Farm Service Agency added, "Advanced planning works well for enrolling acres into the Conservation Reserve Program. The great partnership between FSA, NRCS, and other partners working on this project maximized the benefits and timing of contract enrollment."

Each of the five fields the Gales planted have a different species mix depending on the soil type and amount of moisture. "We knew the cropped field was previously in soybeans and that crop provides great residue to plant into," added Erv. Four fields have various mixes of upland plantings, including native grasses and forbs. "A custom, multi-species mix was used, including 5 native grasses and 3 main flowering forbs, black eyed susan, yellow cone flower and bergamot," said Cory Drummond, Fond du Lac County NRCS District Conservationist. "There is also some yellow cone flower and the Gales are also encouraging milkweed establishment for pollinators." The largest field was planted as an oak savanna with burr oak, white oak, black oak, hickory and swamp lights. "We planted over 460 trees in this planting, over 4 days of work; the oak savanna has many more forbs than the other fields," said David. The Gales have gone the extra mile and completed various tree and shrub plantings on acres not enrolled in the program. With technical and planning assistance from NRCS, the Gales also installed a shallow water area as part of their SAFE contract.

"The savanna and grasslands really hold the wildlife and habitat in and provide food and shelter for them," said Jessica. "We've seen hens and baby turkeys, various frogs, turtles, snakes, pheasants, deer, geese, ducks, pelicans; so many different species! We listen to the frogs all night." "The farm now has large blocks of cover and they have a large amount of duck nesting going on," said Erv. With new plantings, come new challenges and opportunities for management. "We are dealing with Canada thistle in some of the fields. It's one of the biggest problems with native grassland and savanna plantings," said Erv. "Compared to other plantings I've seen, the Gales property doesn't have much

at all because they are doing active weed management," said Erv. The Gales are properly managing their SAFE habitat by actively doing weed management in problem spots. "We are also planning to get a pull behind mower to do more strategic mowing in the smaller affected areas next year," explained David. "This has really been a family effort the whole way through."

David and Jessica grew up hunting and fishing and have two daughters who also love the outdoors, Betsy (10), and Millie (7). "Both the girls love hunting and fishing with mom and dad. It's important our girls understand this healthy land isn't always going to be here unless we take care of it," said Jessica. The Gales have made efforts to show their daughters the importance of conservation by

doing their part on the land they own to plant native habitat and native trees. "It gives them a real life understanding to not take healthy land, clean water and all our natural resources for granted," said Jessica. "Living out in the country exposes them to many new things. Just seeing wildlife and understanding the cycle of life gives them good exposure to how the natural world works." The Gales take conservation education one step further by having their kid's friends out often, taking them around the flourishing property to show different plants, trees, forbs, beneficial insects and animals. Jessica adds, "It's our chance to give back a little."

The Gales were nominated and recently received the NWTf Local Stewardship Award and also won the Statewide Award. "It was really nice to have our hard work recognized for the conservation efforts we have made on our property," said Jessica. The Gales have influenced neighbors and partners to follow suit in their wildlife habitat endeavors. This past summer they hosted a NRCS and FSA joint training session on working with USDA to accomplish restoration goals at their acreage. "The Gales have been very hospitable, allowing NRCS and FSA employees on their property and opening up their site as a training opportunity to see a successfully completed SAFE project. It was a nice experience to allow employees an opportunity to see conservation on the ground through this finished project and to learn specifics about the process," said Cory.

NRCS, FSA, the Gales and all the partners realize the success of this SAFE project. "I like the look and natural feel of it; I love watching the wildlife in the shallow water habitat area; it looks like it's always been that way. We see so many bees and butterflies now too; so, not just animal species, but beneficial insects also," said Jessica. "We've held many meetings and tours with different groups; we're always willing to learn new things and answer questions, we're up front about how good the program is; everyone has been great in providing information," said Jessica. "NRCS and FSA collaborating and working together in Fond du Lac enabled us to get this job done," said Drummond. Vande Berg also agreed, "It took the cooperation of all partners for this project to be a success. Working together as One USDA for our landowners provides countless benefits to the land and the local community." The USDA agencies look forward to many more years of partnership with the Gales on this SAFE project success.



(L to R) David and Jessica Gales, SAFE program participants; Cory Drummond, NRCS Fond du Lac District Conservationist; Brian Kind, NRCS Fond du Lac Soil Conservation Technician; and Erv Lesczynski, Rock River Watershed Planner.

Photos by Amanda Ludois, Wisconsin Visual Information Specialist

Progress for the Rock River Trail Initiative

Greg Farnham, Coordinator Rock River Trail Initiative

In 2018 the Rock River Trail Initiative celebrates eight years since the inaugural river paddle in April 2010 set in motion implementation of plans to establish a system of recreational trails along the Rock River through Wisconsin and Illinois. It has been an exciting journey and all who have been partners in this adventure can take pride in the accomplishments: The first national water trail in Wisconsin and Illinois, a scenic and historic road route designated by legislation in Madison and Springfield, a bike route from headwaters in south central Wisconsin to the Mississippi River at the Quad Cities of Illinois and Iowa, an air route, hiking and horse riding trails, an art route and even a chocolate trail!

It is appropriate that we recognize two individuals whose efforts contributed immeasurably to the success of the Rock River Trail and who regrettably died last year. Frank Schier of Rockford was editor and publisher of The Rock River Times newspaper and founder of the Rock River Trail. Frank's love of the Rock River, his advocacy for clean water and his vision of a river trails system continue to inspire us and guide our planning effort. David Schreiber of Madison was an accomplished landscape architect whose work graces the riverfronts of several Rock River communities. He was one of our original council members and his expertise greatly assisted our trail planning work. Frank and Dave are missed.

We begin our ninth year working closely with park districts, tourism agencies, counties and river communities to promote and market the Rock River Trail as a leisure destination. We recently elected Therese Oldenburg of Beloit as co-coordinator and expanded the number of management council seats to include tourism organizations. And we will be recruiting several residents of the river corridor to serve as county representatives on the council. If you would like to be considered for a representative position, please contact me at 920-296-8771 or at waterdown845@gmail.com. And please visit us at rockrivertrail.com and on Facebook Rock River Trail.

The Rock River Trail has a bright future and we look forward to enhancing public use and enjoyment of the trails and thereby contribute to economic development and revitalization of our river communities.



Rock River Trail supporters: from Left to Right: Joe Nehmer, Therese Oldenburg, Greg Farnham, Debbie Thompson, David Schreiber, Frank Schier, David Hoffman, Loren Swartley.

2018-2020 Triennial Water Quality Standards Review - Request for Topics

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is accepting public input as part of the process for the 2018-2020 Triennial Standards Review on water quality.

Every three years, all states are required under the federal Clean Water Act to review their water quality standards. Topics evaluated in the review include policies, rules and guidance related to designated uses, water quality criteria, antidegradation and variances.

"This water quality review helps the DNR focus our efforts on the best ways to protect the health of Wisconsin's lakes, rivers and streams," said Marcia Willhite, DNR Water Resources Management specialist.

Willhite said the review consists of several steps. First, the department asks for topics from the public and DNR partners on water quality standards. If members of the public have suggestions for revisions or improvements to DNR's policies, rules and guidance related to designated uses, water quality criteria, antidegradation and variances, they can complete the topic suggestion document, linked below, but also found by searching the DNR website for "Triennial Standards Review." **The deadline to submit a topic suggestion is January 25.**

Triennial Standards Review Fact Sheet - Provided for a further explanation of the TSR process.

Topic Suggestion Document - Provided for topic input, further instructions are located in the document.

The department then asks the public, partners and staff to rank these topics, and holds a public hearing to provide additional information on the topics under consideration. The department then prioritizes the topics based on the input from the survey and prepares a final report. The ranking, public hearing and final report may be completed by the spring of 2018. Work then begins on implementing the priority topics, which can take a year or more depending on the topic.

Questions or comments on the Triennial Standards Review should be directed to Marcia Willhite at Marcia.Willhite@wisconsin.gov or 920-746-2875. More information on the review process and past reviews can also be found on the triennial standards review page of the DNR website.

The Triennial Standards Review, Triennial Standards Review Fact Sheet, and Topic Suggestion Document can all be found here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/surfacewater/tsr.html>

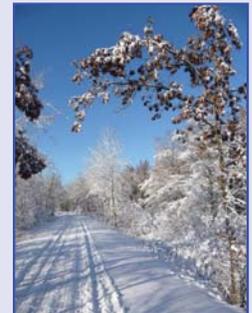
Fun Basin Events

Frozen Assets Festival

February 2-4, Madison. FREE activities all weekend long, including ice skating, sleigh rides, pond hockey, snowshoeing, ice science, and figure and speed skating demos. <https://cleanlakesalliance.org/frozen-assets/>

Knickerbocker Ice Festival

February 3-4, Lake Mills. A weekend full of indoor and outdoor events including trivia, candle-light skiing and snow shoeing, ice golf, ice carving, family games, ice fishing tournament, and an ice safety demonstration where you can take the plunge into Rock Lake in a dry suit and learn how to get yourself out of the water. <http://legendarylakemills.com/>



It's a great time to get out and experience the beauty of the Rock River Basin. Photo by Jim Kerler

Candlelight Hike/Ski

Magnolia Bluff County Park, February 10, starting at 5:30. Enjoy s'mores, hot chocolate, hot dogs, campfire, and illuminated trails. Bring your friends and family for this great fundraiser! www.co.rock.wi.us/parks

Canoeecopia

March 9-11, Alliant Energy Center, Madison. A paddle sport consumer and educational event. <http://www.canoeecopia.com>



PARK PAVILION • January 27th, 2018 • 3-6pm
Featuring beers from regional and statewide big water and craft breweries, local food & music.

www.rockriverbierfest.com

Fighting Phragmites

Jeanne Scherer AIS Outreach Specialist, UW-Extension/UW-Madison College of Ag & Life Sciences



We in the Rock River Basin are on the front lines of preventing the spread of a highly aggressive aquatic invasive species: Phragmites australis (non-native phragmites). We can protect our shorelines and wetlands by learning to recognize it, reporting it, taking care to not spread it and participating in control.



A wetland grass topped with a large, fluffy seed head and as tall as 18', phragmites frequently grows in large stands along the interstates and highways east of the basin. Currently, only small, "pioneer" populations are known to our west. However, stands of phragmites have been appearing in Jefferson, Dodge, Rock and Dane Counties, along roads, railroads and wetlands where they can create dense patches, damaging natural habitats and wetland functions. There can be

significant economic impacts when the plants block shoreline views, choke water runoff areas near homes or make hunting areas impassable.

Stolons (stems that grow up to 50' along the ground) and stems can both be picked up by mowers, construction or farm equipment. Once a scrap of stem lands in a moist area, roots can grow from the nodes (the attachment site of leaves) to begin a new patch. People also move it to new locations when they use live stems to make hunting blinds or when they transplant it because they think it's attractive. Both activities are illegal.

Wetlands are often home to native phragmites, especially in Dodge County. The plants grow less densely, leaving room for other native plants, birds and animals. The stems are up to 10' tall, glossy and smooth. The non-native stems are dull and have ridges that you can see and feel. Native phragmites plants can lose their leaves early in the fall. Non-native phragmites holds tight to its leaves, even in windy locations. Sometimes, a fungus that looks like tiny dots of black ink appears on the stems. The dot fungus does not occur on the invasive plants.



The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) with many partners and federal funding is working strategically to control the plants the Great Lakes Basin where phragmites is most abundant. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation and some county highway departments are doing roadside management. In western counties, where phragmites is prohibited, new discoveries are treated aggressively. Rock River Basin residents are in an excellent position to

The invasive phragmites often grows in dense stands

help block the spread westward if we act quickly when new patches are found.

Reporting invasive plants and animals is explained at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Invasives/report.html>. If working on control with a qualified applicant, such as your county or local municipality, there may be WDNR grants to help with funding. For more information, contact the WDNR Regional AIS Coordinator, Amanda Smith at amanda.smith@wisconsin.gov.

Prevent the spread of phragmites and other invasive plants by cleaning all plant material off of equipment that's moved from one property to another. Ditches and wetlands are high risk areas for picking up and distributing phragmites fragments and seeds. Use artificial materials for blinds. Thoroughly clean off boots and other equipment after hunting, trapping or hiking.

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
Municipal**	\$125
Corporate	\$ 200

*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

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

Tax Deductible Donations	
Amount	Purpose
	General Support
	Citizen Monitoring
	Other:

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

Please mail this completed form with check to:

Rock River Coalition
 864 Collins Rd
 Jefferson, WI 53549

or register and pay online with PayPal at:
www.rockrivercoalition.org/membership.asp



Support Our Stream Monitors GIVE during The Big Share - March 6

On Tuesday, March 6, 2018, The Rock River Coalition will look for your support during Community Shares of Wisconsin's online giving day: **The Big Share™**.

The RRC goal is to train and equip three teams of citizen stream monitors: \$3,000. This provides critical support for our monitoring effort including providing equipment, training and support to new teams of citizen scientists.

The RRC is asking you to:

- Mark your calendar for MARCH 6, 2018.
- Follow us on Facebook and help build the buzz.
- We're counting on our members and volunteers to spread the word. Share our Facebook posts with your friends and family members along with a personal note as to why you believe in our work, and **why they should give** on MARCH 6, 2018.



\$50

Adopt a Monitor:

Fund training for one monitor



\$300

Adopt a Team:

Fund one team's equipment



\$600

Adopt a Team:

One Team Equipped and Trained!

The minimum gift is \$10. The maximum is . . . up to you!

For more information, to donate, or to pledge your support go to: <https://www.thebigshare.org/organizations/rock-river-coalition>.

Stream Side Notes

By Nancy Sheehan, Program Coordinator, Volunteer Stream Monitoring



Don Nettum, Friends of Cam-Rock Park has been a monitor for 17 years. Thank you Don and your team for your commitment to the Koshkonong Creek.

Photo by Janice Redford

Funding Received

Good news! Yahara WINS executive committee voted unanimously to fund the continuation of our citizen-based monitoring project in the Yahara River Watershed. A copy of our 2018-2019 Project Continuance Proposal can be found on our website.

Mark Your Calendars

Yahara River Watershed Volunteer Annual Gathering: Saturday, March 3, 2018

We have a date for our annual spring gathering. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, March 3, 2018 at the Fitchburg Community Senior Center. Once again, we will be joined by Todd Stuntebeck, USGS; Kathy Lake, MMSD; Susan Standford, Dane County Office of Lakes and Watersheds; and Ilana Haimes, WDNR-WAV. More information to follow but volunteers working in the Yahara River Watershed should save this date.

RRC Biennial Confluence: Saturday, November 10, 2018

We have a date set for our biennial conference for volunteer stream and lake monitors working in the Rock River Basin. Please mark your calendars for this event scheduled for Saturday, November 10, 2018. More information to follow.

Spring Volunteer Stream Monitoring Training Workshops

I have several stream monitoring trainings scheduled for the spring. I have posted these trainings on our website. Please help to publicize these volunteer trainings. More volunteers mean more streams can be included in our citizen monitoring program.

Saturday, May 5, 2018 -- Waunakee Village Center, Waunakee, WI

Saturday, May 19, 2018 -- Turtle Creek Parkway Facility, Clinton, WI

Saturday, June 2, 2018 -- Marsh Haven Nature Center, Waupun, WI
(Please note: this workshop will include instructions for both stream monitoring and mussel monitoring programs.)

For more information contact Nancy at nancy@rockrivercoalition.org.

Environmental Events and Conferences

Healthy Soils-Healthy Waters Workshop

February 7-8, Dodge County.

See article on page 3 for more information.

Wetland Science Conference

February 20-22. Olympia Resort, Oconomowoc. Join Wisconsin Wetlands Association, other scientists, and professionals of the wetland and water community of Wisconsin and the upper Midwest for this two-day conference including a keynote address, organized symposia, topical oral sessions, a poster session, working groups, a banquet, and field trips to area wetlands. <http://conference.wisconsinwetlands.org/>

Wisconsin Cover Crop Conference

February 27, 2018, Steven's Point Holiday Inn. This conference will help Wisconsin farmers use cover crops more successfully on their farms. Registration is \$40 per person. <https://fyi.uwex.edu/covercrop/conference/>

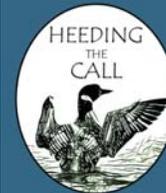
Wisconsin Summit for Natural Resources Volunteers

March 22-24, Lismore Hotel, Eau Claire. Joint conference of the Wisconsin Citizen-based Monitoring Network and the Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program. This is a can't miss event for anyone involved in citizen-based monitoring, including project leaders, educators, volunteers, and researchers. The conference will include: field trips, workshops and trainings, panel discussions, research and project talks, poster session, and networking opportunities. <http://wiatri.net/cbm/Conference/2018/>

Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention & Water Action Volunteers Symposium

April 18-20, Steven's Point Holiday Inn. This symposium brings citizens and professionals together to work on not only lake matters, but also to expand those efforts into the watershed. <https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/UWEXLakes/Pages/programs/convention/default.aspx>

2018 WISCONSIN LAKES PARTNERSHIP CONVENTION & WATER ACTION VOLUNTEERS SYMPOSIUM



APRIL 18-20, 2018
HOLIDAY INN
CONVENTION CENTER
STEVENS POINT

REGISTRATION
COMING IN JANUARY



Rock River
COALITION

Don't forget to renew your RRC membership.

Memberships and donations are critical to providing this newsletter and for our stream monitoring program. Thank You.