



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

Summer 2010 Volume 13, Number 3

Incredible mussels found throughout Rock River Basin

You may not realize it but the Rock River is home to an amazing array of mussel species (clams to most of us). However we really don't know how many kinds or where they are. We need your help to find out.

Early records of Native Americans and European settlers show that shellfish were an important food source, abundant throughout the basin. They're still important to the basin, although not as a food source, but to our ecology.



A number of years ago the Rock County Conservationists were curious about how many types of mussels remained in Turtle Creek. Their curiosity aroused by the many clammers, who typically

Lisie Kitchel, DNR Mussel Specialist assisting Chuck Heidt in identifying his extensive mussel shell collection. Mussel monitors collect shells and photograph live mussels as part of the DNR's program to learn more about the numbers and distribution of shellfish in Wisconsin.

harvest mussels on the Mississippi, that came to Turtle Creek and removed tons of shells during the big 1993 floods for sale to the oriental pearl industry.

They hosted a program at Sweet Allyn Park on Turtle Creek and were astounded at the number of types of mussels they found in just a few minutes. As a result stream monitor Chuck Heidt began collecting mussels in the Beloit area and developed a wonderful collection.

You too can become a mussel monitor and learn more about this fascinating animal. Did you know that all mussels need a fish host for their larva to attach to and grow. And that mussels have developed amazing adaptations to attract the specific species of fish they need, including turning a part of their body into a replica of a female fish so the male will come into mate? Instead they get sprayed with fertilized mussel eggs that have slightly developed into larva, called glochidia. They become a harmless parasite on the fish's gills. How cool is that!

Mussel monitoring takes little scientific knowledge, although you may be surprised that if you take this on as a family challenge, your kids will quickly learn the names of the different species. This is a great pastime for families, friends, couples and even businesses on the water. Any waterbody can be monitored for mussels, although we are most interested in the smaller wadable streams and rivers

of the Rock Basin such as the Bark, & Oconomowoc rivers and Whitewater and Turtle creeks.

Learn how to become a monitor at our training session on Wednesday

September 1, 2010, 6:00 - 8:00pm in the Rome area (County F - south of Sullivan). Wear clothes and shoes that can be worn in the river. Bring towels and an extra set of clothes for afterwards.

Instructors will be Wisconsin mussel specialists from the DNR Lisie Kitchel and John Paul White. To sign up for the program and to receive final location information contact Marie Rubietta at marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov or 920-674-7297.



Bark River mussels found on a Coalition field trip. photo by Suzanne Wade

Wanted Stream Monitors -
Check out page 5 for more
information

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RRC President's Message

Dear Rock River Coalition Friends and Members,

Ironically, the Rock River Coalition's work for conservation and clean water often confines us to our desks and computer screens, far from the waters we love. That's why our annual outing, Send Your Legislator Down the River (SYLDR), which was held June 7th at the Nau-Ti-Gal Restaurant and Cherokee Marsh on the north side of Madison, was such a refreshing event. Forty attendees, including members of RRC and Friends of Cherokee Marsh, who co-hosted the event, paddled the marsh while Russ Hefty of the Madison Parks Division led a tour of his cutting-edge marsh restoration work. Two legislators joined us: State Senator Mark Miller and Dane County Supervisor Melissa Sargent; both shared their thoughts and experiences protecting waters in their respective elected bodies before joining us for some camaraderie on the water.



Voyageur canoe during SYLDR

Social time in the outdoors recharges our "batteries" as we enter a pivotal moment in our organization's history. With the impending completion of the TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load – a study of pollution sources in the Basin and how to reduce them) for the Rock River Basin, we are poised to begin the implementation phase, aka the Rock River Recovery Plan. This will be a watershed-based effort to curb polluted runoff of unprecedented scope in Wisconsin.

Delavan Lake Watershed selected for USDA Healthy Watershed Initiative from NRCS press release

Madison, Wis..... Two key watersheds, Delavan Lake and Jackson Creek, will be the focus of an intense agricultural conservation effort in Walworth County for the next three years.

The Kettle Moraine Land Trust applied for special funding through the USDA Upper Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative, and will receive \$200,000 for farmland conservation practices to reduce nutrients and sediment flowing to Lake Delavan and the Upper Mississippi Basin.

"This Upper Mississippi initiative will help farmers voluntarily implement conservation and management practices that avoid, control and trap nutrient runoff from agricultural land. In all, 76 projects in 12 states are funded this year," said Pat Leavenworth, State Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wisconsin.

According to Maggie Zoellner, Program Manager for the Kettle Moraine Land Trust, farmland conservation practices like grass waterways and vegetation corridors along streams improve water quality and also provide additional wildlife habitat. "With the

The Rock River Coalition is eager to parlay its depth of experience in the Basin into a leadership role in this effort. I encourage any RRC member interested in getting involved to contact me at sotaylor@taylorconservation.com or 608-444-7483

Also broad-scale and forward-thinking, the Delavan Lake Watershed Initiative was awarded a Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI) grant – a federal program targeting select watersheds in the Mississippi Basin, including the Lower Rock – to reduce nutrient loading to Delavan Lake and its main tributary, Jackson Creek. The lead partner in the Initiative is Kettle Moraine Land Trust (KMLT). RRC was named as one of many partners participating in this effort to reduce agricultural runoff and improve wildlife habitat in a critical subwatershed of the Rock River Basin. (See article below for more information.)

Restoring our waters to their full biological and social potential requires big vision and efforts on large geographic scales. We will be thrilled to be involved in two initiatives that possess both qualities.

Scott Taylor, President

support of the Delavan Lake community, and in particular the Delavan Lake Sanitary District, we are able to offer qualified farmers additional funding to offset the cost of implementing new practices and converting land to permanent vegetation."

Farmers in these two watersheds may apply for cost-sharing through the USDA-NRCS. The funding is available through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. Eligible conservation practices include nutrient management planning, grass waterways, buffer strips, crop residue management and other practices that trap sediment and reduce nutrient runoff. Applications for 2010 funding must be complete by July 28. Signups for 2011-2012 funding will be announced later.

For more information, visit www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov, or contact Maggie Zoellner, Kettle Moraine Land Trust, 262-949-7211, or Greg Igl, NRCS 262-723-3216.

Color Map on back page



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:

Scott Taylor (sotaylor@taylorconservation.com)

DIRECTORS:

Peter Hartz, President Elect
Patricia Cicero, Secretary
Suzanne Wade, Treasurer
Lisa Conley, Past President
Paul Benjamin
Jeff Hruby
Jim Kerler
Jim Koepke

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>

RRC Address:

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

Newsletter Editor:

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

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*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.



Fish can't swim in concrete!

Would you expect to see a commercial for a baby doll during a hockey game? Or for a tractor during a soap opera? Probably not.

Commercial advertising has spent millions of dollars and decades to find ways to reach specific target audiences. The Rock River Stormwater Group (RRSG) in Wisconsin is taking a page out of the commercial marketing handbook as it educates local communities about the dangers of stormwater pollution.

The members of the RRSG have identified cement trucks and other construction vehicles as a key source of pollution in the Rock River. To limit this pollution, the RRSG is reaching out to cement and concrete professionals. They have created information for business owners and operators to remind them of the proper, lawful ways to dispose of concrete debris.

**KEEP OUR
WATERS CLEAN**
WASH AND DISPOSE THE
RIGHT WAY, EVERY TIME

www.cleanwaterbrightfuture.org

The materials include the sticker shown above, which can be applied to cement trucks to remind drivers and workers of the proper way to clean and dispose of wet concrete. This point-of-contact educational sticker is a small, simple thing that will be a daily reminder to these professionals of how they can help keep their waters swimmable, drinkable and fishable.

The RRSG formed in 2008 when cities, towns and organizations from around the region came together to create a united plan to address stormwater issues in the Rock River basin. After a year of planning, the Group launched its stormwater education and outreach campaign: Clean Water. Bright Future. Based on the fact that healthy waters create healthy communities, this campaign promotes the many actions homeowners, business, towns and industries can take to prevent dirty water from reaching the waterways that connect our region.



No such thing as a perfect lawn

But you can grow the best lawn possible without harmful chemicals

Not too long ago, natural lawn care meant applying smelly, home-brewed concoctions that were developed by trial and error. In some respects, natural gardening techniques hadn't changed much since ancient Rome when Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C.) recommended using odorless sulfur-oil compounds for battling crop-ravaging insects.

Today, the natural way to feed grass and control weeds includes both the old standbys and new techniques. Researchers and lawn care companies have been developing new products, like the corn gluten-based product developed by an agronomist at Iowa State University, to feed the need for safe, natural lawn care alternatives. And it seems like the new products are catching on. The National Gardening Association reported that from 1998 to 2003 the number of households purchasing natural fertilizers increased from 2.5 million to 11.7 million. The market for natural insect-control products saw a similar jump, from 1.8 million to 10.9 million households.

That growth has been fueled by increased attention to the potential downsides of relying on synthetic lawn-care products. Fertilizer runoff has harmed many waterways, like Wisconsin's Rock River, by encouraging explosive algae growth. Not only do these algae blooms

discourage recreation, but they also harm water species. The algae blooms happen when phosphates, like those found in many fertilizers, are introduced into water systems. Higher concentrations increase algae growth, but each alga is short-lived. Therefore, algae blooms can result in a high concentration of dead organic matter, which starts to decay. The decay process consumes dissolved oxygen, depriving other plants and animals of the oxygen they need to survive.

To protect our environment and waterways, some homeowners have decided to stop using synthetic lawn-care products entirely. No matter how diligently homeowners care for their lawn, however, it is important to remember that there is no such thing as a perfect lawn. But, lawns maintained with natural products can become stronger and healthier. Through the use of natural products and good cultural practices, natural lawn care can reduce lawn maintenance and contribute to improved water quality in the Rock River region.

Check out the box for some easy natural lawn care tips.

Brought to you by Clean water. Bright future., a campaign of the Rock River Stormwater Group. For more information visit: www.cleanwaterbrightfuture.org.

4 simple natural lawn care tips

1. **Grow the Right Grass:** The most common lawn grasses in North America--Kentucky bluegrass and Bermudagrass--also need the most water and fertilizer to grow well. Do research to find out which grasses will grow best in your region.
2. **Test your soil for nutrients and measure your soil depth:** Over-application of fertilizers can lead to nutrient run-off that can pollute our waterways. Never spend money on any fertilizer or soil amendment without first consulting the results of a soil test. Generally, four inches of topsoil leads to a mediocre lawn, while eight or more inches of topsoil leads to a great lawn.
3. **Let it lie:** There is no good reason to bag grass clippings. One common misconception is that leaving clipping causes thatch build-up. Thatch comes from roots not from grass clippings. Grass clippings serve as a natural fertilizer.
4. **Sprinkle wisely:** Low volume sprinklers allow more water to penetrate the soil, while decreasing water waste and runoff.



Having your soil analyzed is easy, just take a number of scoops of soil from around your yard, down below the root level, mix together and then put about two cups into a UW-Extension soil test bag. The bags and information on what to do next is available from your local Extension office.

photo by Suzanne Wade

On Farm Dinner & Twilight Pasture Walk

Date: Thursday, July 29, 2010

Time: 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Location: R&G Miller & Sons, Inc
1706 County Road V, Columbus, WI 53925

The R&G Miller & Sons, Inc. farm, homesteaded in the mid 1800s, is now operated as a 1700 acre certified organic, grazing dairy farm by 9 family members and 6 employees. They graze and milk a 370-cow herd and an additional 615 head of young stock and dry cows on their rolling pastures. They also raise and direct market the dairy bull calves as 100% pastured beef. These happy cattle are moved onto fresh pastures two times per day where they enjoy open space, fresh air, nutritious organic grasses and legumes and the company of their herdmates.

Consumers wishing to learn more about the benefits of grass-based, organic food production, as well as the many environmental benefits of organic farming practices are invited to attend this wonderful event and tour this premier farm. The evening will start with a Potluck Dinner. Mr. Steve Miller will cook their top quality pastured beef burgers. Please bring your favorite dish to pass. Dinner will be followed by a viewing of the animals and a hayride pasture tour of the farm. Bring the whole family to learn where healthy, nutritious food comes from (no pets please)!

5:30 – 6:30 Potluck Dinner: top quality pastured beef burgers. Please bring a dish to pass.

6:30 – 8:30 View baby calves and cows being milked and enjoy a hayride pasture tour where the Miller Team will explain overall organic dairy farm management; soil fertility balancing; various pasture seeding mixtures used to create their lush pastures; and the benefits of their “mob grazing” system.

There is no fee to attend this event. Participants must preregister by July 25. To register contact Kirsten Jurcek, Grazing Education Specialist, Town & Country RC&D at (920) 342-9504 or kirstenjurcek@townandcountryrcd.org or Alan Henning, R&G Miller & Sons (608) 575-4172.

Sponsored by: R&G Miller & Sons, Inc and Town & Country RC&D with funds from the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Program (GLCI) and the Wisconsin Dept. of Ag. Trade & Consumer Protection.



Town and Country RCD was represented in the Alternative Car Show at the MREA with a 2002 Jetta Turbo that had been inexpensively modified post-factory to run on ethanol.



Growing Systems under High Tunnels Workshop

Monday, August 9, 2010

10 am – 2:30 pm plus optional farm tour of VDB Organic Farms
Cost \$20

VDB Organic Farms, GRWW Farms, Turtle Creek Gardens
N5105 Pinnow Road, Delavan, WI 53115-2745 (Waukesha Co.)

High tunnels, also known as hoop houses, are greenhouse type structures that allow for season extension by protecting plants from frosts in the spring and fall. They can also be used to successfully grow crops that are marginally winter hearty in your plant hardiness zone. This half-day workshop will give you the opportunity to see a powerpoint on the site selection and construction of a high tunnel, tour a newly-constructed high tunnel, hear about the NRCS EQIP program supporting the proliferation of these tools, and ask high tunnel construction experts your questions. In addition, production specialist, Janet Gamble, Turtle Creek Gardens, will talk about crop selection and Jim Stute, UW-Extension soil scientist, will give information on soil care in high tunnels.

The workshop is a cooperative effort of Town and Country RC&D, NRCS, UW-Extension, VDB Organic Farms, Turtle Creek Gardens, with sponsorship of lunch by GPS and Carlin Horticultural Supplies

RSVP required, space is limited contact Beth at 920-541-3208 or to beth@townandcountryrcd.org. Prepayment preferred via check made out to Town and Country RC&D, High Tunnel Workshop, 134 W. Rockwell St, Jefferson, WI 53549.

AGENDA

- 9:30 Registration
- 10:00 Intro to High Tunnels & Powerpoint on Site Selection & Construction: Bob Van De Boom/ Gary Baze
- 11:00 Growing Crops in a High Tunnel: Janet Gamble, Turtle Creek Gardens
- 11:30 Soil Considerations: Jim Stute, UW-Extension
- Noon Complementary Lunch provided by Golden Pacific Structures & Carlin Horticultural Supply
- Lunch: Local, Grassfed hamburger stroganoff, waterfront garlic bread, locally sourced vegetable du jour, and house salad with choice of homemade dressings. Homemade cookies for dessert. Catering provided by The Water Front, Delavan, Wisconsin.
- 1:00 EQIP High Tunnel Program Information: Brian Briski, NRCS
- 1:15 On-site high tunnel tour with Q & A: Bob Van De Boom and construction expert Gary Baze of Golden Pacific Structures
- 2:30 Optional Tour of VDB Organic Farms, featuring grass-fed & grass-finished lamb, St. Croix Sheep and Murray Grey Cattle, www.vdborganicfarms.com

The Natural Step Gathering in September

Meeting human needs fairly and efficiently is one of the four tenets of The Natural Step -- a framework for identifying and implementing strategies to move communities toward sustainability.

A statewide gathering of TNS advocates, sponsored by Town and Country RC&D, took place June 19 at the Midwest Energy Association Fair. Educators, pictured to the right, recharged to spread the word about the common sense solutions offered by The Natural Step. A second gathering is planned for September.

For more information about The Natural Step, or the September gathering, contact Greg David at 920-541-3208.



Welcome new Rock River Coalition Board



2010 Rock River Board was elected at the annual meeting in May.

From left: Jim Koepke, Koepke Farms, Ashippun; Jeff Hruby, Montgomery Associates, Cottage Grove; Peter Hartz, Johnson Creek; Patricia Cicero, Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department, Lake Mills; Paul Benjamin, Rock County Planning Department, Janesville; Lisa Conley, Oconomowoc; Jim Kerler, Lake Mills; Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension, Monona; Scott Taylor, Taylor Conservation, Oregon.

New Officers are Scott Taylor, President; Peter Hartz, President-elect; Suzanne Wade, Treasurer; Patricia Cicero, Secretary; Lisa Conley, Past-president.

Meet Your New Board Members:

Paul Benjamin: A bit over four months ago, I was appointed to be the new Rock County Planning and Development Director. I'm delighted to be here. In my prior life at the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, while working in the Farmland Preservation Program, I often found myself in Rock County working on plans and ordinances. I always enjoyed it, and, rain or shine, I always appreciated the local leadership in this county.

The Rock River was a reason people settled in places like Beloit and Janesville in Rock County back in the 19th century and it remains an important resource to this day. It also is a source of concern. In 2008, Rock County and several municipalities suffered great damage from Rock River flooding. Many waters of the Rock River I understand, are also impaired, with a forthcoming "TMDL" soon to be released. A river, of course, is a means of regional integration and we've know that since the Public Trust Doctrine in the Northwest Ordinance. So, the Rock River is not just a thing in itself but also key to a greater regional unity. We have to cooperate up and down the watershed to improve the water quality of the Rock River and I'm looking forward to doing that."

Jeff Hruby: I am excited about the opportunity to participate in the Rock River Coalition. As a water resources engineer, I work on stormwater management, lake restoration, and other water quality and quantity issues, and these interests are well suited to the challenges within the Rock River Basin. Additionally, as someone who grew up on the Missouri River in North Dakota, I understand the personal attachment to water resources. With that thought in mind, I hope to lend my technical assets and experience to the mission espoused by the RRC.

Jim Kerler: Following 30-plus years working in information technology and business data communications, I have turned more attention to my passion for the outdoors and my concern for a healthy environment. As an avid canoeist and fisherman I have always advocated conservation and restoration of our waterways. Previously I served on the board of the Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers (now Milwaukee Riverkeeper), so when I moved to Lake Mills the excellent work of the Rock River Coalition naturally attracted my attention. I became a Water Action Volunteer, monitoring a stream near my home and I attended Coalition events.

Now I am honored to join the RRC board. In the Rock River basin we are blessed with plentiful water resources – and we are utterly dependent on them. Let's all work together to enjoy and protect these shared treasures!

Wanted:

Individuals with enthusiasm and a willingness to learn new things.

Citizen stream monitoring volunteers play a critical role in collecting long-term water quality data. Collecting this data is the first step in protecting or improving water quality within the Rock River Basin.

Invite a friend or relative to join you in becoming part of the Rock River Coalition's family of stream monitors. Volunteer citizen monitors are trained and given equipment to check a local waterway for the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water, the transparency of the water, the temperature, surrounding stream habitat, rate of flow, and the macroinvertebrate life (bugs) living in the stream habitat. No prior experience is needed. It's easy, it's fun, and it's a way to help preserve clean water for future generations!

Two workshops, one at Waterville lead by Waukesha monitoring coordinator, Jayne Jenks and another at Johnson Creek lead by RRC monitoring director Ed Grunden were conducted this spring. New members of the Rock River Basin monitoring team were trained, given equipment and are now monitoring a local waterway near their home. A free third workshop will be held during August. The date and time will be dependent upon the participant's availability and will either be in the evening or on a Saturday.



Jeanne Scherer-Jorgensen and Sarah Seibt didn't know each other before attending the monitoring training at Johnson Creek, today they are collecting needed information on the Crawfish River. At their first monitoring event of the year shown here, their work was overseen by RRC monitoring director Ed Grunden.
Photo by Ed Grunden

Contact Ed Grunden, Citizen Monitoring Director for the Rock River Coalition at 920 648-2673 or by email at ed@rockrivercoalition.org to sign up for the fall training or for further information if perhaps interested in becoming a volunteer Citizen Stream Monitor. Please consider becoming part of the Rock River Coalition's active citizen monitoring family and protecting the waters of the Rock River Basin by joining today. Don't miss the Snap Shot Monitoring Day on September 11, 2010 - Everyone is Welcome!

Can your group lobby?

from the River Alliance of Wisconsin e-newsletter, The TRIB, June 30, 2010.

Campaign season is heating up, and as the temperatures rise, so do questions about which advocacy and lobbying activities nonprofit organizations can and can't participate in. Most are surprised to learn that they can do more than they think. What can your organization advocate? We hope this primer can get you moving on the right—and legal—path.

What is Advocacy & Lobbying?

Advocacy

The Alliance for Justice defines advocacy as an activity that "allows organizations to represent the views of their members and supporters and promote their causes through educating the public and policymakers, conducting research, taking legal action, organizing fellow supporters, lobbying government staff and elected officials, and more." Lobbying is one form of advocacy.

Grassroots Lobbying

Grassroots lobbying, according to the IRS, is any attempt to influence the general public's opinion on any legislation. It is a verbal or written encouragement to take action about specific legislation. Taking action includes:

Asking citizens to call, write, or e-mail their legislators

Providing legislator's contact information

Providing a petition, tear-off, postcard, or similar material for a citizen to send to their legislator

Identifying legislator(s) that will vote on the legislation, does not share your view on the legislation, are undecided about the legislation, or are members of the legislative committee that will consider the legislation

Direct Lobbying

Alternately, the IRS defines direct lobbying as

any attempt to influence specific legislation (or administrative rulemaking) through:

Direct communication with a legislator or employee of a legislative body, or a government official or employee who may participate in the creation of the legislation

The public through a referendum, initiative, constitutional amendment, or similar procedure

What lobbying can your group do?

Actually, quite a bit. Your group can advocate for or against specific issues and legislation, as well as hold non-partisan election-related activities like voter education, registration or get-out-the-vote drives. You can even host public candidate forums, as long as you abide by a few simple rules.

What lobbying activities are not allowed for nonprofit organizations?

501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations cannot do anything related to supporting or endorsing a specific candidate for office, at any level. This includes local offices such as county board.

Groups also cannot do any political communication, including anything that:

Identifies a candidate

Expresses approval or disapproval for a candidate's positions or actions

References or coincides with an election

Identifies a candidate's position on public policy

Distinguishes one candidate's position on an issue from others

What's the 501(h) declaration and should your group take it?

For most groups the answer is yes. 501(h) is the IRS designation for nonprofits declaring they will have expenses for influencing legislation. While your group

can conduct the lobbying activities mentioned above with or without taking the 501(h) election, by doing so you will make your annual reporting requirements less of a burden.

The IRS Form (5768) declaring that you are planning to influence legislation is quite simple. It asks only for your group's contact information and a signature.

If your group does lobbying activities, you need to report those expenses in your annual report (Schedule C, 990) to the IRS.

If you have not taken the 501(h) election, you are required to provide written details about each of your lobbying activities in addition to your expenses. If you have made the 501(h) declaration, you only need to provide your expenses.*

There is a difference in how expenses are reported. If you've filed the 501(h) declaration, your organization will be allowed to spend up to 20% of its budget on grassroots and direct lobbying activities.** Also, volunteer time spent conducting lobbying activities does not count as an expense if you file the 501(h).

If your group does not file the election and lobbies, the IRS will use something called the substantial part test to determine if your lobbying activities violate your 501(c)3 determination. The substantial part test is more art than science and is determined on a case by case basis by IRS staff. The amount of time spent lobbying by staff and volunteers are counted toward the substantial part test.

*Lobbying expenses include the staff time required to prepare and conduct direct or grassroots lobbying and printing and distribution costs for any lobbying materials (letters, postcards, etc.).

**If your organization goes over the 20% limit in the expenditure test you will owe taxes on the excess expenses. If you average more than 20% over four years, you could lose your tax-exempt status.

Note: The content was adapted from a Whyte, Hirschboek, Dudek S.C. presentation at the May, 2010 Wisconsin Nonprofit Association Conference.

Rock River Trails

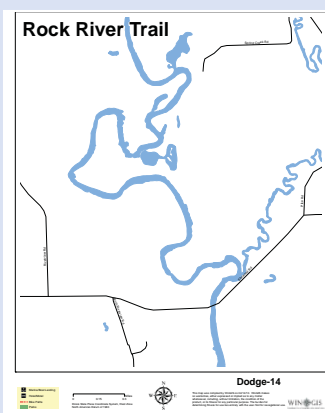


The Rock River Trails group out of Illinois is working on developing a website with GIS maps of the entire basin at <http://www.rockrivertrail.com>. County maps are at the bottom of the page, you need to open the slide show in a new window and copy as pdf or ppt. You can also download section maps at <ftp://ims.wingis.org/RockRiverTrailMaps/>. Click on the map book folder, which contains

the entire river separated into smaller maps of about 2 miles each.

Here is an example of Dodge County map #14; the maps are detailed but some things such as boat launch areas are still needed.

Thank You Rock River Trails, for your work to connect the entire Rock River from it's headwaters in Dodge County down to its mouth at Rock Island, IL.



Wetland Monitoring Guide under development

The RRC is pleased to have Patrice Kohl author and editor working on an on-line wetland monitoring guide. Often the RRC monitoring director, Ed Grunden, gets calls from across the state asking what a group needs to do to monitor a wetland. Often this takes an in-depth discussion about the wetland and why the group is doing the monitoring.

This on-line guide will help a group make this diagnosis and then learn the specific steps, knowledge needed, equipment, timing and resources for monitoring a number of different parameters including birds, small mammals, butterflies, dragonflies, and frogs and toads.

Q & A for new statewide shoreland development minimum standards

1. What are shorelands and why are they important?

Shorelands are land within 1,000 feet of a lake, pond or flowage, and land within 300 feet or the floodplain of a river or stream. They are important because the plants and trees in this area filter soil, fertilizer and other chemicals from the water that runs off land and into lakes and rivers. These plants, trees, and downed trees also provide important habitat for fish and wildlife, including favorites like loons and bald eagles. Development and land disturbing activities in shoreland areas can directly affect lake and stream water quality and habitat by reducing the amount of these important plants and increasing the roofs, driveways and other hard surfaces that generate more runoff.

2. Why did we change the current shoreland zoning minimum standards?

Wisconsinites love their world-class lakes and rivers. They deserve world-class protection into the 21st century. Minimum statewide standards are one part of that protection. But our current minimum standards were written in the 1960s and they have not kept up with development pressures and trends toward larger, year-round homes. New information and advances in technology allow us to change the standards to better protect water quality and habitat in our lakes and rivers while offering more flexibility for property owners and standards that are easier for the counties to apply.

3. If our home burns down, will we be able to rebuild it?

You can rebuild any home damaged or destroyed by violent wind, vandalism, fire or flood just as it was before the event.

4. Will we have to replace our lawn with a natural buffer?

All current lawns and landscaping can stay as they are. There is no requirement for everyone to plant shoreline buffers. If you choose to expand a house that is close to the water, you will need to make some landscaping changes on your property to reduce the water runoff and habitat loss resulting from that change. One option is establishing a buffer of native plants and trees — but there are other "mitigation" options available.

5. How will the changes affect what we can do with our home?

All homes can be maintained and improved with internal remodeling, new windows, doors, siding, insulation, electrical, plumbing and roofs, without cost limits.

6. We would like to expand our home. How will the changes affect us?

If your home is located within 35 feet of the water, you could do internal remodeling including new windows, doors, siding, insulation, electrical, plumbing and roofs, but expansion or demolition and rebuilding would not be allowed.

If your home is located between 35 and 75 feet from the water, you may expand as long as you do not exceed 30% of your lot in hard surfaces, and you have practices in place or implemented to reduce runoff and/or restore habitat, and to offset the increased runoff and other impacts of your project.

Construction or expansion of buildings, driveways or other areas which prevent water from soaking into the ground is limited to 30% of the lot to reduce runoff and protect the water quality of lakes and streams.

If your project does not meet the minimum standards, you can always apply for a variance. A variance is a way that projects may be approved when they are inconsistent with the zoning law and these should be few and far between.

7. We own a shoreland lot and would like to sell the lot or part of it. How will the changes affect us?

There are no changes for existing lots.

8. If my lot is substandard does that make my home substandard?

No. A home does not become substandard or nonconforming because it is located on a substandard lot. A home is substandard if it predates and does not comply with current dimensional requirements such as the setback from the water.

9. What is mitigation-when is it required?

In the past variances and other mechanisms were required to provide flexibility under zoning regulations. Off-setting measures or mitigation eliminates the need for many variances and provides flexibility in development in exchange for practices that reduce water runoff or restore habitat. The following activities trigger mitigation requirements:

- Expansion of structures at less than the required shoreline setback
- Development on substandard lots
- Development with >15% hard surfaces

Find more information about these standards at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/wm/dsfm/shore/news.htm>

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

Rain Garden Workshop

Thursday August 5

6:00 - 8:00 pm

Beloit City Hall

100 State Street

at the site of their new city rain garden

"Diggin' into Rain Gardens: Why are they important?"

"How to Build a Rain Garden"

by Suzanne Wade, UWEX Rock River Basin Educator

Reserve your space by emailing rdill@biodiverse.com or by calling 773-496-4020

New Water Star Municipalities

Two new municipalities have joined the Water Star Community ranks while at least eight are working to complete the application. The new municipalities are the City of Whitewater and the Village of Brown Deer both Bronze Water Star Communities.

Water Star workshops will be held on August 18th 12:30 - 3:30 at the Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland, and in September in Green Bay and Milwaukee. The September workshops are sponsored by the Department of Administration in honor of the Governor's Wisconsin Coastal Management Awareness Month. To receive notification of the September dates and locations or to register for the Ashland workshop email Marie Rubietta at marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov.



Mukwonago designation ceremony on the banks of the Mukwonago River where the village is protecting 53 endangered and threatened species by being proactive. Featured at the ceremony were Paul Moderacki (podium) Village Administrator; County Executive, Dan Vrakas, State Senator Mary Lazich Village Trustee Elliot Bakst, Waukesha County Supervisor Gilbert Yerke and Village Trustees Jim Decker and Mark Penzkover. photo by Lisa Conley



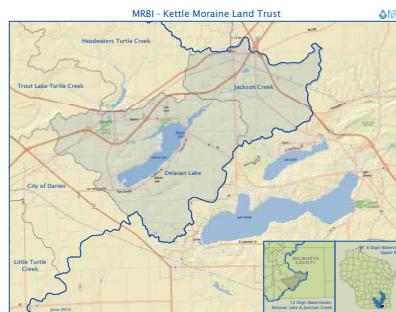
Members of Town and Country's Invasive Species Issue Team met June 25th for a tour of Dorothy Carnes Park in Jefferson County.

The group members, made up of members of different certified weed management associations, share information about grants, events and help each other accomplish objectives.

To learn more about the Invasive Species Issue Team, contact team leader Autumn Sabo at 920-541-3208.

Delavan Lake Watershed selected for USDA Healthy Watershed Initiative

Story on page 2.



Calendar of Events

August 5 **Rain Garden Workshop**, Beloit City Hall 6:00 - 8:00pm, register by emailing rdill@biodiverse.org

August 10 **Rock River Stormwater Group Meeting** contact Bill for location at frisbeew@ci.beloit.wi.us

Sept 1 **Mussel Monitoring** 6:00 - 8:00pm for information or to register: Marie at marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov or 920-674-7297.

Sept 11 **Snap Shot Monitoring Day** contact Ed at ed@rockrivercoalition.org everyone welcome

Sept 28 **Rock River Basin TMDL Public Informational Hearing** 12:30 - 4:00pm Lake Mills Municipal Building



Rock River Coalition was honored for their work to improve the basin using the DNR River Grant Program at the River Alliance of Wisconsin's Annual Confluence in May.

From left: RRC Board members Jim Kerler and Patricia Cicero (holding the award), DNR Secretary Matt Frank, RRC Board members Suzanne Wade and Scott Taylor, & State Senator Mark Miller, who presented a mounted resolution commending the RRC. photo by Theresa Behnen

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Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the fall newsletter is October 15, 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>