



# 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

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## Lake Leaders to Install Natural Shoreline at Wisconsin's Executive Residence

by Patricia Cicero, RRC President-elect and Wisconsin Lake Leader

In December of 2011, the State Capitol and Executive Residence Board voted unanimously to approve a shoreland restoration project at the Executive Residence, where Governors of Wisconsin have lived while in office since 1949.

A shoreland restoration at the Executive Residence not only will be a beautiful addition to the shores of Lake Mendota, but also is a tremendous opportunity to teach citizens of Wisconsin about the importance of protecting our waters.

Shoreland restorations use native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees to provide erosion control, water filtration, wildlife habitat, and scenic beauty.

A group of citizens who participated in the Wisconsin Lake Leaders Institute led an effort to gain support and approval for this project.



A new look to the Executive Residence:

Left: View of the Executive Residence current shoreline.

Below: A rendition of how a restoration will look at the Executive Residence, developed by Bradley Vowels, a UW-Madison landscape architect student.

photo by Patricia Cicero

The Lake Leaders Institute is sponsored by the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership which includes the Department of Natural Resources, UW-Extension Lakes Program, and the Wisconsin Lakes.

The restoration project will be implemented in close consultation with the Department of Administration, the State Capitol and Executive Residence Board, and the Executive Residence staff.

The plant design was prepared by Hope Oostdik of Dutch Designs; Lisa Reas of LJ Reas Environmental Consulting Corp.; Bradley Vowels, a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison majoring in landscape architecture and water resources management; and Barb Gajewski a 2008 Lake Leader graduate and independent environmental consultant.



The planting will occur in September of 2012.

The shoreland restoration installation and long-term maintenance will be implemented under the leadership of the Lake Leaders and the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership. They are currently in the planning phase and are forming committees to work on the various aspects of the project including fundraising, publicity, and education.

Fundraising will be done in the next few months.

In addition, volunteer participation will be sought and encouraged at every stage.

There are a number of ways to be a part of this exciting project. From serving on a committee to contributing materials and donations, there are opportunities for individuals and businesses to lend their support!

For more information, please contact Patricia Cicero at [patricia@rockrivercoalition.org](mailto:patricia@rockrivercoalition.org).

## Are You Blue?

If your label is printed in blue ink, this will be your last print newsletter. See page eight for more information.

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# Rock River Coalition President's Message

The Rock River Coalition enjoyed a boost when the family of board member, Jim Koepke, received the Sand County Foundation's Leopold Conservation Award at the Wisconsin Farm Bureau annual meeting on Dec. 4. The Koepke family operates a dairy farm in the Town of Oconomowoc. They run 1,150 acres and distinguish themselves as early adopters of a no-till cropping system – a type of farming which minimizes soil disturbance and thereby reduces runoff, erosion and loss of nutrients to waterways. In addition to no-till cropping, the Koepkes employ grassed waterways, contour strip cropping, crop rotation and barnyard runoff control to reduce nutrient runoff from their crop fields.



A Koepke corn field is left with significant residue and composted manure which prevents erosion and runoff.  
photo by Lisa Conley

No-till cropping is an excellent practice from a water quality standpoint (although it comes with its own environmental impacts, like heavy reliance on herbicides). Its use among U.S. farmers started after World War II, partly in response to the dust bowl, and grew slowly until USDA program conservation requirements for farmers in 1985 and 1990 triggered faster adoption. The USDA estimates that one-quarter of US cropland currently has no-till operations.

Reducing tillage does more than protect our waterways – it helps our climate. By opening the soil, tillage hastens the decay of organic matter and, given the land area under cultivation in the United States, results in significant release of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, to the atmosphere. Rattan Lal, a leading soil scientist from Ohio State University, argued in testimony to the US Senate that soil conservation can play a major role in reducing atmospheric carbon. He cited a suite of familiar USDA programs – the Conservation Reserve Program, Wetlands Reserve Program and conservation compliance – that increase soil carbon at the expense of atmospheric carbon simply by halting tillage.

Shifting land use to improve water quality is a local undertaking. But we must consider the global ramifications of watershed land management. The stunning failure of nations to act swiftly to reduce greenhouse gases – a failure underlined at the recent United Nations summit in Durban, South Africa – increases the odds of climate change too fast and extreme for society to manage. It is not

hyperbole to suggest that most, if not all, of the environmental progress in the Rock River Basin could be wiped out by climate change over the next 100 years. In fact, this could be a dramatic understatement.

As we approach a dangerous climate threshold without global leadership, we should work locally to maximize land management practices with potential for carbon sequestration, like no-till farming, pasture-based livestock production, production of biomass feedstocks on flood-prone cropland and active forest management. After all, due to their proven benefits for water quality, much has already been devoted to promoting these practices. We can't go wrong by increasing their use in the basin.

Changing land management alone will not come even close to rescuing the climate – only alternative energy sources and conservation can do that – but it will help form a bridge to the day our leaders find it impossible to ignore climate change any longer. In the meantime, we should take leadership from local producers, like Jim Koepke and his family, who are already practicing solutions.

Sincerely,

*Scott Taylor*

President  
Rock River  
Coalition, Inc.



## Mission

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

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Suzanne Wade, Treasurer  
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Next deadline is March 23, 2012.

A letter-sized color version of this newsletter is available at [www.rockrivercoalition.org](http://www.rockrivercoalition.org).

**Photo credits:** Margaret Burlingham, Patricia Cicero, Lisa Conley, Suzanne Wade and Andy Yench

*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.*

## The Wisconsin Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (Assembly Joint Resolution 84)

from Lisa Conley, RRC Past President and TCRC President

The average American child spends six hours per day in front of a TV or computer screen. That's 42 hours each week!

Our kids are quickly losing their connection with nature and the consequences are potentially far-ranging and severe. This is precisely why more than 80 conservation organizations ranked the issue of getting kids outdoors as a "Conservation Priority."

### The Solution to "Nature Deficit Disorder"

The Wisconsin Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights has been introduced in the state legislature.

This resolution is an opportunity for parents, policy makers, educators and health care providers to affirm

each child's right to grow up healthy and have access to a clean and safe outdoor environment.

The resolution states that every Wisconsin child should have the opportunity to:

1. Discover Wisconsin's diverse wilderness: prairies, forests, wetlands, and beaches.
2. Breathe clean air and drink clean water.
3. Splash, play, and swim in safe, clean lakes and rivers.
4. Visit a working farm.
5. Share a hunting or fishing experience with a family member, friend, or mentor.
6. Follow a trail - ride it or walk it.

7. Play, snowshoe, ski, snowboard, or sled in the snow.

8. Camp out under the stars.

9. Eat meals made from local products and ingredients.

10. Play in the dirt, plant a seed, and grow a garden.

11. Explore and connect with Wisconsin's natural spaces and wild places.

Assembly Joint Resolution 84 was referred to the Assembly committee on Rules last December. Jeff Fitzgerald (608) 266-2540 and Kelda Roys, (608) 266-5340, who represent our Rock River Basin, are on this committee.

You can help make this a priority for passage this session by giving them a call.

# Monona Year of Water

from The Natural Step Monona website: <http://www.tnsmonona.org/water/>

Last spring, a team of students in a Capstone Class from University of Wisconsin Nelson Institute and volunteers from The Natural Step Monona (TNS Monona) knocked on every door in the city of Monona to deliver a survey about citizens' concerns of sustainability, the barriers to making change, and the methods they were adopting to become more sustainable. They learned that water was their most important concern.

This, along with water rates increasing by 32% in 2012 led the City of Monona and The Natural Step Monona to enter into a partnership to highlight water during 2012.

Together they developed 2012's Water Conservation Challenge, a year-long contest among residential households to reduce their water consumption (see below).

Mayor Bob Miller proclaimed 2012 *The Year of Water*, a year for community members "to learn about water and actively engage in taking positive steps to change how we use and manage water".

The city is looking for ways to encourage conservation and the Natural Step is hosting a series of

educational programs about water. Additionally, Lance Green of TNS Monona is writing monthly articles for the Herald Independent. His January article, *Water, water everywhere... Coming and going through our community*, examines where our drinking water comes from and some of the issues with groundwater drawdown in the area.

To assist groups in taking on water conservation or management projects during the Year of Water, UW-Madison students met with groups sharing ways to conserve and ideas for projects.

While many groups are still considering what they will do, here are some pledges and ideas:

**Saint Stephen's Lutheran Church**  
Pledge: St. Stephen's church is excited to present ways worshippers can save and protect water at their homes, businesses, and at church. They will also put tips on their bulletin board for every week of the Year of Water.

**Girl Scouts**  
Pledge: The Girl Scouts have pledged to participate in the Wonders Of Water (WOW!), a Girl Scout-created series of journeys to learn about how so many people aren't fortunate enough to

live somewhere with access to fresh, clean water. These girls will also work to protect local water, or help keep it clean, all while helping to educate people about this essential resource.

**Friends of the Senior Center**  
Pledge: The Friends had lots of ideas, but no firm decision. They are interested in helping seniors conserve water in their homes.

**MG21 (21st Century Charter School)**  
Pledge: One of the two teachers who work in this small school has pledged to make the Year of Water a priority in the winter/spring semester. Options include using Xeriscaping to create a rain garden and planting long, native prairie grass on hills around the school. She will also give the TNS water-based presentation to her class and will encourage students to take up projects based on water.

**Monona Grove Audio-Visual Club**  
Pledge tbd (to be determined): The A-V Club is considering water-saving public service announcements for the public news station.

**Monona Grove High School Environmental Club**  
Pledge tbd: The Club is also interested in water-bottle-refill stations and a "Ban the Bottle" campaign.

**Monona Grove HS Drama Club**  
Pledge tbd: The Drama Club is interested in water-bottle-refill stations and native tree planting.

**Monona Grove Soccer Club**  
Pledge tbd: The soccer club is interested in the problems with goose waste in the soccer fields and would like help in developing and implementing ideas. They also suggested they might be interested in providing labor for another group's project.

**City of Monona Parks & Recreation Department**  
Pledge tbd: The department has not yet decided what it will do, but is interested in learning more about pervious parking surfaces and water-bottle refill stations.

**City of Monona Sustainability Committee**  
Pledge tbd: The committee is researching incentive programs, such as toilet replacement program and examining a Marquette University H2O score program for Monona's water utility customers and may pursue public service announcements on home water conservation and/or stormwater management with the Monona Grove High School Audio-Visual Club.



A kick-off to the Monona Year of Water is the Water Conservation Challenge. Monona residents were invited to join the Water Conservation Challenge and more than 100 households took up the challenge. Their meters were read on January 3, 2012 and next January they will be read again. The three contestants who achieve the greatest percentage reduction in water use, compared to the previous year, will each receive a cash award.

But all participants have two other ways to be recognized. 1) All contestants are entered into a monthly prize drawing. 2) Contestants are encouraged to submit their most innovative ideas for conserving water. At the end of the Water Conservation Challenge, prizes will be given to the five entrants with the most innovative methods of reducing water use, as judged by three water experts from outside Monona.

Innovation prizes include: a rain barrel from Fiskars; a one-hour Permaculture consultation from Sustainability on Stilts; four oil change certificates from Monona Motors; a \$50 gift certificate from Crema Cafe; and one night in a Whirlpool room from AmericInn Madison/Monona. More information is available at <http://www.mymonona.com>. Innovation ideas will be judged on:

1. How much water your innovation saves.
2. The clever reuse/re-purposing of materials.
3. How easily it could be adopted by others.
4. Whether it has trade-offs: increased consumption of other precious resources or energy, or additional savings of precious resources or energy.

Water Challenge sponsors include 4 Pillars 4 Health Ecospace, Sun-Mar Global Composting Experts, Gerhard's Showroom, American Transmission Company, Chad's Carpentry, Green Builder Supply, and Meriter Medical Group

QUESTIONS? Email [info@tnsmonona.org](mailto:info@tnsmonona.org) or [monona@ci.monona.wi.us](mailto:monona@ci.monona.wi.us).

## Water Star Updates

Water Star Coordinator, Andy Yencha, is pleased to announce four new Water Star Communities. All earned bronze star designation. Johnson Creek, Monona, and Oconomowoc are in the Rock River Basin. The fourth is Appleton. In 2012 watch for a new series of webinars sponsored by the University of Wisconsin Extension and the Wisconsin Water Star Program.

More information about the program can be found at <http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org>.



Accepting the Bronze Star Designation for the Village of Johnson Creek are Michelle Kaltenberg, Village President and Mark Johnsrud, Village Administrator. Water Star Communities receive a plaque and an aluminum street sign.

photo by Andrew Yencha

# Plan for Spring with a Rain Garden Assessment

by Stephanie Prellwitz, Biological Systems Engineering Graduate Student and Rock River Coalition Volunteer

Snow is on the ground, but it is not too early to begin planning for a successful rain garden installation for spring. A rain garden is an attractive landscape feature with ecological functions that reduces flooding and improves water quality.

However, a rain garden is not ideal in every instance. Improper location or soil conditions can result in a rain garden that does not adequately drain and harbors mosquitoes as a result. Those that are poorly maintained can become an overgrown eyesore. These pitfalls can be avoided by conducting a rain garden feasibility assessment before installation.

## Is a rain garden right for me?

A rain garden's function is only as effective as its design allows. While rain gardens can improve water quality and ecosystem health, first consider if your lawn is a good candidate before digging.

Does your lawn, for example, have sufficient slope away from the house? Is there available green space at least 10 feet away from the foundation to prevent moisture accumulation? Do you have a healthy soil that is not overly compacted and will allow for adequate infiltration? Are you willing to weed and prevent the establishment of invasive species, particularly in the first year? Are you somewhat knowledgeable with native plant identification to assist during maintenance? If not, your site might be more conducive with other stormwater management tools discussed later.

## Location, location, location!

The location of a rain garden is an important consideration to its success. Rain gardens should not be installed above septic fields or under tree cover where excavation could pose a risk to tree roots.

Contrary to intuition, locations that currently experience regular, prolonged standing water are not suitable locations for a rain garden. This is a symptom of a greater subsurface issue such as compacted soil or a high groundwater table.

## Rain garden alternatives

If you have determined that your site does not allow for a successful rain garden installation, there are other beneficial stormwater management tools to consider. With or without a rain garden, your lawn has the potential to act as a sponge and infiltrate stormwater into the ground. The natural properties of the soil filter pollutants and reduce runoff.

Consider grading your lawn surface to include localized depressions that slow stormwater velocities and, in turn, improve water quality and promote infiltration.

Reduce the amount of impervious area of your yard, such as patios and driveways. A decrease in impervious area results in a decrease in stormwater volume.

When possible, choose native plants in your landscape design. Native plants produce significant amounts of root biomass which can reach over 10 feet deep in some instances! This structure improves compacted soil texture, infiltration rates, and organic matter content over time.

For a minimalist approach, install a rain barrel which captures water from downspouts. This prevents the flow from entering the storm sewer system and downstream water resources.



A rain barrel in use. Flowering plants love rain water as it is slightly acid, so in addition to saving precious water, a rain barrel will help give you beautiful flowering plants.

photo by Suzanne Wade

While a rain garden might not be a good alternative for every site, there are still valuable management tools that can improve stormwater quality. Planning ahead and choosing the most appropriate method is an effective solution for enhanced watershed health.



Hawk moth on swamp milkweed in a Jefferson rain garden.

photo by Suzanne Wade



A rain garden down slope from a house's rain gutters and down spout. This rain garden features flowers and shrubs and blends nicely with existing trees and shrubs.

photo by Suzanne Wade

## RRC Monitoring Efforts

The Rock River Coalition supports a number of monitoring efforts, here is a short summary of each:

### Become a WAV Monitor

Level One: New monitors are trained in the Wisconsin WAV (Water Action Volunteer) techniques. They learn to sample dissolve oxygen, temperature, clarity, flow, habitat and perform a biotic index.

Monitors then go out once a month from spring until fall when water levels allow. They collect habitat data once a year, biotic index spring and fall and all others once a month.

The monitors enter their data in the WAV database. It is reviewed by a basin coordinator before it becomes publicly available.

WAV data is used for education and for baseline and trend data.

### Snapshot Days

Be a monitor with just a twice a year commitment. Snapshot Days gives the RRC a cross-basin look by having all monitors take their measurements on the same day. Monitors sample at a minimum turbidity, temperature and dissolved oxygen.

2012 Snapshot Days are May 19 and Sept. 22. Everyone out on a single day tells us a great story about water quality in the Basin.

### WAV Level Two Monitoring

The program, sponsored by the DNR and UW-Extension, is generally for experienced monitors. At this level, citizens are trained to use Department of Natural Resources' methods for monitoring streams. Dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature and transparency are monitored monthly between April and October on pre-determined dates. Continuous temperature monitoring devices are placed in the stream and record temperature hourly until they are removed from the stream and data is downloaded. Meters for monitoring pH and dissolved oxygen must be calibrated by the citizen monitors on each sampling day. Due to the high cost of equipment for this level of monitoring, citizen groups share equipment, thus providing as much data as possible in a given area.

More on mussel, wetland and other level 3 monitoring in the spring Rock River Reflections.

## UW-Arboretum Science Day: Winter Enrichment Lecture

February 9, 2012  
9:00-10:30am

Students and faculty will present findings of research projects conducted on Arboretum lands and in the greater Lake Wingra watershed.

## Stream Monitor Training

A training session for individuals interested in stream monitoring will be held at UW-Waukesha field station, Waterville on Saturday May 12, 2012.

You must preregister by contacting Jayne Jenks at 262-896-8305 or [jjenks@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:jjenks@waukeshacounty.gov).

### Agenda

- 8:30 Welcome, introductions
- 8:45 Watersheds—what are they and what's happening to them?
- 9:30 Dissolved Oxygen, Temperature and Turbidity
- 10:15 Biotic Index (critters)
- 12:00 Lunch (bring your own)
- 12:45 Measuring Flow/Habitat
- 1:45 What Does It All Mean?
- 2:15 Where We Go From Here!
- 2:30 Adjourn

Hip boots/waders: If you do not have them, please give your boot size when you register.

Dress appropriately for the weather, as we will be in or near the creek for an extended period of time.

Bring your calendar to schedule first monitoring visit.

There is no charge for the training and equipment will be provided. But don't forget, pre-registration required by calling or emailing Jayne Jenks.

## More Opportunities

At least one more workshop will be held this spring in the western region of the basin.

Coordinators can train monitoring teams at their site if they can't make it to a training workshop, time permitting.

### Coordinators are:

Dane County: Pete Jopke, 608-224-3733, [jopke@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:jopke@co.dane.wi.us)

Jefferson: Patricia Cicero, 920-674-7121 [patriciac@jeffersoncountywisconsin.gov](mailto:patriciac@jeffersoncountywisconsin.gov)

Rock County: Anne Miller, 608-754-6617 ext 118 [amiller@co.rock.wi.us](mailto:amiller@co.rock.wi.us)

Waukesha County: Jayne Jenks, 262-896-8305, [jjenks@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:jjenks@waukeshacounty.gov)

All others contact Jennifer at 920-674-9380 or [monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org](mailto:monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org)

# Celebrate 10 Year Landmark at the Monitoring Confluence April 28, 2012



The Confluence: a Gathering of Monitors is an opportunity for veteran and new monitors to get together, share experiences and get advanced training on a variety of topics.

This is the only time in the year that we bring all monitors together: stream, wetland and lake. So if you are a monitor in the basin, put this date on your calendar.

Learn about exciting new monitoring initiatives and celebrate with your fellow volunteer monitors.

Pre-register by April 25 with Jennifer at 920-674-9380 or by email to [monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org](mailto:monitoring@rockrivercoalition.org).

## 2012 Citizen Monitoring Confluence: A Gathering of Citizen Monitors

April 28, 2012

Lake Mills Community Center (City Hall), 100 Water Street

### Confluence Agenda

- 8:15 - 8:45 **Registration**
- 8:45 - 9:15 **Welcome & 10th Anniversary Celebration honoring long-term monitors**  
RRC President Scott Taylor and DNR Lake Monitoring Coordinator Susan Graham

### Lake Monitors Breakout

- 9:30 Welcome and Introductions
- 9:40 Secchi and Chemistry Procedures Review
- 10:45 Break (coffee, tea, juice and refreshments provided)
- 11:00 Update Database & Distribute Supplies
- 11:15 Open Discussion

### Stream Monitors Breakout

- 9:15 Stream Monitoring Status Update & New Opportunities:  
Christina Anderson Tier 2 Monitoring Coordinator
- 9:45 Monitor Sharing:  
Koshkonong Creek Mussel monitoring: Janice Redford  
Road Salt Monitoring: Jim Kerler  
Stage Monitoring: tbd  
Macroinvertebrate Monitoring: Samantha Foster  
Raccoon Creek Monitoring: Dave Hinde
- 10:45 Break (coffee, tea, juice and refreshments provided)
- 11:15 Breakout Sessions:

The Exciting World of Mussel Monitoring: Lisie Kitchell, WDNR Mussel Specialist

How to Become a Level 2 Monitor: Christina Anderson WDNR

Macroinvertebrates - Detangling the Commonly Confused Critters: Suzanne Wade

- 12:15 - 12:45 **Lunch:** Bring your own or order a Jimmy John sub and pay during registration
- 12:45 - 1:45 **Keynote:** To be announced

**1:45 Official close of Confluence but for those interested we will reconvene at Tyrenena Brewery Company with RRC board members for a tour, tasting and continued discussion about monitoring and the Rock River Coalition.**

*Jayne Jenks, Waukesha County monitoring coordinator works with Richard Schlondrop, a volunteer monitor, on identifying macroinvertebrates at an earlier Confluence. The Confluence is a great place to meet other monitors and hone skills.*



*Lisie Kitchell working with monitor Chuck Heidt at the 2010 Confluence on mussel identification.*

*photo by Suzanne Wade*



# First Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase by Jefferson County

Last December Jefferson County closed on its first agricultural conservation easement on the Rodell Lea farm in the Town of Oakland. The County's Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements program (PACE) is administered by the Jefferson County Farmland Conservation Easement Commission, which was created by the County Board in 2007.



The 220 acre dairy farm ranked 1st in the state and federal agricultural conservation easement programs and received 50 percent cost sharing from the state PACE program and 50 percent from the federal Farmland and Ranchland Protection program of the NRCS.

Rodell Lea and his partners, the Ned Healy family, employ many conservation practices on their farm and are excited that the land will be protected for future generations of farmers. Healy, who has worked in partnership with Lea since 1980, owns half the animals and machinery and would like to purchase the farm. Without the easement, development pressure would make that goal difficult.

In an article by Gloria Hafemeister in the State Farmer Magazine, Lea is quoted "There is a subdivision across the road and some houses around us. A lot of land in the area is also being set aside for parks. I want to see this farm stay in agriculture and I'm hoping others in the area will do the same."

For more information on the Jefferson County program or to get an application for the easement program, contact Michelle Staff at the Zoning Department, 920-674-8638.

*Lea Farm photo by Margaret Burlingham*

## 2012 RRC Members as of January 17, 2012 - Thank You!

### Individual/Senior

Sharon Beall  
 Patricia Bielke  
 Andy & Debbie Bissonnette  
 Curtis Blakeway  
 Bill Boettge  
 Frank Brazelton  
 David & Darice Brumm  
 David Carpenter  
 Walt Christensen  
 Patricia Cicero  
 James Danky  
 Leslie Demuth  
 Greg Farnham  
 Nelson Fischer  
 William Fogarty  
 Kevin Freber  
 Thomas Ganfield  
 Donnell Geib  
 Ruth Hartwig  
 Frances Highsmith  
 Tod Highsmith  
 Mike Hoppenrath  
 Ed Huck  
 Peter Jacobs  
 Ruth Johnson  
 Sue Jones  
 Chase Kelm  
 Paul Lange  
 Steve Lewis  
 Jeanine Mason  
 Richard McLaughlin  
 Elroy Mittelstadt  
 Daniel Moore  
 Steve Nass  
 Dean Paynter  
 Ursula Petersen  
 Janice & Fred Redford  
 Gerald & Dolores Richardson  
 Eugene Roark  
 Dan Sable  
 Tom Schnaderbeck  
 Debora Sielski  
 Rose Smith  
 Emily Stanley  
 Joleen Stinson  
 Kristen Kordet & Scott Taylor  
 Mary Thompson

### Individual/Senior continued

Marsha Vomastic  
 Bob Weiland  
 Caroline Werner  
 Ken Wiesner  
 Steven Wurster

### Family

Steven Apelbaum  
 William & Cindy Arbiture  
 Jan Axelson  
 Ron & Nelda Bergsten  
 Dean & Kim Buchholz  
 Jane Carlson & Family  
 Don Christensen  
 James & Cheryl Congdon  
 Bob & Lisa Conley  
 Sam & Kaye Cooke  
 Skip and Wendy Drew  
 Patrick & Lloyd Eagan  
 Ralph Froelich  
 Carl & Peggy Glassford  
 Eric Janikowski & Jennifer Hanneman  
 James & Liesa Kerler  
 Roger & Denise Kist  
 James & Mary Koepke  
 Margaret & Ralph Krueger  
 Carl Mendelson & Carol Mankiewicz  
 Tracey & Tom Novak  
 Charles & Evelyn Payson  
 Penny & Gary Shackelford  
 Suzanne & Larry Wade  
 James Welsh  
 Tony & Kate Yuhas

### Affiliate

Citizens Natural Resources  
 City Of Beaver Dam  
 City Of Beloit  
 City Of Delavan D.P.W.  
 City Of Janesville Water & Wastewater Utilities  
 City Of Jefferson  
 City Of Lake Mills WWTP  
 City Of Mayville  
 City Of Stoughton  
 City Of Whitewater

### Affiliate continued

Dodge County Land Resources & Parks Dept.  
 Fox Lake Inland Protection & Rehabilitation District  
 Friends Of McCarthy Park  
 Green Diagnostics  
 Lake Koshkonong Wetland Association  
 Lake Sinissippi Improvement District  
 Loeb-Lorman Metals, Inc.  
 North Lake Management District  
 Rock Aqua Jays  
 Rosy-Lane Holsteins, LLC  
 Taylor Conservation, LLC  
 T.C. Products Company  
 Town Of Dunn

### Affiliate continued

U.S. Geological Survey  
 Upper Nemahbin Lake Mngt Dist  
 Village Of Oconomowoc Lake  
 Watertown Rotary Club  
 Whispering Wings Game Farm  
 Widmer's Cheese Cellars  
 Yaggy Colby Associates, Inc.

### Corporate

Aquarius Systems  
 Frontier FS Cooperative  
 Horicon Bank  
 Kunkel Engineering Group  
 Landesign by Margaret Burlingham  
 Village of Theresa

## New Municipal Membership Category

The RRC Board recently tackled the question of municipal memberships.

There has been some confusion about how a municipality fits into our Affiliate membership category. Our description states that a municipal department can become an Affiliate member, but what if a municipality has multiple departments that work with the RRC? Today we work mostly with the public works or engineering departments but over the years our projects have also involved parks departments, planning departments, wastewater treatment plants as well as elected officials and administrative staff. This could mean multiple memberships to cover an entire city.

To meet the needs of the different municipalities in the basin they will now be able to choose the level that works best for them:

**\$50 Affiliate membership:** Appropriate for a single department or a small town or village. Only that department would receive newsletters or be entitled to discounts at workshops or member events such as Send Your Legislator Down the River. Multiple departments in a municipality can each be Affiliate members.

**\$125 Municipal membership:** provides complete coverage to all departments in the city. Municipality can designate multiple individuals to receive newsletters and can receive discounts to workshops or member events for any staff member or elected official.

Contact us if you would like more information on current memberships at [info@rockrivercoalition.org](mailto:info@rockrivercoalition.org).

# Get the Scoop on Dog Poop!

Ok, it's disgusting, but how bad is it really when piles are left in the street, when it comes to water quality?

While it's a problem year round, during the winter the evidence is generally more visible than other times of the year. And those dog feces can be a real water quality problem.

In Wisconsin 35% of households have dogs, and the average number of dogs per household is 1.5. The average size for dogs is 40lbs and each average sized dog deposits 3/4 pound of feces/day. Now this happens each and every day so a mid-sized dog produces roughly 550 pounds a year.

Using state averages, Watertown, a typical mid-sized city with 8,022 households, would have 4,235 dogs.

Not all of that washes to our rivers and lakes of course, several studies along the East Coast found 40 - 50% of dog owners don't walk their dogs. Most of their waste is deposited on the owners lawn and may or may not wash off depending on slope, distance to street, soil and plantings.

Of those who do walk their dogs, these studies showed that about 35% never clean up after their dogs. Once the dog 'goes' in the street there is nothing to stop it from being washed down the street to the stormdrain and out to the river or lake.

What does that mean for water quality?

Well using the 35% rate for dogs that are walked and the 2010 census for number of households: here are the results for a few selected cities. The difference is a reflection of the number of households/city not an actual measurement of dog waste.

- Ready, its pretty disgusting!

Select Cities	Amount Dog Waste Every Year
Beloit	56 ton
Fort Atkinson	19 tons
Janesville	99 tons
Jefferson	13 tons
Madison	382 tons
Mayville	9 tons
Middleton	29 tons
Sun Prairie	42 tons
Watertown	35 tons
Waupun	13 tons
Grand Total 10 cities	697 tons


## THAT's right from these 10 cities that's 697 tons!

-Of dog fecal waste flowing into the rivers and lakes in the Rock River Basin through our stormdrains every single year.

One spot of good news for the basin, in a 2003 Dane County survey of 500 residents, only 10% reported that they didn't currently pick up after their pets. Hopefully that's true throughout the basin. If so you can decrease the numbers by 2/3 but 233 tons is still a lot from just ten cities.

A note from a currently dogless board member: With regards to dog pooh... for those who (still) get a paper delivered in a plastic bag, these bags make great poop-picker-uppers. Just pull the bag out of your pocket, thread it over your hand like a glove, hold your breath and pick up the doggie doo with the bagged hand. Then invert the bag and tie a knot to seal it. No hardware needed! Send it in the trash to the landfill and they'll make methane out of it! A bread bag from the grocery store works too.

**Remember, you're not just walking the dog**



Find out more at [www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org)

**Clean up after your pet**

Did you know . . .

. . . that pet waste has bacteria that makes our lakes and rivers unsafe for swimming and other recreational activities?

Most of us pick up after our pets to be a good neighbor and keep our yard clean. But there's another important reason to clean up after our pets.

Pet waste contains bacteria that is harmful to our water. Leaving it on the sidewalk or in the yards means that harmful bacteria can get washed into storm drains and roadside ditches that flow directly into our lakes and rivers untreated.

**So what can you do? Simple.**

Whether you are in your yard or on a walk, dispose of your pet's waste promptly in the trash or toilet to prevent it from entering storm drains and roadside ditches.

**Pick up after your pet...and help keep our water clean.**

Support provided by SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (313) 961-4266 and the Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project

Our Waste, Our Problem. Don't Let It Pollute!

Brought to you by the Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water

## 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](http://www.rockrivercoalition.org)

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

Tax deductible donation	
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**  
 823 Lucas Lane  
 Jefferson, WI 53549-1182

or register and pay online with PayPal at:

[www.rockrivercoalition.org/membership.asp](http://www.rockrivercoalition.org/membership.asp)

## RRC Outreach Challenge!

Does your group have a flyer or handout for dog owners encouraging them to pick up?

If you do, submit a link to them on our Facebook page. We'd love to share the good work from our partner stormwater groups and cities in the basin. If you see one you like, you could include it with your municipal dog license or ask local veterinarians to post them or hand them to their clients.

Interested in the Dog Pooh Calculator so you can learn how much pooh washes from your municipality? Just go to [www.rockrivercoalition.org](http://www.rockrivercoalition.org).

# Rock River Reflections -- Are You Blue?

The Rock River Coalition would like to thank the University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension for their long-term support of this newsletter. Unfortunately Extension can not continue to provide the same level of financial support as in the past. This means we can no longer provide the number of complimentary newsletters we have historically been able to.

In general those who will continue to receive a print copy of the newsletter include:

1. 2012 Rock River Coalition members (2012 members as of 1/17/12 are listed on page 6).
2. Active Rock River Coalition monitors.
3. Rock River Stormwater Group members: The RRSF funds one printing of the newsletter annually.
4. DNR staff headquartered at GEF 2, Fitchburg, Janesville or Horicon.
5. Extension and LWCD county offices in the Basin, the UWEX/UW-Madison Environmental Resources Center and Extension Natural Resource Educators and Specialists.
6. Additionally, non-member municipalities will receive one newsletter sent to the top elected official. Municipalities who are paying members can designate additional staff to receive newsletters.
7. Libraries and media outlets including basin newspapers, radio and television.

**If your label is printed in blue ink, then this is your last mailed newsletter.**

If you want to keep receiving a print copy of our newsletter all you need to do is either become a member by filling in the form on page 7 and mailing it in with your check, or on-line at [www.rockrivercoalition.org](http://www.rockrivercoalition.org). Of course you can also become a RRC volunteer monitor.

You can view or print the newsletter from the RRC website. Notifications of when it's available are sent out via the Rock River Basin Update List. This moderated list provides a monthly source for events, websites, publications and grants. Sign up for the update at <https://lists.uwex.edu/mailman/listinfo/rock-river-basin-update>. This is a moderated list with one message sent a month. Contact Marie Rubietta at [marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov](mailto:marier@jeffersoncountywi.gov) if you want a pdf of the newsletter emailed to you.

## Jim Congdon Retires from DNR- Many Thanks!

A true friend of the Rock River Coalition who worked tirelessly for water quality improvements in the basin has retired. Jim Congdon, DNR Upper Rock Water Team leader after the DNR's major reorganization in the mid 1990's, helped lead us to major heights as a basin partnership organization.

Jim's belief that achieving true water quality improvements relies on viewing water as a system, with all aspects analyzed and dealt with as a whole, rather than in narrow regulatory silos is part of what led to our unique DNR, UW-Extension, Rock River Coalition partnership.

Jim helped the RRC put together an extensive nomination of the Rock River as a National Heritage River in 1998. More than 100 letters of support were generated toward the nomination. Many of the ideas

born of that effort were later realized through the RRC issue teams.

Jim's hard work on issue teams resulted in the Rural Development Guidelines and Policy Manual, Send Your Legislator Down the River and our stream monitoring program.

We thank Jim for his past efforts, we know Jim will not be far away from the Coalition and our efforts to improve water quality. Already he has agreed to be our representative on the Dodge County Land & Water Management Plan Advisory Committee.



## Congratulations Jim Koepke - Sand County Foundation's Leopold Conservation Award Winner



RRC board member, Jim Koepke, and his three co-owners of the Koepke Farms, were recently honored by the Sand County Foundation at the Farm Bureau's annual banquet. This national award recognizes excellence in agriculture conservation and is given to those who exemplify Aldo Leopold's land ethic. More on the great efforts of the Koepke family in the President's Message on page 2. Left: Jim is outstanding in his field in more ways than one. Below clear water is flowing from Koepke's tile drains.

photos by Lisa Conley



## RRC Board Recommits to Monitoring Program and Will Hire Monitoring Coordinator

The Rock River Coalition Board at its January 21 retreat recommitted to the basin citizen monitoring program.

2012 is the 10th anniversary of the stream monitoring program and the 7th anniversary of our wetland restoration monitoring at Zeloski marsh. The Board will officially recognize long-term monitors at the biennial Confluence on April 28, 2012 at the Lake Mills Community Center.

The board will hire a monitoring coordinator with a proposed start date of April 2, 2012. The RRC Monitoring Coordinator position description will be ready by Feb. 1, 2012 and will be posted at <http://www.rockrivercoalition.org> and announced on our Facebook page. Copies can also be requested from [info@rockrivercoalition.org](mailto:info@rockrivercoalition.org).

The monitoring coordinator will be a flexible position with an average of 10 hours per week, with more hours in the spring and summer and fewer hours other times of the year.

The key job responsibilities will be to:

Recruit new stream monitors for all three levels of WAV

Organize, lead and promote workshops

Provide on-site training of monitors

Ensure monitors know how to enter data and review their data

Recruit wetland monitors for bird, amphibian, butterfly and Odonata studies

Keep accurate records of monitors

Provide regular communication with all monitors, coordinators and board

Keep equipment and chemicals up-to-date

Raise funds to support the program through donations and grants.

A monitoring assistant will work with the coordinator on record keeping, publicity and communication tasks.



## Citizen Monitoring Award Nominations

Who do you know who has given a significant amount of time to conducting volunteer stream monitoring and sharing their knowledge with others? The nomination process is simple, it just takes writing one letter and if you want, including a few supporting documents. Nominations are due by February 20, 2012 to Chad Cook. Details are available on our website at:

<http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/wav/monitoring/awards/about.html>