

# Rock River Basin Monthly Educational Series

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The third in a series of monthly educational programs about the Rock River Basin will resume on June 9 with a focus on future water quality issues as they relate to climate change.

The forums are sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Rock River Coalition and are open to anyone. They are being organized to help the large group of stakeholders working on the Rock River Recovery Plan become familiar with projects aimed at reducing polluted runoff, says Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension Rock River Basin educator.

## ***June 9 forum topic: Whether Weather Will Impact Our Lives in the Rock***

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, climate modeling predicts a global temperature increase of two to ten degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100. These same models predict that Upper Midwest will experience a shift in growing season, plant communities and weather patterns to name just a few of the many impacts that could affect Wisconsin.

The June 9 forum, Whether Weather Will Impact our Lives in the Rock, will approach this topic from two vantage points.

Adena Rissman, an assistant professor at UW-Madison, will present a brief overview of the National Science Foundation funded research project - Climate Change, Shifting Land Use, and Urbanization in the Lake Mendota Watershed: Challenges for Water Quality and Quantity. Dr. Rissman and her associates, Elizabeth Katt-Reinders and Bob Smail, will also engage forum attendees in an exercise which will help individuals develop their own perspectives on water quality and climate change.

Sharing the perspective of the Wisconsin water resource management community, Tim Asplund of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will outline the water quality related work of the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI). The WICCI assesses and anticipates climate change impacts on specific Wisconsin natural resources; evaluates potential effects on industry, agriculture, tourism and other human activities; and develops and recommends adaptation strategies that can be implemented by businesses, farmers, public health officials, municipalities, resource managers and other stakeholders.

The forum will be held at the UW Extension Jefferson County office at 864 Collins Road in Jefferson. The event will begin at 8 a.m. with registration and presentations will run from 8:30 to 11:15 a.m., followed by a facilitated discussion until noon during which forum participants will discuss how the basin community can use the information to move towards cleaner, healthier lakes, streams and rivers in the Rock Basin.

The Rock River and many of its tributaries have water quality impairments caused by too much soil and excess amounts of phosphorus, a plant nutrient, which washes off of farm fields, city streets and construction sites. The DNR is working with citizens, city stormwater and wastewater utility staff,

consultants, farmers and other groups to develop a plan on how to achieve better river health by reducing these two pollutants. The target for reducing the amount of sediment and phosphorus entering the river is derived from a recent report called the Total Maximum Daily Loads for Total Phosphorus and Total Suspended Solids in the Rock River Basin.

For more information about the Rock River Recovery Educational Forums or to view a factsheet on the recovery effort, visit [www.rockrivercoalition.org](http://www.rockrivercoalition.org).