

Rock River Basin Monthly Educational Series Returns May 19

News Release Published: May 5, 2011 by the [Central Office](#)

Contact(s): Jim Congdon, Wisconsin DNR Upper Rock River Basin Supervisor (920) 387-7872, james.congdon@wisconsin.gov; Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension Rock River Basin Educator, (920) 674-8972 suzanne.wade@ces.uwex.edu

The second in a series of monthly educational programs about the Rock River Basin will return on May 19 to highlight research and special projects underway to reduce polluted runoff.

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.

“We need everyone at the table, together examining the research and figuring out the positive steps we can make is critical” she says.

Jim Congdon, DNR Upper Rock River Basin supervisor, says “The Rock River Basin is too large to address pollutant runoff in the whole basin at one time. By focusing efforts on smaller sub-watersheds which contribute high loads of sediment and phosphorus we can get higher returns on investments and learn effective solutions to reduce pollutant runoff. Presenters at the May 19 forum will describe innovative projects they are working on in the Rock Basin”.

May 19 forum topic: Targeting Water Quality Improvements

Addressing water quality issues can be a daunting task, especially when considering an entire basin. Focusing efforts on particular problems in particular areas helps to make water quality improvement a manageable goal. Sue Josheff of the Wisconsin DNR will share some of the cooperative work being done by the Yahara Legacy Lakes Partnership and Yahara Capital Lakes Environmental Assessment and Needs (CLEAN) to assess nutrient and sediment problems in the Lake Mendota watershed in northern Dane County. Since residential development in the Yahara Chain of Lakes has had an impact on lake health, Steve Gaffield of Montgomery and Associates will convey the lessons learned on mitigating the impacts of development on stormwater and groundwater in Dane County.

Moving to the eastern edge of the Rock River Basin, the Delavan Lake Watershed Initiative Network (WIN) is partnering with farmers to install conservation practices that will support the Mississippi River Healthy Basin Initiative. Project Manager Maggie Zoellner will present the partnership success to date and projects in progress.

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.