



WATER QUALITY TEAM SERVES IMPORTANT WATERSHED FUNCTION

For Wayne Goeken, testing water samples from major streams, rivers, and outlets throughout the Red River basin is an obligation he takes seriously.

For the last 13 years, Goeken has coordinated the Red River Watershed Management Board's water quality initiatives. Goeken and his water quality colleagues, Danni Halvorson of Crookston and Evelyn Ashiamah-Finch of Barnesville, are watchdogs for water quality. Their expertise is watershed science.

As trained scientists, each water sample collected goes through a variety of tests that provide information on turbidity, oxygen content, phosphorous and nitrate levels, and even measurements of coli form bacteria. The purpose of the testing is to better understand the relationship between land use and water quality which will lead to better land conservation practices and improved water quality.

Although much of the watershed business done by the Red River Watershed Management Board focuses on flood control, board president John Finney of Humboldt is quick to point out that water quality initiatives are also important. "Wayne and his team provide an important public service," says Finney. Sand Hill River Watershed District administrator and Red River Watershed Management Board treasurer Dan

Wilkins of Fertile agrees. "The board has a long tradition of funding water quality studies because our mission is all about the public good," says Wilkins.

Without good water quality monitoring, flood protection and mitigation projects would not be possible because federal and state funding requires solid evidence of water quality. "Water quality and flood control really go hand-in-hand," says Goeken. "Good flood protection can significantly improve water quality."

Still, Goeken points out that water monitoring potentially provides an even more important function: watershed education. Goeken, Halvorson, and Ashiamah-Finch see water quality monitoring as an opportunity to teach

high school students the importance of applied science. "Through the River Watch program, the science of water quality and conservation is made real by engaging students in hands-on science in their local watersheds," says Goeken.

The River Watch program, also funded by the Red River Watershed Management Board, is a watershed science program involving over 30 high schools monitoring over 150 river sites throughout the Red River Basin. High school students engage in community and water science projects, including river clean-up projects, water quality monitoring, and watershed research projects. The culmination of the River Watch program is an annual

Forum held each March at the University of Minnesota-Crookston where all schools share their results about the health of waters in the Red River Basin.

Whether it be funding flood control projects, water quality studies, or watershed education programs like River Watch, the Red River Watershed Management Board takes all three initiatives seriously. "It's our mission to be proactive in flood control, water quality, and watershed education," says Wilkins.

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WATER INSTITUTE AND WATERSHED BOARD RECEIVES GRANT FROM YSI FOUNDATION

The Tri-College University International Water Institute and the Red River Watershed Management Board received a \$5,000 grant from YSI Foundation. The YSI Foundation is a non-profit organization which donates a portion of YSI Incorporated profits to environmental causes as well as educational and charitable organizations. Funding will be used to convene a multi-disciplinary work group and to develop a template for applied research projects in Basin River Watch schools (<http://www.international-waterinstitute.org/riverwatchmain.htm>) related to watershed science and management. The grant will also

be used to hold training sessions for River Watch teams on how to best implement the template.

River Watch, a school-based citizen volunteer program, monitors the surface water quality in the Red River of the North basin using professional equipment such as YSI sondes, water samplers, and transparency tubes. Starting in 1995 with four schools in the Minnesota portion of the basin, the program now includes 38 schools in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Manitoba taking measurements at over 200 sites. The Red River Watershed Management Board actively

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MIDDLE SNAKE TAMARAC RIVERS WD

The Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD reported on the Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project. Work has been progressing well on the embankment, with the outlet structure to be completed by the end of September. Intermittent rains have caused some delays, however, with a pleasant fall the majority of the embankment should be completed.



Agassiz Valley Water Resource Management Project

BOIS DE SIOUX WD

The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the North Ottawa Impoundment Project. The contractor working on Phase III (a) of the project has completed the east dike and is preparing to begin construction on the emergency spillway. The work remaining to complete the contract includes

permanent seeding on the east dike and the installation of side inlet culverts in the diversion channel. Seeding will be completed as conditions allow. When the pools are drained down into the diversion channel, the side inlets will be completed.

The contractor working on Phase III (b) is also nearly completed with their portion of hauling the excavation for the south dike construction. The work remaining for this contract includes finish grading and permanent seeding.

The contractor awarded the bid for Phase IV is from Marshall, MN and constructed Phase II of the project as well. Their bid came in at \$455,000 below the engineer's estimate. This contract consists of finishing the dike work and installing all the connecting culverts in the diversion channel. Essentially, when this contract is completed, the project will be fully functional for flood damage reduction.

This winter the District plans to work with local resource managers to develop plans for completing Phase V, which includes implementing natural resource enhancements. A funding strategy for this phase will be developed in conjunction with the State of Minnesota.

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funds the River Watch program as part of its water quality and watershed education initiatives.

The International Water Institute was formed after the devastating 1997 Red River of the North flood. The institute works at the grass roots level to implement educational and professional programs in watershed science. It partners with K-12 and community education, resource management professionals, and decision makers in an effort to enhance leadership capacity and decision making in water quality issues affecting the Red River of the North basin. The Red River Watershed Management Board was created by an act of the Minnesota legislature in 1976 to provide an organization with a basin-wide perspective on water management.



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EVENTS COMING UP

The next meeting of the RRWMB will be on Tuesday, October 21, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, 120 E Bridge Ave, Warren, MN. Following the board meeting, the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group will meet at 1:00 p.m.

RRWMB MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

At it's regularly scheduled September meeting, the RRWMB:

- *Received a report from Naomi Erickson, Administrator.*
- *Discussed the Twin Flex System sponsored by the Flood Defence Group of Ringsted, Denmark.*
- *Received a progress report on the Red River Basin Watershed Feasibility Study from Chuck Fritz, International Water Institute (IWI).*

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