



Ozark Waters

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CONTENTS

FEATURE ARTICLE	PG. 1
UPCOMING EVENTS	PG. 2
BASIN NEWS	PG. 3
WATER NEWS	PG. 3

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Guest Column: A Shared Water Future

By Loring Bullard
Executive Director
Watershed Committee of the Ozarks

As a water guy, it's hard for me to drive by a sprinkler system that's busy irrigating driveways and sidewalks and water is running down the street. I want to get out and shake somebody—"Hey, that's our precious water you're wasting!"

But I don't. It's not really a big deal, is it? Water is cheap and plentiful here in the Ozarks—right? Anyway, it's certainly not worth getting my face pounded in, so I just drive on, grumbling to myself.

The Ozarks is truly water-rich—blessed—you might say, at least compared to many parts of the globe. Maybe that explains why so many people here undervalue and underappreciate it. It's easy to believe that water will always be with us, flowing into and through our magnificent lakes, streams, springs, and groundwater, in abundance and high quality. Is there really any reason to worry?

If we need a wake-up call, we don't have to look very far. The southeastern United States also considers itself water-rich, so it is somewhat surprising that Atlanta has been backed into a corner by a severe and long-lasting drought. Even closer to home, the Joplin area is concerned about the long-term viability of their groundwater resources. The truth is that water is not always where we want it, when we want it. Throw in the wild cards of booming Ozark population growth and the possibility of wide-ranging climatic changes, and our water future begins to look a little less certain than it once did.

Other truths—water does not respect and

flows freely across political boundaries (even when slowed by dams), and our big bathtubs, our water impoundments, only fill when it rains in their watersheds. A locality usually has little control over the water that comes to it. One state's water invariably becomes the "property" of an adjoining state. All of these facts should lead us to the same conclusion—that our water resource issues are best approached on a regional basis.



Loring Bullard

For these reasons, two organizations formed primarily in response to water supply concerns—the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks and the Tri-State Water Resources Coalition—have teamed up to co-convene a regional water conference in September. "Our Water Future: The Regional View" will be held in Joplin, at the LaQuinta Inn, on Sept. 11-12, 2008. In addition to many local water experts, we'll hear interesting stories from Atlanta, Tucson, Seattle and Denver. For information about the conference and to register, visit the WCO website, www.watershedcommittee.org.

We can't afford to wait for the next water crisis. As a region, we need to be talking with each other about our water future. It is our hope that people from all over the four-state region, from many backgrounds, will attend the conference, and that they will share their views on our critical—and shared—water future.



Autumn is coming! As the days grow shorter, the list of water events grows longer! Fall is traditionally one of the busiest seasons for water quality work; whether you've been interested but never participated or if you're a seasoned volunteer—we invite you to participate in one of the events listed below (or on our website) and help make a difference where you live. New events are posted weekly thorough *Ozark Waters* and the UWRB website.

Upcoming Events & Announcements

<p>September 5, 2008 WATERSHED COMMITTEE OF THE OZARKS MONTHLY MEETING</p> <p>Location: Midtown Carnegie Library, 397 E. Central, Springfield MO</p> <p>Time: 7:30 am</p> <p>Presentation: COWS (Community On-site Wastewater and Stormwater) 319 Wrap Up and Missouri Department of Conservation Update.</p> <p>Contact: Watershed Committee http://watershedcommittee.org/</p>	<p>September 5, 2008 ILLINOIS RIVER CLEAN-UP <i>Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission</i></p> <p>Time & Location: Call to register</p> <p>Free canoes and trash bags are provided to participants willing to collect trash along an approximately 6-mile stretch of the River.</p> <p>Pre-Registration Required by September 3. (918) 456-3251</p> <p>Info: Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission http://www.oklahomascenicrivers.net/cleanup.asp</p>	<p>September 9, 2008 SUSTAINABLE GARDENING <i>White River Group of the Sierra Club</i></p> <p>Location: Springfield Conservation Nature Center, 4600 S. Chrisman Rd., Springfield MO</p> <p>Time: 7 pm</p> <p>This session will cover organic, weed-free gardens.</p> <p>Info: White River Group—Sierra Club (417) 581-4018 http://whiteriver.sierraclub.org/</p>
<p>September 7, 2008 TABLE ROCK LAKE SHORELINE CLEAN-UP <i>Table Rock Lake Water Quality, Inc.</i></p> <p>Time & Location: Call to register</p> <p>Join TRLWQ for their fall clean-up of Table Rock. After the spring flooding, there is great need to clean up leftover debris.</p> <p>Trash bags are provided and each volunteer receives a t-shirt and camping voucher for their participation.</p> <p>Information: Gopala (417) 739-4100 or visit: http://trlwq.org/shorelinecleanup.html</p>	<p>September 11 & 12, 2008 OUR WATER FUTURE: The Regional View Conference <i>Watershed Committee of the Ozarks</i> and <i>Tri-States Water Resource Coalition</i></p> <p>Location: La Quinta Inn, Joplin MO</p> <p>Time, September 11: 8 am — 4:30</p> <p>Information: Loring Bullard (417) 866-1127, Bob Nichols (417) 673-7151 or visit: http://morriscenter.missouristate.edu/update/leadership/WaterConference08/</p>	<p>September 13, 2008 ILLINOIS RIVER WATERSHED APPRECIATION DAY <i>Illinois River Watershed Partnership</i></p> <p>Location: Lake Wedington, Fayetteville AR</p> <p>Time: 2—7 pm</p> <p>Family activities, stream team training, dinner and benefit concert.</p> <p>Information: IRWP (479) 238-4671 www.irwp.org</p>

September 3-19, 2008
ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS: STORMWATER REGULATIONS

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality will hold a series of informational meetings around the state during September to explain proposed changes to the renewal general construction permit covered by storm water regulations administered by the department.

Meetings will be held around the state:

- Sept. 3, 9 a. m. and 2 p. m., North Little Rock; ADEQ Headquarters, 5301 Northshore Drive
- Sept. 4, 1: 30 p. m., Camden; Municipal Building, 206 Van Buren St. NE
- Sept. 8, 1: 30 p. m., Jonesboro; Allen Park Community Center, 3609 Race St.
- Sept. 9, 2 p. m., Fort Smith, Riverpark Events Building (West Events Room), 121 Clayton Expressway
- Sept. 10, 9: 30 a. m., Fayetteville; City Administration Building, Council Chambers Room 219, 113 West Mountain St.
- Sept. 10, 1: 30 p. m., Springdale; Jones Center for Families, 922 East Emma Ave.
- Sept. 15, 1: 30 p. m., Hot Springs; Hot Springs Convention Center, Rooms 104-105, 134 Convention Boulevard
- Sept. 16, 1: 00 p. m., Mountain Home; City Hall, 720 S. Hickory.
- Sept. 19, 9: 00 a. m. and 2: 00 p. m., North Little Rock; ADEQ, 5301 Northshore Drive.

BASIN NEWS

Public forum kicks off green infrastructure planning

Northwest Arkansas Times

<http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/68345/>

“Our picture of success in the long term is having the plan developed in such a way that it’s adopted by governing bodies,” said Patti Erwin, urban forester for the Arkansas Forestry Commission. “Involving citizens in this plan is critical to its success. As part of our short-term goal, we want to begin forming a design team to collect input from the public.”

Sewage spill a ‘community health emergency’

Branson Daily News

<http://www.bransondailynews.com/story.php?storyID=8436>

“That treatment plant has always been a problem,” Taney County Regional Sewer District Administrator John Soutee said to Bozoian. “It’s been there since 1991,” he said. “It has operated and then it hasn’t. Operators would come and go. It’s been a problem for many years.”

Volunteers gather Beaver Lake data, shows less clarity

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

<http://www.nwanews.com/adg/News/235160/>

Area residents Dallas and Delores Drda and their friends Ken and Diann Yakel, of Denton, Texas, were among the first to return with findings. Their measurements showed the lake wasn’t quite as clear as last year. “We know it’s not as clear as it was before the storms,” Delores Drda said.

Arrow Rock breathes easier as hog farm fizzles

Columbia Tribune

<http://columbiatribune.com/2008/aug/20080820news005.asp>

Now, less than two weeks before that permit is set to expire, it seems the farmer has abandoned the plan that raised such a stink in the historic community, where activists worried the odor from such a large operation nearby would destroy the town’s only industry: tourism.

State officials to explain proposed permit changes

Northwest Arkansas Times

<http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/68427/>

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Thank you for reading Ozark Waters!

Find the UWRB online at www.uwrbb.org

WATER NEWS

Bill would warn public about sewage in lakes

Springfield News-Leader

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008808170355>

Public officials have disagreed about whose responsibility it should be to give safety warnings at the Lake of the Ozarks, but a bill in Congress could require notifications within 24 hours of a sewage overflow.

Half of All Food Produced Worldwide is Wasted

Environmental News Service

<http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/aug2008/2008-08-22-01.asp>

Tremendous quantities of food are wasted after production - discarded in processing, transport, supermarkets and kitchens - and this wasted food is also wasted water, finds a policy brief released Thursday at World Water Week in Stockholm.

Bird sanctuary, utility working together

Springfield News-Leader

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008808250351>

Missouri-American Water Co., which provides water to Joplin and many other communities in Missouri, has joined with World Bird Sanctuary to improve habitat for birds on land the utility owns along Shoal Creek.

Bottling Plan Pushes Groundwater to Center Stage in Vermont

New York Times

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/21/us/21water.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=%22bottling%20plan%22&st=cse&oref=slogin

“Water is the resource of the 21st century,” said Laurence R. Becker, Vermont’s state geologist. “The amount of water that we use will increase, and we will be looking for fresh water in many places.”

As lake rises, so do spirits in arid West

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

<http://www.nwanews.com/adg/National/235134/>

Such excitement abounds in this summer of bountiful water, at least on the lake. That’s right: In a drought, Lake Powell, unexpectedly and improbably, has risen to its highest point in six years, in the biggest increase since the dry period began in fall 1999.

COLUMNS & OPINIONS

Reader’s Letters: Springfield’s dumped sludge should go elsewhere

Springfield News-Leader

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008808210331>

The Tribune’s View: An Arrow Rock reprieve

Columbia Tribune

<http://columbiatribune.com/2008/aug/20080823comm002.asp>