



Ozark Waters

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Know Your Watershed: James River Basin Partnership

By Holly Neill, Executive Director
 James River Basin Partnership

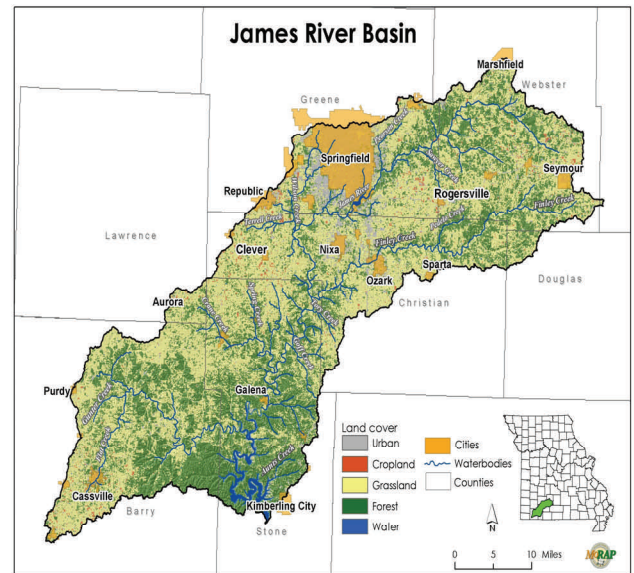
“Know Your Watershed” is an occasional series on the work of the watershed groups located in the upper White River basin of northwest Arkansas and southwest Missouri.

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The James River Basin Partnership (JRBP) is a grass-roots organization whose mission is to protect and improve the water quality of the lakes, rivers, streams, and springs of the James River basin watershed. Covering some 931,000 acres across seven counties in southwest Missouri, the partnership’s major concerns are septic systems, municipal wastes, fertilizers, pesticides, sediment loss, storm-water runoff, livestock and poultry waste and urban growth. Formed in 1997, we recently celebrated our 10 year anniversary.

As a partnership, we strive to create projects and programs which encourage watershed residents to become active participants in protecting their water resources. One of our most popular programs is the “Get Pumped” campaign, held in conjunction with Table Rock Lake Water Quality, Inc. (TRLWQ) of Kimberling City. By conducting a one-on-one site visit and offering a \$50 incentive when homeowners have their septic tank pumped, this program educates homeowners about proper septic tank maintenance and the importance of having septic tanks pumped regularly. Between the JRBP and TRLWQ, we recently reached our initial goal of pumping a million gallons of septic waste!



The James River basin, a sub-basin of the larger upper White River basin watershed.

We are thrilled to be able to continue the pump-out program with funds from Missouri Department of Conservation, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Bass Pro Shops. In addition to the septic tank program, we host a free urban-lawn soil testing program which educates homeowners on how to properly fertilize their lawns. Improperly fertilized lawns can lead to fertilizing our waterways and excess nutrients, like fertilizers, can reach our water and cause algae blooms, leading to negative effects on water quality. In order to prevent this, we write each homeowner a complimentary fertilizer

James River Basin Partnership

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plans and explain the benefits of following the guidelines in each plan.

Some of our newer projects include stormwater reduction and collection. Because stormwater is one of the leading causes of water pollution today, the JRBP decided to introduce rain gardens to the area by implementing nine demo gardens in the water-



One of the Partnership's demonstration rain gardens, located in Springfield, Missouri.

shed. These shallow depressional gardens use native plants to trap stormwater, preventing pollutants from entering local waterways while adding aesthetic value to properties and attracting a variety of local wildlife. After initial success with our first rain gardens, we expanded our demonstration program to test its effectiveness in established, urban-residential neighborhoods.

Working with the city of Springfield, we implemented five rain gardens in the mid-town neighborhood, a cross-section of streets, schools and houses in the heart of Springfield, Missouri. When we later tested these gardens we found they had reduced



Rain Barrel by Hing Ha for "Rain Barrel Reveal."

stormwater runoff by 31%. We hope as the gardens grow and establish we will find even higher percentages of stormwater reduction in this neighborhood.

Last spring the partnership began promoting rain barrel usage as a method to collect stormwater. To announce our program, we hosted the first annual "Rain Barrel Reveal," a fundraiser to auction rain barrels painted by local artists. As we showcased the barrels in the area, news of rain barrel program spread across the basin. We didn't anticipate the amount of public demand for rain barrels in the area, and our initial stock of 100 rain barrels quickly sold. In order to meet the continued demand, we partnered with Meek's Building and Lumber Supply, who generously offered to sell rain barrels to the public. In addition to offering ready-made barrels, we created a "how to" guide for all the do-it-yourselfers out there. The guide is a step-by-step demonstration of how to make your own barrel and you can get it on our website, www.jamesriverbasin.com.

In addition to our programs for rain barrels, rain gardens and septic tanks, the JRBP recognizes that educating our youth is crucial to the future of our water resources. Every year we host county-wide watershed festivals that educate all 5th grade students about local water quality issues. Originally hosted by the University of Missouri Extension in Taney County and the City of Branson, the JRBP expanded the program to include festivals in Stone and Christian counties, and hopes to cover all counties within the James River watershed in coming years. Students and their teachers spend a day learning about local water quality issues, everything from ground water and karst topography to how to prevent pollution, all in a hands-on, interactive setting.

Besides our programs, the partnership

likes to keep the watershed clean by partnering with Ozark Mountain Paddlers for "River Rescue," an annual trash clean-up event. In 2007 our volunteers removed over 4 tons of litter from the watershed, the most in a single outing to date! We celebrate the accomplishment with a night of good music and food at the Ozark Mill, located on the Finley River. The event is successful not only because we remove trash from our precious waterways, but because it connects people to the water in a way that only direct experience can and encourages a stronger, deeper commitment to the waters that sustain us. We hope you'll join us for River Rescue 2008!

For more information on the James River Basin Partnership, its programs and membership, please visit their website, www.jamesriverbasin.com



Fifth-grade students build a watershed during one of the JRBP's annual watershed festivals.

Wetland Management Survey

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking input on wetland management and preservation. The DNR has devised an anonymous, online survey to gauge Missourians' interest and the value of wetlands.

To share your opinion, go to dnr.mo.gov/env/wrc/survey.htm

Tuesday, February 5 is "Super Tuesday." Don't forget to cast your vote!

Most polling stations in Arkansas and Missouri are open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Check with your local precinct for exact times and locations.



BASIN NEWS

Keeping water clean

Springfield News-Leader

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008801290322>

The geography of the Ozarks is often beautiful and challenging—especially when it comes to water. In a region streaked with eye-catching waterways, it can be difficult to keep that water clean, whether the water is intended for consumption, recreation, sport or pure aesthetics.

Sustainable lot nearly completed at Gulley Park

Northwest Arkansas Times

<http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/61809>

The parking area includes four bioswales designed to capture stormwater, which will infiltrate into the ground instead of running off into creeks. Bioswales are used to treat surface runoff, most commonly in parking lots where automotive pollution is collected in the pavement and washed into lakes and streams.

Ethanol demand thins rabbit meat supply

Arkansas Democrat Gazette

http://www.nwanews.com/adg/Business_Matters/215072

The corn-hungry ethanol industry has caused plenty of financial pain for U. S. beef, chicken and pork processors, but there's a furrrier casualty in this battle between food and fuel. Rabbits are becoming a scarce commodity as alfalfa and soybeans—the main ingredients in their feed—lose acreage to high priced corn across the nation. This nationwide shift toward growing corn has tightened supplies of other commodities, which tends to drive their prices up, as well.

Catch and release area below dam now open

The Baxter Bulletin

<http://www.baxterbulletin.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008802020329>

Fishing Report: Keep in mind that the Catch and Release area below Bull Shoals Dam opened Friday. This section has been closed for the past few months while the brown trout have been spawning and no one has been allowed to fish here during this period. I caution all wading anglers to please avoid walking through the Redds (spawning beds recently filled with fertilized eggs by brown trout).

WATER NEWS

Most of Gulf dead zone nutrients come from just nine states

ENS Newswire

<http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/jan2008/2008-01-30-091.asp>

To see the original USGS news release, visit:

<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=1861>

'Impaired' list tough to leave

The Columbia Tribune

<http://www.columbiatribune.com/2008/Jan/20080131News005.asp>

Bill would give neighbors voice on CAFOs

Sedalia Democrat

http://www.sedaliademocrat.com/news/state_5719_article.html/harris_farm.html

EPA picks KC for environmental initiative

Kansas City Business Journal

<http://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/stories/2008/01/28/daily26.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 21, 2008

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
(NACA) MONTHLY MEETING

First Security Bank Annex, 100 W. Emma Street,
Springdale, AR.

Call (479) 586-3122 or info@nwaconservation.org for more information.

February 22 & 23, 2008

OZARKS NEW ENERGY CONFERENCE
Springfield, MO

Visit ozarksnewenergy.org for more information