



Ozark Waters

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THE COMING OF SPRING

By John E. Moore, Jr.
Upper White River Basin Foundation

In these columns we chronicle issues involving our Ozark waters—the threats, some solutions, their uses and benefits. Truly the rivers, lakes and streams of our region are among the defining jewels of the Ozarks. We’ve been beset with overly abundant rainfall in recent weeks and many of our area waters have been in flood stage, running more than full, sometimes murky from runoff and not as inviting as they seem at other times of the year.

Along with the coming of these needed spring rains and the resurgence of floral life throughout the region, there has been the instinctive urge, felt by true fishermen and women, to get out and wet a line. This familiar rite of spring is capitalized on commercially by the Bass Pro enterprise which sponsors its “Spring Fishing Classic,” an opportunity for sportsmen to hear professional fishermen tell about the latest techniques to lure lunkers and stock up on the hottest new tackle. As winter temperatures break and the weather turns milder, an army of anglers takes to the waterways to engage in

a ritual generations old. It’s one of the most reliable indicators of the changing season.

The waters of the Ozarks have many uses and benefits. They are beautiful and attract tourists; they support business and industry in diverse ways; they provide drinking water for many communities; and they facilitate an outdoor lifestyle many residents of the region enjoy. But writing as one who grew up in the Ozarks with a fishing pole in hand, our rivers and lakes also nurture and promote a seemingly innate instinct to catch a fish. And fortunately, we have some outstanding fisheries in our Ozark waters.

The first intimation of the coming spring season occurs on the first of March, often long before winter has released its chilly grip, with Missouri’s traditional opening of trout parks like Roaring River and Bennett Spring. Literally thousands of avid anglers brave the cold at morning’s first light to catch a fish. The news media cover this event faithfully and like the salmon returning to their natal stream to spawn, this cyclical event is the earliest indicator of spring’s return.

But now, by the end of March and first of



Chris Short

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April, these early signs have quickened and the angling urgency marks the accelerated arrival of the season. The calls go out among the fishing faithful: the walleye are "running" in the Pothole; the trout in Lake Taneycomo are being caught at the mouth of Roark Creek on wooly boogers fished a couple of feet below the surface; and the white bass are in the lower James River "biting like crazy" on white and yellow rooster tails cast from the bank. (These are actual calls received in the last week.) For the true fisherman, the imperative to get out on the water becomes inexorable with any debate about whether this urgency is the cause or effect of the advancing season purely moot. The continuing rain dampens enthusiasm only slightly with a trip to the river now inevitable.

My love for the waters of the Ozarks goes back six decades to my childhood when my grandfather taught me to fish. That devotion, now magnified by a larger appreciation for our water resources, continues unabated. One of the nice features of my work is the opportunity to monitor our watersheds, "to check the quality" as I sometimes say. It may be necessary to be out a couple of afternoons this week to monitor the piscatorial performance of a river and lake or two. This is important work and will surely help herald the arrival if not advance the onset of spring.



Due to high water along the shore of Table Rock Lake, the shoreline cleanup scheduled for April 5, 2008 by Table Rock Lake Water Quality has been rescheduled for May 3. Call (417) 739-4100 for more info.

*A special thank you to **Bass Pro Shops** and photographer **Chris Short** for providing these photos of fishermen on the White River.*

American Folklore

*Catchy drawer and sticky door,
Coming rain will pour and pour.*

Little Golden Gate Bridge near Beaver, Arkansas.

Recent rains have caused many area lakes to swell to the flood pool. Table Rock Lake, over which the Little Golden Gate was constructed, is dropping less than a half-foot per day.

*A special thank you to **David Casaletto** of Table Rock Lake Water Quality for sending this photo.*

Photo: Tony Ross & Todd Birkhead

UPCOMING EVENTS



April 4, 2008
WATERSHED COMMITTEE OF THE OZARKS MONTHLY MEETING
7:30 am

Midtown Carnegie Library,
397 E. Central, Springfield, MO

For information, call
(417) 866-1127

www.watershedcommittee.org



Ripple Effect

Low Impact Development Conference

May 7-8, Springfield MO (click for registration & information)



May 7-8, 2008

**RIPPLE EFFECT:
LOW IMPACT
DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE**

Hosted by the James River Basin Partnership

Ever-increasing demands on natural resources have created new challenges for builders and developers. As awareness of environmental issues rises, so does the demand for greener, low impact building techniques. Whether driven by tighter regulations designed to protect our natural resources or customer demand, conscientious development decisions are a must to stay competitive and protect our resources.

To learn more about how low impact design affects water quality, register for Ripple Effect by visiting the James River Basin Partnership website:

www.jrbp.missouristate.edu

BASIN NEWS

Local legislator wants to fix village law

Branson Daily News

<http://www.bransondailynews.com/story.php?storyID=6970>

Dennis Wood is on a mission to right a wrong. Wood, 62nd District Representative in the Missouri House of Representatives, hopes to repeal a law passed last year that provides landowners a loophole to circumvent county authority.

Officials: Injunction on litter needed as spring rains arrive

The Morning News

<http://nwaonline.net/articles/2008/03/26/news/032708okpoultrylitter.txt>

While a federal judge mulls whether to stop 13 Arkansas poultry companies from spreading bird waste in the Illinois River watershed, some environmentalists and business owners say a ruling is badly needed, especially after the heavy rains that fell there last week.

Deadline extended in poultry case

The Oklahoman

<http://newsok.com/article/3222546/1206759977>

A federal magistrate has granted Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson an extension of the deadline to submit expert reports in the lawsuit alleging poultry companies polluted waters in the Illinois River watershed.

Sewer rates headed through the roof

Springfield Business Journal

<http://www.sbj.net/article.asp?aID=21012232.2575907.1049412.735937.6460519.317&aID2=80715>

While sewage treatment providers—mostly cities and regional governments—can complain about the enormous costs to provide what many believe is a marginal return, the courts have spoken and EPA and the state of Missouri have been ordered to clean up Missouri's rivers, lakes and streams.

Low-impact development buzz generates conference

Springfield Business Journal

<http://www.sbj.net/article.asp?aID=72290308.7491679.1049607.6362056.8202463.170&aID2=80730>

Those curious about rainwater harvesting, pervious surfaces and other low-impact development techniques will have access to a bevy of experts May 6-8 at the Ripple Effect Conference in Springfield.

Water woes

Neosho Daily News

<http://www.neoshodailynews.com/news/x1565507872>

Testing of local streams and waterways won't be conducted this summer unless the Newton County Health Department can come up with funding.

WATER NEWS

Agencies at odds over soil dumping

Springfield News-Leader

<http://www.newsleader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008803280415>

The state of Missouri and the U.S. Army corps of Engineers have spent years tussling over water policy on the Missouri River. Now they are fighting over dirt.

Floods are reminder of sinkhole dangers

Springfield News-Leader

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008803310380>

They are grassy dips that give the county the rustic look of rolling hills, but sinkholes can quickly turn into not-so-romantic ponds, immersing highways and flooding homes.

UA student surveys farmers about environmental issues

The Benton County Daily Record

<http://www.nwanews.com/bcdr/News/60230>

A University of Arkansas student is conducting a survey to find out how northwest Arkansas farmers view environmental issues.

World's phosphorus situation scares some scientists

The Coloradoan

<http://www.coloradoan.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080331/NEWS01/803310333/1002/CUSTOMERSERVICE02>

As production of biofuels increase to counter dependence on foreign oil and high fuel prices, some scientists worry that the world's phosphorus supply will slowly diminish.

Missouri amphibians are part of worldwide decline

Kansas City infoZine

<http://www.infozine.com/news/stories/op/storiesView/sid/27719/>

Approximately 16 percent of Missouri's amphibian species show declining population trends. One-third (14 of 43) of Show-me State amphibian species are "species of conservation concern."

Washington DC home to first "green" stadium in US

Environmental News Network

<http://www.enn.com/lifestyle/article/33771>

The Washington Nationals' gleaming new baseball park that opens Sunday night will be the first green professional stadium in the United States, the US Green Building Council said Friday.

Green socks

Rapid City Journal

<http://www.rapidcityjournal.com/articles/2008/03/31/news/features/doc47dad12218cf8860204992.txt>

Called a compost filter sock, it's actually a fabric tube stuffed with composted yard waste.

OPINION

Lawsuit threatens transfer programs

Muskogee Phoenix

http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/opinion/local_story_087195243.html