



WATERSHED NEWS

FOUNDATION

AUGUST 16, 2006

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UPCOMING EVENTS

The date for Secchi Day on Beaver Lake has been rescheduled to Saturday, August 26, 2006. For details, contact Suzanne Langley or Fran Free at slangley@audubon.org or ffree@audubon.org or call the Fayetteville Audubon office at 479-527-0700. Event co-sponsored by Beaver Water District and Audubon Arkansas

WITH YOUR HELP
WE WILL WORK
TOGETHER TO
MAKE BEAVER,
TABLE ROCK,
TANEYCOMO AND
BULL SHOALS
LAKES THE FOUR
CLEANEST
MANMADE LAKES IN
NORTH AMERICA.

TODAY'S HEADLINES

WATER QUALITY:

- [DNR TO HOLD SESSION ON CREOSOTE CONCERNS](#) – *Springfield News-Leader*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)
- [BEAVER LAKE SECCHI DAY IS AUG. 26](#) –
The Benton County Daily Record
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)
- [KNOWN CONSENSUS-BUILDER TO LEAD ILLINOIS RIVER GROUP](#) – *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

SEWER / SEPTIC / WASTEWATER:

- [ROGERSVILLE LOAN FOR SEWER PLANT OK'D](#) – *Springfield News-Leader*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

- [SINKHOLE COULD BE COSTLY FOR NIXA](#)
– *Springfield News-Leader*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

CONSERVATION:

- [DNR REPORTS A FEW COMPLAINTS BUT NO ODOR VIOLATIONS AT THE RES PLANT](#) – *The Carthage Press*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

EDITORIALS:

- [TIMES EDITORIAL: IT'S EASIER BEING GREEN](#) – *Northwest Arkansas Times*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

LEGISLATION / REGULATION:

- [BENTON COUNTY NUISANCE ABATEMENT ORDINANCE MOVES FORWARD](#) – *The Morning News*
TO JUMP TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE, CLICK [HERE](#)

[BACK TO TOP](#)

DNR TO HOLD SESSION ON CREOSOTE CONCERNS

Springfield News-Leader

Posted on August 16, 2006

URL: [http://www.news-](http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060816/NEWS01/608160340/1007/NEWS01)

[leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060816/NEWS01/608160340/1007/NEWS01](http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060816/NEWS01/608160340/1007/NEWS01)

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources will hold a public session at 7 p.m. today to provide residents of a north Springfield neighborhood an update on efforts to control the flow of creosote from an old railroad tie-treating plant.

The meeting at the Library Station, 2535 N. Kansas Expressway, will provide information on investigating complaints of creosote flowing into a spring in the Golden Hills subdivision from the former Kerr-McGee Chemical plant to the south on High Street.

DNR investigated complaints about creosote appearing in the spring in 2005.

Along with DNR staff, representatives of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and the state Department of Health and Senior Services will attend the meeting to provide information and take comments.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

BEAVER LAKE SECCHI DAY IS AUG. 26

From Staff Reports The Benton County Daily Record

Posted on August 16, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/bcdr/News/38494/>

BENTON COUNTY — Organizers of Secchi Day on Beaver Lake, which will be held from 9 a. m. to noon Aug. 26, urge people to come out to enjoy refreshments and education exhibits while Secchi Day results are recorded from various teams that day.

The headquarters for the event will be the West Use Shelter Pavilion at Prairie Creek.

Secchi Day on Beaver Lake is an educational opportunity for people from all walks of life. The goal is to reach out to people and educate them about Beaver Lake and the watershed so they will better understand how the health of the lake and the watershed bears an impact on the quality of raw water that comes from Beaver Lake. Final results from measurements will be shared with the public via the Beaver Water District Web site. In addition, results will be shared with a national database that collects Secchi measurements throughout the United States.

Audubon Arkansas and the Beaver Water District are co-sponsors of Secchi Day on Beaver Lake. A Secchi disk is an easy-to-use device that is lowered into water to measure the water's transparency or clarity. This measurement, collected over time, is an indicator of water quality in the lake. Volunteer teams will take measurements that morning and post them on a tabulation board at Prairie Creek.

To get to Prairie Creek, go to the intersection of Second and Locust streets in Rogers. Then travel east on Arkansas Highway 12 for four miles and turn left on North Park Road into Prairie Creek Park.

For more information, contact Amy Wilson at 756-3651.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

KNOWN CONSENSUS-BUILDER TO LEAD ILLINOIS RIVER GROUP

By ROBERT J. SMITH Arkansas Democrat Gazette

Posted on August 16, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/adg/News/163643/>

A Conway man with 30 years of environmental work experience is being recommended as the first director of an Arkansas-based organization focused on protecting the Illinois River watershed.

The Illinois River Watershed Partnership's Board of Directors will receive a recommendation from its 10-member selection committee on Thursday to hire Nick Brown as the organization's first executive director.

Brown, 55, is a Helena native who left his job as forest program director for NatureServe in Arlington, Va., in 2004. He has spent the past two years as a self-employed consulting ecologist. He's lived in Conway the past several months, he said.

"I've enjoyed technical work, but I've been in the background when it came to decision-making," Brown said. "I've wanted to work in decision-making and leadership positions."

Brown's past ability to bring together people with diverse backgrounds made him the best fit for the job, members of the selection committee said.

"The times I've been around him in previous jobs, he's been able to take large groups of diverse stakeholders and build something out of it of great value," said Tim Snell, a selection committee member and director of Ozark Conservation Programs for The Nature Conservancy.

The Illinois River group has a goal of protecting the watershed from degradation. Its members include representatives of drinking water providers, poultry companies, the construction industry, farmers, cities and environmental groups.

While almost all of its 28 board members are from Arkansas, the group's intent is to include more representation from Oklahoma. Bev Saunders, whose family runs a poultry farm near Colcord, is the only Oklahoman on the board.

Brown said he's "painfully aware" of the lawsuit filed by Oklahoma Attorney General Drew Edmondson against eight poultry companies with operations in Arkansas. The federal lawsuit filed last year accuses the companies of polluting the watershed with poultry litter. He doesn't think the lawsuit has a direct effect on the job he'll start during the first week of September.

Brown's past experience includes working with the Forest Stewardship Council and foresters, loggers, conservationists, companies and agencies across the nation to create forest management standards. The standards he helped develop apply to about 10 million acres of U. S. forest.

"Nick's position is critical because he's got to be able to talk to a farmer, to be able to talk to professional types in the business community and to those interested in conservation," said Evan Teague, a selection committee member and environmental specialist with the Arkansas Farm Bureau. "Their agendas and goals aren't necessarily the same, but if you can sit down and talk, they can be comfortable and come up with solutions."

[BACK TO TOP](#)

ROGERSVILLE LOAN FOR SEWER PLANT OK'D

By Donna Baxter Springfield News-Leader

Posted on August 16, 2006

URL: [http://www.news-](http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060816/NEWS01/608160349/1007/NEWS01)

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Rogersville — City officials were notified this week by Southwest Missouri congressman Roy Blunt's office that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development agency has approved a \$3.37 million loan to expand the sewer treatment plant to triple its present capacity and make other improvements. Work is slated to begin in early 2007, with completion projected for 2008.

"We are very pleased to have the approval for a low-interest loan," said Mayor Jack Cole. "Without this type of loan, the full expansion of the plant would not be possible. A city of our size and means would not be eligible in the private market for a loan of this magnitude."

And, "without the treatment plant expansion, the growth of the city would come to a halt," added City Administrator Nancy Edson. "Our treatment plant was at capacity."

Voters approved a \$5.25 million bond issue on Aug. 8 to pay for improvements and cover repayment of a 35-year federal loan at 4.5 percent.

"Had the citizens of Rogersville not approved the revenue bonds, this loan would not have been possible," stated Cole. "The next stage depended on it."

Revenue bonds will be issued in the amount of \$5.25 million to upgrade the three-year-old plant to handle 1.1 million gallons of wastewater per day, Edson said. USDA guidelines require the city to request 1.5 times the actual estimated cost of \$3.5 million. The collection system also would be upgraded to prevent stormwater from getting into the sewer collection system.

"In the past, passing a bond issue meant a rise in water and sewer rates, but that is not the case this time," said Edson. "There will be no increase in utility bills or the sales and property taxes. Current sales tax revenue only will be used to pay back the loan," she said.

City officials had earlier believed that the city qualified for grant funds, but it was discovered that the city would instead qualify for a loan, Edson said.

Rogersville serves about 850 wastewater users with an average daily input in dry weather of 175,000 gallons. The expanded plant is designed to treat 302,000 gallons a day.

Edson and Cole said they expect that number to grow rapidly as present construction projects in the city hook onto the system in the near future, adding an expected 300,000-gallon demand on the system.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

SINKHOLE COULD BE COSTLY FOR NIXA

By Mike Penprase Springfield News-Leader

Posted on August 16, 2006

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The city asks state representative for help in getting DNR funds

Nixa — City officials facing an estimated six-figure bill to fill a sinkhole that's swallowed most of a house said Tuesday night they would fence off what remains of the house and all of the home next door and would soon share what they know about the sinkhole with concerned neighbors.

A heavy crane could be used to remove debris — including a garage and a Chevy Cavalier — from what's estimated to be a 75-foot-deep sinkhole that appeared Sunday morning on Delaware Street.

At a special meeting of the board of aldermen, officials said part of the long-term project involves negotiating with Norman Scrivener for the purchase of the land where his ruined home sits and with his neighbor Trudy Fugitt.

Scrivener, sitting across the street from his ruined home Tuesday afternoon, said dealing with a gigantic hole in his yard has been worrisome.

Insurance covers the loss of his home but not the value of his land. That's the big unanswered question for him, he said. "This is like it's going to be an eternal 'Who knows?'"

Geologists said they don't know much about how the sinkhole formed or whether it will grow.

The sinkhole is keeping the mysteries of how it appeared locked deep underground, said state geologist Paul Price, who tried to determine how the sinkhole was created.

Tests he and two other employees with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Division of Geology and Land Survey made Monday didn't reveal any useful information, said Price, head of DNR's environmental geology section.

"The geophysical investigation that we attempted really didn't turn out to be very helpful, unfortunately," he said. "We're not quite sure exactly why that is. It may have been interference from buried utilities."

City leaders indicated during Tuesday night's session they want to allay fears of the unknown among Scrivener's neighbors by sharing information they receive.

Local officials are scheduled to meet with DNR representatives Friday and the aldermen set a public meeting to discuss what they've learned for 5:30 p.m. Friday at the Nixa activity center on North Street.

Aldermen also decided to have an eight-foot fence topped by barbed wire put up around Scrivener's property and Fugitt's property just north of the sinkhole, part of an effort to keep people out of a hazardous area.

The fenced-off area will include Delaware street in front of those homes, they decided.

Aldermen who heard about a plan that includes negotiating with Scrivener and his neighbor about the purchase of their properties also heard from consultant Gary Pendergrass, who advised them to take action to stabilize a sinkhole that could end up being 150 feet in diameter.

That would involve using a large crane to remove debris from the sinkhole, then filling the sinkhole's throat with rock and capping it with soil.

The city has asked state Rep. Jay Wasson to encourage DNR to consider earmarking state funds for the project, City Administrator Brian Bingle said.

That work could involve pulling Scrivener's vehicle to the surface, Pendergrass said.

DNR geologist Price, whose job includes keeping pollution from entering sinkholes, said having Scrivener's car at the bottom of a sinkhole that also has consumed a garage is a problem that could take time to address.

Trying to recover a car containing gasoline, oil and other liquids poses its own hazards because it is covered in dirt at the bottom of a sinkhole that could collapse further, he said.

"Certainly, from a realistic or logistical standpoint, whether or not we can do anything at this point is another question," he said.

An inspection of the sinkhole Tuesday indicated that while dirt fell from the east side, there wasn't much growth, Pendergrass said.

The sudden collapse Sunday could affect development in Christian County, which doesn't have comprehensive sinkhole regulations.

That could change in part because of public concern about sinkholes prompted by the Nixa collapse, interim county planning administrator Glenda Hammons said.

It's coincidental she was studying the need for sinkhole regulations just before the Nixa sinkhole appeared, she said.

"The last few weeks, I have done research and nowhere in our code does it state you cannot fill in a sinkhole," Hammons said. "I've been talking to the county commissioners to get something up and running so something like this wouldn't happen."

Hammons, who said some developers have resisted showing sinkholes on maps for planning reviews, said lately her office has been fielding questions from people concerned about sinkholes in the county.

"We've had a lot of calls and people coming in looking at our maps," she said.

While Christian County has no sinkhole ordinances, Greene County has sinkhole regulations backed up by a review process.

Developers have to have a certified geologist report on the presence of sinkholes and how they will be protected. The county's stormwater engineer reviews those reports and can call for additional protection.

"You don't fill sinkholes, you don't excavate sinkholes, you just stay away from sinkholes," Greene County Planning Director Kent Morris said of the county's approach.

He doesn't know of many builders who would try to evade sinkhole regulations enacted by Greene County and Springfield, said Home Builders Association executive officer Matt Morrow.

Greene County's effort to map sinkholes in the county removes doubt from developers' minds on the presence of sinkholes, he said.

"I don't know any builder in their right mind who would want to build on a sinkhole," he said.

"If they know it's there, that's just trouble."

[BACK TO TOP](#)

DNR REPORTS A FEW COMPLAINTS BUT NO ODOR VIOLATIONS AT THE RES PLANT

By Dennis W. Sowers The Carthage Press

Posted on August 15, 2006

URL: <http://www.carthagepress.com/articles/2006/08/15/news/04%20dnr.txt>

Either the odors generated from the industrial bottoms have been limited or Carthage residents are not reporting incidents quickly enough and in numbers.

Mark Rader, Water, Air and Land Section Chief of the Department of Natural Resources' Southwest Regional Office in Springfield, Mo., reports only eight resident complaints since July 8.

“Staff have noted some odor associated with those complaints, but have never found anything that would be considered excessive by regulation,” Rader said. “They are generally noted to be more short term in duration, and much less intense than last summer.”

Rader said that odors were noted Friday morning, but staff indicated that the odors resembled “wet turkeys,” which he said would be expected Friday.

“We have not heard of any issues involving storage, drainage, or otherwise,” he said. “I believe that the RES facility is conducting some trials on new equipment, but the days of operation have not coincided with days that we have received complaints.”

RES has now operated at full capacity since March 7 of this year without a violation. Gov. Matt Blunt temporarily closed the Carthage plant on Dec. 29, 2005, and suspended the facility's air permit for 60 days.

Rader also said that DNR staff has settled into its new Carthage home at the Courthouse.

“I believe that location will serve both the community and the department well,” Rader said. “I would imagine there may be a kink or two arise as they get unpacked, but so far things seem to be running smoothly.”

Once DNR establishes an office in a community, it likes to permanently maintain a presence at the location.

[BACK TO TOP](#)

TIMES EDITORIAL: IT'S EASIER BEING GREEN

Northwest Arkansas Times

Posted on August 15, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/Editorial/43830/>

A group of students at the University of Arkansas are in the process of making Fayetteville more like New York, Chicago and Beijing. And no, we're not talking about all the condos and “skyscrapers” coming soon to Dickson Street. Last Tuesday Mark Boyer, an associate professor of landscape architecture, and his students began installing the first “green roof” on a pair of buildings on the south side of campus. Materials like aluminum edging, lightweight soil and pea gravel were the stars of the production. For most people, the concept of green roofs remains a novelty, more of an idea that sounds nice than a common reality.

Here's hoping one of these days that changes, and this concept takes root as a legitimate way for buildings to become more focused on conservation of energy rather than strictly consumers of it.

Put simply, a green roof is one covered with plants. The plants absorb sunlight that previously beat down on the roof of the building. As a result, Boyer reports, buildings can see an indoor temperature change of as much as 10 degrees. Of course, no building will be kept 10 degrees cooler; it just means the air conditioners that cool the building will have to work that much less to keep the building cool, thus cutting the consumption of electricity.

Boyer and his students expect to plant a combination of sedum plants and some plants native to Arkansas next month.

While Boyer told the Times last week that though most green roofs are found in coastal areas, he thought it was worth testing the idea in Fayetteville. Should these efforts prove successful, he hopes to expand the green roof concept across campus.

Can you imagine the money saved and the energy not consumed by having roofs across campus covered with plants? Even a difference of a few percentage points would likely save thousands of dollars that could be put to use otherwise.

Fayetteville isn't the first place where people have seen the possibilities buildings can suggest. It seems cities across America, and indeed the world, are getting into the act of getting "green."

• In New York, green apartment buildings are all the rage; six exist today, and more are under construction. According to the New York Times, developers believe there is a growing clientele ready and willing to pay more if it helps the environment.

A green designation is conferred on buildings that incorporate recycled or renewable materials into their design, and find creative ways to slash energy use — with roofs covered in soil and vegetation being among the popular options. Heifer International's new headquarters in Little Rock is an excellent example of green building.

• In Chicago, the roof of City Hall, which is home to more than 150 varieties of plants, is oftentimes 50 degrees cooler than nearby asphalt roofs. According to a Washington Post report, there are 2.5 million square feet of green roofs completed or under construction in Chicago.

It's also worth noting that Chicago employs more arborists than any city in the United States. Since Richard M. Daley became mayor, Chicago has planted approximately 400,000 trees.

• In Sacramento, Calif., "cool-colored" roofs are complimenting efforts to go green. Painted roofs are popping up across the landscape using pigments that absorb less heat than a standard brown.

How much less? According to the Sacramento Bee, it's about the same difference Prof. Boyer spoke of regarding the use of "green roofs" — five to 10 degrees, roughly.

• In Beijing, "roof greening" projects are popping up across the city. Despite being 20 years behind trailblazers in Europe, greenery coverage of better than 40 percent by 2008 is said to be within reach. By doing so, the metropolis could decrease the amount of carbon dioxide hanging over the city by a huge extent, and even diminish urban noise in the process.

Many thanks to Professor Boyer and his students for reminding us about nature's remarkable ability to care for itself — and us — if only we're willing to give it a chance. **BACK TO TOP**

BENTON COUNTY NUISANCE ABATEMENT ORDINANCE MOVES FORWARD

By [James Bowie](#) The Morning News

Posted on August 15, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwaonline.net/articles/2006/08/16/news/0816bznuisance.txt>

BENTONVILLE — Junk cars, broken washing machines or even a messy yard could be classified as a nuisance under a proposed Benton County law.

The Benton County Environmental Committee unanimously voted to send a nuisance abatement ordinance to the Quorum Court's Committee of 13 on Tuesday.

The ordinance, sent to the Benton County Planning Board for review in June, will give county environmental officers the power to declare public nuisances in unincorporated areas.

The only change the Planning Board made to the original ordinance was to more clearly define certain items that could be declared a public nuisance.

Under the ordinance a number of structures or items, such as junked motor vehicles, inoperative household appliances or even a yard, can be classified as a nuisance.

However, to be considered a nuisance, something must first be a health and safety hazard, fire hazard, unsafe for occupancy, harmful to the community in which the property is situated or have a failing or failed septic system.

Any person found in violation of the nuisance ordinance, if passed, will be required to fix the problem, according to the ordinance.

Committee members voted to move it to a special meeting of the Committee of 13, on which all justices of the peace sit.

"We've worked on this concept for so many months, I think it's time we take some action," said Justice of the Peace Burt Schindler, R-northcentral Benton County.

Justice of the Peace Bill Adams, R-southeastern Benton County, said he also wanted to see the ordinance move along as long as the process is not hurried.

"We should never ever rush to action unless the law is as perfect as we can get it," Adams said.

Adams voted in favor of moving the ordinance to the Committee of 13 with the requirement that it be heard in a special session.

[BACK TO TOP](#)