

Wolf Creek

Stream Team

"Occasional" Newsletter ☺
Volume 2 Issue 2, March 12, 2003

In This Issue

1. Upcoming Events
2. Successful Macroinvertebrate I.D. Workshop
3. WSU Research Project
4. Streamside gravel mining
5. The Well-Informed Steward
6. Grassroots legislative action – The Clean Water Act

Upcoming Event Reminders...

The Stream Quality Monitoring workshop scheduled for March 22nd will be at Wegerzyn Gardens Metropark on Siebenthaler Avenue. We will be joining a group of folks that will be part of the Five Rivers Metroparks Monitoring program. Right now, the total number registered is around 25, which is about all we can handle. So at this point, anyone else still interested will be put on a waiting list for the next workshop, probably in the summer, depending on demand.

EPA Headwater Stream Workshop will be at Germantown Metropark Nature Center on April 1st. Contact Susan Willeke for more information, (614) 644-2160.

Five Rivers Metroparks annual River Cleanup is Saturday, April 26th. Anyone interested in the Wolf Creek neighborhoods area, contact me for registration.

Macroinvertebrate Identification Workshop an Enjoyable Success

March came in like a lion on the 1st (it snowed a pretty good clip); I'm sure we're all eagerly looking forward to some lamb-like weather in the upcoming weeks – hope springs eternal!

Eight folks checked in, with one being new to our group, who was referred by Chris Royer. Dayton Daily News reporter Mike Garrity also attended. Sarah Hippensteel provided lots of excellent slides and handouts as we discussed some detailed natural history for twelve of the most commonly occurring organisms. We also had a nice variety of preserved specimens to pass around. Some other local conservation topics came up for discussion, and overall, everyone got a little better acquainted with each other as well as with our beloved benthic bugs ☺

For those of you who couldn't make it on March 1st, if we can get at least five or six of you together, I could probably teach another workshop on this topic. We'll play it by ear...
Meanwhile, here's some good web sites related to macroinvertebrates:

<http://www.mostreamteam.org/macroinv/index.html>

Good photos, click to enlarge image, grouped by pollution tolerance

<http://members.tripod.com/tdriskell/insecta.html>

*Excellent drawings, each with link to specific natural history of the bug
(unfortunately, there's also several pop-up ads)*

<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dow/stream/index.htm>

Key for identifying a specimen

In Print:

*A Guide to Common Freshwater Invertebrates of North America,
by J. Reese Voshell Jr.*

Wright State University Launches Extensive Stream Study

Dr. Abinash Agrawal, Department of Geology, is conducting preliminary studies at numerous sites throughout the Great Miami Watershed, eleven of which are within the Wolf Creek Watershed; many are near several of our 'official' eight monitoring sites. The major objective of the study is to describe the specific chemical effects of urbanization on water quality..

Dr. Agrawal and his students will be analyzing water samples for the specific chemical compounds that make up pH, and for e. coli (fecal coliform bacteria). The team will also be analyzing stream sediment samples for toxic metals and pesticides.

And how does this all relate to The Wolf Creek Stream Team you ask? Glad you asked! The WSU team is collecting samples at all their sites once or twice per week. We can become part of this study by collecting water and sediment samples at any or all of our designated sites, to be taken to Wright State for analysis. If you would like to assist with this study, contact me and we can get a tally of how many sites from which we can provide samples. The frequency would ideally be once per week, but monthly sampling would also be useful to the research team.

Ultimately, we anticipate that the study (projected to last at least several years) would be able to distinguish between urban and rural runoff pollutants. Over time, the results of this study could

become an integral part of a Wolf Creek Watershed inventory. As representatives of the public sector, you all, as volunteer stream monitors could form an effective partnership with the academic sector. This process is an important one in terms of “Stakeholder” involvement, for any such watershed project.

Streamside Gravel Mining

As a member of the Great Miami Watershed Network, there are many water quality issues that come to my attention, and I will pass along information to you as is pertinent to our monitoring program. One of the network members is Bob Jurick, Executive Director of BW Greenway, a land trust in Greene County that is trying to establish and restore recreational and wetland areas to the east of Dayton. At our last meeting, he was telling the group about how gravel-mining companies are exempt from most if not all regulation pertaining to stream habitat, in spite of the extensive disruption caused by these activities. He’s starting a listserv in an effort to establish a citizen watchdog group that will advocate more zoning and mitigation requirements for streamside gravel mining, which is a very widespread industry along the Great Miami River and its tributaries.

Jim Henderson is a member of our monitoring group, and at the Bug Workshop on March first, he related the story of what happened to the water flow of the North Branch of Wolf Creek last summer. Having lived a long time at his streamside residence, the sudden and drastic drop in water flow was not a normal occurrence, and he suspected that mining operations upstream were somehow connected to this event. After contacting many local environmental organizations without getting much valuable information about water flow and pertinent regulations, he decided to contact the company directly, Martin-Marietta, just south of Phillipsburg. Oddly enough, the water flow resumed a somewhat normal pattern the next day.

At any rate, Jim believes that public inquiry is a somewhat effective “regulation” in itself, and I agree. He said the manager he spoke with might be willing to arrange a tour. Hopefully some members of our group will be interested. Count me in! Anyone else interested should contact Jim – his phone number (on your Stream Team roster) is 836-3989. If you want to be on Bob Jurick’s computer Listserv for gravel mining information, contact him at (937) 878-6060.

The Well-Informed Steward

This is an FYI piece I decided to put in the newsletter because our group is, I believe, made up of dedicated individuals who want to stay informed about natural resource issues that affect our communities.

Phase II Storm Water Regulations

The Environmental Protection Agency, is in the process of implementing regulations that require cities and other jurisdictions of a certain population size to develop and implement a storm water management plan. The goal is to prevent pollution in runoff (to our streams and rivers) at the sources. There are six Minimum Control Measures that must be included in the storm water management plan. They are as follows:

- Public Education/Outreach

- Public Participation/Involvement
- Illicit Discharge Detection/Elimination
- Construction Site Runoff Control
- Post-Construction Runoff Control
- Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping

And guess what? Our group qualifies for helping our cities meet measures 1 & 2! So if any of you are involved or in contact with your municipal officials, remind them that the Wolf Creek Stream Team is part of the Storm Water Management Plan, and they should take credit for what we are doing.

Drinking Water Well Maintenance web site

<http://www.wellcarehotline.org/wellcare/infosheets.cfm>

Check out this web site for good references on maintaining a well. Everything from testing for various pollutants to state regulations concerning private wells is included, along with many other topics too numerous to mention.

Grassroots legislative action – The Clean Water Act

TO: River Conservation Colleague
 FROM: River Agenda Steering Committee
 RE: Update on threats to the Clean Water Act

Over the last few months you may have received news from American Rivers and others about imminent threats to the Clean Water Act. The health of our streams, wetlands and other waters - and the important benefits they provide to people and wildlife - is at risk. Specifically, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) took action in January that immediately weakened protections for many waters and opened up the possibility of further changes to the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act through an Advance Notice of Proposed Rule Making.

For more background on this issue, visit
<http://www.americanrivers.org/waterquality/cleanwateract.htm>

There are two important new developments that you should be aware of:

1) Public comment deadline extension - The EPA and the Corps announce today (2/28) in the Federal Register that the deadline for public comments on the Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking has been extended by 45 days. This will move the deadline from March 3rd to April 16th. A vocal and forceful response from the river community to this notice is critical to protecting the Clean Water Act. We need both mass comments from individuals and substantive comments from river groups with details on what changes to the Clean Water Act could mean for the rivers, streams, and wetlands in your backyard. American Rivers and other members of the river community are working on draft sample comments for river groups that will be made available as soon as possible. In the meantime, you can help drive large

numbers of comments by encouraging your members, volunteers, etc. to submit a simple comment letter at

<http://amriversaction.ctsg.com/wac/index.asp?step=2&item=2454>

2) Positive legislation introduced in Congress - On Thursday, February 27, Senators Feingold (D-WI), Boxer (D-CA) and Jeffords (I-VT), and Representatives Oberstar (D-MN), Dingell (D-MI), Leach (R-IA), and Boehlert (R-NY) reintroduced the "Clean Water Authority Restoration Act." This is a legislative fix designed to restore the Clean Water Act's authority over all waters of the United States. If passed, this bill would trump the actions being taken by the EPA and the Corps described above. We need your help generating support for this bill in both the Senate and the House. Please urge your members of Congress to sign on as co-sponsors of this bill. To find contact information for your Senators and Representative, visit <http://amriversaction.ctsg.com/directory/index.asp>

As Always,

Be well, do good work, and keep in touch.

Caroline

P.S. Someone left a cross at the office on March 1st. It's a small one that pins on, and has the letters 'cpps' on it. Give me a call if it's yours.