



We Care About Water

Preserving and Improving Springfield and Greene County Water Supplies Since 1984.

Newsletter-Spring 2008

Watershed Center Update

- The Wetland Learning Station is Complete
- The Spring Side Learning Station was dedicated to Becky Shannon in November 2007.
- The Capital Campaign is in full swing to raise the remaining funds to build the Watershed Center.
- NAP Credits are available, for more information call 417-866-1127

Watershed Center News

If you happened to visit Valley Water Mill Park over the last few weeks, you will have noticed significant progress at the site. City Utilities has been busy strengthening the spillway of the dam, while the Watershed Committee is funding the construction of a flood wall and walking trail over the berm. Eventually, a bridge will span the top of the spillway opening to complete the walking trail all the way around the lake, a distance of about two and a half miles.

On the east side of the lake, piers are being set for the boardwalk that will connect the two fishing platforms, also under construction, and at the upper end of the lake, the wetland learning station has been constructed from recycled lumber. Mike Kromrey has already had several groups of kids to the site, including a large contingent in connection with Wonders of Watersheds (in cooperation with Wonders of Wildlife). He reports that kids love the facilities at Valley Water Mill, especially crawling around on the limestone boulders.

Meanwhile, the Watershed Committee has been continuing the capital campaign to raise the remaining funds to build the main education building, to be located near the Parks Maintenance/Outdoor Initiatives Facility, with its vegetated "green" roof. Preliminary evaluations indicate that the new building, with its wide assortment of water and energy conservation demonstrations, should be able to achieve at least a "Gold" level of LEED certification. The Committee intends to wrap up the campaign this year and construct the main education building next year. For more information about the Watershed Center, or to see how you can help, visit our website at www.watershedcenter.org

Inside this issue:

Valley Water Mill Trails Grant **2**

Wonders of Watersheds **2**

Fishing Piers at Valley Water Mill **3**

Rain! Rain! **3**

Grand Opening On-Site Waste Water Training Facility **4**



Valley Water Mill Trails Grant

“This grant will be kicked off early in 2008, and includes several important components and connections in the Valley Water Mill area.”

In December 2007, the Watershed Committee and Ozark Greenways jointly received a \$100,000 grant through the Missouri Recreational Trails Grant Program. This grant will be kicked off early in 2008, and includes several important components and connections in the Valley Water Mill area. Funding will be used to provide a trail connection from the residential neighborhood of Mill Ridge to the completed section of the South Dry Sac Greenway Trail. A connection will also be provided from this Greenway Trail to the Equestrian Center, currently under construction by the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, and to the Watershed Center’s two and one-half mile walking trail that circles the Valley Water Mill Reservoir.

A unique bike parking area will be created at the latter trail junction, where riders can park to obtain access to the stepping stones across the South Dry Sac and then to the Watershed Center main trail. This grant also will allow Ozark Greenways to complete planning and easement acquisitions of the South Dry Sac Greenway east of Valley Water Mill, where the trail will eventually connect to U.S. 65 highway.



Wonders of Watersheds

“Fifth graders from area schools are discovering the importance of clean water on the “Wonders of Watersheds” three-station field trip at Valley Water Mill”

The big yellow busses are rolling into the Watershed Center! Fifth graders from area schools are discovering the importance of clean water on the “Wonders of Watersheds” three-station field trip. Springfield Greene County Parks Outdoor Initiatives program, Wonders of Wildlife, and WCO each share a unique lesson with students as they rotate through the Watershed Center site. Despite days of challenging weather in February, feedback from teachers and students has been very positive.

The real hero of this story is the Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CFO). The field trip is sponsored by the CFO through the Wonders of Wildlife, making the trip affordable to schools, and the learning stations themselves have largely been made possible from CFO grants. Wonders of Watershed should bring well over 1,000 students to the site this spring, with many more to come.



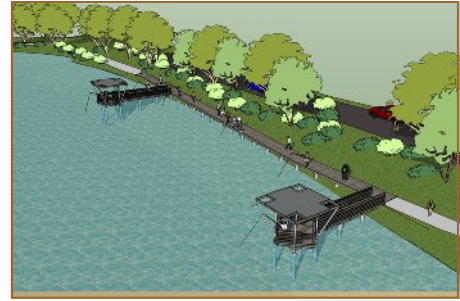
Monthly meetings of the Watershed Committee are held the first Friday of each month.

**7:30 a.m. at the Midtown Carnegie Branch Library
397 E. Central Springfield MO**

Fishing Piers at Valley Water Mill

With financial help from the Missouri Department of Conservation, Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Meeks, Building Materials and Herman Lumber, the Watershed Committee is installing the fishing piers at Valley Water Mill lake this spring. The Watershed Committee is contracting with Davis Structural Development and Kenmar Construction Co. to complete this project.

The piers are projected to be complete by the mid to late summer of 2008.



Water Laws Discussed at Conference

Watershed Committee staffers traveled to Joplin on March 28 to attend at the Four-State Environmental Conference held at the campus of Missouri Southern. Early in the program, experts in water law compared the laws, or lack thereof, relating to water resources in Missouri, Oklahoma and Kansas. Basically, the water-rich states from Missouri east subscribe to “riparian” doctrine, which means that people can withdraw and use water on their property as they please as long as they don’t seriously damage the interests of “downstream” users. In Kansas, Oklahoma, and states west, water rights prevail. Here water users have a prescribed allotment, and the first water right is the senior or prevailing right. When water gets tight, as in a major drought, first in right users will get their shares, while junior rights may get nothing.

All three speakers pointed out the “archaic” and “complicated” features of water laws in the different states. The attorney covering Missouri water law pointed out that a recent case (City of Columbia vs. a Landowner) produced from the appeals court a ruling of “modified reasonable use”, wherein all the different needs and purposes must be balanced in determining who gets the water, and how much. This lawyer argued that sparse population in the Ozarks has not yet forced the issue of water rights, but that the state’s water laws would probably change as competing uses for diminished resources grow more prevalent.

Rain! Rain!

A strong storm system moved through the Ozarks Tuesday, March 18 and Wednesday, March 19, dropping heavy rainfall and causing river flooding. The month of March will go down in the record books as one of the wettest in Ozarks history. The Little Sac River near Morrisville experienced some of this heavy rainfall, causing high waters with a crest of 19.92 feet (NOAA). On March 19, 2008, the flow of the Little Sac River increased to a mean daily discharge of 11,500 cubic feet per second (USGS). The record event for the Little Sac River was on August 20, 2007 when the peak streamflow reached 33,700 cubic feet per second (USGS).

Flooding causes more damage in the United States than any other severe weather related event, and it can occur in any of the fifty states (National Weather Service). For more information about flood safety, visit www.nws.noaa.gov/floodsafety/. (Pictured is Fellows Lake Dam)



Watershed Committee of the Ozarks

Board

Ted Hillmer, *Chair*
Dr. William Cheek, *Vice Chair*
Leslie Carrier, *Secretary*
David Roling, *Treasurer*
Robin Melton
Dan Chiles

Staff

Loring Bullard, *Director*
Matt Keener, *Operations Manger*
Mike Kromrey, *Education Outreach Coordinator*
Stacey Armstrong, *Projects Coordinator*
Kelly Guenther, *Office Manager*
Kyle Kosovich, *Projects Assistant*

Grand Opening Onsite Wastewater Training Center

The **Grand Opening** of the **Onsite Wastewater Training Center** will be held at 5:00 P.M. on Thursday, May 22! WCO and partners will show off progress and celebrate with food, demonstrations, and education. Coupons providing cost share for septic tank pump-outs will be available. The event will be a good way to tour the site, learn, and visit the Watershed Center while you are out there!

Directions to Valley Water Mill-On-Site Training Center– From Glenstone and I-44, north on Glenstone to Valley Water Mill Road , East to Farm Road 171, North to On-Site Training Center(just north of Parks Equestrian Center).

Watershed Committee of the Ozarks is sponsored By:
City of Springfield, Greene County & City Utilities of Springfield

For more information about the Watershed Committee, Watershed Center, Our Projects and Upcoming Events, please visit our website at:
www.watershedcommittee.org



Watershed Committee of the Ozarks
320 N. Main Avenue
Springfield, MO 65806