

Watershed Committee of the Ozarks, Inc.

Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 6, 2011

Midtown Carnegie Library

Meeting Called to Order at 7:33 AM

Watershed Committee Update—Mr. Hillmer called the meeting to order and stated the WCO hosted a City Council Luncheon at the Lakeside Pavilion and Mr. Bullard gave Council a tour of the Watershed Center. The June 3rd presenter is Jodie Adams, Director of Springfield-Greene County Parks, July 1st presenter is Evan Kifer with DNR. Mr. Keener stated Water Watch Week is June 11-21.

Review of Minutes—Mr. Hillmer asked participants to review the April Monthly Meeting minutes and forward any additions or corrections to the Watershed Committee office.

Hydraulic Fracturing in Arkansas—David Freiwald, Director, U.S. Geological Survey, South Central Area, Water Resources Discipline—Mr. Freiwald presented a map of Historical Oil and Gas Exploration Production in the U.S. He said there is hardly any gas or oil production in Missouri but there is in Arkansas. He showed a map of the Shale Gas Plays in the Fayetteville Shale in North Central Arkansas, which covers a five county area including Van Buren, Conway, Faulkner, Cleburne, and White. Since 2001, over 3,000 wells have been drilled in the Fayetteville Shale in this five county area. Mr. Freiwald said a typical Fayetteville Shale Well has a building pad that covers several acres of land. A drill rig drills vertically and stops 500 feet short of the shale, then a directional drill rig comes in and drills horizontally along the shale, sometimes up to a mile. The casing goes in then holes are punched through the casing to frac the shale. Then 5-6 million gallons of water, chemicals and sand is pumped into the well, under very high pressure, to crack the shale. Mr. Freiwald said that only 20-30% of the water comes out of the well, the rest stays in the ground. He said the aquifers in that area are not very productive so tributaries are dammed for a water supply and the water is piped or trucked over to ponds on the drill site. Mr. Freiwald stated wells are drilled 6-11,000 feet and the leftover fluids from the fracturing process are dumped into these wells. The increase in earthquake activity in Arkansas is thought to be caused by the disposal wells and two wells were shut down due to this concern. He said there are many agencies looking into the increase in earthquakes in Arkansas. Mr. Freiwald said one of the biggest environmental concerns is sediment runoff. The USGS is monitoring water issues and sampling springs and wells in the five county of interest. The USGS has built a watershed model that shows a depiction of stream flow and how the stream flow would be affected by dams and ponds. The Watershed Model will available for use by both the USGS and the gas companies.

Missouri Department of Conservation Update—Andy Austin—Mr. Austin stated due to the heavy rains they had to move fish in the Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery. Roaring River State park was heavily damaged due to high water and flooding. May 14th is Kids Fishing Day at Roaring River and May 7th is Kids Fishing Day at Bennett Springs. He said they had a good fish sample at Valley Water Mill Lake and after one or two more samples it should be open for fishing. A couple of days ago Elk were reintroduced into Missouri. Wildlife crews are saving bear hair to compare to previous trappings to determine what the bear population might be like in Missouri.

Regional Issues—Kenny Knauer stated Arts Fest is this weekend and the Botanical Center has added a solar powered tram to take people around the site. May 15th the Butterfly House opens. David Casaletto stated the flooding is a serious situation in Branson and around the lakes. He said the area lakes are full and another major rain would be disastrous for the area. He said Water Watch Week is June 11-21. Barbara Lucks suggesting visiting OzarksEnvironment.com for current environmental information and a calendar of events. May 7th is the Free Waste Tire Collection at the Ozark Empire Fair Grounds.

Other Business—none

Meeting adjourned 8:45 a.m.

