



Watershed Committee of the Ozarks, Inc.

2010 Annual Report

Watershed Committee Sponsors:



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Executive Summary

Like many non-profit organizations, the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks (WCO) suffered budget cuts in 2010. In spite of this, the WCO continued to provide valuable clean water programs to the community. At the same time, we were forced to look for ways to cut costs and streamline operations. To maintain critical services in the face of financial hardship is, in itself, an admirable achievement. In this regard, we were very successful.

A big part of this success resulted from long-standing partnerships with Watershed Committee sponsors and allied organizations. Construction of the main education building at Valley Water Mill Park, the last major component of the Watershed Center Project, got underway in the summer of 2010. Funding through grants, along with public and private donors, allowed construction to proceed. But the tight operating budget of the Watershed Committee caused concern about the operational costs of this new facility. A solid partnership with Springfield-Greene County Parks was crucial to overcoming this obstacle.

While moving ahead with the Watershed Center, the Committee also maintained its many educational and landowner assistance programs, many of which are highlighted in this report. Notable among them are the WQIP program, which provided funding to replace failing septic tanks with advanced wastewater systems; a wide variety of school field trips and educational workshops at the Watershed Center; and stormwater education in support of the city and county stormwater permit programs. The Watershed Committee also broke new ground in 2010, obtaining a USDA Conservation Innovation Grant to work with urban farmers to install new and innovative management practices.

We hope you will find this report interesting and helpful, and that you will contact us if you have any questions or concerns about our activities or operations. Our ultimate goal is to protect the water supply for the Springfield-Greene County community, and we thank you for your interest and support of our clean water initiatives.

Loring Bullard, Executive Director

2010 Board Members

Leslie Carrier, Chair; Robin Melton, Vice Chair; Stuart Murr, Secretary; Ted Hillmer, Michael Bridges, William H. Cheek

2010 Staff

Loring Bullard, Executive Director; Matt Keener, Operations Manager; Mike Kromrey, Education & Outreach Coordinator; Stacey Armstrong, Projects Coordinator; Kelly Guenther, Office Manager



Pictured from left to right
Mike Kromrey, Stacey Armstrong, Loring Bullard,
Matt Keener, Kelly Guenther



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Watershed Committee Highlights

Watershed Center Education Building Construction Progress

In the summer of 2010, the Watershed Committee broke ground for the main education building at the Watershed Center at Valley Water Mill Park. This 4,200 square foot building will achieve a LEED (Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design) certification level of “Gold” or above. The building is primarily public meeting space, with a small adjoining catering kitchen, restrooms, and two work stations for employees.

The building is also very energy and water efficient. It features passive solar heating, rainwater harvesting, a geothermal heating and cooling system, internal daylighting, water efficient plumbing fixtures, and the use of locally available and recycled materials throughout its construction.

The walls and roof went up in the summer of 2010, with windows, internal walls, plumbing and electrical equipment added in the fall. The construction should be completed by the late spring of 2011, with a grand opening set for this summer.



Fishing Update

In 2010, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) surveyed the lake on two different occasions to monitor the progress of the fish stocking efforts that took place in 2008. Results from the 2010 survey indicate that the bluegill population has re-bounded as hoped and is doing well. The bass population is beginning to fill in the needed size structures and year classes, but are lacking in sufficient numbers. MDC is planning a spring 2011 survey that will shed more light on the progress of the fishery. Newly established fisheries typically take 3-4 years to sustain harvest from fishermen.

The progress we are seeing to date is evidence of a well-crafted stocking and management plan coupled with the patience and cooperation of the public. Valley Water Mill Lake is a high priority fishery for the Conservation Department. It is the goal of the Watershed Committee, MDC and the Springfield-Greene County Park Board to provide ample time for the fish populations to develop in order to maximize the potential of the lake to produce exceptional bass and bluegill populations. Public cooperation has been instrumental in this process and will continue to be as we move forward in 2011. We thank you for your patience and encourage you to learn more about the Watershed Center at Valley Water Mill Park by browsing the website or contacting the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks offices. Specific questions regarding the management of the fishery should be directed to the Missouri Department of Conservation Southwest Regional Office in Springfield.

Watershed Committee Highlights

Watershed Committee Receives USDA-NRCS Grant

In October 2010, the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks was awarded a USDA grant through the Natural Resource Conservation Service to stimulate the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies in the urban setting. The grant will leverage federal investment in environmental protection while at the same time encouraging urban agricultural production. The WCO will be working with two local producers, Urban Roots and Milsap Farm, to demonstrate practices that are beneficial to the producer, environment and the consuming public.

Education opportunities for the public will come into the form of workshops, field days and two publications: 1)How to Farm in the City and 2)Rain Water Harvesting Manual for Southwest Missouri. Local regulations will be reviewed that could cause producers difficulty in establishing beneficial agriculture practices in the urban setting. The project will be completed by December 2012.

LAD Foundation Grant

The Leo A. Drey Foundation (LAD) provided the Watershed Committee with a \$5,000 grant for the entrance walkway and rain garden at the Watershed Center. The walkway will be constructed of recycled or sustainably grown and harvested materials, and the rain garden will provide an attractive natural amenity while slowing and filtering runoff from the building area.

District O Grant

Solid Waste District O provided a \$50,000 grant to demonstrate the use of recycled products in the meeting room at the Watershed Center. This will include recycled aluminum windows, recycled plastic in carpeting, and recycled wood and other materials in counters and cabinetry.

Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP): Grant Extension

In 2010, the WCO received a WQIP grant extension providing an additional \$100,000 in funding for wastewater demonstration features at the Onsite Wastewater Training Center (OWTC), and low-flow restroom facilities at the C.W. Titus Watershed Education Building. This federal grant was originally initiated in May 2006 to improve and protect water quality while enhancing economic development for municipalities, agriculture, and tourism. Throughout the four and a half years of the grant, many important water quality projects have been completed, including the remediation of fifteen onsite wastewater systems that were failing to groundwater and five educational onsite wastewater training sessions. The grant extension will bring the award amount over the six year timeframe to a total of \$586,664. The WQIP grant is scheduled to be completed by March 30, 2012.

WQIP Grant: Workshops at Onsite Wastewater Training Center at Valley Water Mill Park

This year the WQIP grant focused on onsite wastewater education and training. The Onsite Wastewater Training Center (OWTC) provided the perfect environment for three WQIP workshops. Missouri onsite wastewater installers were invited to attend the workshops there in July and September 2010, where they received state certified continuing education credits. The state requires that installers obtain education credits every year to maintain certification. More than 100 wastewater professionals attended the workshops and received a total of 400 hours of continuing education credits. In September, 40 homeowners attended an educational workshop at the OWTC. They learned about soils in the Ozarks, advanced wastewater treatment technology and the importance of proper installation and maintenance. The workshops ended with a tour of the variety of wastewater systems on display at the OWTC, including low pressure pipe, peat moss filters and advanced treatment aeration systems. Partners in sponsoring these workshops included Environmental Resources Coalition, Greene County Resource Management, Table Rock Lake Water Quality, Inc. and James River Basin Partnership.



WQIP: Wastewater Workshop at Fantastic Caverns

A WQIP workshop focusing on “Wastewater in Karst” was held in May at Fantastic Caverns in northern Greene County. The workshop featured presentations from a soil scientist, water quality specialist, and a karst conservation consultant. Septic system owners were educated on a variety of wastewater system technologies and the importance of maintaining wastewater systems to help protect drinking water. After the educational workshop, participants had the opportunity to tour Fantastic Caverns and view some of its beautiful karst features. Partnering organizations included Environmental Resources Coalition, Greene County Resource Management, Table Rock Lake Water Quality Inc., James River Basin Partnership and Ozarks Regional Land Trust.



WQIP: Missouri Section American Water Works Association and Missouri Water Environment Conference

The WQIP grant provided funding to send WCO staff to the American Water Works Association and Missouri Water Environment annual joint conference in March 2010 to present on the Water Quality Improvement Project and the importance of onsite wastewater education in southwest Missouri. This conference was an excellent platform to discuss the connection of wastewater to drinking water in southwest Missouri’s karst terrain, and the importance of cost-share funding to improve failing onsite wastewater projects in these environments. The presentation also generated dialogue with other workshop professionals on onsite wastewater treatment issues in different regions of Missouri.

Water Quality

Springfield-Greene County Health Department Sampling

The Watershed Committee partnered with the Springfield-Greene County Health Department during the summer months in 2010 to collect bacteria samples in local stream swimming holes throughout Greene County. The samples were collected once a week from May through September. The results are posted on the Health Department website for public access.

Adopt a Spring

Adopt a Spring is a volunteer water quality monitoring program. In this on-going project, trained volunteers collect quarterly water samples from major springs in Greene County. In 2010, we focused on eight springs, collecting twenty-six samples during the year.

Water Quality Monitoring Education

In the fall of 2010, the WCO partnered with Drury University to provide college students with watershed education and water quality monitoring experience. The Alpha Class from Drury University attended a water quality field day at Jude Ranch to learn about biological and chemical water quality sampling techniques. The students in the class ranged from freshman to seniors and came from a variety of different degree programs and educational backgrounds. This water quality field day provided each student with information from a watershed perspective they could incorporate into their profession in the future.



Identifying New Resources: Future Grant with Multiple Partnerships

In January 2010, the WCO applied for federal funding through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Nonpoint Source Implementation (319) Program for stormwater best management practices in Springfield and Greene County. This project is unique in its amount of collaboration, with one application being submitted instead of several from many organizations. The Springfield-Greene County Urban Watershed Stewardship Project is tentatively set to begin in the spring of 2011. This multi-faceted non-point source project that will span over a four year timeframe and involve the city of Springfield Storm Water Services Division, Greene County Resource Management Department, Missouri State University, Ozarks Environmental and Water Resources Institute, Missouri Project WET, James River Basin Partnership and Ozark Greenways.

Education and Outreach

	<u>Quantity</u>	<u># Individuals</u>
Participants Visiting Watershed Center		2,146
Event Bookings	95	
Watershed Center Field Trips	53	
Stream Trailer Outings	5	
Volunteer Hours Logged	606	
Booths at Community Events	7	
Jordan Creek Tours	7	
Onsite Wastewater Training Center uses	4	
Website hits		11,936
Total Number Reached		14,082

Highlights

Media Releases

June 5, 2010 Springfield News-Leader: “Center will teach value of resource taken for granted”
 KSMU news story: “Watershed Committee Breaks Ground on New Center”
 Springfield Business Journal: “Groundbreaking for Watershed”

Publications

“*Missouri Springs: Power, Purity and Promise*”: WCO
 “*Source to Tap: A History of Missouri’s Public Water Supplies*”: WCO
 “*Create A Rain Garden*”: James River Basin Partnership, Missouri Department of Conservation, the city of Springfield and Watershed Committee of the Ozarks.

All three publications are available on the Watershed Committee website. Upcoming publications include a book about the geology of Greene County, “Gargoyle Country: The Inspiring Geology of Greene County” and an Interpreter’s Guide to the Watershed Center.

Water Savers

Missouri State University (MSU), City Utilities (CU) and the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks (WCO) teamed up for a multi-step water conservation initiative on the MSU campus, similar to the one conducted at Drury in 2009. Through grant funding, WCO purchased a large quantity of water conserving devices including sink aerators, low flow showerheads, leak detecting tablets, and shower timers. These devices were installed in residence halls at Sunvilla Towers and Scholars House over the summer. MSU student Erin Murray facilitated this initiative as her Citizen and Service Learning Project. The projects have been a great success, saving over 400,000 gallons so far!



Education and Outreach cont.-

Community Leadership and Involvement

Employees of the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks are encouraged to be involved in the community and seek leadership development opportunities.

In 2010, Matt Keener completed the Greater Ozark Leadership Development (GOLD) program offered through Missouri State University. The mission of the program is to increase civic leadership capacity in southwest Missouri by developing civic engagement, regional awareness, community development and economic growth. Matt was able to secure scholarship funding thanks to the Springfield Chamber of Commerce.

Mike Kromrey finished his second year as chairman of the Springfield-Greene County Environmental Advisory Board and was elected president of the Missouri Environmental Education Association. He also served as the WCO representative on the MSU Sustainability Advisory Committee, Environmental Collaborative, Interpreters Coalition, and Professional Science Masters Program Advisory Board at MSU.

Stacey Armstrong attended the weekly Greene County Planning and Zoning Staff Meetings to stay updated on development occurring in the watershed.

Wastewater Improvement Task Force: In September 2010, Springfield's City Council created the Wastewater Improvement Task Force through a Council Resolution. The purpose of this task force, made up of local citizens, is to develop recommendations for fair and equitable sewer use charges. The WCO provided a staff member for the Task Force.

"Community Focus Report: A Report for Springfield and Greene County", is a collaborative project providing the opportunity for the community to reflect on its strengths and weaknesses through the use of "blue ribbons" and "red flags." Since 2004, these reports have provided the basis for meaningful community action, volunteer commitment and grants for areas needing attention. In 2010, the Watershed Committee Director chaired the Natural Environment Section of the report.

The Watershed Committee presented a Choose Environmental Excellence Award to Rebecca Zigler and Misty Mitchell.



Education and Outreach cont.-

Educational Partnerships

WCO has many partners in education. The Ozarks Regional YMCA helped a lot of kids experience the Ozarks at the Watershed Center this summer through their “Summer Odyssey” program. Summer Odyssey is similar to a day camp based out of schools throughout Springfield. Many groups came to the Watershed Center for field trips where the students experienced nature while learning important, age appropriate information about water. This year three hundred and forty-three students spent an educational day at the Watershed Center, a 33% increase over 2009.

WCO partnered with the Springfield-Greene County Library District for their “Make a Splash” summer reading program. The program included a story, hands on activity, and even live stream creatures as the main characters of the story. Five programs were presented at various libraries, and one program at the Watershed Center that included a visit from the Book Mobile. About 117 children participated.



WCO also helped out the Wonders of Wildlife 4th Annual National Outdoor Recreation and Conservation School (WOW School) held at Ritter Springs Park. WOW School is about providing outdoor, hands-on experience based learning such as outdoor skills, activities, safety, conservation, and ethics. Watershed staff taught a hands-on lesson about stream ecology and water conservation.

Nature Unleashed: Springfield Public Schools adopted the Missouri Department of Conservation’s “Nature Unleashed” science curriculum for fourth graders. The curriculum requires a field trip and focuses on the local environment—the Watershed Center is a perfect location to meet the needs of Nature Unleashed.

In 2010, WCO provided support to the James River Basin Partnership for their excellent series of Watershed Festivals. The WCO pledged one volunteer for each festival. Schools from Nixa, Clever, Chadwick, Sparta, Billings, Ozark, Hurley, Galena, Crane, Monett, Shell Knob, Cassville, Hollister, Branson, Forsyth, Kirbyville, and Taneyville participated, totaling 2,117 students.

Last but not least, WCO worked closely with the city of Springfield and Greene County to provide Stormwater and Onsite Wastewater education, detailed in the Stormwater and Onsite Wastewater Training Center sections of this report.

Education and Outreach cont.-

Groundwater

The Watershed Committee of the Ozarks helped when water quality issues surfaced in the Rogersville area. Along with Greene County, WCO provided resources and expertise to re-search groundwater and well contamination.

The WCO also worked with the Groundwater Foundation to recognize Greene County for the 15th consecutive year as a Groundwater Guardian Community. The Groundwater Foundation provides educational resources and a national network of communities working to improve groundwater quality. In addition, the Watershed Center has achieved the Groundwater Foundations Green Site standing.



Monthly Meetings

A long standing community service provided by the Watershed Committee is the Monthly Meeting. The first Friday of each month, community members from the private, public, non-profit and academic sectors gather for presentations on a water issues, regional and agency updates and networking opportunities. This year, WCO hosted eleven presentations attended by a total of 419 people:

- “PAH’s”: A Prevalent Threat to Water Quality and Human Health” by Tommy Bieker, Springfield-Greene County Environmental Advisory Board.
- “The City of Springfield’s Commitment to Water Quality” by Ed Malter, Sanitary Services Superintendent, Springfield Public Works
- “What About that E-Coli at the Lake of the Ozarks” by Donna Swall, Executive Director, Lake of the Ozarks Watershed Alliance
- “What Research Says About Environmental Education” by Jan Weaver, Director of the MU Environmental Studies Program, University of Missouri
- “Haiti Disaster Relief: Drinking Water” by Roddy Rogers, City Utilities
- “Geology of Greene County” by Jerry Vineyard
- “Re-Engineering the Missouri River for Ecosystem Recovery” by Robert Jacobson, Research Hydrologist, US Geological Survey
- “James River Basin Partnership Update” by Joe Pitts, Executive Director, JRBP
- “Current and Future Directions for Bacterial Monitoring in Surface Waters” by John Schumacher, US Geological Survey
- “IRWP? Who are you? Click...” by Dr. Delia Haak, Executive Director, Illinois River Watershed Partnership

Rain Barrels

WCO provided homeowners an opportunity to purchase rain barrels at a reduced cost in 2010. Thirty-one rain barrels were sold with 50% of proceeds supporting Education and Outreach efforts.



Education and Outreach cont.-

Onsite Wastewater Training Center (OWTC)

2010 witnessed many improvements and events at the Onsite Wastewater Training Center. With help from the onsite wastewater experts at Greene County, the WCO completed a distribution box display, improved the existing systems and added an attractive split rail fence and native shrubs to delineate the parking area from the demonstration area. Maintenance staff from the Springfield-Greene County Park Board helped keep the site mowed and looking sharp, and the Water Quality Improvement Project Grant from the Environmental Resources Coalition provided funding for improvements. Four classes were held at the OWTC in 2010, attended by 130 people.



Stormwater

WCO serves as an important partner with the city of Springfield and Greene County to provide education and outreach required for the MS4 Stormwater permit. Nearly all of our outreach events include basic education about stormwater such as understanding what a watershed is, what the common pollutants in runoff are, the differences between point source and non-point source pollution, and the effects of impervious surfaces. Specifically, this year we started selling rainwater harvesting equipment, led Jordan Creek Tours, provided sediment and erosion control training for local professionals, and held demonstrations with the “Enviroscape” and “Stream Trailer” watershed models. In addition, WCO applied for a million dollar stormwater improvement 319 grant.

The Watershed Center is also an important stormwater education tool. The Watershed Center will exhibit stormwater Best Management Practices (BMP’s), Low Impact Development (LID), rainwater harvesting, and green building design, all of which improve stormwater quality on the site. Interpretive signage will explain the techniques and the site will be open for tours and classes.

Watershed Center Field Trips

This year about 53 field trips were conducted at the Watershed Center, in spite of ongoing construction activities at the site. Groups ranging from Elementary Schools to local Universities participated in place-based water education there. One notable change this year was Springfield Public Schools adoption of the Missouri Department of Conservation’s “Nature Unleashed” science curriculum for fourth graders. The Center is a perfect location for “Nature Unleashed”. In all, about 2,146 people used the Watershed Center for educational purposes, an increase of 24% from 2009.

Education and Outreach cont.-

Watershed Center Site Projects

The construction of the Watershed Center Education Building was an obvious improvement, but lots of other projects occurred at the site this year. Springfield Plateau Master Naturalist members Bob and Barb Kipfer and Mort Shirts conducted timber stand improvements according to our Forest Stewardship Management Plan written by MDC.

Greene County helped with two major projects at the site. Substantial bank armoring was added to ensure the piers of a trail bridge were not compromised by stream bank erosion. Greene County also helped with the construction of the central wayfinding kiosk. It was built with trees removed from the Watershed Center site as part of the Forest Stewardship project, and contains information about the site, a site map, and current events board. (see photo below)

Several trail work and trash clean-up days were hosted with a variety of volunteers and volunteer groups. WCO staff experimented with different methods of algae control/harvesting on Valley Water Mill Lake, including developing prototypes of algae harvesting systems.

2010 was a big year for tree planting. WCO helped MDC on two riparian plantings: one at the Equestrian Center, where 2.4 acres were planted with 750 native trees and shrubs; and one at Lost Hill Park, where 5.5 acres were planted with 600 native trees and shrubs. About 110 volunteers helped on these two planting events. WCO staff also coordinated a volunteer day at the Watershed Center. Twenty-five students planted twenty trees to implement phase one of our planting plan.

Website

Our website, www.watershedcommittee.org, had a big year. Regular updates on the building project, our blog, and other online resources attracted 11,936 hits, an increase of 16% over 2009.



Education and Outreach cont.-

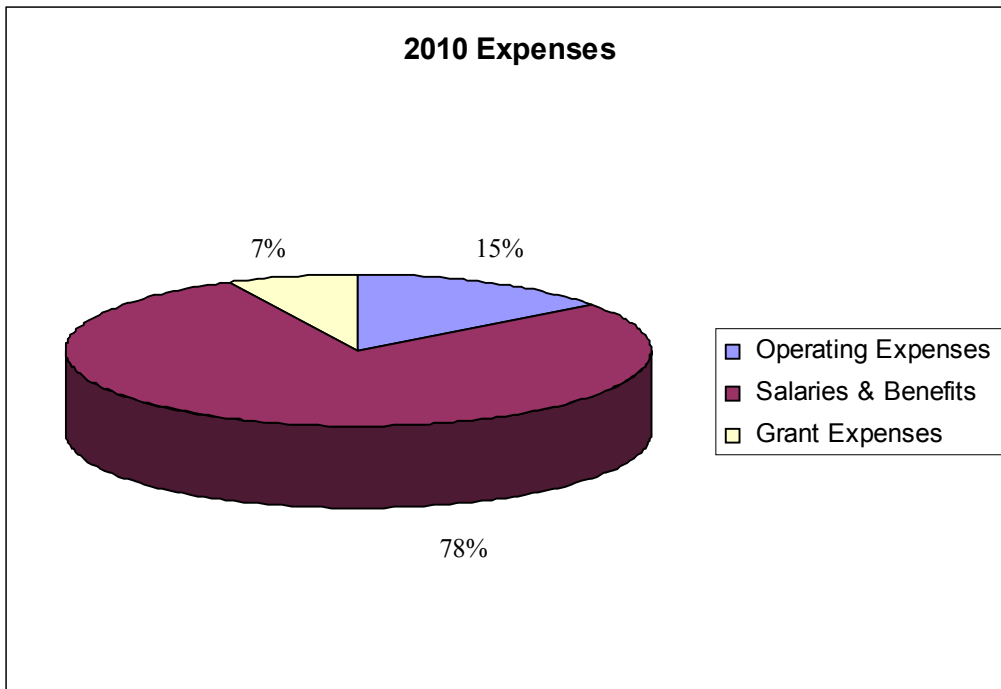
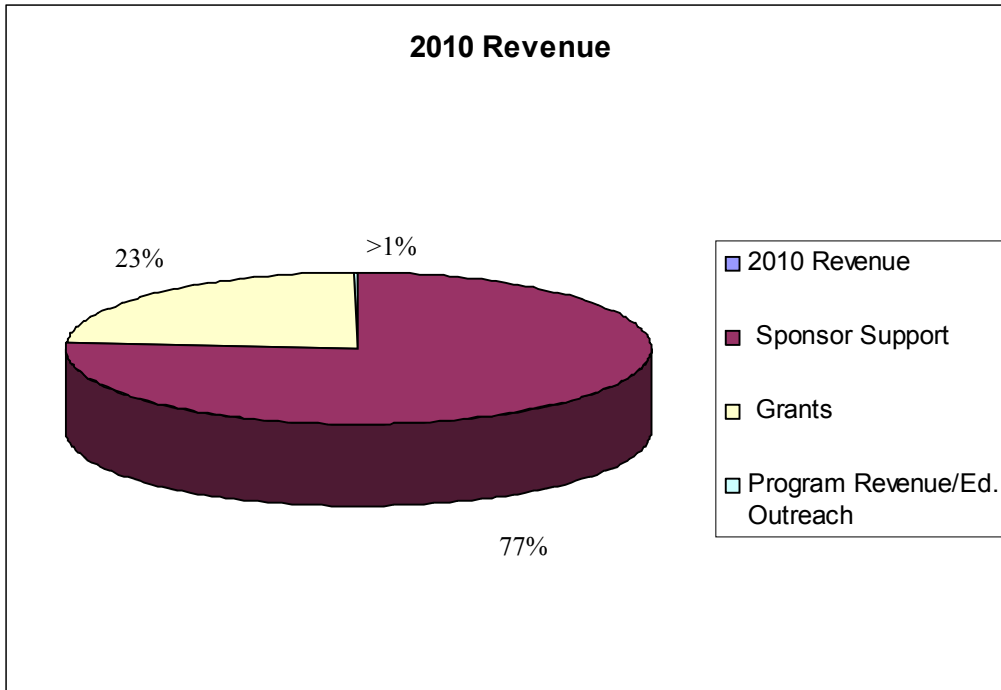
Volunteering

Volunteers graciously donated time and talent to further the mission of Watershed Committee of the Ozarks. Board Members provide time and expertise to guide the organization and donated an estimated 150 hours to the Watershed Committee this year. Adopt-A-Spring volunteers monitored major springs in Greene County quarterly to assess water quality, donating about 144 hours. Citizenship and Service Learning students from MSU worked on a variety of projects and donated about 140 hours of service. Citizens, groups and organizations frequently donate labor for projects at the Watershed Center, adding another 322 hours, for a grand total of approximately 756 volunteer hours in 2010!

Volunteers in 2010



2010 Revenue and Expenses



Grant Activity

Grant Project	Date initiated	Total Grant	Non-Local Funds
Greene County GIS Project	1988	\$325,000	\$235,500
Fullbright Spring Monitoring System	1989	\$40,000	\$20,000
Fellows-McDaniel Lakes 319 Project	1992	\$119,000	\$63,000
McDaniel Lake Remediation Project	1993	\$66,621	\$40,500
Fullbright Spring 319 Project	1996	\$190,000	\$100,000
Splash Exhibit for Discovery Center	1997	\$6,800	\$3,500
Little Sac River Pollution Study	1999	\$145,000	\$140,000
Discovery Center Project	1999	\$205,000	\$125,000
Adopt-A-Spring Volunteer Initiative	2000	\$12,000	\$4,900
Little Sac Restoration 319 Project	2000	\$625,000	\$343,500
Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods	2000	\$8,475	\$4,975
Valley Water Mill 319 Project	2001	\$920,838	\$480,000
Cause Marketing for Clean Water	2001	\$8,334	\$5,000
Radio Promotion White River Basin	2001	\$8,334	\$5,000
Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods II	2002	\$8,350	\$5,000
Time to Come Clean Awareness	2002	\$8,334	\$5,000
Show-Me Yards & Neighborhoods Tips	2002	\$8,334	\$5,000
Recreational Trails Program	2003	\$84,500	\$42,500
Jordan Creek Education Event	2003	\$2,315	\$0
Science Based Field Trip Grant	2003	\$4,000	\$0
Watershed Center	2003	\$447,000	\$447,000
Watershed Center	2004	\$994,600	\$994,600
Community On-Site	2006	\$309,650	\$185,750
Water Quality Improvement Grant	2006	\$400,000	\$400,000
LAD	2006	\$5,000	\$0
CFO Streamside Learning Station	2006	\$20,000	\$0
CFO Wetland/Curricula Grant	2006	\$22,288	\$0
LAD Interpretive Signage	2007	\$3,500	\$0
Rotary Service Grant	2007	\$500	\$0
Rotary Service Grant-Southeast	2007	\$1,000	\$0
Corporate Agency Partnership Program-			
Fishing Piers	2007	\$49,500	\$0
LAD Forestry Learning Station	2007	\$5,000	\$0
CFO Fishing Piers Grant	2007	\$30,000	\$0
Watershed Mgmt Planning Grant	2007	\$15,000	\$0
MO Recreational Trails Grant	2007	\$142,000	\$100,000
Rotary Service Grant-Southeast	2008	\$4,500	\$0
USDA-NRCS GIG Grant	2010	\$80,000	\$50,000
Missouri Solid Waste Mgmt. District O Grant	2010	\$46,350	\$46,350
LAD Foundation	2010	\$4,000	\$4,000
Total		\$5,376,123	\$3,856,075