



Summer Newsletter 2013

Director's Update

Events!

Mark your calendar for October 2, 2013. The Watershed Center will be hosting an exciting and prestigious line up of speakers including Bill Ritter Jr., the former Governor of Colorado and current Director of the Colorado State Center for the New Energy Economy, Jon Jones, a national leader in stormwater engineering, Don Brandes, esteemed landscape architect and designer of Estes Park Colorado, and more. Details are available on our website and social media outlets, and **CEU's will be available.**

In 2014, the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks will celebrate 30 years of working to protect our most precious resource-water. The 30th Anniversary Committee, comprised of board members, staff and community members, is meeting to design a series of celebration events. The year and events will be an exciting mix of fun, fundraising, and focus on our next 30 years!

Local Food — and Water

Recently, the Ozarks Regional Food Policy Council was formed. The working goal of the group is to identify actionable policy that supports the region's development of a sustainable and equitable food system. During the meetings, fascinating ideas are discussed like the positive ripple effect that spending money locally can have, the amount and quality of food that local farmers can produce, and the positive or negative environmental impacts that local food production and consumption can have.

A subcommittee of the group titled "Sustainable Ecosystems," is specifically working to facilitate the development of a regional food system that improves the environmental conditions of the region's air, land and water. Farming, done well, can be a land and community healing enterprise, with delicious results.

Mike Kromrey
Executive Director

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Storm Water Task Force

Last fall a 30 member citizen taskforce was formed by Springfield's City Council and the Greene County Commission, with the goal of studying the long term needs of the City and County stormwater programs which includes ongoing costs for flooding issues, infrastructure needs and clean water mandates. On September 6th at the WCO monthly meeting, Todd Wagner, Principal Stormwater Engineer for the City of Springfield will be presenting on the Stormwater Management Task Force recommendations. A link to the final recommendations and additional information can be found here, <http://www.springfieldmo.gov/taskforce/stormwater/>

Big Urbie Update

Campbell Streetscape Project: If you have driven north on Campbell Avenue through downtown recently, you likely noticed a major change in the road design. Through the Big Urbie grant, rain gardens and "tree box filters" were constructed at part of the street project. The design is more aesthetic, and functional. Three rain gardens are numerous tree box filters are designed to reduce urban runoff (which travels to Jordan Creek) by allowing stormwater to slow down and soak into the ground. Additionally, trees are effective "solar dewatering pumps" as engineers put it. The native vegetation will be planted this fall, so stay tuned for more pictures!



FREE Soil Tests: Proper lawn fertilization is critical to clean water in the Ozarks. Getting a soil test can **save money** on fertilizer by meeting your lawn's exact nutrient needs. Excess fertilizer commonly runs into rivers and streams. The Watershed Committee of the Ozarks in partnership with the James River Basin Partnership is offering a **FREE soil test** and nutrient management plan for yards in the South Creek, Jordan Creek, Fassnight Creek and Pea Ridge Creek Watersheds. To find out if you live in one of these watersheds visit, www.bigurbie.org.

For more information on the Big Urbie Grant, call Stacey Armstrong, Projects Manager for the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks at 417-866-1127. To **schedule a soil test**, call **Melissa Bettes**, Projects Manager for James River Basin Partnership, at 417-836-4847. This program made possible by funding from The Springfield-Greene County Urban Watershed Stewardship Project (Big Urbie) EPA Section 319 Water Quality grant.

Stacey Armstrong
Projects Manager



Springfield-Greene County Urban Watershed Stewardship Project
Section 319 Nonpoint Source Implementation Gant

Watershed Center

The summer's exceptionally cool temperatures and lots of precipitation have led to lush green growth and many opportune workdays. As we finished up our last few school field trips in May we had only a moment to catch our breath before summer school groups began arriving at the Watershed Center. Students from Springfield, Nixa, and even Isesaki, Japan came out to catch critters, walk in the woods, and learn about protecting water.

This summer, I have had the privilege to work with four Missouri State University (MSU) students who have interned at the Watershed Center for the summer. Clarissa Hatley, a recent MSU graduate with a Bachelor's in Geography, is exploring possibilities in the field and graduate programs. Felix Corrodi came to us from Sweden and is currently studying at MSU with an interest in Geospatial Information Systems. I attended an introductory Stream Team workshop with two of our interns, Sam bley and long-time volunteer Nicole Boucher. They were right there with me, getting their feet wet and hands dirty to learn about stream sampling science. I can't say enough nice things about these interns. Each one has a special set of strengths and motivations, and they all do a heck of a job working out here with me at the Watershed Center. Thank you Clarissa, Felix, Samantha, and Nicole!

Ozark Watershed Academy

One of the highlights of the year has been the Ozark Summer Watershed Academy. The purpose of the academy was to provide participants with an in depth and hands-on educational experience focusing on local water resources. The speakers were fantastic, the topics moved smoothly from one to the next and our students were engaged and a treat to be around. We owe a huge thank you to all of our speakers and students. Over the course of five days, participants heard from a diverse group of local experts on watershed management. Participants learned about the way creeks and rivers change over time while keeping their feet cool in the South Dry Sac River, about stormwater improvement projects in Springfield while walking around the Watershed Center and seeing demonstration storm water practices in place, and even poke their heads into a few demonstration septic treatment systems at the Onsite Wastewater Training Center. We are planning next year's academy and will post details in the springs, so stay tuned!



Land Ethic Leaders

My personal favorite event this summer was the conference Mike and I attended in Wisconsin. We made the drive up to Baraboo, WI to visit the Aldo Leopold Center for a two-day workshop about facilitating discussion on environmental topics with a diverse group of participants. The time spent at the Center was restorative and peaceful, but full of learning experiences at the same time. I am excited to put use the things I have learned at the Watershed Center. We brought back so many great ideas there is no doubt that the Watershed Center will become a highly functioning machine, hosting many workshops and retreats, bringing people into the natural environment.

Rob Hunt
Watershed Center Coordinator



Get Connected

In the past few years, the WCO has expanded and upgraded our website, established a social media presence, an RSS feed, a twitter account, and an electronic newsletter. All of these outreach avenues are important, but one of the best things we still having going is the **Monthly Meeting**. Known affectionately as the “early meeting,” it occurs the first Friday of every month, at the Midtown Carnegie Library at 7:30 am. We strive to put together an interesting and diverse line up of speakers, and the “around the room” updates and regional issues portion of the agenda is always a crowd favorite.

Perhaps the most important part, however, is the “meeting after the meeting,” when people stay to talk with friends, network, and discuss news and new ideas. If you haven’t been to the “early meeting,” or haven’t been in a while, **join us!** We have a fantastic line up of speakers, and we will have a hot cup of coffee waiting for you.

Mike Kromrey
Executive Director

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