

Our Future

You must be part of the change you wish to see in the world.

- Mahatma Gandhi

Where are we headed?

You might wonder why the future is left blank. It's because we really don't know what the future will be. Early in the Basin's history, the natural resources and landscape was usually changed by slow climatic and geological changes. Now, human actions are the major transforming actor. We, as individuals and as a society, are deciding the future of the Basin - even when we do nothing. It's up to us to create the future we want.

Landscape changes are increasingly related to people's activities and life style choices. These choices include where and how to live, transportation mode, work and leisure activities. These choices carry with them effects on water, land, air, plants and wildlife and ultimately, us. The choices we make will determine the future well being of our Basin and our planet Earth.

The watershed and ecosystem approach are emerging as the holistic framework in which environmental issues will be addressed. These approaches unite all the people in a common framework around natural resource issues - all of which are interrelated. It's increasingly apparent that meaningful environmental and resource protection cannot be obtained by focusing on just one problem, like groundwater pollution, or by focusing just on one area of the Basin, or on one stream. Each resource problem, each problem area within the Basin, is related to the environmental, economic, and human health of the whole Basin.

Protecting and improving the health of the Rock River Basin requires its residents to recognize the interrelatedness of the watershed's natural resources and problems to their everyday life. Residents need to join in to identifying issues, making recommendations, and developing action plans that protect the land, water, air and wildlife resources in the Basin.

The DNR is eager to join with all the Rock River Basin residents in a watershed approach that is sure to help create a better future. This is the new DNR public/private 'partnership approach' to protecting our natural resources. Two levels of action are needed to protect the health of the Basin. The broadest action level is at the largest scale, the Basin level. This report is designed to describe the overall Basin issues and recommendations developed over the last three years with its residents.

The next level of action needed is more localized. The Rock River Basin consists of 28 individual watersheds, 13 in the Upper Rock River Basin and 15 in the Lower Rock River Basin. Over the next five years, the DNR will be working with the residents of each watershed to develop comprehensive, detailed action plans to protect its land and water resources. Get involved! You can make a difference in your river system!

Resource Issues and Recommendations

As soon as we take one thing by itself, we find it hitched to everything in the universe.

- John Muir

Resource Issues

In November 1998, a Basin-wide public forum was held to identify and prioritize the critical resource issues in the Rock River Basin. A second Basin-wide forum was held in April 2000 to bring people together to again assess our progress in addressing these issues. The two Basin forums were hosted by the DNR, Rock River Coalition (the official Basin partnership organization), and the University of Wisconsin-Extension (UWEX). Seven major issues and specific needs or actions were identified in the Basin as follows:

Water Quality

Impaired Water Quality in most Basin's rivers and lakes; Reducing Pollutants from Point and Non-Point Pollution Sources; Implementing more Nutrient Management Plans on Farms; Working more Cooperatively with Pollution Sources to Efficiently Implement Best Management Practices; The Economic Cost of Implementing Pollution Controls; Developing Measures of Success for Pollutant Reduction.

Groundwater

Significant Groundwater Contamination in Basin; Decline of Groundwater Aquifers in Some Areas; Collecting All Basin-wide Groundwater Monitoring Data; Identifying Potential Pollutant Sources; Increasing Municipal Well Source Water Protection.

Wetland-Shoreland Protection

Loss and Disconnection of Wildlife Habitat; Increasing Information & Education Efforts; Impairment of Water Quality and its Effect on Biology; Inadequate Habitat Restoration Tools; Poor or Little Land Use Planning/Protection; Increased Area-wide Flooding; Developing Wetland Benefits Assessment; Strengthen Wetland/Shoreland/Habitat State and Local Regulations; Accumulated Loss of Aquatic Habitat and Habitat Fragmentation; Development of Better Streambank Stabilization Practices; Decline of Shoreline/Fishery Habitat; Aesthetic Loss of Shoreline Beauty; User Conflicts regarding Land Use; Public vs Private Water Rights.

Recreation

Increasing Land/water Based Outdoor Recreation Opportunities; Promotion of Nature Based Tourism; Better Water Sport/Recreation Management; Increasing Water Related Safety Concerns.

Rural Development

Loss of Rural Character; Conflicts with Farming, Increased Urbanization and Environment Protection; Protecting Environment along with Landowners Investment; Proper Planning & Siting of Development; Inefficient Use of Societal Resources (money, land, etc) in Rural Development; Increasing Government Involvement; Costs of Providing Public Services to Developing Areas.

Stormwater

Developing Conservation Oriented Stormwater Systems; Increasing Regulatory Controls on Stormwater Runoff and Land Use; Insufficient Basin-wide Cooperation to Control Runoff; Increasing Resources (funding/technical assistance) for Stormwater Controls.

Hunting & Fishing

Inadequate Public/Private Access to Lands for Hunting & Rivers/lakes for Fishing Resources; Water Level Management that impacts hunting/fishing Opportunities; Protecting/improving Habitat to have a Quality Fishery; Improving Participation in & Acceptance of Hunting and Fishing Activities; Declining Quality Land & Water Habitat.

Resource Plans

The Basin's seven identified critical resources issues are integrated and linked to the following federal, state, county, and partnership strategic and resource management plans and recommendations.

Wisconsin's Natural Resource Vision

Reorganization of the DNR in 1996 integrated DNR programs to better serve citizens and environmental protection. The DNR Strategic Plan is built around four major goals which provide a foundation for work plans to address issues in the Basin. The four Strategic Plan Goals:



Making People our Strength

People, organizations, and officials work together to provide Wisconsin with healthy, sustainable ecosystems.



Sustaining Ecosystems

The state's ecosystems are balanced and diverse.



Protecting Public Health & Safety

Our lands, surface waters, groundwater and air are safe for humans and other species that depend upon them.



Providing Outdoor Recreation

Our citizens and visitors enjoy outdoor recreation and have access to a full range of nature-based outdoor recreational opportunities.

Fisheries, Wildlife and Habitat Management Plan

The Fisheries, Wildlife and Habitat Management Plan (FWH) was completed in June 2000. This plan guides DNR staff and partners in protecting, improving, and managing habitat, game animals, sport fish and non-game wildlife. It is a six-year plan, for 2001 through 2007.

Wisconsin's Wetlands Initiative: Reversing the Loss

Wisconsin has developed a statewide strategy to reduce wetland loss. The four goals include:

-  Strengthening relationships with property owners, not-for-profit conservation organizations and local governments.
-  Manage wetlands to protect diversity of species, wildlife health and ecological integrity.
-  Simplify our regulatory approach.
-  Develop and use modern technology.

American Heritage River Nomination: The Rock River

In 1997, the RRC, DNR and UWEX with Basin residents developed a plan and specific recommendations for restoring and protecting the Rock River Basin's natural and cultural resources.

County Land and Water Resource Management Plans

The Basin counties worked with local citizens to identify the highest resource issues and concerns in each county and its watersheds. The chart on page 61-64 (Agriculture section) identifies in detail each county's critical resource issues and goals. Contact your County for specific information on its plan.

* NOTE: County plans differ in details regarding specific resource issues, goals or recommendations. Check your county plan for local resource related questions.

DNR Upper and Lower Rock River Watershed Reports

The DNR is writing highly technical comprehensive reports for each of the 28 watersheds in the Basin. Some reports are completed; some are underway. All the reports will be completed over the next 5 years. These reports should be referred to for more site/watershed specific recommendations. The Appendices to this report contains these comprehensive reports.

Basin Recommendations

The following pages show the integration of the DNR's four strategic goals with Basin specific goals or recommendations. These recommended actions are for the years 2002-2007. The Basin's goals and recommendations come from state and local plans, and other relevant resource plans. The partners to be involved in achieving the goal(s) are also indicated.

Key to abbreviations

CWS = Comprehensive Watershed Plans

DNR = Department of Natural Resources

FWL = Fishery, Wildlife & Habitat Plan 2000

HRI = Heritage River Initiative

LCD = Land Conservation Department

LRBWQM = Lower Rock Basin Water Quality Management Plan

LWRM* = County Land & Water Resource Management Plans

RRC = Rock River Coalition

RRC-Public Forum = 2 Basin-Wide Forums

Basin Issue Teams = RRC Issue Teams

URBWQM = Upper Rock Basin Water Quality Management Plan - 1995

UWEX = University of Wisconsin Extension

WW = Wisconsin Wetlands Strategy
"Reversing the Loss"

Basin Actions ~ Making People Our Strength



Increase citizen participation in water quality efforts through education and involvement in Basin partnership projects.

Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, and LCD

Source: RRC-Public Forum and WW



Implement Basin-wide stream water quality monitoring study that integrates different agency staff, citizens, funding and project data. Form 25 Basin Citizen water quality and/or wetland monitoring teams.

Partners: DNR, RRC, and UWEX

Source: HRI



Work with Partners to use education and existing funding to develop new financial incentives to encourage landowners to protect/restore wetlands.

Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX and LCDs

Source: RRC-Public Forum



Use cooperative agreements with landowners for stewardship of rare plants and animals on private lands.

Partners: FWL, DNR, and Citizens

Source: FWL



Host bi-annual Basin Partnership summit.

Partners: DNR, RRC, and UWEX

Source: RRC-Public Forum



Share resource management data involved in watershed protection and land use planning with local governments.

Partners: FWL, DNR, RRC, UWEX, and Citizens

Source: FWL, DNR, RRC-Public Forum, and Basin Issue Teams



Jointly sponsor 5 local workshop or seminars on wise land use planning to support Smart Growth goals.

Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, Local Governments, organizations, and Citizens

Source: DNR, Basin Issue Teams, WW, and LWRM*



Utilize educational strategies and programs to increase stormwater management programs/ordinances and wetland protection activities in the Basin.

Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, WW, and LWRM*

Source: RRC-Public Forum, Basin Issue Teams, WW, and LWRM*



Increase protection of urban wetlands through better cooperation among citizens, municipalities, state, federal, county agencies.

Partners: DNR, UWEX, LCDs, and Municipalities

Source: LWRM*

Basin Actions (continued)



Work with other agencies/non-profit organizations to promote CRP, CREP, and WRP streambank buffers and vegetation.

Partners: DNR, FWL, Federal and local agencies, RRC, and other organizations

Source: WW, LWRM*, and HRI



Provide and/or coordinate conservation funding efforts with other federal, state, county, or local organizations.

Partners: DNR, FWL, Federal and local agencies, RRC and other organizations

Source: RRC-Public Forum, FWL, WW, LWRM*



Increase sportfish information to anglers about status and management of fisheries via internet or printed materials.

Partners: FWL and DNR

Source: FWL



Institute partnerships with 5 Basin industries to increase environmental protection, enhance recreation, and spur economic revitalizations.

Partners: DNR, RRC, and UWEX

Source: HRI, Basin Issue Team



Market existing wildlife outdoor skills and awareness programs to schools and youth development agencies in the Basin.

Partners: FWL, DNR and UWEX

Source: FWL



Encourage farmer to do "Whole Farm Conservation Planning."

Partners: LCD

Source: LWRM*



Increase use of federal and state programs that help compensate farmers restricted from development.

Partners: RRC, DNR, UWEX, LCD

Source: RRC-Public Forum



Promote, educate and involve citizens about nutrients and lawns, storm drain stenciling, and septic systems.

Partners: DNR, UWEX, RRC, and Citizens

Source: LWRM*, DNR Watershed Management Team

Basin Actions ~ Sustaining Ecosystems

-  Identify components in a Basin River Management Plan to guide protection and restoration of the Basin's land, water, air, and wildlife resources.
Partners: DNR, UWEX, LCD, RRC, Lake districts, and Land trusts
Source: DNR Watershed Management Team
-  Establish 40,000 feet of shoreland buffers and 1,500 acres restored wetlands in the Basin.
Partners: DNR, UWEX, LCD, FWL, NRCS, FSA, Lake districts, and Land trusts
Source: RRC-Public Forum, LWRM*, and WW
-  Identify and prioritize shoreland and wetlands in need of protection, restoration, and enhancement in the comprehensive watershed plans.
Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, Lake districts, and Citizens
Source: FWL, WW, RRC-Public Forum, and HRI
-  Work with counties, municipalities, and landowners and install 10 (3,000 ft) natural shoreland demonstration projects.
Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, Local governments, Citizens, and Non-profit groups
Source: Basin Issue Team, DNR Watershed Management Team
-  Protect wetland complexes with exceptionally high value via acquisition, incentives, and innovative strategies.
Partners: DNR, Federal and local governments, Citizens, Non-profit groups, Lake districts, and Land trusts
Source: FWL, WW, RRC-Public Forum, and HRI
-  Restore 100 acres of oak savannas and prairies in the Basin.
Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, Federal and local agencies, Citizens, Non-Profit groups
Source: DNR Biodiversity Report
-  Increase natural area habitat protection, restoration and improvement by identifying specific critical habitats in the Basin in the comprehensive watershed management plans.
Partners: DNR, UWEX, RRC, NRCS, LCD, and Lake districts
Source: RRC-Public Forum, DNR, FWL, and LWRM*
-  Develop success criteria, performance measures, recommendations using monitoring to optimize wetland and other resource benefits.
Partners: DNR, RRC, UWEX, and Other governmental agencies
Source: RRC-Public Forum and WW
-  Identify in-stream habitat or streambank protection sites for improving sport fisheries in the comprehensive watershed management plans.
Partners: DNR, FWL, and Conservation organizations
Source: FWL

Basin Actions (continued)

-  Address gully, rill, and sheet erosion on agricultural lands through effective implementation of state, federal, and county conservation programs.
Partners: LCD, DNR, UWEX, NRCS
Source: LWRM*
-  Increase local ordinance protection and enforcement on construction site erosion.
Partners: LCD, DNR, UWEX, and other governmental agencies
Source: LWRM* and DNR Watershed Management Team
-  Screen actions for impact on state/federally listed threatened/endangered species and natural communities, develop improved GIS tools and provide to partners for land use planning.
Partners: DNR and FWL
Source: FWL and DNR Watershed Management Team
-  Prevent, control where feasible, or contain non-native invasive plant and animal species.
Partners: DNR, FWL and Non-profits groups
Source: FWL and DNR Watershed Management Team
-  Promote protection of groundwater recharge areas, through land use planning.
Partners: DNR, UWEX, RRC, LCD and other governmental agencies
Source: DNR Watershed Management Team
-  Identify location, populations, and movements of sensitive species, including bats along Niagra Escarpment and other fragile environments.
Partners: FWL, DNR, LCD, UWEX, and Non-profit groups
Source: FWL

Basin Actions ~ Protecting Public Health and Safety



Identify major groundwater recharge areas and contaminants in the Basin.

Partners: DNR, RRC, and Citizens

Source: RRC-Public Forum and Basin Issue Team



Demonstrate 5 proper well abandonments in the Basin.

Partners: RRC, DNR, LCD, UWEX, and Citizens

Source: RRC-Public Forum and LWRM*



Organize a Basin strategy to evaluate dams and their impacts.

Partners: DNR, FWL, RRC and Citizens

Source: FWL and DNR Watershed Management Team



Encourage communities to participate in the Groundwater Guardian Program.

Partners: DNR, Municipalities and Citizens

Source: DNR Watershed Management Team



Support the development of Wellhead Protection Plans and ordinances for municipal water wells.

Partners: DNR

Source: DNR Watershed Management Team



Complete a source water assessment for all public water systems. Post information on DNR website.

Partners: DNR

Source: RRC-Public Forum and DNR Watershed Management Team



Improve cross-agency problem assessment testing of public and private wells.

Partners: DNR, UWEX, and other governmental agencies

Source: DNR Watershed Management Team



Promote Nutrient and Pesticide Management (NPM) Plans to help reduce overuse of chemicals.

Partners: DNR, UWEX, LCD, NRCS, and other governmental agencies

Source: LWRM* and DNR Watershed Management Team



Work with 5 Basin industries to decrease hazardous waste and solid waste production.

Partners: DNR, UWEX, RRC, Industries, and Citizens

Source: DNR Watershed Management Team and HRI

Basin Actions ~ Providing Outdoor Recreation



Improve, enhance and promote trails in the Basin. By 2002, develop Basin recreational trails map.
Partner: DNR, UWEX, Basin Issue Team, County and Municipality agencies
Source: RRC-Public Forum, DNR, UWEX and HRI



Increase adult and youth participation in conservation and hunting, fishing and trapping activities/
clubs.
Partners: DNR, UWEX, Basin Issue Team and Non-profit groups
Source: RRC-Public Forum



Identify facilities, boat and recreational access needs and increase these types of access areas
within the Basin.
Partners: DNR and FWL
Source: FWL, DNR Watershed Management Team



Continue implementing objectives of Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Joint Venture, in
cooperation with “all bird objectives” by restoring and enhancing wetlands and upland cover for
ducks and other bird species.
Partners: DNR, FWL, other governmental agencies, Non-profit groups and Citizens
Source: FWL and DNR Watershed Management Team



Identify and make recommendations to protect existing self-sustaining fisheries in the
comprehensive watershed plans.
Partners: DNR, FWL, other governmental agencies, and Citizens
Source: FWL and DNR Watershed Management Team



Implement Deer Management 2000 and Beyond project recommendations. Continue aggressive
harvest management strategies to lower size of deer herd in management units 68B, 70G, 76,
76M, 77A and 77C.
Partners: DNR and FWL
Source: FWL

Partners and Projects

*Every individual matters. . . Every individual has a role to play.
Every individual makes a difference.*

- Jane Goodall

Partners

The Rock River Basin is very fortunate! We have many caring people in hard-working, effective conservation organizations - with both local and Basin-wide focus. These citizen organizations are possibly the Basin's single, most valuable natural resource. When citizens and the DNR work together, the Basin's water, land and air resources receive much more protection.

Over the years, public agencies (federal, state and local) have developed many outstanding resource plans that include many excellent resource protection recommendations and projects. Unfortunately, many of these recommendations weren't implemented. This wasn't because the agencies and staff didn't put tremendous effort into the projects. It's wasn't always because more funding was needed. It happened because the DNR was missing an important planning and implementation ingredient - full citizen participation!

In 1997 as part of the DNR's reorganization, the DNR began a new Partnership approach to managing Wisconsin's water, land, air, and wildlife resources. In the Rock River Basin, the DNR wholeheartedly began this new way of managing the Basin's natural resources by very actively joining in partnership with many private and public organizations. The 'very inclusive' partnership approach has brought effective and resource protection-minded citizens directly into resource protection. As a result, more valuable basin-wide or local resource protection projects have been completed or are underway.

As you read about projects in the Basin, keep in mind: You are needed! With more citizen involvement in Basin organizations, much more can be done to protect the land, water and air resources in the Rock River Basin. Join in, protect the earth, have fun, make a difference!

Citizen Partners

Citizen-led organizations are protecting natural resources at different scales in the Basin. Some work at the very local scale, for example, helps protect individual lakes, streams, sensitive lands, or endangered wildlife in the Basin. Locally led groups are vital to protecting neighborhood streams, lakes and sensitive areas.

These groups include conservation organizations, lake districts and associations, river organizations, county land trusts, environmental groups, friends of parks organizations, rod and gun clubs and many others. Most change-on-the land comes about through local organizations as people living closest to a resource have the most at stake in protecting it. They bring the powerful force and voice of local commitment and energy to resource protection.

There's so many local organizations, in fact too many to list in one report, that an insert has been designed to accompany this report. Some might be working in your part of the Basin. However, more locally led and focused organizations are needed. Every watershed and lake needs a local action group. Yet most Rock River Basin watersheds and many of its lakes don't have a local citizen organization to watch and protect it. The insert will be updated as we learn of new organizations.

Resource protection is also needed on a larger scale. The Basin, as a whole web of related resources, needs broadly organized protection, stewardship, and management. Local action alone can't fully protect our land, water, or air resources. Recognizing this, the DNR as a part of its reorganization directed its Regional staff to begin organizing Basin partnerships in every Basin in the state.

In the Rock River Basin, we're fortunate again. In contrast to most of the Basins in the state, we already had an organization with a Basin-wide resource protection vision and commitment - the Rock River Coalition (RRC). In 1998, the DNR and RRC linked together as partners in Basin-wide resource protection.

Rock River Coalition (RRC)

The Rock River Coalition, a non-profit volunteer organization, was established in 1994 to encourage cooperation among communities, organizations and individuals for the purpose of improving environmental, recreational, cultural, and economic conditions in the Rock River Basin. The RRC's motivating vision is

“To make the Rock River more useful, beautiful and enjoyable by increasing cooperation among communities, organizations and individuals to preserve and protect our shared cultural, economic and environmental resources”. The RRC mission: To educate and bring together people of diverse interests to work together to improve the economic, environmental, cultural, and recreational resources of the Rock River Basin. To become involved in the RRC or for more information contact:

The Rock River Coalition
PO Box 141
Watertown, WI 53094
(920)674-7443
rriver@excel.net

☆ www.rockrivercoalition.org

The RRC, with the DNR and UWEX have sponsored a number of Basin-wide initiatives. In 1997, the partners developed an application for an American Heritage River nomination. This project brought together many different partners to write a Basin-wide plan for the Rock River. The plan included diverse issues, goals and recommendations to restore or protect the natural and cultural resources in the Basin.

In November 1998, the RRC, together with the DNR and the UWEX hosted a Basin-wide forum in Fort Atkinson “Partners for the Future.” A survey was sent out pre-forum, along with the forum invitation, to over 1,600 Basin residents, businesses, conservation organizations and agencies requesting their input in defining the most important natural resource issues in the Basin.

Over 150 people from a broad diversity of backgrounds, gathered at the forum to help refine, further identify, and prioritize the most significant natural resource issues in the Basin. Another 100 people couldn't attend but sent information and comments. As a result of the forum, seven Basin-wide resource issue teams were formed. The teams are working on a number of Basin-wide projects to help protect the Basin's natural resources.

In April 2000, the second Basin-wide forum was help called “The Power of Partnerships.” Over 90 participants from diverse backgrounds joined in celebrating the actions taken or underway by the Basin issue teams since the first forum. Additional issue and project identification was conducted at the forum.

(continued on next page)

Through the DNR/RRC partnership, seven Basin-wide natural resource issue teams were formed: surface water quality; groundwater; wetland/shoreland habitat protection; recreation; storm water; rural development concerns; hunting & fishing. Today, more than 70 people from city, county, state/federal agencies, lake districts, other private organizations and private firms have become actively involved in Basin-wide resource protection projects undertaken by six issue teams.

The Rock River Partnership (RRP)

In May 2000, the Rock River Partnership joined the RRC as part of the Water Quality Issue Team. This group was organized in 1997 to investigate the potential use of watershed-based trading (also known as nutrient or pollutant trading). The pollutant trades would be between point sources of pollution, such as wastewater treatment plants, and nonpoint sources, such as agriculture and construction sites.

The RRP is an alliance of wastewater treatment plants, industries, counties, Farm Bureaus, DNR, NRCS and several organizations and individuals. During its first four years, the RRP invested more than \$680,000 in assessing the potential of nutrient trading in the Basin. The assessment included an extensive, two-year water quality monitoring study in the Basin.

Local Public Partners

County Land Conservation Departments (LCD).

Every Wisconsin County has a Land Conservation Department that works to protect county natural resources. Various resource protection plans, including the Land & Water Resource Management Plans, are available in each county. These plans identify the most significant land, surface and groundwater issues and actions needed to protect the county's natural resources. The County Conservation staff provide information to county residents about their resource concerns and help farmers increase agricultural productivity; design and implement conservation practices; and provide funding to eligible landowners to protect soil, water, and natural resources by controlling sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants entering lakes/streams.

County Planning and Zoning Departments.

Counties have planning and/or zoning department that works with their residents to promote orderly and sound development in the county. The responsibilities and jurisdiction of the different county zoning and planning departments varies. For example, some counties have countywide zoning, others do not. Contact your county planning & zoning department for the responsibilities and planning and zoning ordinances in your county department.

County University of Wisconsin Extension Departments (UWEX)

The UWEX has staff serving the public at the Basin, county and state levels. The Basin Educator provides professional expertise to Basin issue teams, local organizations, schools, and public agencies. Each county has educators that work with landowners to help reduce farm-related pollutants and improve agricultural productivity. Other educators work with communities to address such concerns as solid and hazardous wastes, land use planning, park and recreation planning, drinking water and other local natural resource concerns.

County Natural Resources

Conservation Service Centers (NRCS)

NRCS staff assist landowners through the District Conservationist, who work out of individual or multi-county offices. The NRCS provides technical assistance/cost share funding to landowners for conservation practices to control pollutants establish and enhance wildlife habitat and restore wetlands.

Municipal and Township Zoning and Planning

Most municipal and townships provide land use related services. Through a variety of local offices citizens can obtain information and assistance pertaining to resource protection.

Regional Public Partners

Dane Co. Regional Planning Commission (DCRPC)

The 13-member commission assists 61 local units of government in Dane County. It is the designated water quality planning agency for Dane County. The two-volume *Dane County Water Quality Plan* and 11 technical appendices provide a detailed analysis of water quality in the county. Certified by the state in 1979 as the official area-wide water quality management plan for Dane County, it has been continually revised, updated and expanded since then. DCRPC produces a variety of investigations, technical analyses and reports, covering a wide range of land use, water quality and other natural resource issues for local government planning purposes in Dane County. It is an excellent source for various resource and planning maps.

Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC)s

The 21-member commission assists 154 local governments in the seven counties in southeastern Wisconsin. This includes the parts of the Rock River Basin in Washington, Waukesha, and Walworth counties. SEWRPC is the designated water quality planning agency for these Basin areas. The three-volume *Regional Water Quality Management Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin-2010 (1995)* is the official area-wide water quality management plan for this area. The agency prepares area-wide and locally focused plans for land use, transportation, and water quality and other natural resource management issues. SEWRPC has prepared watershed scale management plans for most of the major watersheds in the Southeast Region and has provided lake specific plans for almost half of the major lakes in the region. SEWRPC provides planning expertise to local governments and organizations and is an excellent source for various resource and planning maps.

State Public Partners

Department of Natural Resources

The staff works together to combine resources and manpower to complete natural resource projects. The DNR staff work out of several offices in the Basin.

South Central Region Fitchburg Office

At this office staff from many disciplines work closely with landowners, counties, municipalities, townships, other governmental agencies, such as lake/sanitary districts and with locally led non-profit groups on natural resource protection and projects.

Horicon Service Center Office

The multi-disciplinary staff at this office primarily works on natural resource protection and projects in the Upper Rock River Basin.

Janesville Service Center

The multi-disciplinary staff at this office primarily works on natural resource protection and projects in the Lower Rock River Basin.

Pike Lake Office

This office is located near Hartford. The staff manage several state-owned properties in the basin including Theresa and Allenton Wildlife Areas, and the Pike Lake and Loew Lake units of the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest.

Lapham Peak Office

The office is located near Delafield and manages the Lapham Peak State Park.

Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine

The staff manages the state forest and various staff specialists assist area landowners.

Lake Mills Offices

The staff supports the Glacial Drumlin Trail and Aztalan Park and staff serving wildlife management in the area. Lake Mills and Fitchburg also have fish hatchery facilities.

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)

The staff works out of the Madison Central Office and field offices located in several counties. DATCP staff works with basin landowners to: assist agricultural production, help control soil loss, and control farm emissions of pollutants into the environment.

Federal Public Partners

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The FWS staff works to protect the natural resources in different areas in the Basin. FWS staff work directly on critical animal and bird protection issues on federally owned land. They also provide technical assistance, funding and educational information to private landowners for resource protection projects.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

This staff operates out of the Rock Island, Illinois office and works with organizations and governmental agencies to help plan, implement, and fund many ecosystem restoration or flood control projects. The projects can range in scale from Basin-wide resource assessments to a fish passage at a local dam. Funding is available through a number of different funding programs.

Other state and federal agencies also work with landowners to help landowners protect natural resources in the Basin. All these diverse partnerships link goals, efforts, and projects. This can achieve more effective on the ground resource protection in our Basin.

Resource Management Projects

Many resource protection projects are underway in the Basin. These projects are at all different scales, from Basin-wide action, to watershed, down to a local streambank project. The projects also cover many types of resource protection, from improving Rock River water quality, to restoring a wetland complex, to protecting mussel habitat in Turtle Creek. Each is contributing to the health of our Basin's resources. For more information on a specific project call your DNR Basin staff.

The following projects are only a few of the resource protection work underway in the Basin. Other governmentally funded projects are completed, underway, or planned. In addition, many privately organized projects have also been completed or are ongoing by local conservation and environmental organizations. Often times, only local residents know the good work that's been done. But all these efforts and projects add up to protecting the land, water, and air resources in the Basin.

Citizen Issue Team Basin Projects

To highlight the "Power of Partnership" and of citizen teams accomplishing change on the land, this section of the report starts out with the Basin-wide Issue Team projects completed or underway! Some of the Issue Team projects both span the Basin and accomplish change at a local level.

Surface Water Quality

Surveyed Basin organizations/agencies regarding water quality actions, past or current; Developing Basin-wide resource guide identifying all Basin water quality projects; and Developing a Citizen Basin-wide Stream Monitoring Program in 2002.

Groundwater

Obtained a federal NRCS "Environmental Quality Incentive Project" grant and conducted 4 proper well abandonments in several counties; Developed a Karst and Groundwater Contamination display and brochure; Compiling a Basin directory of groundwater related monitoring and resource information. Funded Farm*A*Syst assessments of potential groundwater contamination risk for 29 Basin farmers.

Wetland/Shoreland

Working with cities & counties, developed 3 natural shoreland vegetation demonstration sites in county/city parks in the basin. Received a state grant to support the three demonstration projects and working on developing 20 more natural shoreline demonstration sites in the Basin. Developing accompanying educational strategy; Participating in a cooperative funding process for multi-agency and local partnerships to implement CREP in the Basin counties.

Rural Development

Developing a map showing counties & towns with land use plans; Developing a library containing: Methods used to compensate land owners who are restricted from developing; Information on the cost of development; Compiling a position paper for good Land Use Planning for Basin counties and communities.

Stormwater

Developing a library of county/municipal ordinances for use by Basin counties; Co-hosted a conservation-minded design seminar "Grow Smart-Grow Green" - 170 attended; Along with Token Creek Watershed Association & City of Sun Prairie, sponsored a mini conservation minded design seminar tailored to the Token Creek watershed - 50 attended. This is a pilot

project, which is intended to go out on the road to other interested Basin communities; Conducted a Basin-wide survey of municipalities and counties about local stormwater problems and concerns; Developing a Basin-wide stormwater educational strategy.

Recreation

Developing a Basin book highlighting all the trails in the Basin: hiking, biking, atv, snowmobiling, horse and paddle; Sponsoring the development of paddle trails in the Basin.

Government Organized Basin Projects

Several projects that span the Basin were or are organized through local or federal government initiatives. Many of these projects have or are expected to result in considerably more knowledge about the resources in the Basin. This knowledge is used for greater land and water resources protection. Two examples of such projects are:

Rock River Partnership Nutrient Trading Project

Analyzed the economic and environmental potential for nutrient trading. While a few facilities are still assessing nutrient trading, most wastewater treatment plants have decided to upgrade their facilities to meet the more stringent phosphorus removal level.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

A NRCS Program which provides significant federal and state funding to eligible farmers for streambank buffers and associated wetland restorations and grassed waterways. This program is an enhancement of the NRCS Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), which most farmers are familiar.

Area Specific Projects

Comprehensive Watershed Projects: Every watershed in the Upper and Lower Rock River will have a Comprehensive Watershed Report written for it. These reports will be a highly technical integration of each watershed's land and water resource issues, goals and recommendations. The watershed reports compliment the State of the Basin report, which is more generalized and less technical. Each comprehensive watershed report will be developed in close partnership with the public and published individually. The goal is to conduct a process and co-write a report that increases public/private partnerships that more successfully protect the land and water resources in the watershed. All indi-

vidual watershed reports are planned for completion within 5 years. The first one is almost completed, the Yahara River-Lake Kegonsa. Two others are underway.

Many other resource protection projects are operating in the Basin. To help readers see which projects are located in their area, the projects are grouped under the Upper Rock River or Lower Rock River portions of the Basin.

Upper Rock River Basin

Middle Rock River watershed (UR 01)

Jefferson Dam in Jefferson: US Corps of Engineers 206 Project, which is evaluating installation of a fish passage at the dam in the City of Jefferson.

Lower Crawfish River watershed (UR 02)

Rock Lake watershed: A Nonpoint Source Priority Watershed Project is underway. The project provides state funding to eligible landowners to reduce the pollutants entering the lake and streams in the watershed.

Glacial Habitat Restoration Area Project (parts of UR 03, UR 04, UR 06, UR 12)

The project covers portions of the Upper Rock River Basin. The project focuses on landscape scale restoration of wetlands and grasslands for waterfowl and prairie songbirds.

Upper Rock River, East Branch Rock River and Dead Creek watersheds (UR 12, UR 13, part of UR08)

The Comprehensive Watershed Report is in the early stage of development and citizen participation. An innovative citizen participation process is planned to engage area rural and urban citizens in identifying the issues and devising the actions needed to address the land and water problems.

Gill-Irish Creek sub-watershed (part of UR 13)

The small subwatershed located on the east side of the Horicon Marsh, has received a NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Grant (EQIP). The grant provides funding to area farmers to install a wide variety of conservation practices.

Beaver Dam watershed (UR 03)

A Nonpoint Source Priority Watershed Project is underway in this watershed. The project provides state funding to eligible landowners and urban communities to reduce the pollutants entering the rivers and lakes.

Upper Rock, East Branch and Dead Creek Comprehensive Watershed Report (UR 12, 13 and 08)

The process of writing these reports has just begun. However, considerable information is already known about the watershed project. The Upper Rock watershed stretches from north of Waupun, near the Village of Brandon, down through the Horicon Marsh. On the east, the East Branch Upper Rock starts in the headwaters area of Kummel Creek, near Brownsville, with additional headwaters areas near Allenton. The headwater streams flow generally eastward through Theresa and Mayville and enter the southern part of the Horicon Marsh. The Rock River continues down into Lake Sinissippi, where on the west another tributary, Dead Creek also empties into the Lake Sinissippi and the Rock River. The watershed comprises approximately 627 square miles.

The majority of the watershed is in Dodge County, with headwater areas in Fond du Lac, Washington, and Green Lake counties. Twenty-six cities or villages are in the watershed area, including the communities of Waupun, Mayville, Horicon, Theresa, Brownsville, Brandon, Hustisford, and Allenton. The area includes all or part of 26 townships. The significant waterbodies include the Upper Rock River, East Branch Rock River, Rock River, Lake Sinissippi, and Dead Creek .

Before European settlement, oak openings, prairies and wetlands dominated the land. Many of these wetlands were located along rivers and streams; many also were located between the many large drumlins located in the eastern part of the Focus watershed. A unusual land feature is the Niagara Escarpment. This feature is actually a series of linear limestone ledges, that outcrop in the eastern part of the project area.

Today, land use is dominated by agriculture. However, the watershed is increasingly urbanizing, especially near the cities of Waupun, Horicon, and Mayville. Huge tracts of wetlands have been ditched and drained for agriculture and development, destroying habitat and decreasing water quality. Land use today is about 66 percent agriculture, 10-12 percent urban and the remaining percentage, wetlands, open water or woodland.

While complete identification of the major issues in the focus watershed requires the public's participation, certain issues are apparent. The loss of the significant acres of wetlands in both the Upper Rock and the East Branch Rock River is one of the major issues due to valuable as wildlife and fishery habitat and protection of water quality in the watershed's lakes and streams. Other threats include:

-  increased nutrification and pollution of the lakes and rivers due to uncontrolled rural and urban soil erosion and storm water runoff;
-  effects of dams on river water quality and fishery
-  decline in groundwater quality, especially in the Town of Leroy area
-  increased urbanization and conversion of rural lands for urban uses
-  fragmentation and loss of wildlife habitat

With the active participation of the watershed residents the restoration of the land and water resources in the Upper Rock, East Branch Rock River, and Dead Creek watersheds be realized.

Map 16: Upper Rock River Project Area

Please refer to the State of the Rock River Basin Report web page to view this map

Lower Rock River Basin

Turtle Creek watershed (LR 01)

Shopiere Dam removal and river restoration/Sweet Allyn County Park expansion

Bass Creek watershed (LR 03)

Afton Dam removal and river restoration

Marsh Creek watershed (LR 05)

An NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Grant (EQIP) provides funding to area farmers to install a wide variety of conservation practices. An NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Grant (EQIP) provides funding to area farmers to install a wide variety of conservation practices.

Yahara River/Lake Kegonsa watershed (LR 06)

The Comprehensive Watershed Report is complete. A very technical assessment was conducted on the land and water resources and issues in the watershed. Citizen participation was an important part of identifying the important issues and recommendations for actions to address the issues.

Lake Mendota/Yahara River watershed (LR 09)

The Comprehensive Report was begun and should be completed within 2002. A Nonpoint Priority Watershed Project is underway. The project provides state funding to eligible landowners and urban communities to reduce the pollutants entering the rivers and lakes in the watershed by installing conservation practices. An NRCS Environmental Quality Incentive Grant (EQIP) provides funding to area farmers to install a wide variety of conservation practices.

Token Creek sub-watershed (Part of LR 09)

A diverse group of partners have joined to protect this outstanding cold water trout stream located in the midst of increasing urbanization from the City of Sun Prairie and Madison. A large fund raising project enabled purchase of considerable acreage adjacent to the stream and helped get the dam removed.

US Army Corps of Engineer 206

Token Creek Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project

The project will restore natural stream features and recreate a stable channel pattern, restore the wetland and riparian zone in the stream corridor and former millpond and provide recreational opportunities in the watershed.

Dane County, DNR, and University of Wisconsin Stormwater, Thermal Analyses and Groundwater Assessment project

The project involves in-stream temperature and other water quality analyses, modeling of the results in relationship to land use changes, groundwater monitoring, and application of the new groundwater ordinance in Dane County.

Lake Koshkonong watershed (LR 11 and LR 12)

Rockdale Dam removal and river restoration/Cam Rock County Park expansion. The project, which involves close cooperation with the city and area residents, is restoring about 200 acres of wetland to help alleviate flooding concerns in the Upper Koshkonong watershed. The Lake District is developing a US Army Corp of Engineers 206 project to install approximately 3 miles of in-lake dikes to protect the sensitive wetlands adjacent to the lake.

Lake Ripley sub-watershed (Part of LR 11)

A Nonpoint Source Priority Watershed Project is underway. The project provides state funding to eligible landowners to reduce the pollutants entering the lake and streams in the watershed.

Spring Creek sub-watershed (Part of LR07)

A Nonpoint Source Priority Watershed Project is underway. The project provides state funding to eligible landowners to reduce the pollutants entering the lake and streams in the watershed. As a result of land use changes, trout have been found in the stream for the first time in many years.

Together these projects are making a significant contribution to resource protection in the Basin. Many areas in the Basin still have important resource needs that are not being sufficiently addressed by local, state, federal agencies or private citizen actions.

As more people join minds and hands to protect the natural resources in the Basin, the list of projects will grow. But of course, it's not the list itself that's important - what is important the result. All our efforts give better natural resource protection in the Basin, for human beings, animals, and plants living today - and those who will be alive in the future. Everyone now and in the future have a better chance at a long and healthy life.

Yahara-Kegonsa Comprehensive Watershed Report

(LR 06)

The watershed stretches from just east of Madison southward to the Yahara River's confluence with the Rock River below Indianford in Rock County. It comprises about 126 square miles. The majority of the watershed is in Dane County and includes the communities of the city of Stoughton, the Village of Cottage Grove and the Towns of Cottage Grove, Pleasant Springs, Dunn, Dunkirk, Fulton and Port. The significant waterbodies include the Yahara River, Lower Mud Lake, Lake Kegonsa, Door Creek and its wetlands, and Gibbs Lake.

Before European settlement, oak savannas, oak openings and prairies dominated the land, along with wetland complexes along the rivers and streams. Today, land use is dominated by agriculture. However, the watershed is rapidly urbanizing, especially near the Township of Cottage Grove. Huge tracts of wetlands have been ditched and drained for agriculture and development, destroying habitat and decreasing water quality. Land use today is 81 percent agriculture, 6.9 percent urban and 5.4 percent wetlands.

The loss of the significant acres of wetlands is one of the major issues in the watershed due to valuable as wildlife and fishery habitat and protection of water quality in the watershed's lakes and streams. Other threats include increased eutrophication and pollution of the lakes and rivers due to uncontrolled rural and urban soil erosion and stormwater runoff; the effect of dams on river water quality and fishery; the declining baseflow of the Yahara River as a result of wastewater diversion to the Badfish Creek; the declining groundwater level caused by overpumping and loss of groundwater recharge; increased urbanization and conversion of rural lands for urban uses; the fragmentation and loss of wildlife habitat; wetland loss and degradation.

With public participation through meetings held out in the communities, many important recommendations were developed for resource protection. The challenge facing the watershed residents and the DNR is implementing these recommendations. Only then will the health of the land and water resources in the Yahara River/Lake Kegonsa watershed be realized.

To obtain a copy of the report contact:

Ken Johnson
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Map 17: Yahara-Kegonsa Watershed

Please refer to the State of the Rock River Basin Report web page to view this map