

Water Action Volunteers

Monitoring Site Quick Facts

SWIMS Station ID	10044824
WBIC	128000
County	Outagamie
Watershed	Fox River - Appleton
Watershed Area	39 sq miles
Stream Miles in Watershed	71 miles
Downstream Waterbody	Fox River

2016 Monitoring Results

Minimum TP Value	0.0769 mg/L
Maximum TP Value	0.332 mg/L
Median TP Value	0.114 mg/L
No. Samples > 0.075 mg/L	6



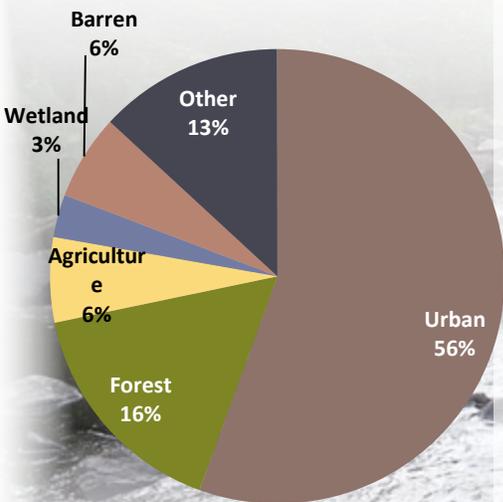
2016 Total Phosphorus Monitoring Program

UNT to Fox River 50m US Main St (USH 96)

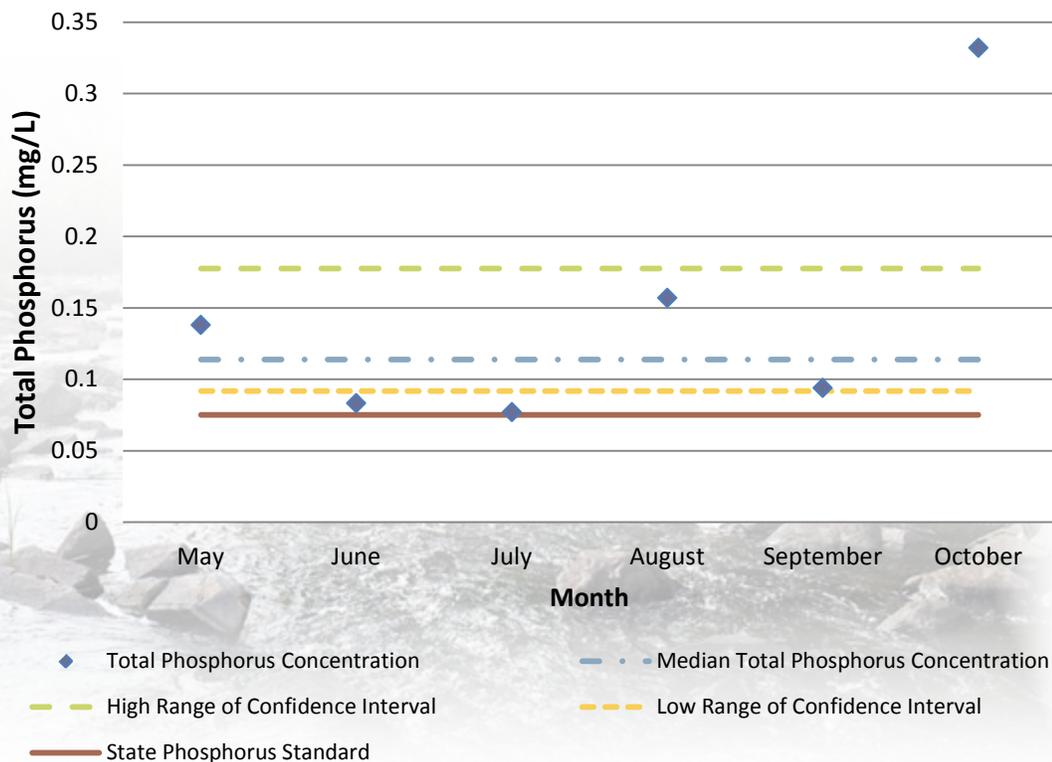
Terri Gonya



Approximate Land Use for the Fox River Basin



Total Phosphorus Concentration per Month



Why Phosphorus?

Phosphorus is an essential nutrient responsible for plant growth, but it is also the most visible, widespread water pollutant in Wisconsin lakes. Small increases in phosphorus levels can bring about substantial increases in aquatic plant and algae growth, which in turn can reduce the recreational use and biodiversity. When the excess plants die and are decomposed, oxygen levels in the water drop dramatically which can lead to fish kills. Additionally, one of the most common impairments in Wisconsin's streams is excess sediment that covers stream bottoms. Since phosphorus moves attached to sediments, it is intimately connected with this source of pollution in our streams. Phosphorus originates naturally from rocks, but its major sources in streams and lakes today are usually associated with human activities: soil erosion, human and animal wastes, septic systems, and runoff from farmland or lawns. Phosphorus-containing contaminants from urban streets and parking lots such as food waste, detergents, and paper products are also potential sources of phosphorus pollution from the surrounding landscape. The impact that phosphorus can have in streams is less apparent than in lakes due to the overall movement of water, but in areas with low velocity, where sediment can settle and deposit along the bottom substrate, algae blooms can result.

Project Description

In 2016, volunteers were selected to help with a monitoring project in the Garner's Creek sub-watershed. Garner's Creek is listed on the State's 303(d) list of impaired waterways. Volunteers collected total phosphorus samples at two sites in the watershed to provide data for the assessment by the Garner's Creek Storm Water Utility (GCSWUD) District.



Photo credits to Matt Berg, David Seligman, Linda Warren, Adrian Konell

Volunteer Monitoring Protocol

To assess in-stream phosphorus levels, WAV volunteers collected water samples that were analyzed for total phosphorus (TP) at the State Lab of Hygiene during the growing season (May through October). Following Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) methods, six phosphorus water samples were collected at each monitoring site - one per month for each of the six months during the growing season. The water samples were collected approximately 30 days apart and no samples were collected within 15 days of one another.



A stream site is considered "Criteria Exceeded" if: 1) the lower 90% confidence limit of the sample median exceeds the state TP criterion of 0.075 mg/L or 0.1 mg/L or 2) there is corroborating WDNR biological data to support an adverse response in the fish or macroinvertebrate communities. If there is insufficient data for either of these requirements, more data will need to be collected in subsequent years before a decision can be made. A site is designated as "Watch Waters" if the median total phosphorus concentration falls within the confidence limit and a site is considered to have "Met Criteria" if the upper limit of the confidence interval does not exceed the criterion.



PROJECT PARTNERS

