water SPOUT!

ALLEN COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR WATER QUALITY

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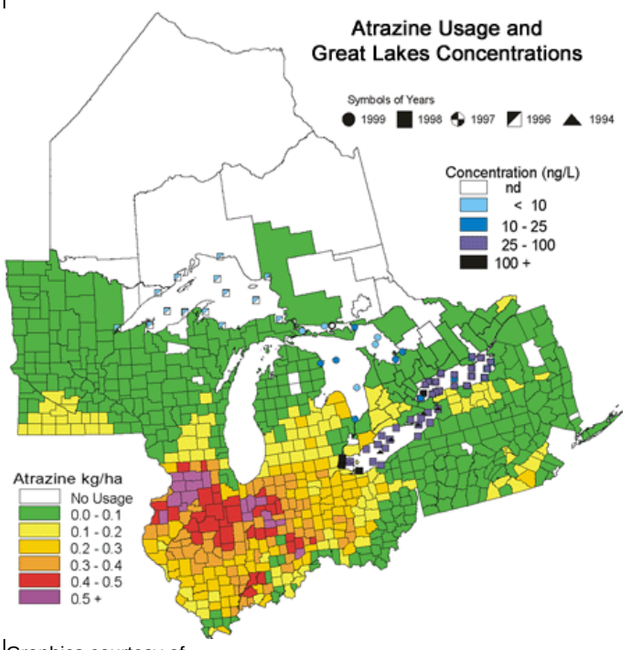
Survey Finds Less Atrazine in Midwestern Rivers

DesMoinesRegister.com

by PHILIP BRASHER & DAN PILLER • business@dmreg.com • November 15, 2009



Graphics courtesy of Environment Canada Environnement Canada Canada

Less atrazine is showing up in a few Midwestern rivers, including the Iowa River, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

A report issued by the agency found "highly significant down trends" in the popular corn herbicide in the Iowa River basin from 2000 to 2006, even though usage has been relatively stable there and throughout the rest of the Corn Belt. That drop was recorded at Wapello.

There were statistically significant declines in atrazine in the Illinois River and the Maumee River in Ohio. There also was a drop at the Mississippi River at Clinton, but it wasn't rated as significant.

The question is why atrazine levels dropped where they did. It could be, the report says, that the downward trends mean that less of the herbicide is getting into the rivers because of "agricultural management changes, such as increases in conservation tillage and application buffer strips along streams during the trend-assessment periods." But the report says it also could mean the estimates are off.

The Environmental Protection Agency said recently that it was going to take another look at the potential of atrazine to cause cancer. Atrazine is used on about 60 percent of Iowa's corn acreage.

Volunteer Opportunities in Water

The following events provide several volunteer opportunities with the ACPWQ. Please take the time to read the list. If you can volunteer, great. If not, please share the opportunity with others that may be interested. We hope to see you soon!

Ongoing: Storm Drain Marking Coordinator
Volunteer Coordinator
Event/Presentation Coordinator
1/12-14 Regional Farm Show
2/15 Tri=State Conservation Farming Expo
2/25-28 Ft. Wayne Home & Garden Show

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Newsletter Spotlight

"Sediment is the most common pollutant in our waterways. While natural soil erosion produces about 30 percent of waterway sedimentation, accelerated erosion from human modifications of the land accounts for the remaining 70 percent."

"*What is Sediment and Why Should I Care?*"

[Marion County SWCD] (See article on P. 3)

PROJECT WET Water Education for Teachers

Update and Activity Spotlight

About Project WET

Through the publication and distribution of water resource materials, facilitation of workshops on diverse water topics, coordination of community water events and creation of a global network of water professionals, educators and scientists, Project WET is teaching the world about water. Project WET believes that individuals can be empowered to take action and develop sustainable solutions to community water resource issues. Learn more at www.projectwet.org.

Project WET Certification Workshop, Oct. 24, 2009

This workshop was well-attended-considering the damp chill of the 40-degree temperature inside. I think this attests to the resilience and dedication of the volunteers and interested public. The staff of the Little River Wetlands Project were great. This organization deserves a big round of applause for the work they put into this workshop and their mission at-large.

Project WET "Make A Splash" Training Day
March 11th, 2010

The IDNR-Natural Resources Education Center, Project WET, the State Library, Allen County Public Library and the ACPWQ will be involved in an internal workshop on integrating Project WET into library curricula. This workshop is designed to better service communities through coordinated activities.

Keep your eyes open for activities held through your local library.

To host a Project WET Certification Workshop, please contact Angie Tilton, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources/Natural Resource Education Center Project WET State Coordinator at projectwet@dnr.state.in.us

The Allen County Partnership for Water Quality/Project WET Facilitator is Matt Jones. You may contact him directly at: matt.jones@one.usda.gov or 260/484-5848x111

IN THE NEWS...

The following articles are reprinted from various newsletters with permission. The ACPWQ neither advocates nor supports the statements within the articles; they are here as information only.

Great Lakes United — Union St-Laurent Grands Lacs

Coalition Updates

Connecting the Great Lakes to their Headwaters

By Andrew McCammon · August 31, 2009 ·

When people think about the Great Lakes, they tend to think at a large scale: 6 quadrillion gallons of water, left over from the last ice age, that could submerge the continental United States under 9.5 feet of freshwater. They think of one-fifth of the world's fresh surface water, and home to the largest lake in the world by surface area.

The lands that drain into the Great Lakes are also immense. At over 200,000 square miles (520,000 square kilometres), they are home to over 40 million people and their social and industrial activity. This has led to colossal challenges that include water and air pollution, climate change, disputes over water allocation, and invasive species.

The region, however, contains a third massive reality: headwaters. Gentle rain that pools in depressions and gathers into tiny streams that babble through forests and meadows are infinitesimal compared to the Great Lakes. Yet these waters nurse the biological diversity of our wetland complexes, filter into and out of aquifers, and provide the sources of our streams, groundwater, rivers, and of course the Lakes. In fact, headwaters form both an intricate and delicate web of life and the foundation of everything downstream.

Every drop of water that flows into the Great Lakes begins in the region's headwaters.

Consider depictions of the potential impacts of climate change on the Great Lakes. Headlines tend to focus on impacts such as lower water levels, reduced cargo capacity in freighters, stranded docks, the dredging of marinas, and the cost of moving municipal intake pipes. Additional impacts occur across the region. We tend to put these in human terms, from less or more water availability for human consumption, to impacts on agriculture, forests, and winter recreation.

While these challenges are serious, we must not separate the lakes and their basin from the web of headwater ecology.

Damaged forests, whether from fire or pests, would alter infiltration rates, stream flow, and water chemistry. Disappearing wetlands would eliminate valuable habitat. Reduced ice cover or changes in spring run-off would disrupt fish breading and hatchling requirements. Temperature change might shift cold-water fisheries into warm water fisheries, but the timing of temperature change might also mean that bugs or seeds won't be available when birds need them most.

Consider the impact of these potential outcomes on Lake Superior. Lake Superior has a refresh rate of 1 percent per year. If the recharge rate suddenly dropped by 10 percent, the impact on the Lake would be visible in a relatively short period of time. Upstream headwater impacts, however, would have already taken place, and likely not in as uniform a manner as can be demonstrated by a fallen water level. What might we have lost? Regional forests? Wetlands? Streams? Groundwater? Species? By the time the drop in Lake Superior levels had been noticed, the damage to the lake's headwaters could be dramatic and irreversible.

The health of the Great Lakes must be protected. To do so, we must consider all of the components of the regional ecosystem: the Lakes themselves, the basin, and the headwaters. To ignore, drain, or pollute our headwaters is to set in motion consequences that will ripple throughout the entire region. We must cherish and protect them as much as we do the Great Lakes themselves.

Member Bio:
Name: The Ontario Headwaters Institute
Formed: 2003
Recent Effort: "Preserving Ontario's Freshwater", a March 2009 symposium with over 100 attendees
Current Project: "Preserving Ontario's Headwaters", a 20-minute power-point and slide presentation to be ready in the fall of 2009
Website: www.ohwi.ca

Keeping the Native Character of the Great Lakes Alive

By Jim Diana, Michigan Sea Grant Director **http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/upwellings/index.html**

Most people in the Great Lakes are familiar with invasive species. Almost daily we read information about threats of new invasive species moving into the Great Lakes basin. At this point, it should not be a big surprise—invasive species continue to shape the Great Lakes ecosystem. Yet, just because we hear about them and they have become more common doesn't make it any less important of an issue.

Overall, more than 180 non-native aquatic organisms of all types—including plants, fish, algae and mollusks—have become established in the Great Lakes since the 1800s.

Some were introduced intentionally, like the common carp, brought to the U.S. as a food fish in the 1880s and now is probably the most damaging invasive fish species throughout the country. Others on the non-native list include those that found their way through a variety of other means, such as hitchhiking in the ballast water of ocean freighters or arriving as packing material.

Regardless of how a species was introduced, limiting the spread of invasive species is something we can all take on as a personal responsibility. It only takes one careless individual to contribute to the movement of invaders. For example, boaters know that plants should be removed from the boat trailer, the bilge should be drained and flushed and the boat should be washed before transferring it from one body of water to another.

A number of other things should be done to limit the spread of existing invasive species and prevent new invaders from becoming established. In addition to implementing a common and effective approach to ballast water management, it is imperative to stress that the Great Lakes basin has unique species and conditions that do not exist anywhere else.

Sea Grant and many other organizations invest in education and outreach about preserving Great Lakes resources, including native plants, fishes, mussels and other species. An appreciation of our native fauna and flora—and an ethic to fight for their conservation—should be an important concern of all residents of the Great Lakes basin. Nurturing such an ethic will go a long way toward solving the problem of more non-native species becoming introduced within the Great Lakes.

That is what this issue of "Upwellings" aims to do: remind readers that invasive species are still out there and that by each of us doing our part, we can help prevent the introduction of new non-native species and better manage the invasive species that are now part of the Great Lakes ecosystem—our greatest natural resource.

What is Sediment and Why Should I Care? [Adapted from: Marion County SWCD]

Sediment is the #1 water pollutant by volume in the United States. Sediment is the loose sand, clay, silt, and other soil particles that are carried from a site by runoff water that eventually settles at the bottom of streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds. Sediment comes from soil erosion. Water runoff, stormwater from rain or melting snow, flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks, parking lots, across bare soil, through lawns and fields. As it flows, the runoff collects and transports soil as sediment, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, litter, and other potentially toxic pollutants. This water drains directly into storm drains or nearby drainageways into creeks, streams, and rivers most often without receiving any treatment at a sewage plant.

Sediment is the most common pollutant in our waterways. While natural soil erosion produces about 30 percent of waterway sedimentation, accelerated erosion from human modifications of the land accounts for the remaining 70 percent. The most concentrated sediment releases come from construction activities, which can often exceed 100 times that from agricultural use of the land.

Why should you care?

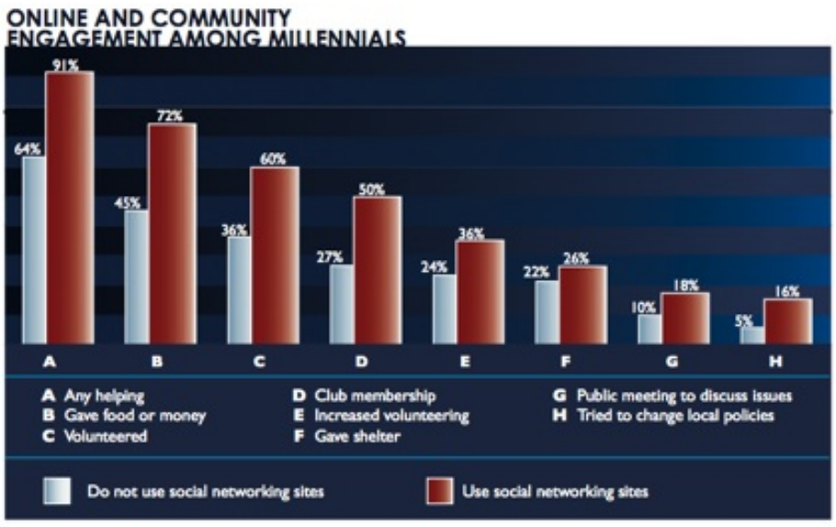
Sediment entering stormwater can cause severe water quality degradation of the waterways that we depend on for our drinking water, that provide fish and wildlife habitat, and that provide us with recreation in the form of swimming, fishing, and boating. Excess sediment can also cause flooding, severe streambank erosion, and undesirable physical and chemical changes to our lakes and ponds. It increases the cost of treating our drinking water and it can affect the odor and taste. Sediment fills up storm drains, catch basins, roadside ditches, and streams creating costly drainage, flooding, and associated problems. Nutrients transported by sediment can activate blue-green algae that release toxins that make swimmers sick. Sediment deposits in rivers can alter the flow of water and reduce water depth, making navigation and recreational use more difficult. Water polluted by sediment disrupts the natural food chain by destroying the habitat of the smallest stream organisms and causing massive declines in fish populations. It can also cause the water to become cloudy, preventing animals from seeing food.
Sediment can clog fish gills, which reduces resistance to disease, lowers growth rates, and affects fish egg and larvae development. Murky water prevents natural vegetation from growing. Sediment pollution causes an estimated $16 billion in environmental damage each year in the U.S.

Truly, an ounce of prevention could save a pound of cure, and free up funds for other priority issues.

"Water Words that Work"

Talking About (Not) My Generation

September 11th, 2009
Author: Environmental Writing Guy



According to the endlessly fascinating America's Civic Health 2009 report, members of America's "Millennial" generation (age 18 to 29) who are active in online social networks participate at higher rates in some activities that are important to nature protection and pollution control experts — like attend a meeting about local policies or try to change those policies, volunteer for a river or beach cleanup, or join a membership organization.

This tells me that the nature protection and pollution control groups that are *stampeding* onto Facebook these days are generally moving in the right direction — even though there is a tremendous amount of hype and unrealistically high expectations about what it takes to actually accomplish something there.

To host a Project WET Certification Workshop, please contact
Angie Tilton, Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources/Natural Resource Education Center- Project WET State Coordinator at projectwet@dnr.state.in.us
The Allen County Partnership for Water Quality/Project WET Facilitator is Matt Jones. You may contact him directly at:
matt.jones@one.usda.gov or 260/484-5848x111

The ACPWQ encourages educators to motivate their students in the following contest:

Allen County Solid Waste Management District

Video Contest

Contest Details

Create a 30 second video about recycling.

Entries must be submitted by February 15, 2010 to www.youtube.com/acswmd1

Winners will be chosen by a panel of judges and announced the week of March 8, 2010.

1st prize-Dell Netbook courtesy of Best Buy

2nd prize-Apple 16 GB IPod courtesy of National Serv-all

Visit our website for more information www.acwastewatcher.org

Watch the winning videos at the 2010 Eco-Film Fest (next Spring-date to be announced)

Teachers, please contact the ACPWQ for coordinating curriculum and/or extra credit

in other news...

United States Department of Agriculture • Natural Resources Conservation Service • P.O. Box 2890
Washington, DC 20013 • Phone: (202) 720-3210 • Web: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov

Contact: Terry Bish 202-720-5974

NRCS ANNOUNCES STRONG INTEREST IN NEW CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP)

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7, 2009— Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Chief Dave White today announced that NRCS has received 21,300 applications to participate in the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). These applications cover an estimated 33 million acres, nationwide.

"NRCS has received enough applications to carry out conservation activities on more than twice the number of acres Congress authorized for CSP this year," White said. "This incredible response shows that conservation-minded producers and landowners want to attain higher levels of conservation stewardship."

Congress capped the annual acreage enrollment nationally at 12,769,000 for each fiscal year. The final national and state-by-state numbers on acreage nationwide will be available in November 2009.

CSP provides financial and technical assistance to eligible agricultural and forestry producers to conserve and enhance soil, water, air and related natural resources on their land, and encourages producers to voluntarily implement more conservation practices and improve, maintain and manage existing ones.

Lands accepted into CSP include cropland, pastureland, rangeland and non-industrial private forestland—a new land use for the program—and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe. Individual landowners/operators, legal entities, corporations and Indian tribes are eligible to apply for CSP assistance.

Those who are not approved for funding through this first sign-up will have the option to participate in the second sign-up period, which will be held from Oct. 1, 2009 through January 2010.

For additional information about CSP, including eligibility requirements, the interim final rule, and to submit comments please visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp or visit your local NRCS field office.

Mercury Found in Every Fish Tested, Report Says

Kristy Meyer, M.S.- Director of Agriculture & Clean Water Programs—Ohio Environmental Council
Thursday, August 20, 2009 3:10 AM

WASHINGTON -- No fish can escape mercury pollution. That's the take-home message from a federal study of mercury contamination released yesterday.
Scientists tested more than a thousand fish from nearly 300 U.S. streams and found the toxic substance in every one.

But while all fish had traces of contamination, only about a quarter had mercury levels exceeding what the Environmental Protection Agency says is safe for people eating average amounts of fish.
The study by the U.S. Geological Survey is the most comprehensive look at mercury in the nation's streams. From 1998 to 2005, scientists collected and tested the fish, including bass, trout and catfish, from 291 streams nationwide.

"This science sends a clear message that our country must continue to confront pollution, restore our nation's waterways and protect the public from potential health dangers," Interior Secretary Ken Salazar said in a statement.

Mercury consumed by eating fish can damage the nervous system and cause learning disabilities in developing fetuses and young children.

The main source of mercury for most of the streams tested, according to the researchers, is emissions from coal-fired power plants.

All but two states -- Alaska and Wyoming -- have issued fish-consumption advisories because of mercury contamination. Some of the streams studied already had warnings.

The mission of the Ohio Environmental Council is to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home.

Historic Funding for the Restoration of the Great Lakes Watersheds; Lake Erie is a Priority

The bill proposing restoration funding to the Great lakes has been signed into law. This legislation brings about the kind of change this region needs. As one-fifth of the world's available freshwater and the world's largest body of freshwater, the restoration is welcomed relief. Efforts to stem invasive species, non point-source pollution, toxic dumping, eutrophication and a hypoxic (dead) zone have stressed the resources, financial and otherwise, of this struggling, post rust-belt region.

The following is the official release from the US EPA/Great Lakes News, announcing the Request For Proposals (RFP):

> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson today announced the release of a request for proposals (RFP) under President Obama's historic Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The RFP released today invites partner Agencies, stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, and other eligible organizations working on Great Lakes restoration to present EPA with ideas and projects to protect and restore this national treasure. EPA, through the Great Lakes National Program Office is seeking applications from a diverse group of participants and partnerships to support the goals of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The RFP is available online at http://epa.gov/greatlakes/fund/2010rfp01
>
> "We're asking for innovative, far reaching, community-based ideas to drive the most aggressive Great Lakes protection effort in decades," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "President Obama and Congress have made clear that there is no time to lose in restoring the water bodies that play a central role in the health, environment, and economies of the Great Lakes communities. This is an unprecedented opportunity for community groups, NGOs and others to partner with the Great Lakes Interagency Task Force to improve the quality of life for millions and serve Great Lakes communities most vulnerable to environmental challenges." (GreatLakesNews is hosted by the Great Lakes National Program Office of USEPA:)

Greg Lake, District Administrator for the Allen County (IN) Soil and Water Conservation District elaborated that Lake Erie, as the most biologically productive of the Great Lakes, is being targeted as a priority, with a specific focus on the Maumee River and the Western Lake Erie Basin. (article submitted by Matt Jones, Water Resource Education Specialist for the Allen County Partnership for Water Quality)

ALLEN COUNTY
PARTNERSHIP FOR
WATER QUALITY

3718 NEW VISION DR.
FORT WAYNE, IN
46845

Last Words:

"In the end, we will conserve only what we love, love only what we understand, and understand only what we are taught."

- Baba Dioum, Ecologist

Upcoming Trainings and Events

LOCATIONS IN ALLEN COUNTY UNLESS NOTED

Nov. 30 LRWP presentation on "Origins and Challenges of the Little River"
Dec. 3-4 Project WET Retreat/Annual Meeting
Jan. 12-14 Regional Farm Show
Feb. 15 Tri-State Conservation Farming Expo (Auburn, IN)
Feb. 24-28 FW Home and Garden show
Mar. 11 Project WET/ACPL "Make a Splash" Librarian Training
Apr. 27 Master Naturalist Watershed Session

TBD- ACPWQ/ACPL Summer Reading Program (Presentation tour of 18 county libraries)

Questions or comments? E-mail us at matt.jones@one.usda.gov
or call 260/484-5848x111

For additional water quality links and resources, please visit:
www.acwater.org