



The South Grand Current

www.SGRWA.org
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Water Quantity

We all understand about water quality, but when is the last time you gave some thought to water quantity? If the tap went dry would that get your attention? What if flood waters inundated the water department facilities and they could not produce clean water for your tap? At times the water quantity becomes as critical to humans as water quality!

In an unaltered ecosystem the rain falls to the ground and is absorbed by the soil. If enough rain falls, runoff occurs taking the water downhill to a drainage and then to a creek and eventually a river. Many rivers have natural levees built up that pool runoff outside the levee in bottom fields creating both temporary and permanent wetlands.

The rain in soils and wetlands slowly filter down to recharge ground water supplies which many of us use for our source of drinking water. A recharged aquifer helps keep rivers charged and maintains a base river flow, even in droughts, which is important to communities that get drinking water from a river as well as to the aquatic ecosystem. When development enters the picture, things get changed. Impervious surfaces like streets, houses, and parking lots do not absorb the rain and quickly drain it off. This causes the drainages from these impervious surfaces to take

in more water from the quick runoff, which leads to erosion and head cutting in the drainage. On a larger scale this causes more flooding as more and more water rapidly flows into the creeks which flow into rivers, and before long you have a situation like the



Blue River in Kansas City where even moderate rains have the potential to cause flooding. As more development in the rivers' drainage area occurs the more flood potential is increased.

To counter the negative effects of flooding and drought, conservation groups like the South Grand River Watershed Alliance (SGRWA) try to educate land developers, landowners, and local governments on some practices that help reduce damage. On a small scale, conservation practices like rain gardens and rain barrels take some of the runoff from impervious surfaces and slowly release them back into the water cycle. On a large scale, wetland development in flood prone areas, as opposed to levees to keep the

water in the river, provide areas for flood waters to expand out, rather than push the water levels up.

So what is a rain garden? It is a shallow depression planted with native plants and grasses that collect runoff from, say, a big parking lot and hold the water rather than let it run off. The benefits are the pollutants are filtered out of the water, reduced runoff means reduced flooding, and the water has the chance to slowly filter back down and recharge the ground water.

Another conservation practice that can conserve water is to use native plants for landscaping. Native plants are adapted to the extremes of heat, cold, wet, and drought with the big added bonus that they require less water and save on the water bill. Native plants are also attractive and rival many non-native species for beauty. Coreopsis flowers in bloom in late summer are a deep golden yellow plus they help feed birds. (www.grownative.org provides sources of native plants)

Do you want to know more about water quantity or quality? Would you like to get more involved in conserving water in your neck of the woods? Then contact the SGRWA at www.sgrwa.org.

—Phil Needham

Hands-On for Water Quality

If you have ever wanted to learn more about Missouri's water resources and how you can contribute to better water quality through direct, hands-on involvement with local streams, Missouri's Stream Team Program will surely provide you with the resources.

Members of a Stream Team can choose from a number of stream-related activities to protect, monitor, and advocate for water quality such as picking up litter along a stream bank; stenciling urban storm drains; planting trees in a riparian corridor; adopting an access; monitoring water quality, etc. The ST Program trains ST members for certification in different levels of



monitoring and provides many of the materials needed for monitoring, litter pick up, and promotional items. Workshops are held at locations throughout the state each year to provide information about stream ecosystems, covering topics such as Understanding Streams, Invasive

Species, Crayfish Identification, Advocacy Workshop, Herpetology Workshop etc.

Individuals can either join an existing Stream Team or form their own. Some of the existing Stream Teams within the South Grand River watershed include the South Grand River Watershed Alliance Stream Team, Amarugia Ridgerunners Stream Team, and Concerned Citizens for Better Development Stream Team. and Teamabe.

Contact info@sgrwa.org for information about these Stream Teams and how to join them. To learn more about the Missouri Stream Team Program, visit www.mostreamteam.org

Local Recipient of Ambassador Award

In August 2011, the Missouri Stream Team Program recognized Hydie Middaugh, Amarugia Ridgerunner Stream Team member and a SGRWA Director, for her contribution to water quality by presenting her with the Ambassador Award for ST activities conducted in 2010. Award recipients were announced at the Annual Missouri Stream Team picnic at Meramec State Park. Hydie leads the Amarugia Ridgerunners ST in Archie in a variety of activities that gets members involved in monitoring water quality, picking up litter, and providing educational events that inform about streams and how to improve the quality of water in the South Grand River and other streams. She also contributes to these efforts as a Director of the SGRWA.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer opportunities for you to help spread the word include:

- Tabling at community events
- Helping with community rain garden maintenance
- Distributing SGRWA information
- Identifying presentation opportunities

volunteer at: info@SGRWA.org

Take Action! Protect the Water You Depend on

There are many actions individuals can take to care for our water resource that promote healthy aquatic ecosystems, and provide beauty and enjoyment.



For many of us, water simply flows from a faucet, and we think little about it beyond this point of contact. We have lost a sense of respect for the wild river, for the complex workings of a wetland, for the intricate web of life that water supports.

—Sandra Postel,
Last Oasis: Facing Water Scarcity

- Conserve water in your household or business.
- Pick up wastes from you pet.
- Protect soil in your landscape from washing away.
- Help increase water quantity by keeping rain where it falls.
- Install a rain barrel and use the water for your landscape needs.
- Install a rain garden.
- Plant long-rooted native plants in your landscape or on your acreage. (*Sources of native plants can be found at www.grownative.org*)
- Do not pour oil or any other substance in a stormwater drain! Remember stormwater entering stormwater drains *is not treated*—it goes directly to a natural stream or drainage.

For information about SGRWA monthly meetings, go to www.SGRWA.org

Why I Stream Team

Growing up in a rural area I didn't know there was such a thing as "after school programming." I never spent the day playing video games and the words "I'm bored" never came out of my mouth unless I was stuck inside. I did, however, know every wooded inch of our family farm. I knew where all the best fishin' holes were and how to find the best skipping stones. I spent my youth tracking bobcats, deer, and turkey. The forests and streams of Missouri were my home away from home and the agents charged with conserving them, my heroes.

Now that I have children of my own in this world of technology I knew I had to expose them to the outdoor world. After a day spent in the Amarugia Highlands Conservation area I got out my *Missouri Conservationist* and found the phone

number I needed. I called Sherri Fischer to find out what I needed to do to start a Stream Team. As it turns out, that phone call was all I needed. Within a month our Stream Team was off and running. The team has grown from fifteen at that first meeting to over fifty just four years later. I have had the opportunity to share my love of the outdoors with friends, family, neighbors and children all over the area.

At that first meeting I asked kids to share why they thought we should Stream Team. Angaleena, 5, went through some Stream Team literature and found a picture of a turtle with its shell grown around a plastic six-pack ring. She held the picture high in the air and said "The animals need us." James, 4, stood up and said "If we don't take care of Mother Earth she will die."

Aiden, 3, announced, "Someone has to clean up after the grown-ups." These statements outta the mouths of babes! It would seem our children better understand the importance of conservation than the adults.

So when asked why I Stream Team I would have to say, "Why wouldn't I?". The Stream Team Program has given me knowledge, purpose and the opportunity to do more!

—Hydie Middaugh

*For Stream Team Information, contact Naomi Gebo, Stream Team Biologist, MDC Fisheries Division, 573-522-4115 x 3598 or email: naomi.gebo@mdc.mo.gov



Snapshots 2011 SGRWA



Recap: SGRWA 2011 Activities to Promote Water Quality and Quantity

Rain Garden/Native Plant Meadow

- Designed and constructed a Community Rain Garden and a one-acre native plant meadow at the Peculiar Lions Club Community Building.

Grant Awards

- MARC Water Quality awarded grant funding to the SGRWA for a Community Rain Garden and one-acre Native Plant Meadow at the Peculiar Lions Club Community Building.
- Missouri Stream Team Watershed Coalition awarded a Pat Jones grant to the SGRWA for the purpose of renovating the SGRWA website.
- Community Development Block Grant administered through MARC was awarded the SGRWA to develop an inventory of Cass County residences within the flood plain and to develop an education outreach package designed for grassroots citizens and as an aid in flood related planning efforts.



- Raymore-Peculiar Botany class about function of rain gardens to improve water quality and quantity.

Community Events Tabling

- Cass County Fair—attendees learned about stream dynamics through stream table demonstrations and educational pamphlets were distributed.
- Water Festival in Butler: Attendees received information about the

SGRWA and topics on water quality.

Maintenance of Community Rain Gardens

- SGRWA with help from Community Service workers did maintenance work on rain gardens installed in previous years by the SGRWA: Cass County Justice Center, Harrisonville Elementary, Pleasant Hill Intermediate and Middle Schools.

Participation in Missouri Water Summit 2011

- The SGRWA Board of Directors was represented at the Summit by two Directors who participated with stakeholders throughout Missouri in developing 10 priorities for wise, sustainable use of Missouri's water resources. *(these priorities as well as presentations can be accessed at www.confedmo.org/watersummit)*

Ambassador Award:

- SGRWA Director and Amarrugia Stream Team member, Hydie Middaugh, received the Stream Team Ambassador Award for her contribution to water quality.

Presentations

- Rain Gardens, Native Plantings and How They Contribute to Water Quality presented to the,

Yes, I want to join the South Grand River Watershed Alliance and help protect and restore water quality.

Memberships/donations are fully tax deductible and run from January 1 through December 31

Name (please print) _____ Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Membership type: ___ Individual (\$10); ___ Family (\$15); ___ Business/Organization (\$50)

___ Government (\$100); ___ Donation(\$____) ___ New Member; ___ Renewing Member

I can help with: ___ Planning; ___ Outreach/Education; ___ Community Events; ___ Distributing brochures etc.

Make checks payable to SGRWA and mail to: SGRWA, 10807 E. 205th St., Peculiar, Mo. 64078