



C.R.O.W. JOINT POWERS

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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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How can I get involved?

Are you looking for something to do this summer? Do you enjoy being outside? Would you like to increase your knowledge on natural resource/conservation issues? Would you like to become involved in your community? If you answered yes to any of the following questions and live in the Crow River Watershed, than become involved in a Crow River Watershed Program. Portions of 10 counties make up the Crow River Watershed: Carver, Hennepin, Kandiyohi, McLeod, Meeker, Pope, Renville, Sibley, Stearns and Wright Counties. The following is a list of community programs in the Crow River Watershed offered by the Crow River Organization of Water (C.R.O.W.).

Citizen Stream Monitoring Program:

Volunteers participating in the Citizen Stream Monitoring Program (CSMP) receive a transparency tube, rain gauge, data sheets and instructions. Once a week from April to October (and following large rainfall events when possible) volunteers visits an established spot on a nearby stream, tributary, or ditch and measure: transparency, rainfall, water level, appearance and recreational suitability.

Participation the CSMP will enhance your understanding of streams in the Crow River Watershed. Information collected will be sent to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and become part of the state wide Citizen Stream Monitoring Program. The CSMP records can indicate where runoff may be contributing sediment and other pollutants into streams. CSMP records can serve as yardsticks to measure improvements or declines in water quality. Natural resource employees can use CSMP data to detect water quality problems and help decide if additional assessments or actions are needed to protect and improve water quality. The CROW is especially interested in finding volunteers to monitor tributaries to the Crow River.

Storm Drain Stenciling:

Storm drains are designed to carry rainwater and snow melt runoff from streets to nearby water bodies. Storm drain stenciling is an educational activity that calls attention to the fact that everything that enters a

storm drain may end up in a local stream, river, wetland, or lake. A water treatment plant does not treat storm water; so pollutants like trash, grass clippings and chemicals flow directly to the water body.

Storm drains collect pollutants washed off from driveways, streets and sidewalks. Oil, gas, leaves, grass clippings and garbage enter rivers and lakes through storm drains. These pollutants impact the water quality, which affect recreation use, fish and plant species.

Volunteers participating in the storm drain stenciling program paint a slogan on storm drains and distributes literature to surrounding homes. The stencil states, “Don’t Dump-Drains to River”, while the literature explains proper disposal of yard waste, motor oil and household cleaning solvents. This is a great program for youth groups to participate in.

River Clean Up Program:

River Clean Up Program utilizes the MN DNR’s Adopt-a-River program. The Adopt-a-River program is similar to the Adopt-a-Highway Program. Volunteers donate their time to clean up a stretch of river or stream once or twice a year.

The River Clean Up Program is a great outdoor activity that provides interaction with local residents, students and community groups.

River Watch Program:

River Watch Program allows students to collect bugs and identify them from local rivers and streams. The bugs collected are tiny and live on the bottom and are known as benthic macroinvertebrates.

Macroinvertebrates are visible animals without backbones. Benthic macroinvertebrates include aquatic insects-stoneflies, mayflies, caddis flies, as well as worms, snails and leaches. By measuring the number and variety of bugs, it can provide a good indication as to what’s happening in the river. Some bugs tolerate pollution, where others do not. The River Watch program provides public awareness and education in water quality issues. It allows school students hands-on learning experience, opportunity to “do” scientific research, outdoor learning, and understand natural resources and water quality issues of their community.

The C.R.O.W. will help train teachers on monitoring techniques, loan monitoring equipment to the schools and assist with invertebrate monitoring. The C.R.O.W. will also work with teachers and students in the classroom to provide background information on how aquatic invertebrates can be used to provide information about the water quality in a stream.

This program is not limited to schools; it is open to 4-H groups, boy and girl scouts or community groups.

Support your local watershed efforts. Small efforts by individuals can add up to make a substantial difference. Contact Diane Sander at the Crow River Organization of Water (C.R.O.W.) 763-682-1933 Ext. 3 or diane.sander@mn.usda.gov to find out more information.