



E-Currents

Electronic Newsletter of the Crow River Organization of Water

March 2007

Stream and Lake Monitoring Training for Volunteers

The CROW is teaming up with the Middle Fork Crow Watershed District, and Minnesota Waters to offer two FREE volunteer lake and stream monitoring training workshops. The intent of the workshops is to provide volunteers with the knowledge and tools necessary to conduct monitoring on surface waters in the Crow River Watershed.

Anyone interested in learning about volunteer options in the Crow River Watershed is invited to attend. There is no commitment required by attending the workshop. Volunteer water monitors will learn sampling methods, data collection and record keeping tips.

Participants will be provided with materials, equipment and lunch free of charge. All current volunteers are encouraged to attend to learn about updates and obtain a refresher in proper sampling techniques. Additionally, volunteers on up to 10 lakes and 10 stream sites will be eligible to receive funding for monitoring surface water chemistry (Total Phosphorus, Chlorophyll a, etc).

The first training session will take place on March 31 in Maple Lake, and the second will be in Spicer on April 28.

The workshops are offered at no charge, but registration is required. Please contact Diane Sander at 763-682-1933 Ext. 3 or Julie Klocker at 320-796-0888 if you are interested in attending.

These training sessions are part of a two year volunteer monitoring enhancement grant through the MPCA. Funding was made possible by the Minnesota Legislature approval of the Clean Water Legacy Act.

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CROW begins Strategic Planning Process

The CROW was created in 1999 in an effort to ensure more local involvement in watershed restoration efforts. Since our inception we have been working with our partners on a variety of efforts that we feel will result in an overall improvement in the water quality of the Crow River. However, in any successful endeavor it is necessary for an organization to take the time to review its progress and determine what course it would like to take in the future. On January 26, 2007, the CROW began a process to do just that.

The University of Minnesota is assisting the CROW in developing a Strategic Plan. The first step in this process took place on January 26, when we worked with our partners during a six hour facilitated session that explored the current efforts of the CROW, identified upcoming opportunities and discussed potential improvements in the overall mission of the CROW.

Over 75 partners from across the watershed took part in the January 26 session. The contributions from our partners were used by the CROW staff and Board the following week as we began to reexamine our mission and our current workload. We are currently working on long and short term goals for the CROW.

Our progress on the strategic plan and goal setting process was interrupted by our recent snowstorms, but will resume at the next Joint Powers Board Meeting. We would like to sincerely thank everyone who assisted us during the first planning session and we will keep you informed as we progress. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Upper Mississippi River Source Water Protection Project for funding this effort.

Conservation Pays: Bank on the Future

The third annual Regional Earth Day Event "Conservation Pays: Bank on the Future" is planned for **Saturday, April 21, 2007** at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center in Spicer, Minnesota. This year's event will seek to connect everyday lifestyle choices with environmental issues such as: water, energy, & climate.

The event will run 8:00 am to 1:00 pm with a complimentary omelet breakfast and concurrent exhibit booths. The event will include children's activities, live music and renewable energy demonstrations. Keynote speaker J. Drake Hamilton will speak on how our lifestyle choices can "bank on the future". A legislative panel will address local and federal laws and policies regarding Agriculture, Renewable Energy, Water Quality, & Environmental Protection. The CROW is working in cooperation with the Chippewa River Watershed Project, the Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project the Middle Fork Crow Watershed District, the Kandiyohi SWCD, the DNR and the Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center on the event.