



Volunteer water monitors being trained on May 6 at Cambridge. (Photo submitted by Janice Redford)

Water worlds: the Rock River Basin

By Janice Redford
Special to the Lakes Edition

Water is a main attraction to living and visiting south-central Wisconsin. There are groups and organizations dedicated to maintaining and watching over the surface waters of the area.

The Rock River Coalition is dedicated to water and the Rock River Basin that surrounds south-central Wisconsin, an area that includes 3,800 square miles of land, with 3,932 miles of streams and 150 lakes.

On a bright sun-lit Saturday in May, 22 volunteers from two counties and three trainers (plus this author) converged upon the Amundson Center in Cambridge for a water monitor training course including indoor instruction and stream-side work, plus wading into the Koshkonong Creek at its high level with rapidly flowing water. The training was sponsored by not only the Rock River Coalition (RRC), but also the Jefferson County Land and Water Conservation Department and the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department Office of Lakes and Watersheds.

The volunteers learned the processes of gathering data on dissolved oxygen, water clarity, turbidity, biotic index and temperature. Each team was supplied with the equipment to successfully gather the information and then enter it into the "Water Action Volunteer" database that works with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin. Over time, the water statistics can tell the story of the health of waterways and surface water in Wisconsin. Currently, 65 percent of the surface water within the Rock River Basin is listed as "impaired" and thus in need

of corrective measures. Hundreds of water monitors are recruited and trained as "Citizen Scientists" in all parts of the state and they give thousands of work hours to the project each year.

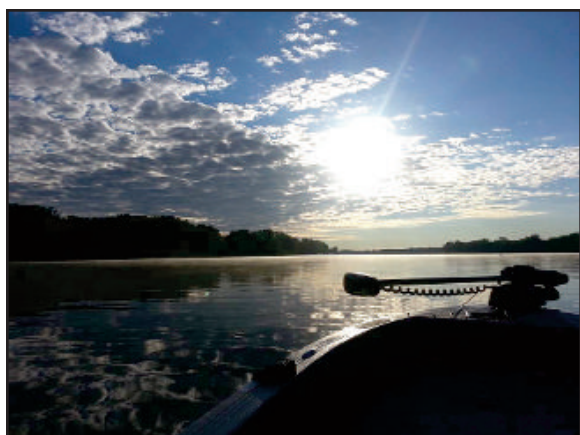
The RRC was founded in 1994 and has been training volunteers as water monitors for the past 16 years. In 2016, the RRC supported 181 citizen volunteers who monitored 100 different sites within the Rock River Basin. The coalition explores new and innovative ways to achieve water quality goals and reduce sediment and phosphorus in the waterways.

"Volunteer citizens play a crucial role in protecting and improving our water resources because they collect data that can be used to make resource decisions," said Patricia Cicero, Water Resource Specialist for the Jefferson County Land and Resources Department.

Susan Sandford, the Strategic Engagement Coordinator for the Dane County Office of Lakes and Watersheds, helped to train the volunteers along with the RRC's Nancy Sheehan.

Volunteers are trained and assigned a specific site on a stream for the monitoring season that runs from May until October each year. The volunteers start as level one monitors for the first year, then they may continue with advanced training into level two or three, which could include e-Coli, special biotic index studies, total phosphorus or other chemical research. Some teams have been volunteering for more than 16 years within the Rock River Basin.

Anyone with interest in learning more about citizen scientist projects or the work of the coalition should contact the RRC at info@rockrivercoalition.org, www.rockrivercoalition.org or on Facebook.



Rock River sunrise. (Photo courtesy of Adam Walton of Pike Pole Fishing Guide Services)

EPAC

EDGERTON
PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER

PRESENTS

The Wartmann

Artist Series
2017-2018

RONNIE MILSAP

10.21.17 • 7:30 PM



BARRAGE 8

11.18.17 • 7:30 PM



TRANSIT AUTHORITY

1.27.18 • 7:30 PM



CANTUS

3.17.18 • 7:30 PM



Tickets

Call 608-561-6093 - Or by mail to:
Edgerton School District - Attn: WEpac Tickets
200 Elm High Dr., Edgerton, WI 53534

Tickets also available at
www.edgerton.k12.wi.us/EPAC
Ticket Series - \$150



- All performances are partially funded by the Wartmann Endowment for the Performing Arts Center -