

USRWA NEWS

For Friends of the Upper Sugar River

Fall 2010

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A Message from the President

Submitted by Lisa Keen, President

There have been a number of changes at the USRWA lately, as many of you know. Our Executive Director of 4 years, Becky Olson, resigned in January. It took many months of advertising for the position, evaluating the dozen submitted resumes, decisions about who to interview, and then coordinating times between 3 directors and each of the 3 candidates for a meeting. Then came the decision about who would be the best fit for the Association. While any of the 3 candidates would have done a good job, the Board of Directors felt that Megan Phillips had both the knowledge and people skills that would benefit the USRWA.

During this time, Steve Haak resigned as well from the Board, having served as President of the Association since its inception. His last meeting was in May and he will be sorely missed. He brought a great knowledge of the watershed and a calm demeanor when others were upset. I can only hope that I can do half of what he was able to accomplish. For those of you that don't know me, I have been on the Board of Directors since May of 2001. I've served as Treasurer and as Secretary at different times. I was invited to join the USRWA as a member shortly after it became an association by Marie Johnson, who was on the board at that time. My husband Bill and I attended meetings periodically to see where our money was going and what was happening in the area. Treasurer at that time, Frank Fetter told us to be careful because that was a good way to be nominated to the board. His words rang true in May of 2001 when there was an opening. As I didn't have a good excuse to say no, and they were willing to take a chance on me, I agreed. I haven't regretted that decision since. It's a great joy to know I am making a difference in this beautiful area. My professional life is serving as the microbiology lead technician at Dean Clinic. Bill and I have lived in the Town of Verona for 18 years with our 18 year old cat.

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A Message from the President

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So, you may be asking, where is the USRWA heading? The board of directors is working on a revised strategic plan and evaluating our bylaws. Financially, we are holding steady. For additional funding news, please see the article on the endowment fund. We are continuing with citizen monitoring and hoping to start a similar watershed group in the lower and middle Sugar River area. We held our annual Paddle and Pigout in Paoli, partnering with a Belleville Scout group for food. We also worked that day with Capital Water Trails and Sugar River Sports for the canoe trips. We continue to host our Annual meetings in February and plans are already underway for the 2011 gathering. We have a redesigned website! Check it out!

We welcome any suggestions from the public for feedback on what we're doing and what we should be doing. We also have 2 vacancies on our board. If you'd like to take a more active interest in the direction that the USRWA is going, or are just looking for something to do on the second Monday of the month, please contact Megan for an application form. If there is anything we can do for you, please contact Megan, me or any of the directors.

Lake Belle View Restoration Project: A Crystal Clear Vision

Submitted by Jon Radloff, Treasurer

Montgomery Associates, a water resources consulting firm located in Cottage Grove, is leading a multidisciplinary team to restore Lake Belle View in the Village of Belleville. The lake is a former millpond with poor water quality due to nutrient loading, shallow water due to sedimentation, very little aquatic vegetation, and a fishery dominated by carp. The Village has been working to restore Lake Belle View for over 30 years.

After considering ten alternatives, the selected restoration plan includes construction of an earthen berm to separate a portion of the lake from Sugar River flows, which will reduce sediment and nutrient loads to the separated portion of the lake and will allow establishment of native aquatic vegetation and a diverse fishery. The berm will also connect north shore neighborhoods to downtown with a bicycle/pedestrian trail. Portions of the lake will be dredged to improve recreation and fish habitat, and dredge spoils will be used to create new island wetlands on which native floodplain forest will be established. The project is currently under construction and refilling of the lake is expected to begin next summer.



Left: The Lake Belle View Restoration Project ground-breaking event was held on August 6, 2010. Pictured from left to right: Madison Community Foundation - Bob Sorge, Lake Committee Chair - Joe Donlin, Dane County Executive - Kathleen Falk, Village Administrator - April Little, WI Senator - Jon Erpenbach, WI DNR Secretary - Matt Frank, Village President - Terry Kringle, Montgomery Associates Engineer - Jeff Hruby

A Message from the Executive Director

Submitted by Megan Phillips, Executive Director

This time last year I was entering my final semester working on a Biological Aspects of Conservation degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and had no idea what my future career would entail. My previous work at the Center for Limnology had given me extensive aquatic research experience and fostered my interest in aquatic systems ecology. I also served as an intern at the Madison non-profit organization Clean Wisconsin, where I learned about the power of grassroots organizing and stakeholder involvement when it comes to solving environmental issues. These valuable experiences have brought me to my current position, where I plan to dedicate my skills and experience to developing strategic and effective solutions to ecological and social concerns within the Upper Sugar River watershed.

I am ecstatic to serve as your new Executive Director. While with the USRWA, I hope to secure the funding to tackle several major issues in the watershed, including fighting the spread of invasive species, nonpoint source pollution, and improving in stream habitat. I also aspire to collaborate with other local non-profit groups to organize conservation-related community events.

Although I have several goals and ideas of my own, I would love to hear from the membership. I had the opportunity to meet some of you at the annual Paddle & Pig Out event. However, if we haven't had a chance to chat, please feel free to stop by the USRWA office located at 207 E. Main Street in Mt. Horeb. I am in the office Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM. I look forward to meeting you and discussing ways to serve our watershed and community.

Be 'Burn Wise' this Winter

If you're burning wood this winter, you can have a cheaper, safer and healthier fire by following these tips:

- Burn only dry, seasoned wood. It's better for the air and your wallet. Dry seasoned wood is more efficient at heating your home and can add up to significant savings over the winter. Look for wood that is darker, has cracks in the end grain, and sounds hollow when hit against another piece of wood or consider using a wood moisture meter.
- Never burn painted or treated wood or trash as these can release a variety of toxic air emissions.
- Maintain your wood stove or fireplace and have a certified technician inspect it yearly. A certified technician can clean dangerous soot from your chimney and keep your wood stove or fireplace working properly, which reduces your risk of a home fire.
- Replace an old, inefficient stove with an EPA-certified wood stove or fireplace insert. These models are more efficient than older models and keep your air cleaner, your home safer and your fuel bill lower, while keeping you warm. An estimated 12 million Americans heat their homes with wood stoves each winter, and nearly three-quarters of these stoves are not EPA-certified. EPA-certified wood stoves emit 70% less particle pollution and are approximately 50% more energy efficient than wood stoves manufactured before 1990. Go to the U.S. EPA's Burn Wise website for more information: <http://www.epa.gov/burnwise/>
- If you have another source of heat, do not use your fireplace or wood stove on winter days that are forecast to be Clean Air Action Days for fine particle pollution.

Paddle & Pig-Out Report



Congratulations to our raffle winners!

Kayak donated by Payne & Dolan: Stephanie Reneau

Rain Garden Design w/ Native Plant Gift Certificate

donated by Montgomery Associates and JF New: Diane Bauman

Rain Barrel donated by the USRWA: Brian Wallace

Native Plant \$50 Gift Certificate donated by JF New: Nate Hammersly

Native Plant \$50 Gift Certificate donated by JF New: Chris Cramer

All donated by Ruegsegger Farms:

Two grass fed beef burgers with the works, dine in: Mike Crisman

One pound package of grass-fed ground beef: Robb Kahl

One pound package of grass-fed ground beef: Nora Vrakas

One Grass-fed Beef Chuck Roast: Karl Gmur

One package of two bone in "pastured" pork chops: Carolynne Larsen

One - 1/2 "pastured" chicken: Monica Olmschenk

\$20 Gift Certificate, courtesy of Trillium Natural Foods: Derek Grisbeck

\$20 Gift Certificate, courtesy of the Grumpy Troll Brewery and Restaurant: Bill Weltin

\$20 Gift Certificate, courtesy of the Grumpy Troll Brewery and Restaurant: Ryan Oehlhof

\$10 Gift Certificate, courtesy of Dee's Cheeses N More: Mike Crisman

Fly Fishing Sling Pack, courtesy of Orvis: Dennis Moungen

\$30 Gift Certificate, courtesy of Willy St. Co-op: Jim Grant

Assorted Merchandise, courtesy of Fontana Sports: Brian Wallace

Handmade reusable bag filled w/ bird feeder and seed, made by Lisa Keen: Bill Weltin

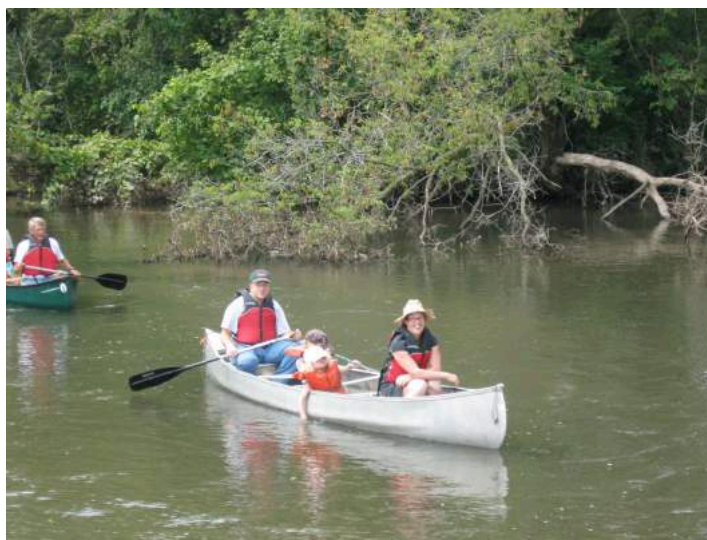
\$5 Gift Certificate courtesy of Tuvalu Coffee: Greg Mattlin

\$5 Gift Certificate courtesy of Tuvalu Coffee: John La Conte

\$5 Gift Certificate courtesy of Tuvalu Coffee: Nora Vrakas

\$5 Gift Certificate courtesy of Tuvalu Coffee: Greg Mattlin

\$5 Gift Certificate courtesy of Tuvalu Coffee: Christina Rose



Paddle & Pig-Out Report

Submitted by Lisa Keen, President

Sixty-one people attended the 4th Annual Paddle & Pig-Out in Paoli on August 21, 2010. The festivities were based at Paoli Park. Forty-one people participated in the canoe trips which ran from the Bruce Company Farm to the Paoli Mill. (Four people brought their own kayaks and did their own shuttling in the morning). Other activities included tie-dyeing the old white and blue T-shirts and face painting for the kids. A T-shirt with a Paddle & Pig-Out logo was created and displayed. These shirts are printed on recycled cotton and there are some still available for purchase. Contact Megan at the office if you are interested. We also have some old T-shirts, as well as denim shirts, note cards and holiday cards in our "store." This year we were entertained by the folk rock band "Down from the Hills."

There were 16 people who volunteered before, during and after the event. Can we count on you to help next year? Volunteers are needed for many different tasks, including river clean-up days and weeks before the event and securing trailers and canoes and raffle prizes. Day-of-event activities include selling raffle tickets, merchandise and food sales, registering guests, and leading canoe trips. Help is also needed after the event with loading the canoe trailers, washing and returning canoes, and returning items back to the office. If you'd like to volunteer for this or any other event, contact the office and we'd be glad to find a spot for you.

Thirteen individuals and/or businesses donated prizes for the raffle, but we could always use more! We also received truck and trailer use from 4 people/businesses, including Rutabaga, Sugar River Sports, Steve Falter of Capital Water Trails and Bill Keen. We also used a pop-up canopy tent for life jackets, but we could always use more if you have one to spare for the day. Huge thanks goes to the Bruce Company for letting us use their land for canoe launchings.

The Belleville Boy Scouts once again sold food to help feed the crowd. They sold steak and chicken sandwiches, along with hot dogs, chips and drinks. Our thanks to them for taking care of the food this year. If you would like to help with this part of the day, please contact Megan in the office.

It was a very good day for all those who participated or volunteered. Contact Megan at the office if you would like to help out in any way next year, or if you have any suggestions on how to improve the event.

Grant Updates

The USRWA has recently finished work on several exciting grant projects:

Volunteer Citizen-Based Stream Monitoring:

This year the USRWA monitoring teams gathered monthly data at 9 sites within the Upper Sugar River watershed as a part of our Citizen Based Stream Monitoring grant. It was our goal to expand the monitoring program to include the Middle and Lower Sugar River as well.

A group of volunteers were trained on the WAV techniques in August, and have begun to establish their own sites in the Lower Sugar River. An interest in creating a Lower Sugar River Watershed group was expressed at the September 26 paddle from CTH EE to Albany. The formation of this group will greatly benefit the area and tackle issues such as carp control and nutrient loading. The USRWA intends to collaborate with this nascent organization on future conservation projects and grants.

Grant Updates

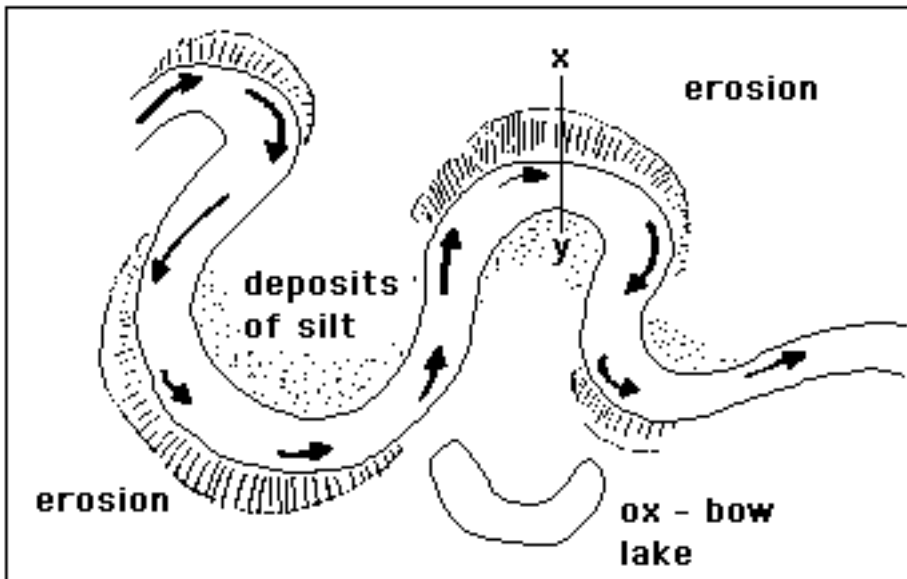
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Floodplain Lakes Ecological Survey:

Oxbow lakes are formed when a meander from the main stem of a river is cut off to form a lake. These bodies of water are rarely the object of scientific study; therefore we don't know as much about them as we would like. The USRWA paired up with Dave Marshall (Underwater Habitat Investigations) to survey oxbows along the Sugar River to determine which species can survive in these types of habitats.

We were very excited to find the once endangered Starhead Topminnow in oxbows along the Lower Sugar River. This species prefers still waters that are clear to slightly turbid with plenty of aquatic plants below the surface of the water. This finding sparks a need for more habitat restoration efforts in the Sugar River watershed. The fact that these oxbow lakes can support a species like the Starhead Topminnow has positive implications for its ability to host other important fish species.

Map showing the formation of Meanders



- (Top left): Example of how an oxbow lake is formed.
- (Top right): The Starhead Topminnow, found in several oxbow lakes in the Lower Sugar River region.
- (Bottom left): Megan Phillips, Dave Marshall, and Kurt Welke sample an oxbow in Belleville. Although they were expecting to see some carp, none were found. Instead they spotted several Big-Mouth Buffalo, which are a native species more often associated with larger Mississippi River tributaries.



Visit our Store

We have plenty of merchandise for sale at our online store. Visit www.usrwa.org and click the "Store" tab to shop, or stop by the office Monday or Wednesday 9am-5pm.

You may also send in a check for the items that you wish to purchase and we can mail them to you. Please include which size(s) you would like. Send checks to:

USRWA
PO BOX 314
Mt. Horeb, WI 53572

These items make great gifts for the holidays!

USRWA Store Price List

Item	Member	Non-member	Sizes
Sage Green Paddle & Pig-Out Tee (recycled cotton)	\$10	\$15	S, M, L
Classic White USRWA Tee	\$6	\$10	S, L, XXL, XXXL
Denim Shirt w/ Embroidered Logo	\$20	\$25	L, XL, XXL, XXXL
Rain Barrels	\$75	\$75	
Note Cards	12/\$12 or 24/\$20	12/\$15 or 24/\$25	
Holiday Cards	12/\$15 or 24/\$25	12/\$18 or 24/\$28	



Get to Know Your USRWA Board

Executive Director- Megan Phillips

Megan has lived in Madison for the past four years. When she's not working at the Mt. Horeb office she is employed by the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center on the UW-Madison campus. In her spare time, Megan enjoys hiking, reading short stories and poetry, and taking a leisurely inner tube float down the Sugar River.

President- Lisa Keen

Lisa has been a member of the USRWA since it became an Association and a Director since May 2001. She has also served as Treasurer and Secretary in the past. Lisa has been employed as a Medical Laboratory Technician at Dean Medical Center for the past 18 years and has lived in the Town of Verona for the past 18 years. Her husband Bill serves on the Town of Verona Open Space and Parks Commission and has served on the Town and City Merger committee. Bill and Lisa started an endowment fund for the USRWA.

Vice President- Bill Buglass

Bill is employed by Payne and Dolan, Inc. The company operates a gravel pit in the watershed and has two asphalt plants in Dane County. He has been attending watershed meetings and/or have been on the board since about the mid 1990's. Both Bill and his company believe strongly in protecting and preserving the natural assets we are so fortunate to have all around us. They are very proud of the work the association and its members have done to improve the resource for everyone.

Secretary- Marty Cieslik

Marty was born and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison receiving two Bachelor of Science degrees, the first from the College of Letters & Science (Geography) and the second from the College of Engineering (Civil & Environmental Engineering). He has worked in the environmental field for over 30 years with over 20 years in environmental consulting. He currently works for the City of Verona as the Assistant Director of Public Works. His duties at the City of Verona include storm water management and compliance. He is married with two daughters and lives in Madison.

Treasurer- Jon Radloff

Jon lives in Mount Horeb and has served on the USRWA Board of Directors since 2008. He has always had an innate interest in water and water quality so is glad to be working as a water resources engineer at Montgomery Associates : Resource Solutions (MARS), a consulting firm based in Cottage Grove where he designs stormwater treatment facilities for developing areas and assisting municipalities with their diverse and challenging stormwater issues. He is also involved in private pond design, stream and lake rehabilitation, water conservation and re-use through rain gardens and rain barrels, and serving on stormwater technical committees. Jon's interests include spending time with family, camping, fishing, biking, kayaking, playing/coaching baseball, geocaching, and playing with dirt, water, and plants (gardening).

Board Member- Pat Downing

Pat is a Luthier & Piano Tuner/Technician, Town of Perry Chair, & Dane County Supervisor, serving on the Environment, Agriculture & Natural Resources and Land Conservation Committees. He also makes Bluegrass & Cajun Music in his spare time and counts canoe sailing and camping among his favorite leisure time activities.

Board Member- Dan Salas

Dan lives in Madison and has been a USRWA board member for four years. He has worked in the field of ecological restoration, resource management, and conservation planning for fourteen years. His experience includes a variety of issues related to the watershed including invasive plant control, conservation planning, and the design and installation of stream, forest, and wetland restoration projects. He is an ecologist with JFNew, an ecological consulting company located in Verona.

Board Member- Adam Ingwell

Adam is an ecologist with 16 years of working experience comprised of production ecology, restoration ecology, natural areas management, and wetland sciences. He began his working career at a small native plant nursery outside of Mt. Horeb, in the Upper Sugar River Watershed. Adam is currently employed by NES Ecological Services, a division of Robert E. Lee & Associates, where he provides field & restoration services for utility projects throughout southern WI, conducts local restoration and invasive species management projects, and provides wetland delineation & regulatory services for a variety of clientele. When not working, Adam enjoys spending time with his family at their home near New Glarus WI.

Don't Leaf Your Lakes

Information contributed from Marcia Hartwig, Madison Storm Water Education Coordinator

Your lakes are beautiful and provide fun activities like swimming, fishing, boating, water skiing, bird watching and more. But Dane County lakes and streams need your help. Whatever is in the street may end up in the nearest lake or stream after the next rain. Do your part by keeping the street in front of your house free of leaves and debris. Because leaves account for a significant portion of the algae-feeding nutrients in your lakes and streams, we can all help reduce the impact.

Learn About the Leaf Collection Program in Your Municipality:

- Call your municipality or go to their web site for information on leaf collection requirements and schedules.
- At www.myfairlakes.com you can find links to your municipality by clicking on “Madison Area Municipal Storm Water Partnership.”
- Generally, leaves placed for pickup should be placed on the terrace between the sidewalk and the street.
- Wet the leaves down or put a tarp over them to stop them from blowing into the street.
- Bag your leaves if your terrace is very narrow (make sure your municipality allows bagging).
- Bags should contain only leaves and be open at the top for easy emptying.
- Raking leaves into the street is prohibited in most municipalities and could result in a fine. Street sweeping is not intended to pick up piles of leaves.

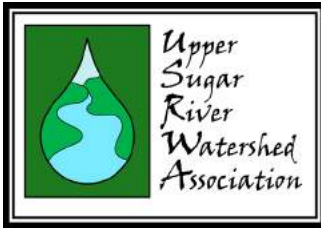
Calling all Photographers!

The USRWA is having its first watershed photo contest!

Send us a photo of yourself or your family enjoying all that the watershed has to offer, or a simple shot of something that you find interesting or beautiful as you are out enjoying the autumn weather. If your photo is selected as the winner, it will be featured in our next issue of the USRWA News and you will receive a prize from our store.

Please submit photos via e-mail to usrwa@usrwa.org by December 1, 2010. Photos should be in .jpg format.

Questions? Call Megan at 608-437-7707.



Non-profit
Organization
Postage Paid
Mt. Horeb, WI
Permit No. 5

USRWA
PO Box 314
207 E. Main
Mt. Horeb, WI 53572
(608) 437-7707
usrwa@usrwa.org
Return Service Requested

Do you want to help the Sugar River Watershed forever?

You can, by contributing to the Upper Sugar River Watershed Fund through the Natural Resource Foundation.

In 2005, the Natural Resources Foundation created the Wisconsin Conservation Endowment to build a permanent and sustainable source of private funding for the conservation, protection and management of Wisconsin's rich natural resources.

The Wisconsin Conservation Endowment is a permanently endowed fund comprised of numerous individual named funds (Upper Sugar River Watershed is one of 47) that are pooled, invested and managed as a whole.

In 2008, Bill and Lisa Keen started an acorn (not fully funded) endowment fund in memory of Elinor Keen. This fund, when fully endowed, will provide up to 5% of each year's gain, to the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association.

This year, the first \$3500 donated to the fund will be matched. If the goal is met, the fund will become endowed and the Upper Sugar River Watershed will have a source of income forever. As the fund grows, the budgeting for each year will become less stressful and more stable.

If you would like to contribute to the fund, please donate to the Upper Sugar River Watershed Fund through the Natural Resource Foundation. Send a check written to the Natural Resource Foundation with Upper Sugar River Watershed Fund on the memo line of your check. Send it to:

Natural Resource Foundation, Attn: Upper Sugar River Watershed Fund, PO Box 2317, Madison, WI 53701.

You can also visit their website (<http://www.wisconservation.org/>) to contribute.