



Current Events



The Newsletter of the Arkansas Stream Team

Volume 12, Number 2

April – June 2008

Make Plans Now to Attend the 2008 Arkansas Stream Team AND AWAG Conference



That's right, the **Arkansas Stream Teams** and the **Arkansas Watershed Advisory Group (AWAG)** are partnering to host the 2008 AWAG/Stream Team Conference. In years past, the Arkansas Stream Team and the Arkansas Watershed Advisory Group have usually held a biennial conference every other year. The two organizations will co-host the 2008 Watershed Conference in an effort to conserve resources and also in the hopes of demonstrating to watershed groups and Stream Teams alike that the two groups work well together.

Conference Keynote Speakers

Conference Keynote Speakers will open the conference with a holistic explanation of the watershed approach followed by a local perspective. Our keynote speakers include Tom Davenport, Region 5 USEPA. Gene Dunaway is the past president of the Friends of the North Fork/White River (FNFWR).

The AWAG/Stream Team Conference will offer workshops, presentations, a watershed tour, discussions and a poster session for its participants. Over a three-day period, environmental experts, watershed group leaders, science education instructors, and natural resource specialists will provide information to equip communities with leaders that have the skills necessary to guide their community in making informed decisions about their water resources. For more information, contact Steve Filipek at 501-223-6369 or sfilipek@agfc.state.ar.us or Ellen McNulty at 501-682-0022 or mcnulty@adeq.state.ar.us.

The Arkansas Watershed Advisory Group (AWAG) is a "working group" of representatives of 45 agencies, organizations, and citizens interested in promoting the watershed approach in Arkansas. AWAG is hosted and funded through the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality.

Pre-conference Workshops and AGFC Watershed Tour
Pre-Conference training sessions will be held on Thursday, October 30th. These sessions are designed to offer specialized training to various individuals attending the conference. A brief description of the pre-conference watershed tour and workshops is given below. Space is limited in the workshops and watershed tour so please register early to reserve your training slot. These workshops will include:

- **AGFC Stream Team Watershed Tour and Training**
- **USEPA Funding Workshop**
- **Projects WET, WILD, and Learning Tree**

This year's conference will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas at the newly renovated Hilton Little Rock Metro Center. The training offered at this conference will be useful to anyone living in Arkansas and surrounding states. The Plenary Session topic is Climate Change, Drought and Water Conservation. Conference participants will hear from a variety of speakers with expertise in addressing climate change and the effects on our water resources. Other topics will include Natural Gas Exploration, Pharmaceuticals in Arkansas's Waters, Local Watershed Protection, Water Rights, Protecting Water Quality in Our Forests, Conservation Easements, and Sustainable Organizations. The conference will close with The Watershed Symposium, Knowing What You Don't Know – A Knowledge Gap Assessment.

Like past AWAG conferences, scholarships will be provided to citizens to pay for lodging and registration expenses. A state watershed conference with conference scholarships provides the opportunity to train more citizens and develop stronger, sustainable watershed organizations with members who understand environmental policy, community dynamics, and local environmental issues

Costs for the conference will be as follows:

- ▶ Early registration or pre-registration (before October 10, 2008) = \$35
- ▶ Late registration (after October 10, 2008) = \$50
- ▶ Family registration (early, before October 10, 2008) = \$50
- ▶ Family registration (late, after October 10, 2008) = \$70
- ▶ Student registration (age 22 and younger) = \$15

Continued education credits can be earned for attending pre-conference training and the AWAG/Stream Team Conference. Contact Ellen McNulty at (501) 682-0022 or mcnulty@adeq.state.ar.us for more information about continuing education credits and teacher in-service training credit. Attendance for the three Pre-conference Training Sessions will be limited, so register early to reserve your training slot. Scholarships will be available to citizens interested in attending the pre-conference training, as well as the AWAG conference, and most of the meals are provided. For more information about scholarships contact Ellen McNulty at (501) 682-0022 or mcnulty@adeq.state.ar.us.

News from Region I (Ozark Highlands and Boston Mtns.) Stream Team Coordinator, Dave Evans...

Well, fall has “fell,” spring has “sprung,” now, summer's here, and it's already hot as a firecracker! Actually, so far this summer, it has been quite tolerable up here in the beautiful Ozarks. It sure beats the 100+ temperatures I remember as a kid growing up in Dallas.

During the past three months I made a lot of site visits to creeks all around the Ozarks. It's surprising how many phone calls you get after a region gets hit with back-to-back major flood events, followed by numerous other large rains. At one point, I had enough site visits lined up to tour one a day, every day, for a solid month. The main thing about this year's storms is that the damage they caused occurred in every portion of Region I.

I have toured several completed project sites across the Ozarks, and all of them have sustained some level of damage. At one site on Osage Creek, in Carroll County, the landowner not only lost the lower portion of the project, but also a portion of his pasture. As you can see in the left photo (below), the landowner lost a chunk of pasture that measured approximately 100 feet by 35 feet. The real problem here is that this loss occurred at a low portion of the pasture (an old overflow channel) and, if left unrepaired, Osage Creek could continue cutting at this site and abandon its present channel. I did not design or install this project, and it used techniques I do not recommend.



ERODED PASTURE



**LONGITUDINAL-FILLED STONE-TOE PROTECTION
WITH HIGH WATER MARK**

At a site about one-half mile upstream of the eroded pasture (right photo - above) is a project I designed and installed. This project suffered minor damage. As the above photo shows, the water level (eroded bank) was significantly higher than the top of the bank protection structure (this is a LFSTP, longitudinal-filled stone-toe protection). Two rock vanes were also installed at this site, and one of them was destroyed. John (the landowner) and I were both surprised that the upper vane remained intact, due to its location in a high energy bend in the channel.

The most dramatic erosion site I have ever seen occurred on the upper White River near Pettigrew in Madison County. An estimated acre of steep hillside slid into the river and blocked nearly half of the channel. This slide carried large trees and boulders with it. It appears that a buried rock ledge near the top of the hill became saturated by the rain water and caused the slide to occur. When the landowners asked Steve Filipek (AGFC *Stream Team* Coordinator) and me what could be done, neither of us had an answer. We finally decided that nothing could be done, and since the slide only blocked a relatively small portion of the floodway, we felt it did not dramatically increase the chance of their house flooding.

The floodway is that portion of the land associated with a particular stream that is covered with water during a flooding event. Floodways are a lot larger than the stream channel, and allow the flood waters a chance to spread out, slow down, and drop a portion of their debris load.

News from Region II (Delta) Stream Team Coordinator, Stephen O'Neal...

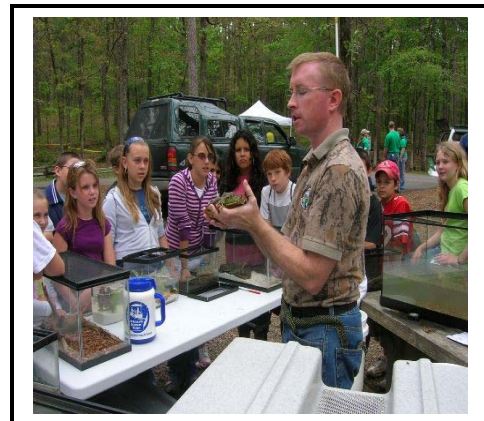
The *second quarter* of 2008 has been filled with numerous requests for assistance and advice on "what can we do" to restore eroded property and aquatic habitat (67 phone calls, e-mail or referrals came in one month after the flood waters receded). Suffice it to say, there were a lot of landowners and stream habitat which were impacted by the spring floods, and the sheer number of inquiries to the *Stream Team Program* will be enough to keep all of the Program Coordinators busy for years to come.

The South Fork Spring River *Landowner Incentives Program* (LIP) is finally off and running with the first project in and functioning well. It incorporated the use of two upstream angled rock barbs (fish habitat and flow management), along with bank shaping and rock installation. Riparian area plantings will be added later this fall to restore the functionality of the filtering capacity of this critical area.



The rock spur installed on the South Fork Spring River created fast water off the tips, slow water behind them, and helped to repair a severely eroding streambank. The result is better fishing, an improved aesthetic to the streambank, and less sediment going into the waterway.

Educational opportunities abound in the *Natural State*, and the *Stream Team* reptile, fish, bug, and amphibian "ambassadors" were on display at the *Youth Expo* held at Lake Sylvia, west of Little Rock. Around 2,000 fifth-graders attended the event, and all of the Arkansas Game & Fish divisions were represented as the students were escorted from biology stations, shooting stations, archery, fishing and more. A good time was had by all and, based on the enthusiasm shown by the students, AGFC has in its future some very bright leaders.



The 5th graders enjoyed the 2008 *Youth Expo* held at Lake Sylvia. AGFC personnel showed them there is a lot to learn, see, and do in the *Natural State*.

**News from Region III (Gulf Coastal Plain)
Stream Team Coordinator, Kevin Atkins...**

Due to a family illness, news from Region III Stream Team Coordinator, Kevin Atkins, is being omitted for this printing.

**News from Region IV (Ouachita Mountains and
Arkansas River Valley) Stream Team Coordinator,
Jim Ahlert...**

I participated in the *Arkansas Resource Education Fishing Derby* held for the third time on Spadra Creek in downtown Clarksville. The Johnson County Conservation District sponsors the fishing derby with the assistance of many volunteers. The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) provides the fish for the derby, and this year the fish were biting very well. Almost all the students were able to catch at least one fish. The event is geared towards fifth grade students from the Clarksville area and, this year, we had 200 students and their teachers take part. In addition to the fishing derby, the students also took turns shooting B-B guns in a controlled environment, virtual duck hunting with laser shotguns, and learning about different traps used to control nuisance animals. Bob Cushing, AGFC Boating Safety Coordinator, was on hand to teach the students the importance of boating safety and why it is always important to wear your life jacket when you are on the water. I also appreciate the help of the following AGFC personnel for making the event a success: Matthew Irvin, Carrie McQueen, Leo Knoernschild, and Ralph Meeker.



*A young fisherman
displays one of the many
catfish caught.*



*Taking careful aim at
the B-B gun trailer.*

I attended the first *Earth Day* celebration held at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff in April. UAPB students and their teachers are planning to make this an annual event. A number of organizations and businesses were on hand to help get the event off to a good start. The school had several dumpsters on site to handle a variety of recyclable items that were brought in from the community and the school. Next year, the event should attract a bigger turnout from the “locals,” as the word gets out as to what the school and students are attempting to accomplish.

A *Conservation Day Workshop* was held at the Ouachita River Haven Resort where I gave a presentation to students attending. The students and their instructors toured a recently completed streambank renovation project on the Ouachita River (located at the resort). This site is unique, in that three different types of streambank renovation techniques were utilized in the repair of the bank. The bank renovation was completed in two phases and incorporated the use of rock vanes, large rocks (placed on the bank in the stair-step fashion), and the use of a longitudinal-peaked stone-toe protection dike. The third phase of the work on the upper river site is scheduled to begin later this year. The students were able to see a good example of bank failure due to the loss of large trees and their root balls. The two previous sites had been heavily replanted to restore the riparian zone. The growth of the planted trees and shrubs were a striking comparison to the eroded upper bank.

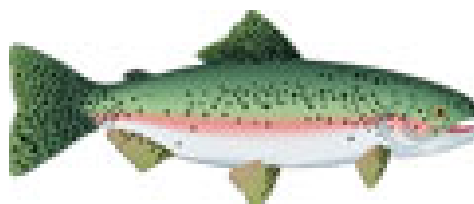
In addition, I took part in the *Buckhorn Trail Cleanup* in the Ozark National Forest with personnel from the U.S. Forest Service, the city of Fort Smith, and other volunteers. This ‘off-highway vehicle’ (OHV) trail borders Lee Creek and receives a lot of use from people in the northwest part of the state, as well as from out-of-state. The upper part of the trail was fairly clean, as most of the trash was found on the camping areas and near the trailhead parking area.



I assisted the AGFC Education Division in conducting an *Underwater Arkansas* program on the Buffalo River south of Yellville. The program gives participants a chance to interact with our biologists and other personnel, and learn about the different species of wildlife found in and near our streams and rivers. The diving and snorkeling are enjoyable, especially on the Buffalo River where water clarity makes viewing underwater species a lot easier. I gave a presentation on the *Stream Team* program and talked about some of the projects we had completed, in addition to our work with schools and other groups concerning water quality monitoring.

Several site visits were made with landowners who requested our assistance with erosion problems on their property. Site visits were made on the following streams and rivers: Little Red River-Cleburne County, Little Red River-White County, North Fork of Cadron Creek-Faulkner County, White Oak Creek-Franklin County, Mulberry River-Johnson County, and the Ouachita River-Montgomery County.

I worked the *Striped Bass Project* on Lake Ouachita for one week in April. The project utilizes both male and female striped bass from Lake Ouachita in a spawning process that ensures we have sufficient stock species to restock our large lakes. The fish are caught with gill nets and taken to our hatchery where they are spawned and reared to stockable size. I also assisted our fisheries management staff with the fertilization of Lake Hinkle in Scott County.



HAS ANYTHING CHANGED?

Please let us know if your address, phone numbers or e-mail information has changed.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, and Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

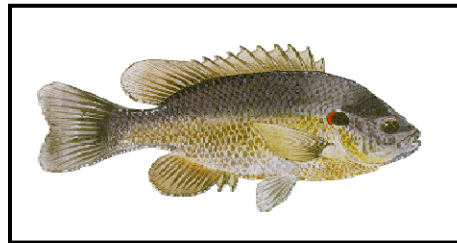
E-Mail: _____

Mail to: Stream Team Coordinator
2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205

(OR)

E-Mail to: sfilipek@agfc.state.ar.us

For those reading a *Stream Team* newsletter for the first time, *Stream Teams* are groups of citizens from 6 years old to 96+ who care enough about Arkansas' water resources to form or join a team and adopt a stream or other water body in the state for the purpose of keeping it clean and healthy. Started in 1996, there are now over 500 Stream Teams statewide that carry out a variety of activities in the quest of keeping our state's water more natural. These teams conduct litter pick-ups, repair eroding streambanks on willing owners' land, plant trees to restore degraded riparian areas, work with local leaders to better manage their watersheds, and a variety of other activities aimed at conserving one of the most valuable of Arkansas' natural resources, its water. Anyone out there who hasn't already joined this winning team and is interested in joining the Stream Team, or learning more about this grassroots way to conserve our state's water resources, can contact Steve Filipek at the AGFC (501) 223-6371, or e-mail him at sfilipek@agfc.state.ar.us. There is no cost to join. Classes on how streams work, what animals live in and around them, and how a healthy stream functions, are offered each year at a reasonable rate.



NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE VIA E-MAIL.

In an effort to conserve resources, Stream Team members with current e-mail addresses were notified of the option to receive the newsletter via e-mail. If you have not received an e-mail notification and would like to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please notify Steve Filipek at sfilipek@agfc.state.ar.us, or at (501) 223-6371.

► **NEWSLETTER UPDATE:** Easier access (a direct link) to the Stream Team Newsletter has been made available on the Internet:
<http://www.agfc.com/streamteam>

The Process of becoming a STREAM TEAM...

1. Express an interest and request more information: **Send your name, address, and phone number to:**
STREAM TEAM PROGRAM COORDINATOR
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205
2. Sign up. You will get the newsletter and be counted among Arkansas' STREAM TEAM members. This will also get you in the network of those wanting to help out Arkansas' waterways.
3. Adopt a stream. To become more involved in the program you can adopt a stream. Select a stream that you or your group are particularly concerned about. For example...the creek on your land, your favorite fishing hole, or the stream you drive over every day to work or school.
 - A. Inventory your stream with help from STREAM TEAM coordinators.
 - B. Decide what you want to do---trash pick-up, habitat improvement, water quality monitoring, and/or whatever is of interest to you!



Steve Filipek/Debra Dickson
Stream Team News Editors
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
2 Natural Resources Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205