

Event Press Release

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For Immediate Release

10th Annual Fox (Illinois) River Watershed Conference March 17, 2022, In-person event (w/virtual option)

A conference for individuals and organizations interested in the Fox River basin will take place March 17 at Veterans Terrace at Echo Park in the City of Burlington, Wisconsin. The “*Fox River Summit – Celebrating Success and Addressing Challenges*” examines watershed management issues in both the Wisconsin and Illinois portions of the river basin. A key goal is to continue the dialogue between stakeholders in Wisconsin and Illinois on many shared topics including recreation, economics, fisheries and other wildlife, stormwater management, water quality/supply and nutrient load pollution. It is a watershed approach to problem solving and celebrating successes.

A recent article by Morgan Green from the Chicago Tribune dated December 20, 2021, entitled “*Illinois — a major feeder to the Gulf of Mexico dead zone — falls behind federal goal to reduce phosphorus and nitrogen flowing into its waterways*” illustrates our mutual challenges concerning nonpoint source nutrient loads within the Fox River watershed. In this article Eliot Clay, Agriculture and Water Programs Director for the Illinois Environmental Council was quoted as saying “*...this should be a wake-up call that the status quo of what the state agencies have been doing around nutrient loss is not working.*” This profiles one of our many combined challenges or “wicked problems” among both states that this conference has been designed to address. The conference highlights common interests, concerns, and commitments regarding the improvement of the Fox River Basin.

**Preston D. Cole,
WDNR Secretary
will be presenting!**

This event is organized by the Southeast Fox River Partnership, Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, Friends of the Fox River, and the Fox River Study Group with financial support from the Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River Commission and our generous exhibitors.

Speakers with State, Local and Federal Perspectives

The day will include briefings from six regional organizations working to protect the Fox River: The Southeast Fox River Partnership (WI), Fox River Ecosystem Partnership (IL), Fox Waterway Agency (IL), Friends of the Fox River, Fox River Study Group (IL) and the Southeastern Wisconsin Fox River

Commission. Farmers from Ozaukee County, WI, will discuss soil health and farmer-led program efforts and how a family farm “Redline Dairy” has been able to implement no-till and cover crops and maintain profitability. The US Army Corps of Engineers will discuss ongoing studies and potential funding opportunities for ecosystem restoration for the future within the Fox River watershed. The Wisconsin Waterfowl Association will share their current and ongoing wetland and riparian/floodplain restoration techniques and speakers from Openlands and the Illinois Environmental Council will discuss setting land/water protection goals for the basin. **The morning session concludes with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Secretary Preston D. Cole’s State partner perspective to help improve the Fox River watershed!**

Following lunch, mussel status and distribution updates for the basin will be provided by WDNR and fishery passage implementation will be given by the City of Thiensville, WI. Recreation and educational outreach efforts will be presented by the Friends of the Fox River and McHenry County. Potential partner collaborators and new funding opportunities will be discussed by speakers from UW-Whitewater and the RES consultant group. The day culminates with a presentation by Dr. John Jansen, P.G., Ph.D. Senior Geophysicist/Hydrogeologist on one of the most alarming issues/threats to our drinking groundwater supplies, which is the rising concern of chloride concentrations in groundwater.

Dr. John Jansen

John works on a wide variety of ground water projects around the country specializing in high-capacity wells, aquifer recharge, and groundwater resource management. He received the NGWA Keith A Anderson Award in 2012 for service to NGWA and the groundwater industry and was the NGWA McElhiney Distinguished Lecturer in Water Well Technology in 2013. John was an invited speaker at the European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers at their annual convention in Barcelona in 2018, the keynote speaker at the Symposium on Geophysics to Environmental and Engineering Problems in 2013, and a guest lecturer on managed aquifer recharge and groundwater geophysics for the Geoscience University of China in Beijing in 2018.

Covid Concerns

The planning team has seriously considered participant safety in designing the event. All attendees are encouraged to follow the current CDC COVID guidelines. Please be aware that this is a public event, and there may be individuals that will not be wearing a mask. If you will be uncomfortable in that environment, please consider the virtual option.

We are planning to host this as an in-person event, but we also offer a fully virtual option for attendees using GoToWebinar. Note the registration price for in-person or virtual attendance is the same.

How to Register

The registration fee for this event is \$41.50 which includes lunch, snacks, and beverages. Register via PayPal account or credit card using the link on our website here <https://www.southeastfoxriver.org/>.

The advanced registration deadline is March 9th. Refunds will not be provided for cancellations received after this date. Veterans Terrace at Echo Park is located at 589 Milwaukee Avenue in Burlington WI, www.veteransterace.com. The full conference agenda, speakers, and descriptions of presentations can be found at <https://www.southeastfoxriver.org/2022-fox-river-summit>. Please contact the SE Fox River Partnership with questions: tslawski@sewrpc.org or benlikesjazz@sbcglobal.net.

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