

This month, check out photos from the Northwest Arkansas Youth Paddling Days, find out what we're up to for Lake Appreciation Month, and look at our calendar for upcoming events!

BEAVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE



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July 2013

Northwest Arkansas Youth Paddling Days



Youth from the Yvonne Richardson Community Center paddling on the White River. Photo by [Ironsides Photography](#)

About the Alliance

The Beaver Watershed Alliance was formed in 2010 to establish programming to maintain high quality drinking water in Beaver Lake and improve water quality on the Beaver Lake Watershed. The Alliance represents a diverse stakeholder group from conservation, education, water utilities, technical and science, agriculture, recreation, business, and local government groups working together for the

The day started in Fayetteville, taking head counts and answering questions coming from ten-year-old kids about how many different types of snakes lived near the river and whether or not we thought there might be some snake sightings on our trip. The day ended a few miles below Beaver Dam with a chilling swim in 50 degree water, the kids shrieking and smiling as they jumped into the river. In between was a mix of commotion, storytelling, and serenity. This was our first trip with the Yvonne Richardson Community Center as part of the Northwest Arkansas Youth Paddling Days. We put 20

cause of clean water.

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Upcoming Events

July 9 - 10

Bentonville Summer Water Days - Mary Mae Jones Elementary School, Bentonville

July 23

Northwest Arkansas IECA Lunch 'n Learn - Golden Corral, Rogers

August 17

Secchi Day on Beaver Lake - Prairie Creek, Rogers

August 23 - 24

Frisco Festival - Rogers

September 7

Lee Creek Cleanup - Devil's Den State Park, Winslow

September 19 - 21

NWA E-Waste Recycle Event - Arvest Ballpark, Springdale

Check out our [online calendar](#) for more detailed information on upcoming events!

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kids, aged 10 to 12 years old, in canoes for a five mile paddling trip on the White River. Most of these youth had never stepped foot in a canoe before, and chaos ensued upon launching into the river as they were getting their bearings. However, paddling came naturally to many of them, challenging the trip leaders to keep up with them as they paddled vigorously. And for the kids who didn't quite understand the technique at first, dedicated trip leaders from the Alliance and Pack Rat Outdoor Center patiently guided them, and at times, towed them along the way. Although there were the occasional complaints from the participants that they were hungry, tired, or hot during the trip, the kids had only positive things to say about the trip as they rode back to Fayetteville in YRCC vans.

The trip was one of four paddling day-trips that the Alliance held, in partnership with Pack Rat, through the Northwest Arkansas Youth Paddling Days program. This program was funded by a grant that we received earlier this year through the nonprofit, Outdoor Nation, whose mission is to increase and sustain outdoor recreation among youth and millennials. The Paddle Nation Project Grant specifically aims to increase paddlesport participation among this generation. The four trips were taken in June, with participants from the Youth Bridge transitional housing program, the Yvonne Richardson Community Center, and a group of fifth-grade girls from West Fork. Participants paddled in canoes on a five or eight mile float, which included a stop for a picnic lunch and swim in the river. Along the way, we talked with the participants about the history and function of Beaver Dam, animals that reside in and near the river, and "Leave No Trace" principles for disposing of waste and minimizing our disturbance to the environment.

All of the time and hard work that went into planning these trips became worth the effort as we watched participants gain confidence in the canoes, spot wildlife in and around the river, and even recite free-form poetry about the peacefulness of the water. We are incredibly grateful to [Outdoor Nation](#) for providing funding to make these trips happen, [Pack Rat Outdoor Center](#) for all of their support along the way, and [Black Jack Adventure](#) for working with

with your friends and neighbors so that they can have the opportunity to become active members in the Beaver Watershed community.

us to make these trips possible for as many participants as possible. Check out photos from our trip with the Yvonne Richardson Community Center [here](#), and be on the lookout for photos from the other trips in the near future.

We will be able to fund an additional trip with money leftover through the grant, so stay in touch with us for more stories!



Photos by [Ironsides Photography](#)

July is Lakes Appreciation Month!



Beaver Lake from Whitney Mountain, photo by Mary Christian Stewart

July is Lakes Appreciation Month, and the Beaver Watershed Alliance would like to take this opportunity to recognize Beaver Lake and how integral this body of water is for life in Northwest Arkansas.

Beaver Lake was established in 1966, after the construction of the dam began in 1959. The purpose of this project was to provide flood control and hydroelectric power, along with public water supply. Today, the purpose of the lake extends to also include water-based recreation activities. Beaver Lake is about 44 square miles in surface area, and extends approximately 50 miles end-to-end, with an average depth of 60 feet throughout. The Beaver Lake Watershed is 1,192 square miles in area, and primarily includes portions of Benton, Carroll, Madison, and Washington counties along with 17 incorporated municipalities. Major streams in the watershed include the East, Middle, and West Forks of the White River, War Eagle Creek, Richland Creek, and Brush Creek. These tributaries contribute clean, abundant water for drinking, recreation, industry, power generation and the breathtaking scenery that makes our area's "quality of place" so high.

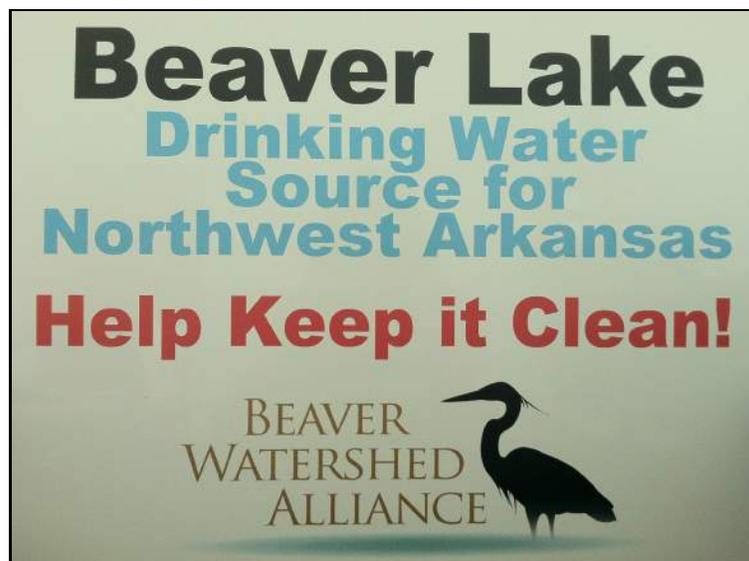
Water quality in Beaver Lake is good, and we are working with our partners to proactively to protect it from degradation. Priority issues affecting water quality on the watershed and in the lake include quantity and quality of runoff from new development and construction,

degradation of streamside vegetation and stream channels, potential for nutrient pollution from lawns, landscaped areas, and pastures, as well as sedimentation in runoff from unimproved/gravel roads.

We encourage all citizens to recognize Lakes Appreciation Month, to enjoy the clean drinking water and recreational activities provided by Beaver Lake, and to learn more about how they can help protect the lake through simple every day actions. Here are a few things you can do to help protect Beaver Lake and its watershed:

- Take advantage of the FREE soil testing at the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service before applying fertilizer
- Plant grasses or ground covers on bare soil to prevent soil erosion
- Remove all plants, plant pieces, mud and any similar material from boats and trailers prior to launching, after pulling boats from the lake and before leaving the boat launch area
- Pick up pet waste and dispose of it in the toilet or trash

Raising Awareness through Signage around Beaver Lake



Look for our signs at public access points around Beaver Lake

We can't think of a better way to celebrate Lakes Appreciation Month than to spread the message that Beaver Lake is the source of drinking water for Northwest Arkansas, and that we should all work together to keep it clean! During the month of July, 24-28 signs will convey this message at public access points around Beaver Lake, including boat launch ramps and recreation areas. This initiative was started by the Beaver Watershed Alliance Awareness and Education Committee, and spearheaded by board member, Mick Maggi. The committee's goal is to encourage patrons of Beaver Lake to prevent pollution into a body of water that provides recreational opportunities, and more importantly, serves as a drinking water source for 1 in 7 Arkansans. The first round of signs will be ready for installation at the beginning of the month. After the initial installation, the idea is to expand the project to include private marinas. We'd like to thank Alan Bland and Sean Harper (also a board member) from the US Army Corps of Engineers, as well as Ron Moore from the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission for working with us on this project.

Be on the lookout as our signs pop up around Beaver Lake! You can also follow our [Facebook Page](#) and [Twitter feed](#) to keep up with the latest information, including dates of installation.

Meet the Board



Patsy Christie

Mrs. Patsy Christie is a native of Northwest Arkansas. She began career in the field of public administration and planning at the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission as a sophomore in high school and spent 20 years working with local governments in Benton and

Washington Counties on planning matters, grant administration and financial management. Patsy left the Commission to serve as deputy city clerk and later as an administrative assistant for the City of Lowell. In August of 1996, she became the first Director of Planning for the City of Springdale. In September of 1999, she became the Planning and Community Development Division Director responsible for the planning, engineering, and the Community Development Block Grant program, the close-out of the Street Bond Program; project oversight for construction of Arvest Ballpark, and project development and oversight of the trails program. Patsy is a member of the Beaver Water Alliance Board of Directors, the American Planning Association, and Arkansas APA Chapter. She also serves as Chairman of the NWARPC Technical Advisory Committee and is a member of Springdale Rotary. Patsy is married to Peter Christie and has two daughters, Melissa Lindeman (Jonathon) and Kimberley.

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