



Fall 2016

This newsletter is being sent to you because our records show that you own or reside on streamside property in the Beaver Lake Watershed. *If you would prefer to receive a digital copy only or have your name removed entirely from this mailing list, please notify the Beaver Watershed Alliance by calling 479-750-8007.*

Inside this issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| The Spirit of Community-Driven Watershed Protection | 1 |
| Glossary | 1 |
| War Eagle Creek Watershed News | 2 |
| Riparian Planting Guide Available | 3 |
| BMP Spotlight: Invasive Plant Mgmt. and Eradication | 3 |
| West Fork White River Watershed Restoration | 4 |
| Forest Management Increasing in Watershed | 4 |
| Pond Placement Optimization Program | 5 |
| Lakeside and West Fork Restoration Initiative | 5 |
| Upcoming Events And Property Assessments | 6 |

The Spirit of Community-Driven Watershed Protection

Hello Beaver Lake Watershed Resident, Landowner, or Manager,

The spirit of community-driven watershed protection is alive and well in our watershed, and the Beaver Watershed Alliance is extremely thankful and appreciative to the communities, landowners, land managers, residents, volunteers, and sponsors who make it all possible, effective, and fun! To make the voluntary improvements needed to protect our water, wildlife, soil, forest, pasture, and community/environmental quality and health, we need a whole lot of helping hands! We strive to make our programming meet the needs of our communities and watershed **stakeholders**. It is fun to visit with watershed landowners and assist in the best management of certain activities, or talk about ideas to meet multiple objectives for any given land management scenario.

Sharing non-biased, research-based information and technical expertise with stakeholders regarding natural resource management on public and private lands and combining with local input provided directly by watershed stakeholders has generated a community-driven watershed protection effort that is beyond our wildest dreams and expectations. Thank you for all that you do to help guide and implement the regional water supply protection effort that will also aid in protecting our environment, quality of life, bottom dollar, way of life, and future generations.

John Pennington

Director, Beaver Watershed Alliance

Glossary of Newsletter Words

Best Management Practice (BMP)— a practice that has been proven effective and practical for addressing sediment, nutrient, and other pollutants.

Bioswale— stormwater runoff conveyance systems composed of plants, sand, soil, and/or rocks that absorb and slow runoff water, filter pollutants, and provide wildlife habitat.

Cultural management practice— when regarding pests such as invasive plants or insects, a proactive practice that enhances the success of desirable species that can out-compete or resist specific pests

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)— a program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural

producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve soil, water, plant, animal, air and related natural resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland.

Invasive plant— a non-native plant that spreads aggressively, displacing native plants and the wildlife dependent upon them and negatively impacting ecosystem health.

Stakeholder— a person or group with an interest or concern in an issue or topic.

Stormwater— runoff generated from rainfall or melting snow and ice that carries nutrients, sediment, bacteria, oil, road salt, and other potential pollutants from the land surface to a waterway.

Special thanks to sponsors and partners:

Mt Olive Water Association



War Eagle Creek Riparian Project

Hello friends of the War Eagle!

For nearly two years, we have been working on the War Eagle Creek Riparian Project. In that time we have connected with hundreds of landowners in the War Eagle Creek Watershed and helped more than 50 folk implement over 200 best management practices! And although the grant ends in September, that does not mean we will stop our work in the area. If you are still interested in having us come out to assess your property for issues such as streambank erosion, forest and pasture health, or **stormwater** runoff, contact us any time and we will come out for free.



New bioswale installed at Huntsville Intermediate School.

Even with the heat we were able to install some great **best management practices (BMPs)**! With the help of a local contractor, the Huntsville School District, and the City of Huntsville, we were able to install a 3,000 sq ft **bioswale** at the Huntsville Intermediate School. This replaced the original grassed waterway that was meant to drain runoff from the school's roof. The waterway was not sloped enough and the soil did not allow water to drain properly, so the area would be inundated for several days after a rain. Several truckloads of topsoil were brought in to fix the slope and drainage issues, and large gravel, native plants, and mulch

were used to help absorb roof runoff. This was all done with a \$1,000 mini-grant awarded by the Beaver Watershed Alliance as well as donated materials and labor. Thanks to everyone who helped on this awesome project!

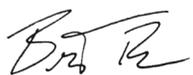


War Eagle Appreciation Day was a big success despite the rain!

In other news this year's War Eagle Appreciation Day saw nearly 100 participants and volunteers who braved the rain to come learn about the War Eagle and help clean up trash along the creek. The War Eagle Steward Award, which is handed out at this event each year, went to Joe Doster of Huntsville for his work establishing a riparian buffer demonstration site on his property in town! And not too far south of Huntsville we worked with some more watershed stewards who received a mini-grant from BWA to install two rain gardens on their property. Friends and family came out to help see the process along from start from finish. These rain gardens will help filter roof runoff and allow it to soak into the ground, as well as make a lot of pollinators happy. Let us know if you are interested in doing something similar on your own property!



Unused lawn space was converted to beautiful rain gardens that will capture roof runoff and provide food and habitat for wildlife!



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Riparian Planting Guide Available for Free!

As part of our nearly-completed War Eagle Creek Riparian Project, we created and published the very first Riparian Planting Guide of the Ozarks! This 36-page document details how to choose, purchase, and establish native plants in riparian, or streamside, areas. We wrote this guide with the Ozarks in mind, so you can be sure that the information within is suitable for your property! The guide is especially useful for landowners who are planning to enhance a current riparian vegetative buffer, re-plant a buffer that was removed, or establish a new buffer. However, anyone will find this book useful for a variety of other activities. Interested in native plants that grow around water? Check out the Riparian Plants Reference Table in the guide! Want to know more about what riparian areas are and why they are important? The introductory section is for you!

If you are interested in obtaining a FREE copy of this guide, give us a call at 479-750-8007 or email info@beaverwatershedalliance.org. We would be glad to send you a copy or come out to your property and discuss any issues you are having with your riparian areas. This guide will be a great complement to those participating in our Free Tree and Shrub Program which will start later this fall and winter. Let us know if you are interested!



BMP Spotlight: Invasive Plant Management and Eradication

Invasive plants are an insidious problem. They may look pretty, but they hide a dark agenda. Invasives have a tendency to take over native habitats, creating a monoculture that is void of diversity. This can be detrimental to both wildlife habitat and water quality. Native plants are better adapted to our climate than non-native plants are, and their roots are much deeper, enabling them to provide soil stabilization to prevent erosion. They also provide top-quality food and habitat to a wide variety of animal species.

Invasive plants can be a challenge to remove and keep at bay, but every effort to battle them helps! Removing plants by hand, using a little herbicide, or other **cultural management practices** to remove them all have their place. Just make sure to find out what works best for you and what the best options for removal are before you start.

Whether you take charge on your own where you live or work, or you would like to join us at an event, please learn more by visiting www.beaverwatershedalliance.org or by contacting us at info@beaverwatershedalliance.org or 479-750-8007.



Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*) is a common invasive shrub in forests and along stream edges in the watershed. Image Credit: Karan A. Rawlins, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org.



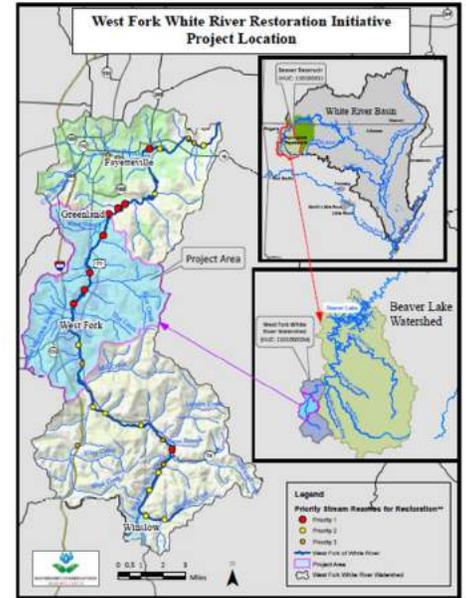
West Fork Watershed Restoration Initiative Begins in October

Over \$8.6 million will be devoted to improve a portion of the West Fork White River Watershed to protect water quality in Northwest Arkansas over the next five years. Roughly \$200,000 in **EQIP** funding will be available to pasture and forest landowners in the central portion of the West Fork White River from October 2017—2021.

Key steps for landowners to take in order to qualify for funding are:

- 1) Call the NRCS at 479-442-4160 to let them know you are interested.
- 2) Based on your check-in with NRCS you will either need to provide your property deed or get registered with the Farm Service Agency so that you may be eligible to apply for funding.
- 3) Visit with BWA and NRCS staff to talk about the soil, water, wildlife, or forest goals that you have and to find out more about the resources available to help you meet your goals.

Resources are still available for landowners outside of this project area, so be sure to check in with the BWA at 479-750-8007 or NRCS if you would like assistance of any kind with your natural resource management activities.



Forest Management Activity Increasing in Watershed

The cities of St. Paul, Winslow, and Goshen are all working to achieve Tree City USA status, which will qualify them for increased funding of urban forest management and planning. It will also help them continue thoughtful planning for the health and aesthetics of their urban forests, which will yield dividends to their communities and quality of life while also protecting our water, wildlife, and sense of place in the years to come. Many other cities, including Huntsville, Garfield, Gateway, Avoca, Hindsville, and Elkins, seem open to the concept and are likely on their way to becoming Tree City USA designated. Lowell will be renewing their participation. Rogers, Springdale, West Fork, and Fayetteville are already designated Tree City USA. Private landowners are also increasing their forest management to obtain optimal forest health and other benefits.



We recently spent a day out at the Walton Nature Preserve and Devils Eyebrow in Gateway and Garfield. It was nice to spend time with watershed landowners and tourists from out of town who wanted to come appreciate the forest and talk about the multiple benefits that forests provide to our region.

If you own forested land we'd enjoy the opportunity to work with you, and if you're already working with us, we would like to continue serving as your primary connection to the additional resources that are out there waiting for you. We'll be here 479-750-8007, and when you're ready just give us a call!



Pond Placement Optimization Program

As the population of our region continues to grow and more land is converted from forests and pastures to impervious surfaces such as parking lots and roofs, larger volumes of **stormwater** flow into waterways, which increases the force of water in river channels and leads to streambank erosion that contributes high levels of sediment and nutrients in the waterways that lead to Beaver Lake, the source of drinking water for most of our region. Impervious areas in the entire Beaver Lake Watershed are currently at about 4%, but that number is expected to increase to 20% by the year 2050.

In response to this prospect, a watershed analysis with researchers at the University of Arkansas was recently commissioned by the BWA that determined it would be possible to help reduce **peak water flows** in the lower portion of the West Fork-White River by building a series of small ponds near headwater streams that would serve to slow water flow, as well as trap sediment and nutrients before they can reach the river.



25 priority subbasins had Curve Number ≥ 80
Potentially represent the greatest need for ponds

Average Pond Size Needed Assuming Different Average Depths:

| Pond Depth (m) | Pond Area (acre) |
|----------------|------------------|
| 3.03 | 1 |
| 2.02 | 1.5 |
| 1.51 | 2 |
| 1.21 | 2.5 |
| 1.01 | 3 |

The West Fork White River Watershed, showing the highest priority drainages for pond placement due to severe hydrologic risks and high runoff curve numbers.

We have been visiting with landowners in the areas identified in the study as high priority to determine if a pond would be suitable on their land, so that we can study the amount of water and sediment it traps over time. We are about to select a property for this program so if you own property in the West Fork area and received a letter in the mail about this project but have not yet checked in with us, there is still time to get involved but time is running out! Please let us know if you are interested, and we will be happy to come out for a visit on your land.

Lakeside and West Fork Restoration Initiative



We look forward to assisting the City of Winslow with their streambank erosion issue at Peek's Park! Let us know if you would like help protecting water quality, sometimes it takes a team approach to address erosion.

In this program to continue providing educational programming and one on one technical support with landowners to implement **best management practices (BMPs)** we have recently received \$27,000 dollars from Tyson Foods and Patagonia to help install streambank stabilization and riparian buffers in the West Fork and Lakeside watersheds. At least half of these dollars have already been allocated to projects in Greenland and Winslow, we wonder where they can be allocated next! In this project we have provided over 92 property site visits with landowners that have lead to 128 BMPs being established. If you have not checked in with us, but have been meaning to, please do so before our remaining cash runs out! Of course, it's not all about the money, and not everyone has an erosion problem—so if you are more into proactive forest, pasture, wildlife, or water quality management at your place that just requires a little more information, planning, or technical assistance please call Jennifer Ogle at 479-750-8007 or email her at jennifer@beaverwatershedalliance.org.

Inside:
Grants and Cost
Share Available!



| Free Programs | Time | Date | Location |
|--|--------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Beaver Lake Watershed Symposium | 9:00 am - 3:00 pm | 9/29/16 | Lowell |
| Invasive Plants Removal Event | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm | 10/19/16 | Kessler Regional Park, Fayetteville |
| White River Project Intro Meeting | Call to inquire | November | White River Watershed |
| Forest Management Workshop | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm | 11/12/16 | To Be Announced |
| West Fork White River Restoration Initiative Intro Meeting | 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm | 11/19/16 | Greenland Community Center |

Please email info@beaverwatershedalliance.org or call 479-750-8007 to RSVP or request more information.

Free Landowner Property Visits

Are you interested in finding out more about how you can help maintain and improve the water quality of Beaver Lake and the health of its watershed, while also saving some money or improving wildlife habitat and other natural resource values on your property? Then check in with us at info@beaverwatershedalliance.org or 479-750-8007 today to arrange a FREE appointment. We will be more than happy to meet with you at your convenience about your particular concerns, goals or interests. No issue is too small or too big.