

Riffles & Runs

Rogue River Watershed Project Newsletter

Grand Valley State University Annis Water Resources Institute

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The Rogue River Celebration

Laurie Beth Nederveld - Annis Water Resources Institute

The "Rogue River Celebration", a free watershed fair for kids, took place on May 31, 2003. The event was held from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at Parkside Elementary School in Rockford, MI. Fair sponsors included the Annis Water Resources Institute of GVSU and the Dwight Lydell Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America. This event was made possible through the Rogue River Information and Education program funded by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the US-EPA. More than 200 fair participants and over 100 volunteers were present, making the fair a success.

Thirty-two indoor and outdoor booth activities were offered, to raise awareness about the issues and unique qualities of the Rogue River Watershed. Booth volunteers, by performing fun and educational booth activities with kids and parents, helped to educate residents on plants and animals of the area and raise awareness about how to follow environmentally sound practices at home.

Watershed fair participants included elementary school children and their parents. Participants began their fair experience by taking a virtual trip down the Rogue River in their own imaginary canoe. Along the way they met the creatures, big and small, of the Rogue River

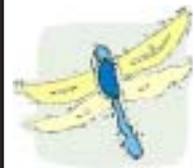


Little boy introduced to a crayfish at the Rogue River Celebration.

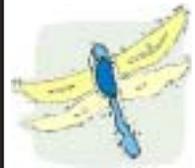
Watershed. Memorable stops included "froggin' around" at the frog booth and fishing for paper cut outs of rainbow trout, small-mouth bass, and other fish species at the fish booth. Those who "paddled" their way further down the river made their own animal tracks, received non-toxic cleaner recipes, picked up native seeds to plant, and watched worms eating away at compost.

After finishing the virtual tour of the Rogue River, participants made their way outside to the banks of Rum Creek, beyond the nearby playground. At the outdoor booth activities, participants were shown ways to enjoy their watershed by learning how to cast a fishing pole, search for water bugs, identify trees, and make a bird feeder. Live turtles, snakes,

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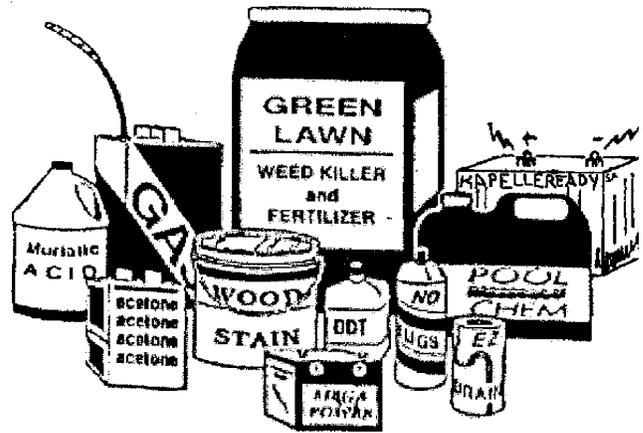
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Does Your House *Hold* Hazardous Waste?

Kent County Department of Public Works

The Kent County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program was developed to provide county residents with a safe and effective means to dispose of their unwanted hazardous materials. How do you tell if something could be hazardous? Read the product labels. Words such as "Danger", "Poison", "Warning", or "Caution" will identify products that contain hazardous ingredients. When these products are discarded, they become household hazardous wastes. These products generally fall into five categories:

- **Cleaning Products:** Drain openers, oven cleaners, polishes, spot removers.
- **Automotive Products:** Gasoline and solvents, brake or transmission fluids, car batteries, polishes and waxes.
- **Paint and Paint Products:** Thinners, mineral spirits, oil base paints, stains and varnishes, aerosol cans, epoxies and adhesives.
- **Pesticides:** Weed killers, insecticides, fertilizers, wood preservatives, rat or insect poisons.
- **Miscellaneous:** Pool chemicals, driveway sealer, roofing tar, hobby or photo chemicals, mercury, batteries (Ni-Cad, lithium, alkaline, etc.).



Call (616) 336-2501 or 1-888-217-2850 to make an appointment, and for more information on Kent County's Solid Waste Recycling and HHW Programs. Participation in the HHW program is **free** to the residents of Kent County, but we cannot accept materials from farms, businesses, offices, or institutions. This program is for households only. To keep the service free and prevent illegal dumping of materials, we need to have residents call for an appointment. We also publish a guide on waste options and alternatives in Kent County available to residents. For residents of other counties, please call your county government to find out what options are available in your area. ♀

The Rogue River Celebration

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and salamanders were also on display. Participants finished their day with a free lunch and went home with a bag of giveaways including fish pencils, bookmarks, frog pens, posters, workbooks, brochures, and handouts.

The Rogue River Watershed Council is working to make this celebration an annual event. It is the Council's hope that every year more families will participate in this celebration. This opportunity will allow everyone to discover the unique resource around us - the Rogue River Watershed. ♀



A whole lot of fun at the Froggin Around booth at the Rogue River Celebration.

Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have.

—Margaret Mead



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What is in Your Rogue River Watershed?

Nichol Stout - Annis Water Resources Institute

As we all know, the Rogue River Watershed is a region of natural beauty. The watershed supports a very diverse environment, and sometimes it is hard to notice the little things. As this watershed is studied and explored, any neat little things we stumble across we will take note of, conduct research on, and let you know about it through this newsletter.



In the spring breeze I love to smell the sweet scent of apple trees in bloom. This scent is very apparent as you drive through the Rogue River Watershed and the Fruit Ridge area. The Fruit Ridge area covers 7 townships and 4 counties: Kent (Alpine, Sparta, Tyrone), Newaygo (Ashland), Muskegon (Casnovia), and Ottawa (Chester & Wright). An estimated 66% of the Fruit Ridge lies in Kent County.

The Fruit Ridge is considered to be an agricultural mecca! What makes this area so special? It has fertile clay loam soils (mixture of clay, silt, and sand) that hold moisture in the ground. The area also has elevations greater



Apples are grown in the Fruit Ridge area.

than 800 feet and it is located 25 miles from Lake Michigan. This creates a unique climate ideal for growing fruit.

The Fruit Ridge is a very important piece of the Rogue River Watershed landscape. This area supplies 40% of Michigan's apples. Whether you want to smell the apple blossoms or enjoy a freshly picked apple during harvest season, you should visit the unique Fruit Ridge area. 

Sources: Fruit Ridge Markets www.fruitridgemarket.com



Wandering Through Your Watershed



Welcome back to another exciting adventure! In the last newsletter the mystery location was the Rogue River Nature Trail. This trail is 4.5-miles and it curves along the Rogue River's west bank. This trail provides access to Peppler Park and the Rockford Dam. Can you guess the mystery location to the left?



Rogue River Nature Trail



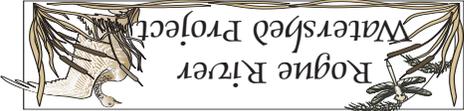
If you have questions about this newsletter or the Rogue River Watershed program, please call Nichol Stout at (616) 331-3092 or e-mail her at stoutn@gvsu.edu.



River

**She runs through the fields
She runs through the forest
She runs down the hill
She runs in the ground
She runs giggling and laughing
She's Mother Nature's child...River**

D.K.S



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