



iowater.net – Power at your Fingertips

While DNR Publication Designer Pat Lohmann has added a little flare to the IOWATER newsletter, DNR Geologist and IOWATER Webmaster Jack Gilmore has done the same for our website. Jack has not only adorned the site with a new look, but he has also added numerous features that make the site more user friendly. Because of this major website overhaul, we would like to inform you of the changes, encourage you to take full advantage of them, and place the power of information in your hands. After all, you are the ones who make IOWATER a success.

Locate Menu-driven Information

Moving your computer cursor over the blue menu bar under the IOWATER heading generates dropdown menus. Unlike the random listing approach that was utilized with the previous website, this new arrangement makes it easier and quicker to locate the information you are seeking.

Request IOWATER Workshop Online

IOWATER workshops are scheduled upon the request of the citizens of Iowa. If you know of 10 or more people interested in attending an IOWATER workshop in your area, contact Jacklyn Neely, who will work with you to set up dates and times for a workshop. Workshop requesters act as facilitators by securing a location, making sure there's access to a stream or other such water body, locally promoting and advertising the workshop, collecting registrations, and determining a maximum capacity for the workshop. Requests for workshops can be made through the IOWATER website by moving the cursor over "Workshops" and selecting "Request workshop" from the resulting dropdown menu.



Access IOWATER Data in STORET

As many of you know, data from Iowa's professional water monitoring program are stored in an internet-accessible database known as STORET (STORage and RETrieval). One of the objectives for STORET is to provide a "one-stop shopping" location for all the state's water monitoring data. The Water Monitoring Section of the DNR's Iowa Geological Survey maintains the database and is continuously working to add more sources of credible data. We are pleased to announce that you can now access some of the chemical IOWATER data through STORET. While data can also be viewed through traditional means, its inclusion into STORET places citizen-scientist data (your data) next to the professional scientific data, which not only adds to the credibility, but also allows users to employ the power of STORET to retrieve and graph IOWATER data. To access

...from IOWATER'S Coordinator

With the growth and success of the IOWATER program, more assistance was required, and Kristie Raymond was selected as the newest member of the IOWATER team. Environmental issues and water quality concerns are not new to her. Prior to joining the IOWATER team, Kristie conducted water quality studies on the Little Papillion Creek in Nebraska as part of her thesis. She graduated with a master's degree in geography from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in May 2003, after receiving a bachelor's degree in geography from Northwest Missouri State University in 2001. I am very excited to have Kristie facilitating workshops, aiding with program development, and bringing new thoughts and ideas to further enhance the program and help perpetuate the success of IOWATER.

I would also like to introduce you to Jacklyn Neely, the IOWATER Field Coordinator. No, there is no misprint – the Field Coordinator formerly known as Jacklyn Gautsch celebrated the institution of marriage with her husband, Matthew, on August 21 in Holmen, WI. Congratulations to the bride and groom – may your lives be blessed with happiness, togetherness, and excellent water quality!

Please take the time to welcome Kristie and congratulate Jackie. Although our faces and names may change, the IOWATER program continues its progress, upholding the mission of improving and protection Iowa's water quality...



Brian Soenen

STORET, move your cursor over “Data Base” and select “Storet” from the resulting dropdown menu.

Post Information on Interactive Forum

If you would like to connect with other IOWATER monitors and post information that may be useful to others, request information from others, or simply network with volunteers across the state, the IOWATER Forum was developed for you. (NOTE: The forum is not the preferred way to contact IOWATER staff. Although staff will periodically view posts, the purpose of the forum is for IOWATER monitors to connect with one another. If you have a question for staff, e-mail us at iowater@iowater.net). To access the forum, move your cursor over “Learning Corner” and select “Forum/Chat” from the resulting dropdown menu. For security purposes, your IOWATER Monitor ID and Password are required to enter the forum, and you must also register within the forum so you can post information. The following topics are available:

- **General Chat:** Feel free to post any IOWATER-related information here.
- **Classifieds:** If it's water monitoring companionship you seek, please post your requests here. Would you like to locate someone in your area who can help you with data entry? Would you like to find a partner to help you monitor? Are you looking to adopt (or give up for adoption) an IOWATER site? The partnership ideal has guided IOWATER throughout its existence – this is your opportunity to develop local partnerships that will help you achieve your goals and objectives.
- **Special Events:** If you know of a special event occurring in your area, and want to share the information with others, post the Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How's of the event here.
- **Water Monitoring:** Discussion of IOWATER parameters – what works and



what doesn't, how to conduct water monitoring with groups, and other ideas concerning water monitoring are welcome here.

- **Watershed Groups:** For existing groups, this area may be used to post information specific to the group. For people interested in becoming involved in, or creating their own watershed group, you may find communicating with others helpful.

- **Water Information:** Do you know of any water quality publications, information, or websites that may be useful to others? If you'd like to share this information, please post it here.

Take an IOWATER Quiz

Test your water quality knowledge online! IOWATER will develop water quality quizzes that include general water quality and benthic macroinvertebrate ID questions. Quizzes can be accessed by viewing the "Learning Corner" dropdown menu and selecting "Test your knowledge."

Find New Information

- **EPA Watershed Academy.** The United States Environmental Protection Agency has developed a Watershed Academy website that contains manuals covering all aspects of watersheds. PDF copies of the manuals can be found on the IOWATER website by selecting "EPA Watershed Modules" under "Learning Corner" on the menu bar.

- **Stormwater Manager's Resource Center Slide Shows.** Urban impacts within watersheds contribute to water quality. The information provided through these slide shows helps illustrate what those urban impacts are and what can be done to reduce them. Slide shows are found in "Slide Shows," located in the "Learning Corner" dropdown menu.

- **Snapshot Sampling Results.** Snapshot sampling events across the state have had overwhelming success. For the latest results, select "Snapshot sampling" under "Activities."

Submit Your Event

If you are hosting an event, we would like to know about it! Ideally, if we know about events far enough in advance, we can print them in the newsletter and hopefully help to increase the success of your event. If you'd like to notify us of your event, simply choose "Submit your event" under "Activities."

Submit Your Article

Many of you may have noticed the "Volunteer Viewpoints...in their own words" section of our newsletter – this section is dedicated to you and we encourage you to write articles for the newsletter. Articles can focus on anything you wish. To submit them online, move your cursor over "Activities" and select "Submit your article" from the dropdown menu.



We hope you find the new and improved IOWATER website useful. If you have ideas or suggestions for improving the website, please send them to us at iowater@iowater.net.

Volunteer Viewpoints

... in their own words.



Cheese to Sewage – The Story of Buttermilk Creek

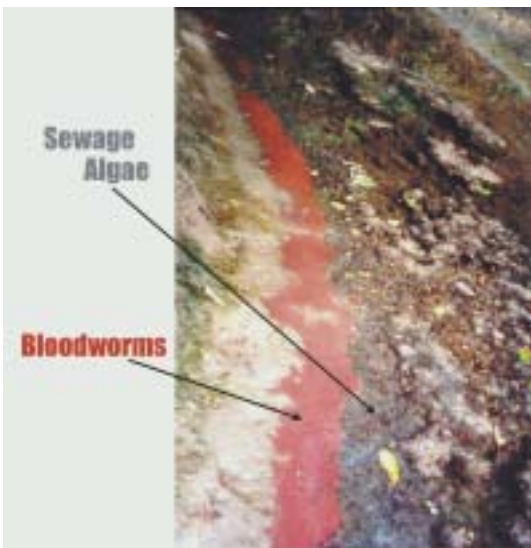
article and photos by Greg Soenen

History played a role in naming the little meandering waterway in Wright County called Buttermilk Creek. A former cheese factory located on its banks deposited by-products into it, thus the name. The stream is only one-half mile long – it originates from two large tiles at the upper end with another feeding it at the edge of town. It flows through Goldfield before emptying into the Boone River near my backyard.

I began monitoring the creek in 2001 and have since enlisted other volunteers to help. During month after month of monitoring, we noticed it gradually getting worse. In the summer, when flows are low, the water is cold and crystal clear, but an odor of sewage, plumes of gray algae, ribbons of slimy green moss, and masses of red bloodworms make the stream look like something from a third-world country. Some owners of the adjoining property have told me they used to seine minnows from Buttermilk Creek – only two minnows have been noted since monitoring started, and more dead frogs are present than living ones. There is a real concern for local children who often cool off and play in the stream.



"This stream is not pleasant to monitor."



"Stream had an offensive odor. There were mass amounts of bloodworms, too numerous to count."

After notifying DNR officials in field office two, jurisdiction passed to the Wright County Sanitarian, who believed the source of the raw sewage was faulty septic systems that drained into the feeder tiles. Homeowners in the watershed were advised to have their septic tanks pumped, as well as install leach fields. They were also informed of the DNR's long-term, low-interest loan that is available to homeowners who wish to update their outdated systems.

Although a definite cause for the pollution has not been identified as of August, faulty septic tanks are still suspected. One tank believed to drain into the feeder tile has been pumped, and while conditions appear to be improving for the time being, only time will tell whether the caddisflies, mayflies, stoneflies, and the minnows that feed on them, will return.

Thanks to IOWATER, this problem has been discovered and will continue to be monitored as county officials, citizens in and around Goldfield, and concerned water monitors work together to make a difference in their community.

Why do we do this IOWATER monitoring?

by Michael Meetz and Jerry Keys

“**Phone call on line one**” blasts through the intercom,
New Mail flashes on the computer screen,
the Franklin Planner keeps track of the things we have not completed.
And tonight is board meeting night . . . just what we needed! Really, it is just what we need.

The second Monday of every month from 5:00 to 7:00 PM before the Story County Conservation Board meeting, we take part in the IOWATER Volunteer Monitoring “Stress Relief Program.” We adorn rubber boots, grab our gear and a Subway™ sandwich, and are once again reminded of the peace and tranquility that can be found along/in an Iowa stream.

Stepping quietly off the well used trail, hands full of gear, we gingerly pick our way down the steep bank to the water’s edge.

“Air temperature; 78 F.”

“Check!”

“Water temperature; 71 F.”

“Got it!”

“Water is clear, no odor, ‘tube’ reads 60+, and pH is 12.” “Jerry, what are you getting for a B.O.D.?”

“Okay, phosphate is next . . .”

People have questioned our motives as to why we “waste time” doing things like this? Our answer is that we get a feeling of ownership for the resource and this is a way to give something back to it. Another reason; this is a great way to relieve the stresses that build up at our workplaces.

During the day Mike is involved in laboratory work that offers little in the way of getting to experience the natural world. It is with welcome relief when he leaves that windowless concrete basement for a chance to see what’s going on outdoors.

Jerry spends his day teaching kids and adults about the natural world. As a naturalist, he gets to spend a fair amount of time outside. However, most of that time is spent with 20 or more energetic youth tagging along.

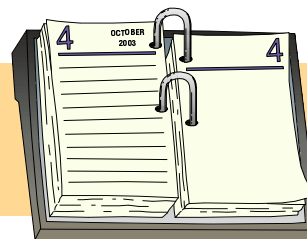
Doing this with a friend is much more enjoyable. We can banter a little, listen to the chatter of the birds, spy on an unknowing critter, and talk about what we are observing along the trails to and from the monitoring sites. After the data is collected we can sit back, eat our favorite Subway™ sandwich, and catch-up on what we have been doing outdoors on our off time.

Can you think of a better, less expensive way to relieve some stress?

We’d like to hear
from you, so
send us a note...
about your
IOWATER activities,
thoughts, and
ideas **...in your
own words.**

Upcoming Events

... snapshot sampling & more.



Saturday, September 20

Old Mans Creek Watershed Snapshot
(Iowa and Johnson counties)
Contact: Dave Ratliff (319) 354-1397 day;
(319) 337-4445 evening or kdeng@msn.com
(Use subject line 'Old Mans Creek' in e-mail)

Saturday, September 27

3rd Annual Upper Iowa River Volunteer
Cleanup Outing
Contact: Diane Ford-Shivvers, DNR Volunteer
Program Director (515) 281-0878 or
diane.ford-shivvers@dnr.state.ia.us Free
camping and canoes are available.

Tuesday, September 30

Urban Stream, Storm Water, Combined Sewer
Overflow and Sanitary Sewer Overflow
Sampling Workshop - Nahant Marsh, Daven-
port, IA Contact: Ed Askew (563) 326-7965
efa@ci.davenport.ia.us

Saturday, October 4

Whitebreast Creek Watershed Snapshot
(Marion, Lucas, Clarke, and Warren Counties)
Contact: Anne Hildebrand (515) 961-5264
Anne.Hildebrand@ia.usda.gov

Tuesday, October 7

Scott County Snapshot
Contacts: Robert Lawson (563) 391-1403 ext. 3
Robert.Lawson@ia.usda.gov
or Patty Copeland (563) 344-4084
pcopeland@bettendorf.org

Tuesday, October 14

Muscatine County Snapshot
Contacts: Matt McAndrew (563) 263-7944
Matt.Mcandrew@ia.usda.gov

Saturday, October 11

Upper Wapsipinicon River
Watershed Snapshot
Contact: Vicki Wilson (319) 827-1690
mvw@jtt.net

Saturday, October 18

IOWATER Statewide Snapshot Sampling -
International Monitoring Day
Contact: Lynette Seigley (319) 335-1598
lseigley@igsb.uiowa.edu
Sample your regular monitoring site between
10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Then before October 31,
submit your data to the IOWATER web site. A
summary of the data will be sent to those who
submit data, and the report will also be
posted on the web site. If interested, but
unable to sample on October 18, you can
sample on Friday October 17, or Sunday
October 19.

Saturday, October 25

Clinton County Snapshot
Contact: Mark Roberts (563) 847-7202
cccb@gmtel.net

Saturday, November 8

3rd Annual DNR Volunteers in Natural Re-
sources Recognition Banquet
Des Moines Airport Holiday Inn
Contact: Kristie Raymond (515) 281-3150
kristie.raymond@dnr.state.ia.us

Saturday to Saturday, June 19-26

Project AWARE (A Watershed Awareness and
River Expedition)
Des Moines River – Fort Dodge to Des Moines
Contact: Tom O'Neill (515) 281-4539
tom.oneill@dnr.state.ia.us

Sign up & join us at the event(s) nearest you!

IOWATER Action!

Press releases, events, & news articles involving IOWATER monitors – Many thanks to all of you for your efforts.



- **Allamakee County** – Jon Stravers led a Mississippi River Clean-up near Lansing.
- **Buena Vista County** – The Iowa Limestone Producers Association recognized Dr. Steve Tonsfeldt of Buena Vista University for completing the 2003 Geology for Iowa's Teachers Workshop.
- **Chickasaw County** – Naturalist Dana Dettmer provided a workshop follow-up article to local media.
- **Dickinson County** – The Dickinson County Conservation Board included the IOWATER program in their summer educational events.
- **Iowa and Johnson Counties** – Dave Ratliff and others are organizing the Old Mans Creek Snapshot.
- **Sac County** – The Sac County Conservation Board conducted an IOWATER program to sample the Boyer River.
- **Scott County** – Team Up to Clean Up Duck Creek enlisted the support of hundreds of volunteers and numerous sponsoring agencies to clean up 20 miles of Duck Creek.
- **Sioux County** – Evan DeGroot has been monitoring the West Branch of the Floyd River, as well as two urban sites in Sioux Center.

Compiled by Jacklyn Neely, IOWATER Field Coordinator

If we missed your happenings, please call or email Jackie with an update.

IOWATER Classifieds

FOR SALE - Benthic Macroinvertebrate Flash Cards, consisting of 18 full-color, laminated ID cards. \$30.

FOR ADOPTION - Maquoketa River Monitoring Sites. 15 sites monitored during Project AWARE '03 would like monitors to adopt them. Sites are located along the river from Backbone State Park to the Mississippi River.

WANTED - Monitoring Partner in La Porte City area.

WANTED - Monitoring Partner in Cedar Falls area.

WANTED - Photos of your monitoring sites. Pictures in the form of .gif or .jpg files can be uploaded to the database when you submit your data.

For more information about the above classifieds, contact Jackie at (515) 281-4476 or jacklyn.neely@dnr.state.ia.us

IOWATER

Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring

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Wallace State Office Building
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Des Moines, IA 50319-0034

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(515) 281-6640

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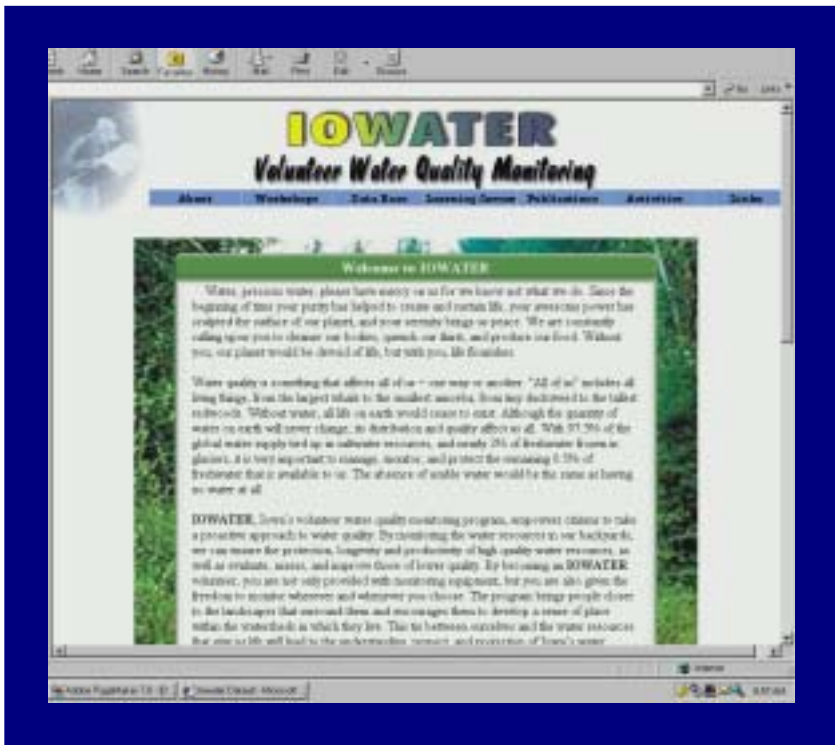
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*new look,
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& information-packed
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**Special events . . . IOWATER quiz . . . Classifieds . . . STORET . . .
Chat forum . . . Slide shows . . . Snapshot sampling results . . .**