

2019 NEWSLETTER



Our Mission: To improve the stewardship of Scott County watersheds through education, technical guidance, and volunteer opportunities.

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



I first want to express my gratitude for the generous support from our volunteers, continued commitment from our funders and new collaborations that have contributed to Partners' amazing year! In 2018 when the Board voted to restructure, we were unsure of our future. We were then able to recognize new energy and a renewed sense of our core stewardship, education and collaboration values with new partners Eastern Iowa Community College and Nahant Marsh! Through this

effort, we were fortunate enough to bring on Cassie Druhl as the Coordinator for Partners. She hit the ground running pursuing grant funding and providing watershed education to groups of Boy Scouts, urban homeowners and rural landowners; among others. Through her efforts we refreshed the logo and, in conjunction with the extremely helpful webmaster of Scott County, created a new website. We are also in the process of generating interactive web maps to better relay information gathered from our water quality monitoring Snapshot events. We hope to have these online by the end of the year! Through focus group and Board member sessions, we were able to develop and adopt our 2019-2020 Strategic Plan. This will help guide our organization through membership and program development, community engagement and education efforts. However, there is no amount of planning that can sustain Partners alone. The volunteers participating in water quality monitoring, the presenters and citizens who attend our educational Forums and all of those working in the background to coordinate local efforts – you are the true drivers of this organization and we couldn't do it without you. Thank you for your continued support!

PSCW BOARD MEMBERS

Cassie Druhl, Coordinator

Amy Kay, Chair

Steve Gustafson, Vice
Chair

Brian Wessel, Treasurer

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Tim Huey

Brian Schmidt

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Jim Hoepner, Emeritus
Board Member

OUR HISTORY: In 1990, 1993 & 1995 severe flooding occurred on Scott County urban streams. This flooding was a result of the conventional methods being used to deal with stormwater. These events and concerns with water quality in Scott County streams led to the formation of the Partners of Scott County Watersheds, an alliance committed to *developing and implementing ways all citizens can be better stewards of our watersheds.*

Since 2003, the group has been improving water quality in Scott County by providing residents, landowners, developers, environmental organizations, educators, and government officials with education, technical support, and financial assistance to promote and install best management practices.

FROM THE COORDINATOR

Hello! 2019 marks my first year as a PSCW Coordinator, and I have learned so much! I remember back in 2007, when I was an AmeriCorps Naturalist at the Wapsi River Center, I participated in my first “Snapshot” as a volunteer. Little did I know that years later, I would be coordinating the Snapshots and other PSCW activities!

I feel so fortunate to have the opportunity to work as the PSCW Coordinator and continue to educate others about the important role that Scott County’s citizens play in keeping not only our local watersheds healthy, but also the largest watershed in North America, the Mississippi River Watershed.



It is my goal to continue the forward momentum that the Board and I have created in 2019 and to make sure that, in 2020, PSCW is one of the first organizations that Scott County’s citizens will recognize as a resource when they think of water quality management. I greatly appreciate the Board’s support and guidance. There is a lot that we can do if we work together!

2019 SUCCESS STORIES

This year, PSCW was busy getting the word out about the services that we provide and forming relationships with Scott County citizens and local organizations. Here are some of the things that we accomplished in 2019:

- Updated our logo and web site, including adding Snapshot parameters and past data
- Added a third Snapshot date in the summer
- Added a biological survey to the Summer Snapshot
- Staffed a booth at Bald Eagle Days and the Earth Day Fair
- Gave a presentation to a local homeowners association about residential water quality improvement practices
- Presented water quality programs to over 500 Bettendorf Middle School students during their First Green program at Palmer Hills Golf Course
- Presented soil erosion programs to 40 Boy Scouts during their Merit Badge event
- Spoke to the Bettendorf Lions Club and North High’s Environmental Club
- Shared PSCW’s mission and services with local farmers and rural residents during a farm field day in Walcott
- Added parameters for Microbial Source Tracking (MST), ammonia, and glyphosate to the Snapshots and added lab analysis to validate volunteer data
- Conducted interviews for WVIK and the Quad City Times about our Snapshot events
- Partnered with the City of Davenport’s Duck Creek Wild program to host a canoe cleanup along Duck Creek
- Received a grant from Iowa American Water to install bioremediation filters in Robin Creek in Davenport
- Designed an educational sign for a bioswale included in the West Lake Park restoration project
- Hosted Snapshot Volunteer Trainings in the winter
- Developed interactive online maps for viewing Snapshot data trends and statistics
- Participated on a water quality education panel for 30 K-12 teachers hosted by Upper Iowa University

2019 SNAPSHOTS

By Steve Gustafson, PSCW Board Vice Chair

PSCW had another successful year of water quality snapshots. Volunteers and staff analyzed samples for a variety of water quality parameters from 54 stream sites in the spring, summer and fall. As fecal bacteria is a major impairment source in Scott County, PSCW sent in 47 stream samples for fecal genetic fingerprinting analysis (a.k.a. Microbial Source Tracking). We also collected 16 samples for herbicides and pesticides laboratory analyses, 8 for glyphosate (Roundup) analysis, 25 samples for nitrate analysis, and 26 samples sent for phosphorus analysis.

In general, nitrate concentrations are trending up or are stable over time in rural and suburban areas, with rural average concentrations a little higher than suburban and urban averages. Phosphorus concentrations are more stable in urban areas as opposed to suburban and rural, but all three land uses have elevated concentrations. In general, one third of the sites tested for phosphorus had an upward trend over time, with roughly a third stable, and slightly less than a third had a downward trend. Other parameters such as water clarity, pH, dissolved oxygen, and temperature are generally satisfactory, with a few areas that are being monitored closely.

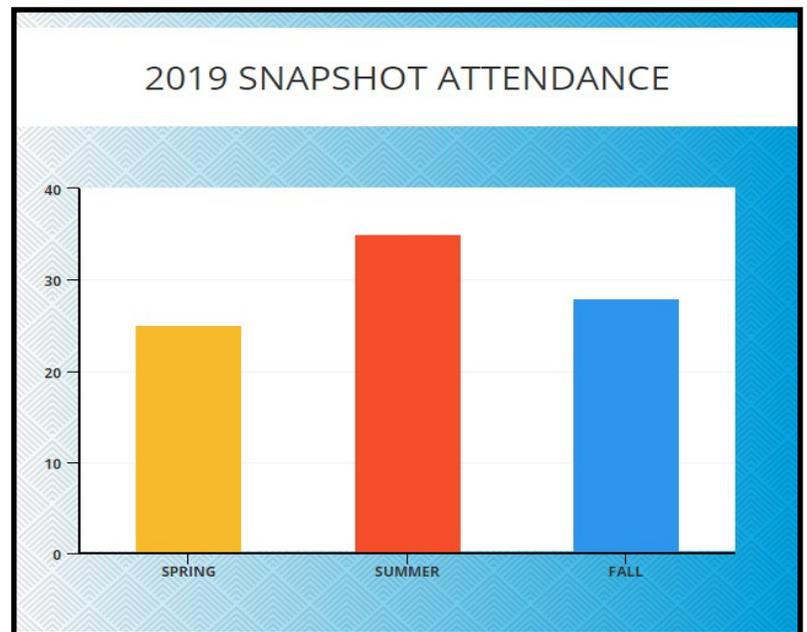
The herbicide/pesticide/glyphosate analyses did not indicate widespread issues. There were a few detections of pesticides, but none exceeded a water quality standard. More analyses are needed before any conclusions can be drawn regarding these chemicals, but the initial lack of detections is hopefully a good sign.

The fecal genetic fingerprinting indicated that human fecal matter is present in streams throughout the County, and is likely the primary source for fecal bacteria stream impairments. Canine fecal matter is present in urban and suburban settings, and may be present in rural to a limited degree. Cattle and swine fecal matter is present in rural stream settings to a limited degree, but does not appear widespread. More analyses are needed to fully determine the contribution of these sources to fecal bacteria stream impairments.

Overall, the primary water quality concerns in Scott County are excess nutrients and fecal bacteria impairments. These concerns warrant further investigation into their extent, sources, and implementation of practices, projects and methods for reducing their impact.



Thank you for funding lab analyses during our 2019 Snapshots!



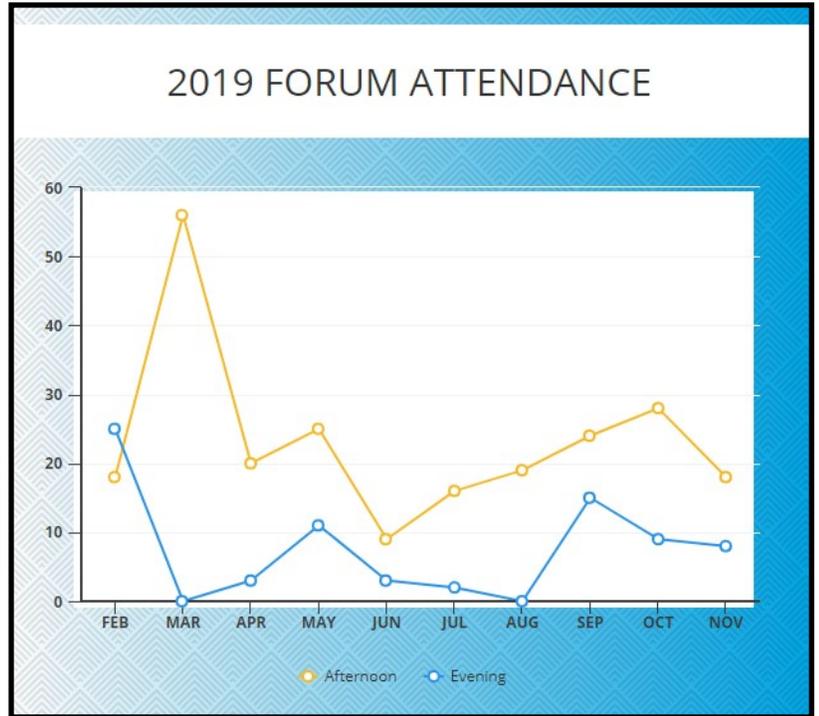
2019 FORUMS

2019's forums were attended by 309 people. 233 attended our regular afternoon forums, and 76 attended our evening forums that were added this year. We plan to continue holding evening forums for those who can not attend the afternoon forums. Thank you to the 11 speakers who donated their time and expertise to present this year!

Contact info@partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org or visit www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org to sign up for our email list and be the first to hear about next year's speakers.



March's forum with Marc Miller (Scott County Conservation Board) attracted 57 attendees!

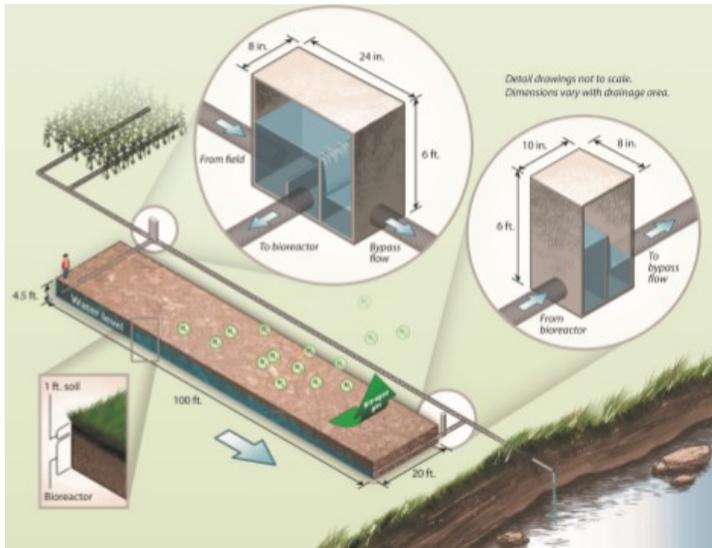
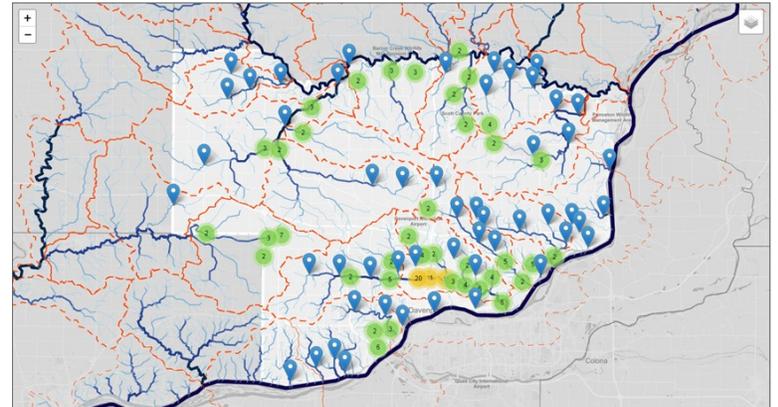


| Month | Speaker | Topic |
|-------|---|---|
| Feb. | Ray Wolf, National Weather Service | Climate/Rainfall Trends in the US |
| March | Marc Miller, Scott County Conservation Board | West Lake Renovation Project |
| April | Omar de Kok-Mercado, Iowa State University Extension Office | Prairie STRIPS program |
| May | Brian Burkholder, Scott County Secondary Roads Department | Roadside Vegetation Program |
| June | Justin Bisinger and Mark Schutt, Natural Resources Conservation Service | Soil Health |
| July | Joe Jordan, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | Mussel Survey in the Quad Cities |
| Aug. | Al Frohlich, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers | USACOE Regulations |
| Sept. | Brian Ritter, Nahant Marsh Education Center | Fairmount Cemetery Prairie Management |
| Oct. | Amy Bouska, IA Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship | Urban Stormwater Conservation Practices |
| Nov. | Steve Gustafson, PSCW | 2019 Snapshot Summary |

WHAT'S NEXT?

Head to www.partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org to access our new interactive Snapshot maps! Learn which watershed you live in, find out where we are testing for water quality, and access 20+ years of water quality data!

Map of Watersheds and Sample Sites



PSCW will continue to monitor the urban bioreactor along Duck Creek in Davenport. This project includes an excavated pit filled with woodchips and tile drainage. As water passes through the tile, naturally occurring bacteria in the woodchips convert harmful nitrates from fertilizers into harmless nitrogen gas before the water reaches Duck Creek.

In Spring 2020, PSCW will partner with the City of Davenport to install bioremediation filters in Robin Creek in the northwest part of the city. This innovative technology uses specialized fiber sheets to create a “dam” within the creek that will fill with bacteria-eating microbes. As the water flows down the creek and into the filter, the microbes will consume the bacteria and reduce the amount traveling downstream. PSCW will regularly monitor these filters and their affect on the creek’s water quality.



A BIOSWALE!

What is this? · Why is it here? · How does it work?

Bioswales are placed in the path of stormwater runoff. The quality of a watershed is directly affected by the human activities that surround it. This area was chosen to reduce pollution from use of the surrounding shelter, beach, playground, and parking lot. The bioswale prevents pollution from fine sediments, heavy metals, nutrients, bacteria, and litter from directly entering the Lake of the Hills.

An stormwater flows to the bioswale, deep rooted native plants hold soil in place, and soak up excess water. Microbes in the soil break down pollutants.

Check dams and constructed soil media layers above flow to increase filtration/infiltration and to cool water before it enters the lake.

A perforated pipe underdrains system slowly releases any remaining water to the Lake of the Hills.

Do you see any of these native plants?

- Pink Sedge
- Worm Meadows
- Soft Rush
- Blue Green Grass
- Flax Seed Sedge
- Right Hand Fern
- Great Blue Flag Iris
- Sediment
- Stone Sea Sedge

Special Thanks: [Logos for various organizations]

PSCW worked with the Scott County Conservation Board to create an interpretive sign for the bioswale that has been added to West Lake Park as part of its restoration project. The sign will be installed near the parking lot near the beach of Lake of the Hills by Spring 2020.

Would you like a representative from Partners of Scott County Watersheds to speak to your group in 2020? We welcome any opportunity to share our mission and our services, as well as educate the public about water quality issues. Email info@partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org or call 563-336-3378 to schedule a presentation.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2020

Snapshot Trainings

PSCW will demonstrate the equipment used to test water quality during our Snapshot events and train volunteers to accurately record results on data sheets. Held at Davenport Public Works, 1200 E 46th St.

Thursday, Dec. 12 from 5pm-7pm

Saturday, February 1 from 10am-12pm

Register by emailing

info@partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org

Bald Eagle Days

This event features live birds of prey, over 100 display booths, and live animal demonstrations, all while learning about the Mississippi River watershed and the Bald Eagles who migrate here.

Friday, January 10 from 4pm-8pm

Saturday, January 11 from 10am-8pm

Sunday, January 12 from 10am-5pm

QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4th Ave. Rock Island, IL

7th Annual QC Stormwater Conference

This year's message is "Challenges, Collaboration, and Resiliency." Listen to local experts discuss stormwater issues from 2019 and look into future improvements for 2020.

Tuesday, February 11 at Jumer's Casino (777 Jumer Dr., Rock Island, IL)

Earth Day 50th Anniversary

Celebrate the Planet! Go on a hike, pick up some trash, and attend local Earth Day events!

April 22 on Planet Earth

2020 Snapshots

Save the date for our annual Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Events! We will break volunteers into groups to monitor 48 watershed sites around Scott County. The testing equipment is easy to use, and volunteers will enjoy a morning outdoors and FREE LUNCH upon their return! Follow PSCW's website and social media for more details in 2020.

Tuesday, May 5 from 8am-12pm

Saturday, July 18 from 8am-12pm

Tuesday, October 6 from 8am-12pm

2020 Forums

Held the 3rd Tuesday of each month, February through November, these monthly forums feature local and regional experts discussing the latest news and research in conservation. Follow PSCW's website and social media for more details in 2020.

12pm-1pm at the Davenport Public Library-Eastern Ave. Branch (6000 Eastern Ave.)

5pm-6pm at the Davenport Public Library-Fairmount St. Branch (3000 Fairmount St.)

WE'RE LOOKING FOR BOARD MEMBERS!

Are you interested in water quality and conservation issues? Would you like to help PSCW achieve its mission? We are looking for Board members who will help spread the word about events, connect us with residents, businesses, and landowners in Scott County, and identify funding partners. Contact info@partnersofscottcountywatersheds.org to learn more.

Partners of Scott County Watersheds

1200 E 46TH ST. DAVENPORT, IA 52807

563-336-3378

INFO@PARTNERSOFSCOTTCOUNTYWATERSHEDS.ORG

WWW.PARTNERSOFSCOTTCOUNTYWATERSHEDS.ORG

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/PARTNERSOFSCOTTCOUNTYWATERSHEDS

