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Natural News

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Upper Sevier River, South-Central Utah ~Photo by Jim Harris, UDEQ

Targeted Watershed Grants

The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the 2006 Targeted Watershed Grants (TWG) is expected to be published in March, 2006. In 2005, EPA awarded over \$9 million to 12 of the nation's most outstanding watershed coalitions as part of the Agency's third round of Targeted Watersheds Grants. The Targeted Watersheds Grant Program is a relatively new EPA program designed to encourage successful community-based approaches and management techniques to protect and restore the nation's waters. For more information on this grant program and to read the RFP, see:

www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/initiative

Within EPA Region 8, The Upper Sevier River Watershed received a 2005 grant for approximately \$600,000. Encompassing 2,031 square miles in south-central Utah, the Upper Sevier River Watershed is predominantly public lands with 15 % private agricultural land concentrated in the lower elevation valleys. The goal of this project is to establish a coldwater fishery by restoring impacted stream reaches and correct habitat alteration, and by reducing phosphorus loading and sediment levels through improved irrigation practices. The project will also provide landowners with tools and training for the conservation of water resources and maintenance of a

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sustainable fishery through proper grazing management. Water quality, biological and physical habitat parameters will be monitored. In addition, UDEQ's Division of Water Quality will monitor changes in fish populations under its current surveying program.

For more information on the TWG program, contact **Gary Kleeman** at (303) 312-6246 or kleeman.gary@epa.gov

CARE Grant Proposals Due April 10, 2006

The new Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program sponsored by EPA is a competitive grant program that offers an innovative way for communities to take action to reduce toxic pollution. CARE educates and supports communities by helping them assess the pollution risks they face while also providing funding and access to EPA and other voluntary programs to address local environmental priorities. Funding ranges from \$75,000 — \$300,000 per community. Find out more at: <http://www.epa.gov/care> or contact **Nancy Reish** of EPA Region 8 at (303) 312-6040.

Innovative Stream Stabilization ~ Jim Wulliman, Muller Engineering Company

The Cottonwood Creek Project in southeast Denver provides an innovative example of restoring a degraded urban stream. The project was recently constructed by the Cherry Creek Basin Water Quality Authority to help reduce the amount of sediment and phosphorus entering Cherry Creek Reservoir from a tributary with typical



Prior to the project, Cottonwood Creek was deeply incised and actively eroding, conveying phosphorus-laden sediment to Cherry Creek Reservoir.

~Photo by Muller Engineering Company



Grade-control structures designed to emulate natural stream riffles using a mix of rock observed in a tributary to Cottonwood Creek.

~ Photo by Muller Engineering Company

urban stream erosion issues. The project involved filling in a deep, actively-eroding channel to create a shallow, stable base flow channel meandering through riffles and pools. The rock riffles, constructed to replicate similar natural grade control formations observed in a nearby creek, provide grade control, energy dissipation, and aquatic habitat. The riffles are less than one-foot high and gently sloped at a ratio of 15 (horizontal) to one (vertical) to provide for fish passage. The raised base flow channel is less than two feet below the surrounding overbanks, keeping the water table close to the ground surface to encourage the growth of riparian and upland vegetation, and allowing flood flows to spill into the wide overbank areas.

The goal was to create a healthy natural stream channel – one that is stable, well-vegetated, and able to relieve energy during high-water events by allowing runoff to spread into the overbanks. Under the right conditions this slows the water down, reduces erosional forces, increases the storage and infiltration of runoff, and enhances water quality.

For further information please contact **Jim Wulliman** at jwulliman@mullereng.com or (303) 988-4939.

The 2005 Energy Policy Act and Stormwater Regulations

~ Greg Davis, EPA Region 8

The last issue of *Natural News* discussed revisions to the Clean Water Act as they pertain to oil and gas construction activities. These revisions affect oil and gas construction activities such that any construction associated with oil and gas exploration, production, processing, treatment, or transmission is no longer required to be permitted under the Clean Water Act.

During a January 10, 2006, Colorado Water Quality Control Commission hearing, the State of Colorado questioned whether these revisions affected the State's authority. Some representatives of the oil and gas industry argued that the Energy Bill preempts Colorado's ability to regulate stormwater discharges from oil and gas construction activities. However, based on advice from the State Attorney General's Office and the analysis of other parties to the proceeding, the Commission disagreed. It was determined that, although Congress eliminated most federal regulation of stormwater discharges from oil and gas construction activities, Congress did not state that such activities cannot be regulated by state governments.

In the proceeding, the Commission considered whether, in view of the provisions of the 2005 federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 (the Energy Bill), any revisions should be adopted to current Colorado requirements regarding stormwater discharge permits for oil and gas construction activities. The Commission decided to leave unchanged the current stormwater discharge permit requirements for oil and gas construction activities. Therefore, the State of Colorado will continue to regulate construction associated with oil and gas activities, so long as the construction disturbs equal to or greater than one acre of land.

The final actions of the Commission were codified in Colorado's Control Regulation #61 (5 CCR 1002-61). The regulation, details from the hearing, and further background on permitting oil and gas construction activities can be obtained from the Commission's web site: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/op/wqcc>
For more information, contact **Greg Davis** at davis.gregory@epa.gov

***“There are no
passengers on
spaceship Earth.
We are all crew.”***

Marshall McLuhan

Review of “*Environmental Literacy in America*” Report

~ Darcy Campbell, EPA Region 8

If you are in the business of educating the public on environmental issues, read this report titled “*Environmental Literacy in America: What Ten Years of NEETF/Roper Research and Related Studies Say about Environmental Literacy in the U.S.*” It was published by the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation in Sept. 2005.

Quoting from the preface, it “. . . provides a loud wake-up call to the environmental education community, to community leaders, and to influential specialists ranging from physicians to weathercasters. At a time when Americans are confronted with increasingly challenging environmental choices, we learn that our citizenry is by and large both uniformed and misinformed.”

Here are some interesting tidbits from the report:

- About 80 % of Americans are heavily influenced by incorrect or outdated environmental myths.
- Just 12 % of Americans can pass a basic quiz on awareness of energy topics.
- Most adults get environmental information from TV and the internet.
- Kids get their environmental information from the following sources:
 - 72 % from TV
 - 51 % from school
 - 49 % from parents
 - 40 % from friends

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- 80 % of all students decide before high school to opt out of advanced math and professional scientific pursuits.
- The environment is the number one subject of choice for community service projects for youth.
- The “Influentials”, “True Blue Greens”, and “Environmental Information Seekers” together make up about 25% of the population of the U.S, and are the people to target for implementing environmental change. Check out the report to find out who these people are at: <http://www.neetf.org>

Don't forget to take the quiz and see how you score!

**“Friend of EPA” Award to Karen Baltz,
Majestic View Nature Center, Arvada, CO
~ Paul McIver, EPA Region 8**



EPA Presents Majestic View Nature Center with the “Friend of EPA Award.” From left to right are Paul McIver, (EPA wetlands educator), Kathy Okon, (Environmental Education Specialist for Majestic View Nature Center), Dr. Gene Reetz (EPA Wetlands Team Leader), and Karen Baltz (Majestic View Nature Center Director).
~Photo by Pem McIver

A “Friend of EPA” Award for outstanding environmental achievement went to Karen Baltz, Director of the City of Arvada’s Majestic View Nature Center. The Center conducts many programs for educating the public about the environment, including aquatic resources and wetlands. Many school groups benefit from these programs in a unique setting that is completely urbanized. The center has a deep valley lined with wetlands that empty into a pond. The hills surrounding the pond and wetlands have some native

prairie vegetation. The Director, Karen Baltz, does an outstanding job of developing programs, administering the site and working with schools and others organizations to ensure high quality environmental education. The award was presented to her on February 6, at the Arvada City Hall during the weekly City Council meeting. The mayor was presented a certificate of recognition and Karen was awarded a trophy for her efforts.

**Webcast-Mania: EPA Offers Free Seminars
~ Darcy Campbell, EPA Region 8**

Have you noticed the explosion in Web-based training? This is a great way to get training at very minimal cost. I’ve summarized many of EPA’s offerings below. You can view past webcasts to catch up on what you’ve missed.

Watershed Academy Webcast Seminars

EPA sponsors monthly Webcasts to offer free training and information for watershed practitioners from around the globe.

Wednesday, March 22nd Sustainable Funding for Watershed Groups

Wendy Wilson and Pat Munoz, River Network

Explore the keys to effective fundraising, including organization essentials, top fundraising strategies, and a comprehensive fundraising plan.

Wednesday, April 19th Opportunities for Citizen Involvement in the Clean Water Act

Gayle Killam, River Network

Learn how citizens and organizations can make a difference in their watersheds through an improved understanding of the Clean Water Act and other national laws addressing water resources.

Wednesday, May 17th (in celebration of American Wetlands Month): Integrating Wetlands in Watershed Protection Efforts

Tom Schueler, Center for Watershed Protection

Find out how local communities can integrate wetlands into larger watershed protection efforts and learn about new tools to help protect these valuable aquatic resources.

Wednesday, June 28th *Influencing Behaviors Using Social Marketing*

Charlie MacPherson, Tetra Tech, Inc. and Chris Conner, EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program

Learn how social marketing techniques can be applied in your watershed to influence behaviors and build environmental stewardship.

Registration is available on a first-come/first-served basis and opens approximately one week prior to each seminar at www.clu-in.org/live.

Each Webcast includes a Web-based slide presentation with a companion audio portion that can be accessed either by phone or by streaming audio. Because of the growing popularity of these Webcasts, we encourage participants to reserve a conference room and invite others. Audio versions of all past Webcasts can be accessed at www.epa.gov/watershedwebcasts.

Past topics include:

Plan2Fund: A Tool to Organize Your Watershed Funding.

For more information about the Plan2Fund Watershed Tool, visit:

http://sspa.boisestate.edu/efc/Tools_Services/Plan2Fund/plan2fund.htm.

Introduction to Trading for Water Quality Protection

Phase II Stormwater

Low Impact Development Strategies, Tools and Techniques for Sustainable Watersheds

The ABCs of TMDLs for Stakeholders

Getting in Step: Developing Your Message and Publicizing it Effectively

Eight Tools for Watershed Protection in Developing Areas

In addition to Webcasts, the Watershed Academy sponsors live classroom training and on-line distance learning modules through the Watershed Academy Web at www.epa.gov/watertrain. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/wacademy.

Source Water Protection: A Webcast Series

EPA and the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies are working on a series of interactive Webcasts designed to allow owners and operators of drinking water utilities to share their experiences with source water protection. The first Webcast, "Source Water Protection: Monitoring and Data Sharing," aired on January 25, 2006. This Webcast, which addressed issues including real-time reporting, water monitoring, emerging contaminants and data sharing, attracted approximately 200 viewers. It is available for viewing at:

<https://www.livemeeting.com/cc/encounter/view?id=11347531610127>

A Webcast on land development and growth aired on February 22. The third Webcast on collaborative communication and regulatory and non-regulatory tools will air on March 22, 2006, from 1-- 3 p.m., Eastern Standard Time (EST).

Registration must be made in advance to participate in the Webcasts. Participants will need a telephone and a computer with an Internet connection. Complete instructions will be provided upon registration. To register, visit EPA's Drinking Water Academy Training Calendar at: <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwa/calendar.html>

This Web site also contains links to information about speakers and specific presentation topics. Questions about the Webcast series may be directed to Tracy Hudak at hudak.tracy@epa.gov.

"The beauty of the living world . . . has always been uppermost in my mind . . . I have felt bound by a solemn obligation to do what I could – if I didn't at least try I could never again be happy in nature . . . there would be no peace for me if I kept silent."

Rachel Carson (1907—1964)

Stormwater Webcasts

EPA is announcing a new series of Webcast training sessions for municipal stormwater managers. Webcasts will be scheduled approximately every other month from now until September.

First Webcast: Post-Construction Overview and Introduction to Smart Growth and Low-Impact Development. March 8, 2006, 1-3 p.m. EST. Nikos Singelis, U.S. EPA Stormwater Program, Instructor. Geoffrey Anderson, Director of EPA's Smart Growth Program, Guest Speaker. Sign up for this Webcast at:
<http://www.epa.gov/npdes/training>

Future Topics and Tentative Dates (final dates and speakers will be announced later):

- Construction 101 - 5/10/06
- Stormwater Utilities 201 - 7/12/06
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) 101 - Program Development (with the Center for Watershed Protection) 9/13/06

Conferences and Training

2006 National River Rally

To be held near Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, May 5 — 9, 2006. For more information see:

<http://www.rivernetwork.org/rally>

5th National Monitoring Conference-Monitoring Networks: Connecting for Clean Water

May 7-11, 2006. San José McEnery Convention Center, San José, CA. Organized by the National Water Quality Monitoring Council.

<http://www.tetrattech-ffx.com/nwqmc06/>

Second National Water Quality Trading Conference

The Second National Water Quality Trading Conference will be held May 23-25, 2006, in Pittsburgh, PA. A collaboration of EPA, the USDA and the Farm Foundation, this conference will explore opportunities and challenges associated with developing trading programs. To see a tentative program visit:

www.farmfoundation.org

Publications and Web Resources

Live from Nebraska – Crane Cam

The Crane Cam sits in the middle of the Platte River at Rowe Sanctuary in Nebraska. The 2006 Crane Cam is a joint effort between Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and National Geographic beginning February 28th.

The Kids and Cranes page (<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/cranecam/kids.html>) contains educational Web videos about sandhill cranes, migration, and the importance of the Platte River. The site also includes educational activities. Go to:
<http://eelink.net/cgi-bin/ee-link/newclick/362685>

“Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters”

EPA's Office of Water has published a guide to watershed management to help various organizations develop and implement watershed plans. The “Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters” is aimed toward communities, watershed groups, and local, state, tribal and federal environmental agencies.

The 414-page handbook is designed to take the user through each step of the watershed planning process: watershed monitoring and assessment, community outreach, selection and application of available models, best management practices, effectiveness data bases, implementation, feedback and plan adjustment.

The handbook is intended to supplement existing watershed planning guides that have been developed by agencies, universities and other nonprofit organizations.

This handbook is more specific than other guides about quantifying existing pollutant loads, developing estimates of the load reductions required to meet water-quality standards, developing effective management measures, and tracking progress once the plan is implemented. The handbook is available online at:

http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/watershed_handbook

You can order a free copy from the National Service Center for Environmental Publications by calling 800-490-9198 or e-mail ncepimal@one.net. When ordering, please refer to EPA document number: EPA 841-B-05-005.

Water Protection Toolkit for Local Officials: Connecting Land Use with Water Quality

A free copy of the “Water Protection Toolkit” is available at: www.awarecolorado.org

Aware Colorado is a statewide program to help communities protect water quality through land use choices. Its purpose is to educate local decision makers about the impacts of land use on water quality.

Robocow Returns

Check it out! Robocow returns and tackles ground water contamination from improperly sited or abandoned wells and urban activities. Lots of fun and lots of great information — what a great way to reach people!

http://www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/flash/robocow2/en/robocow2_e.htm

Wetlands Web Site

The Center for Watershed Protection has a great new wetlands web site at: www.cwp.org/wetlands

Management Handbook for Septic/Decentralized Systems

A "how-to guide" for implementing EPA's Voluntary National Guidelines for Management of Onsite and Clustered (Decentralized) Wastewater Treatment Systems. The guide describes a step-by-step approach for the development of a community management program for decentralized wastewater systems. It includes specific community examples, gives an overview of the elements essential for sound management of these systems, and provides links to extensive resources. Published 12/01/2005. To download a copy go to: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/owm/septic/guidelines.cfm>

Colorado's Water: Headwaters of the West

Channel 7 News has a new website dedicated to water education, including information on snowpack, watersheds of Colorado, links to other sites and much more. Go to: <http://kmgh.iewatershed.com/index.php>

Earth Day Plans

Earth Day will be held April 22. Here are some websites with information and ideas:

Government agencies: <http://www.earthday.gov>

EnviroLink's Earth Day Online: <http://earthday.envirolink.org/>

Earth Day Network: <http://www.earthday.net/>

The Nature Conservancy:

<http://nature.org/earthday/>

National Environmental Education Week:

<http://www.eeweek.org/>

EPA Reports on Stormwater Best Management Practices

EPA's "Using Smart Growth Techniques as Stormwater Best Management Practices" reviews nine common smart growth techniques and examines how they can be used to prevent or manage stormwater runoff. This publication will help communities encourage smart growth and meet their new regulatory requirements. Go to

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/stormwater.htm> to learn more about this report or to order copies.

Agricultural Guide Provides New Tools for Landowners

The Rocky Mountain Agricultural Landowners Guide is the product of a unique partnership between American Farmland Trust and Coleman Natural Foods through the Coleman Eco-Project 2015, a 10-year relationship that addresses the critical need to protect U.S. working farms and ranches. In this guide, you will find information outlining tools and federal and state programs to help farmers and ranchers conserve their land and maintain its long-term health for future generations.

The guide is available online at http://www.farmlandinfo.org/documents/30427/FINAL_Rocky_Mountain_Guide.pdf.

The New Colorado Wastewater Mentoring Program

The Mentoring Program is designed to provide online and personal mentoring services to wastewater collection and treatment agencies throughout the State of Colorado. The program is to assist smaller communities with wastewater problems, compliance issues and water quality standards-related issues. In addition to being matched with mentors, mentees will be able to ask questions online (Bulletin Board), and to link to other Websites to find a consultant, contractor, or service to assist them with their question or problem. Mentees receive technical and managerial expertise from experienced individuals (mentors) at low risk and low cost without having to learn by trial and error. The Mentoring Program is co-sponsored by the Colorado Rural Water Association & the Colorado Water Quality Control Division.

For more information visit the web site at:

<http://www.cwwuc.org/Mentoring/Mentoring.html>



*The Saint Vrain River, Colorado
~Photo by Paul McIver*



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Natural News

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If you have an article concerning ecosystem protection, community based environmental protection, or watersheds; we would like to hear from you!

We need your help in updating our mailing list in order to keep Natural News coming to you! Please contact John DiPentino at (303) 312-6594 or dipentino.john@epa.gov, or write to him at the return address below.

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Ecosystem Stewardship on the web: http://www.epa.gov/region8/community_resources/steward/est.html



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