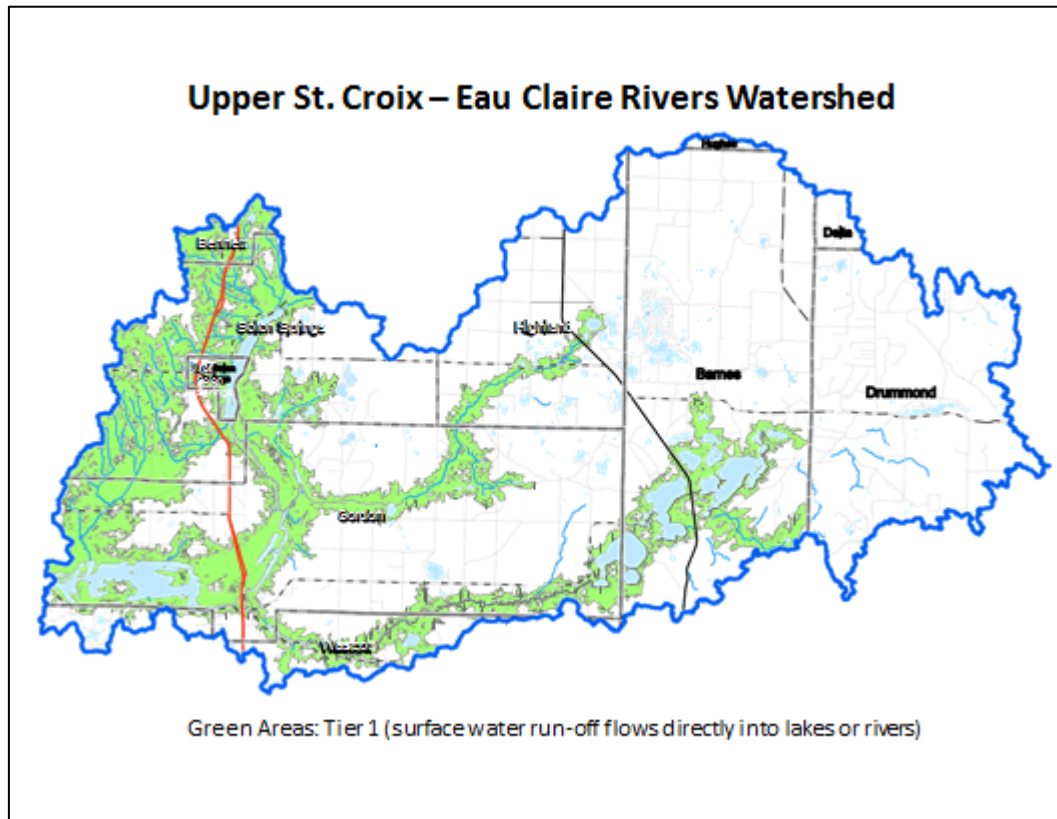


Grant LPT-322-08 Summary Report
Creating Regional Watershed Based Groundwater,
Hydraulic, and Nutrient Models for Local-scale Use in
the Upper St Croix - Eau Claire Rivers Watershed



We are certain this project has made the Upper St Croix – Eau Claire Rivers Watershed one of the best documented watersheds in northern Wisconsin. Details about the scientific studies that were conducted under this grant may be obtained in their entirety at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/publications/stcroix/>

The reports are titled: “Creating regional watershed based groundwater, hydraulic, and nutrient models for local-scale use in the upper St Croix – Eau Claire Rivers Watershed” by UW-Stevens Point Center for Watershed Science and Education (UWSP), February 2011, “Description of Existing Wetland Resources in the St. Croix River Headwaters Watershed” by Geo Spatial Services of St Mary’s University of Minnesota, May 8, 2012, and a draft St. Croix Headwaters Watershed Study Report by Elliott Stefanik of the Army Corps of Engineers.

These large reports have been summarized in a 12-page document titled: “St. Croix Headwaters Watershed Study Summary Report” also found at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/publications/stcroix/>

The DNR also conducted several Critical Habitat studies in the watershed. These studies can be found at:

http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/criticalhabitat/Projects.aspx?page=CRITICAL_HABITAT&status=COMPLETE

This grant was a part of a broader group of WDNR grants that allowed us and our partners to get specific aquatic plant studies done for more than 20 lakes and river segments. The bulk of these studies were conducted by Matt Berg of Endangered Resource Services and may be found on the FOTSCH website: fotsch.org under the “Our Rivers & Lakes” tab.

One of the most useful outcomes of our project was the mapping of the directly-connected surface water runoff areas, known as “tier 1” in the reports. This information is vital because it allows citizens to see that it is not just the shoreline property owners who need to be aware of the impact of storm water runoff. See attached sample map of Solon Springs (tier 1 in brown, wetlands in green).



As important as the “tier 1” information is, without the WDNR’s approval to purchase a software license from ESRI for their Arc Map products with grant funding, FOTSCH would not have been able to combine the “tier 1” maps provided by UWSP with the information provided by several other sources (Douglas and Bayfield County (property owners), St Mary’s (watershed wetland data), Matt Berg (and his Grantsburg student’s) aquatic plant surveys, and the open water, river, and roads layers from the DNR).

At the beginning of this project with the encouragement of the DNR and UW-Extension to include the whole watershed in our studies (not stopping at the Douglas County border), and to form a new informal organization called the Upper St Croix Watershed Alliance (USCWA) we have over the past five years developed long-lasting cooperative relationships with several organizations: (Upper St Croix Lake Association, Gordon/St. Croix Flowage Association, Eau Claire Lakes Property Owners Association (POA), as well as several schools in the area). Even though this grant period will end on 12/31/13, these relationships will continue under the new Douglas County St Croix Headwaters Watershed Stewardship Project that has funded a Watershed Coordinator for the next two years.

A direct non-technical outcome of this grant was the development of FOTSCH’s “Canoes On Wheels” program (canoesonwheels.org) to provide local schools and youth groups with the ability to get their students out on our local rivers and experience first-hand what they are studying in their classrooms.

This program was started as a direct result of what we learned during our Riverfest 2008 extravaganza (see attachments for activities and the story about the local student who was the inspiration for the canoes on wheels program).

Canoes on Wheels was started in 2009 with the contribution from local units of government, conservation groups, and individuals. These contributions allowed FOTSCH to purchase a trailer, eight canoes needed to fill the trailer and all of the associated canoe and safety gear (e.g., paddles, PFDs, plant rakes, etc.) In addition, AIS grant support from the DNR allowed us to include waterproof Aquatic Plant Visual Identification books with the trailer. Since 2009 the program has logged over 150 canoe outing days and allowed over 1,900 students, teachers and supporting volunteers to experience the wonders of Wisconsin's waters.



The Canoes on Wheels program has also led to closer collaboration with the Douglas and Bayfield County Conservation Departments, Solon Spring and Drummond Schools, Douglas County 4-H, and the POA Lake Ecology Education Program (LEEP).

In closing, we (the FOTSCH board) want to thank the DNR for providing us with the opportunity to better understand and protect this wonderful area. We now have the science-based tools to support discussions with interested citizens and local governmental agencies as we work cooperatively to find ways to continue to protect our waters and to help provide outdoor education for our youth.





COW Origin Story

2008: Amber Johnson, who lives and attends school in Solon Springs, earns the statewide Wisconsin Stream Monitoring Award for student volunteers from UW-Extension.



What is the Canoes on Wheels Program?



Community Partnership

Program Goal

All local high-school students have at least one supervised paddling experience before graduating.





The Canoes on Wheels (“COW”) program puts kids into canoes to help them find their passion.

We work with middle and high school aged students through their schools and youth organizations.

The volunteer staff of COW offers the use of a canoe trailer, eight canoes suited for river or lake use, and canoe gear such as paddles, life vests, and aquatic plant visual field guides at no-cost to local schools and youth groups. COW also provides no-cost workshops for teachers to help them understand how to safely manage canoe outings and to integrate these activities into school curriculums. When requested, the COW program offers logistical support such as trailer transport.

Started in the fall of 2008, the COW program has a proven track record. Our canoes have been on five northwestern Wisconsin rivers and numerous lakes.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Workshops	3	1	2	2	3	11
Canoe outing days	20	30	43	26	39	158
Student-paddles (est.)	200	300	400	450	557	1909
Parades	3	4	3	1	0	11

The COW trailer and bright red canoes are also used to publicize worthy causes such as the promotion of donations to our area food shelves by participating in local community parades and events.

Donations to the COW program are used for direct operational expenses such as insurance, winter storage costs, outing supplies, and transportation costs.

We need your support to continue this program. It costs less than \$15 per student per outing to run this program. School classes, 4-H camps, and student outdoor education camps all benefit from the COW program. We believe at least 30% of local youth will not have the opportunity to experience a “rivers-eye” view of our great Wisconsin waterways without this program.

Think about starting your own “COW” program; we would be happy to help. You will find it well worth your time and effort. **Contact us at: scott@fotsch.org.**

ST. CROIX RIVERFEST 2008

WATERSHED CONFERENCE & EVENT EVALUATION

1. Overall how would you rate Friday's Watershed Conference held on June 13th?

Not So Good	Fair	Good	NA
0	3	9	4

2. How would you rate Saturday's event(s) held on June 14th in which you participated?

Event	Not So Good	Fair	Good	# Attendees
Pontoon Rides/Tour			1	45-49
Macroinvertebrate Mania	1			1
DNR Voyager Canoe Rides			1	7
Gordon Dam Park History			3	12-20
Underwater Video Program		1	3	20-30
Friday Night Film Festival	1			
Pontoon Classroom			6	31
Landscaping Workshop & Plant Sale			1	40
Barnes Kids Fishing Day	1			0
Barnes Local History			2	16
Conservation Case Study			1	6
St. Croix Portage Trail Hike			1	11-18
Boardwalk Hike			1	8-11
St. Croix River Paddle			1	30
Gordon/Wascott Historical Museum		2		
Kids Special Free Environmental Film Festival	1			6
Aquatic Plants of St. Croix Flowage, AIS Prevention			2	15
EWM Identification, Life History & Barnes Research Project			1	7
Approximate Attendee Numbers at St. Croix Riverfest Events Not Evaluated				
EWM Identification Barnes				7
Gordon R.S. Open House				24
Festival of the Arts				30
Free Children's Festival Lucius Woods				350
Family Storytime Lucius Woods				12

3. If you could change one thing about St. Croix Riverfest 2008, what would it be?

- Change the date to September when more folks are done with family summer vacations to encourage increased attendance.
- Make it later in the summer or early fall – definitely not June.
- I thought Riverfest was a great success, I was really impressed with the number of participants at Gordon Dam on June 14th. If I could change anything I would improve the program that I gave to make it even more educational and interpretive.
- Get more citizens interested.
- Drop the film festival.
- The canoe trip would have had a stop along the way for bathroom, social time and some type of short historic, glacial or natural history discussion.
- I think the number of events should be limited as attendance was not good at some, especially in the Gordon area.
- I do believe that sharing our different projects with each other was important and valuable to all, and that was accomplished. It's my feeling, though, that if we choose to produce another conference next year or in the future, we need to come up with entirely different content. There's not much accomplished when we're seeing, hearing, participating in the same conversation repeatedly, and I'm not in favor of spending my time and that of others in that manner. If we do, however, come up with different, relevant topics for another full-day conference, I'm okay with putting my energy into it.
- Some events overlapped others reducing the opportunity to attend several of particular interest.
- Make it one day longer...Sunday.
- Increased & more thorough (more details about events) publicity so that more people could be reached.
- The date – make it later in the year and no more than every 2 years.
- THE DATE – too much going on in June! Every group, lake association meeting or other activity seems to be scheduled in June. Since Riverfest is new, why not move to a later date and make it every 2 years.

- Maybe only a few presentations; maybe some food tied into it and paid by the participants; maybe reservations required by the potential participants.

4. Do you think there should be some form of St. Croix Riverfest in 2009?

Yes	No	Left Blank	Maybe
11	3	0	1

5. Would you participate in future St. Croix Riverfest planning/funding?

Yes	No	Left Blank	Maybe
10	3	1	1

6. Comments, ideas, suggestions:

- Maybe shorten schedule. Seemed like a lot of events for a fairly small group.
- I think the best way to get a larger crowd would be to have it every 2 years or so and somehow find a way to publicize it occasionally through the off time, maybe to kind of stoke the fire.
- I'd recommend fewer outdoor events/field trips so they don't compete with each other. Elected officials could be engaged by presenting them some sort of recognition/gratitude or vice versa. For example, a village or county board member could have presented Amber with her award. An alternative to a multi-day event could be to have a featured monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly event sponsored by the Alliance or individual groups. Meals should be free – no donations requested – if attendance is important. Raffle prizes may also expand interest and attendance. A multi-day paddle from the headwaters down to the Gordon Dam would be cool.
- I thought it was a great event and we would be very happy to help out where we could in the future. Thanks...Keep up the good work!
- There needs to be a discussion about what worked and what others might be interested in. The movies were too long and to many. We didn't get out of there until 11:00 PM.
- Although I have not gotten feedback for all of the events there were at least six events on Saturday that were very successful according to their sponsor. These were:
 - B-2 Landscaping workshop
 - G-1 Conservation Case Study
 - G-4 Underwater Video Program
 - S-2 St. Croix River Paddle
 - S-4 Festival of the Arts
 - S-5 Pontoon Tour

- Events like this- if supported locally build over time and eventually become a local and regional tradition. Is there enough support to make that happen...that would be great. Right now I see a really strong leader driving most of the effort. A planning committee approach for next year's event may not only share the load, but could make this a more sustainable event in the long run (yes, planning committees can be a lot of work) start planning next year's event in October of this year...just my thoughts. I think the attendance could build over time if the event is attractive and promoted as it was this past.
- I don't mean this to be negative, but I think this area of small communities is overcelebrated. The amount of funding and time spent by people working at RiverFest did not result in that much return in the form of attendance or interest by non environmentalists in the local area. The Gordon area was a prime example with very little cooperation by any locals, other than the Historical Society. I attempted to interest several locals that owned businesses, etc. and got no responses. Due to Good Neighbor Days, the town government is not interested in another celebration. Also, RiverFest lacked what the locals expect in a celebration; beer and fireworks.
- Patagonia film festival:
Although I enjoyed the adult package, it sure cost a WHOLE lot of money for what we got. And the children's programming was entirely inappropriate, especially for the young audience we managed to draw. (Thank heaven's for Heather and her great choice of books, and ability to read to and relate to those tyke-lets!) Weighing the cost/benefit: Ixnay on Patagonia in the future. If I'm overruled, then at least put them in the same venue so we don't have the added cost of moving the equipment.
- Friday's conference:
I learned quite a bit and personally felt the day was well-spent. I couldn't help but think, though, that most of the participants and attendees were the faces I've seen at Watershed Alliance meetings; that we were, indeed, preaching to the choir.
- Saturday events:
Since I spent the day babysitting A/V equipment, I'm not a good one to comment on the quality of or attendance at the other events. I can say, though, that there were a number of competing events. Two of the bigger ones being Children's Day at Lucius Woods (I estimate 250+ attended over the timeframe), and Wascott Fire Department's open house (they always draw 300 to 500 people who stick around for most it chatting up the neighbors, enjoying free food, playing on the equipment, etc). It's my opinion that summertime is filled up every weekend with stuff to do in our area and people have to choose their favorite. As much as I enjoy kicking up bugs, I don't want to spend a precious Saturday looking at'em for fun. If we do this again, pick the most popular events and if we can find someone willing to champion it and do the work to put it on, then OK. Frankly, if I have my druthers, I'm not interested in taking another stab at the whole Saturday thing. But if we do, time it for May or September to avoid the summer stuff.

- 9-5 was too long a time slot at Barnes Town hall.
- There were too many things to do in one day. The canoe trip could have been on Sunday...also one of the hikes. Numerous people told us they were busy on Saturday and were sorry to miss all of the activities. Others told us that they wanted to participate in more activities but they were too close together (time wise). HATS OFF TO SCOTT!
- Finding a good date is always challenging.....perhaps later in the summer date would be better (August?).
- Include updates ...a project within the watershed – especially to highlight “Best Practices” that can be adopted/adapted within the area.
- Can’t remember if there was an “instructional session” on kayaking – if not, might be a good/nice addition.
- Plan events in each area (Barnes, Gordon, Solon Springs) on separate days so that if (for example) you want to attend an event at Gordon Dam, you won’t miss something presented in Barnes or Solon Springs at the same time.
- 2009 could have just a couple of education seminars.

*****The response rate to the St. Croix Riverfest evaluation forms was 83%.**

Results of Rating Curve re-evaluation field work done by Jake Macholl, Scott Peterson and Jim Heim on September 6, 2013.

Staff gauge sites:

Cut-away (SX03) –

Staff gauge was not changed and the original rating curve is still correct.

Old Hwy 53 (SX02) –

Staff gauge was moved but rating curve can still be used by adding 0.35" to the staff gauge reading.

Eau Claire (EC01) –

Need to start over and move the site to County Road Y.

Note: no staff gauge was installed at County Road Y.

Gordon Dam (SX01) –

Staff gauge was not changed and the original rating curve is still correct.

Scott's Bridge (SX00) –

Staff gauge was not changed and the original rating curve is still correct.

Moose River (MS01) –

New staff gauge was installed to replace the old gauge that washed away at this location. Add 0.3" to the staff gauge reading to use original rating curve.

Lord Creek (LD01) –

Subtract 0.22" from the staff gauge reading to use original rating curve.

Report completed by Jake Macholl, MS Water Resources Scientist
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