

Darlington Sewer and Water Utility  
Lafayette County

January 7, 1977

West Branch of the Pecatonica River - Surface Acres = 227.5 Miles, Miles = 41.9, Gradient = 2.4 feet per mile.

This branch of the Pecatonica River also originates in Iowa County. It drains approximately 500 square miles in Wisconsin and about 283 square miles in Lafayette County. In general the uplands are farmed intensively and are usually in crops. The steeper slopes and coulees are either wooded or in meadow and firm pasture. Almost all of the floodplain cover consists of a combination of wet marsh, woodlands, fresh meadow and meadow pasture. Fifteen named streams are direct tributaries and contribute significantly to the total volume of flow. There are also fifteen unnamed tributaries with perennial flows which feed directly into it. However, their total flow is quite low (8.6 cfs.), when compared to the total.

Horseshoe Lake is the only named lake in the watershed. This lake and two unnamed lakes are oxbow lakes formed by the river. All three are located in the floodplain. Extremely high water levels and severe flooding are common occurrences throughout the basin and some sections exhibit severe erosion. However, stream banks are generally well covered with perennial vegetation. In some areas over-grazing is contributory to the erosion problem. The heavy erosion taking place along the stream is generally confined to the immediate stream banks. Heavy bank erosion is understandable since at various times during the year the discharge may increase to one-hundred twenty times the average. The sport fishery within the county includes very good populations of panfish, smallmouth bass, channel and flathead catfish, and walleyes. Others include carp, buffalo, white suckers, redhorse and forage fishes. Another fishery resource in the watershed are the numerous farm fish ponds. Well managed ponds with good perennial sources of water yield good catches of bluegills and largemouth bass. Those with sufficient springs will support a trout fishery. Wetlands within the basin are usually found in the floodplain of the river itself and are localized. They provide the general habitat requirements for prolific populations of muskrats with some beaver present. Waterfowl also utilize the wetlands for food and nesting cover. The open water of the river accommodates many hundreds of ducks and some geese during the spring and fall migration.


Recommendations

From the Darlington discharge and for the remainder of the West Branch of the Pecatonica River the classification should be continuous fish and aquatic life.

The above recommendations represent a concurrence of opinion of the stream classification team who are as follows:

Jerry Friederichs - District Engineer  
Gene Van Dyck - Area Fish Manager  
Tom Bainbridge - District Biologist  
Roger Schlessler - Natural Resources Technician

Respectfully submitted,

  
Thomas Bainbridge  
Stream Classification Coordinator

RS:js

2869 II NW  
(CALAMINE)

T. 3 N.  
T. 2 N.

PLATTEVILLE VIA WIS. 81/ 22 MI.  
VON O. 3 MI.

(S)

40'

4727

0.2 MI TO WIS. 23

4726

34  
C N ST P & P  
Vestiger Br

Darlington  
(BM 817)

Quarry

Sewage Disposal

Gaging Sta

Quarry

Quarry

Substation

Radio Tower

Quarry

Quarry

Quarry

35

36

31

(81)

PECATONICA

Creek

Otter Creek Sch.

RIVER

(K)

10

12

BR 820

CHICAGO MILWAUKEE

Ames

D A R L I N G T O N

Branch

ST PAUL

PECATONICA

BR 834

859

904

830

AND