



## **White River Basin Proceedings**

### **Summary of General Session Presentations**

#### **Jim Gaston**

##### **Gaston's White River Resort**

Mr. Gaston encouraged cooperation in protecting the White River Watershed - noting that everyone agrees that cooperation is appropriate and good, but many times agencies and others fail to cooperate because it is easiest to just go on working independently to address watershed issues. Mr. Gaston encouraged State and Federal agencies to update regulations and environmental requirements to address current watershed issues, and proposed that additional environmental taxes might be appropriate to fund effective environmental protection for the watershed.

#### **Richard Weiss**

##### **Interim Director, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality**

Mr. Weiss reflected on his personal commitment to environmental protection and to the well-being of the watershed, which attracted him to live and work in Arkansas. He reiterated his personal and professional commitment to working with all stakeholders to cooperatively address environmental issues, including watershed issues in the White River basin.

#### **Randy Young**

##### **Executive Director, Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission**

Mr. Young reviewed the watershed protection-related activities of the Arkansas Soil & Water Conservation Commission (ASWCC), providing a summary of some of the most successful Best Management Practices promoted by the Commission. Mr. Young highlighted successful cooperative efforts between the ASWCC and other environmental agencies, and shared future goals of the ASWCC to improve water quality in the White River basin.

#### **Steve Mahfood**

##### **Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources**

Mr. Mahfood shared the philosophy of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), focusing on the Department's commitment to integrity, openness and cooperation, diversity, and excellent service in the effort to protect natural resources. He discussed future water issues facing the region, including water quality, water use, and water ownership. Mr. Mahfood closed by encouraging forum participants to turn their commitment to addressing environmental issues into action by participating fully in the forum .

#### **Bill Keith**

##### **Manager of Water Quality Planning, Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality**

Mr. Keith provided forum attendees with an overview of Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements for the White River basin, explained the monitoring network used to evaluate water quality in Arkansas, and shared Arkansas water quality summaries. Mr. Keith discussed future water quality requirements, including the EPA requirements that States implement Total Daily Maximum Load (TMDL) programs in upcoming years.

**Ed Knight****Director of Water Pollution Control Program, Missouri Department of Natural Resources**

Mr. Knight addressed geographic areas of concern and water pollution constituent concerns in the White River basin in Missouri, and discussed water quality trends in the basin. He shared the creative and cooperative methods that MDNR is using to address those concerns, including implementing new nutrient management plans for agriculture and developing phosphorous standards for municipal wastewater discharges. Mr. Knight highlighted some of the outreach and public education programs addressing water quality in Missouri.

**Steve Filipek****Coordinator, State Stream Team, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**

Mr. Filipek illustrated how local Stream Teams sponsored by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission are improving stream water quality by remediating eroding stream banks and managing stream banks to reduce siltation - the largest single inhibitor of water quality in Arkansas.

**Bob Morgan****Nonpoint Source Coordinator, Arkansas Soil and Water Conservation Commission**

Mr. Morgan explained in some detail how Best Management Practices (BMPs) for agricultural nutrient management are being used to protect water quality in the White River basin. He explained how cooperative programs sponsored by the Arkansas Soil & Water Conservation Commission (ASWCC) are implemented to promote BMPs.

**Wally Miller****Project Leader for Table Rock Lake Initiative, Missouri Department of Natural Resources**

Mr. Miller shared with forum attendees examples of how the Missouri Department of Natural Resources is engaging the public, cities, businesses, local officials, and other agencies to protect water quality in the White River basin by implementing local watershed protection groups and encouraging public participation in watershed planning and watershed protection.

**Roy Mahler****Chairman, Madison County, Arkansas, Conservation District**

Mr. Mahler explained the efforts of the Madison County Conservation District in protecting water quality in the upper White River basin. Mr. Mahler highlighted numerous local watershed protection success stories and presented statistics that demonstrate Madison County's improvements in water quality protection.

**John Kielczewski****Hydraulic Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District**

Mr. Kielczewski explained how the US Army Corps of Engineers balances their Federal mandate to provide water, power, and flood control in the White River basin, illustrating how the Corps allocates water for various uses and how that allocation affects the levels of the White River lakes. Mr. Kielczewski also discussed the Corps' efforts to balance the needs of downstream fisheries affected by low dissolved oxygen content in lake discharges.

**Stan Todd****Assistant Trout Biologist, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**

Mr. Todd illustrated how the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission has researched the effects of low dissolved oxygen content in White River lake discharges on downstream fisheries. Mr. Todd explained how dissolved oxygen content varies in lake discharges, and proposed methods to maintain the dissolved oxygen content of lake discharges.

**Bethel Herrold****Hydraulic Engineer, Department of Energy, Southwestern Power Administration**

Mr. Herrold explained how the Southwest Power Administration (SPA) serves citizens and he illustrated the research SPA has conducted to study dissolved oxygen issues associated with the White River dams. He illustrated the numerous modifications that the SPA has implemented to increase the dissolved oxygen content in White River dam discharges.

**Brenda Puloma****Project Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District**

Ms. Puloma discussed the US Army Corps of Engineers' current operating plan for the White River and explained the congressionally-mandated Minimum Flow Study being undertaken by the Corps. Ms. Puloma discussed the implications of introducing minimum flow as a new water use in the Corps' operating plan, and proposed how the results of the Study might ultimately affect the Corps' operating plan.

**John Stark****State Trout Biologist, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**

Mr. Stark discussed how a change in the White River minimum flow is expected to affect downstream fisheries, based on research and modeling conducted by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission. And he discussed the minimum flow recommendations being made by the Commission.

**Allen Carter****Senior Fisheries Biologist, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission**

Mr. Carter discussed the balance between water interests in the White River basin, and the actions of the Dissolved Oxygen Committee that has been addressing the White River dissolved oxygen content issue.

**Christophe Tulou****Principal, Christophe Tulou Associates**

Mr. Tulou explained and illustrated several methods of developing community-based watershed protection groups, based on case studies of watershed protection groups around the nation. He characterized the watershed protection issues facing the White River and proposed considerations that Arkansas and Missouri officials should consider to establish effective local watershed protection groups.

**Curtis Merrill****Founder, Bayou Bartholomew Alliance**

Dr. Merrill shared with forum attendees his experiences initiating and leading a local watershed protection group, the Bayou Bartholomew Alliance, in Southeast Arkansas. He shared his experience garnering public and political support, as well as funding, for local watershed protection. He encouraged others to take an active role in protecting their local water resources.