

Friends of the Minnesota Valley



River Watch Program

River Watch is a high school based student activity through which teams of high school students are trained on basic river water quality data collection and reporting procedures using Minnesota Pollution Control Agency protocols. River Watch teams also perform other monitoring and data collection activities such as macroinvertebrate counts and identifying sources of water pollution and excess sediment. The data the students will collect and submit is the same data the MPCA and others use.

A successful River Watch program is operating in the Red River Valley under the leadership of the International Water Institute. Technical assistance and advice in creating and implementing a Minnesota River Basin River Watch program is being provided by the Red River Watch program managers.

Friends of the Minnesota Valley is establishing a River Watch program in the Minnesota River Basin including the major tributary rivers and streams leading to the main channel of the Minnesota River..

The first operational year of the River Watch project, July 2017-June 2018, goal is the enrolling a minimum of 5 teams and perhaps as many as 20 teams.

River Watch school based teams will inventory and study local pollution and sediment sources, promote river quality activities and Best Management Practices within the community, meet with other teams to share successes and ideas for activities, and participate in a basin wide conference.

In addition to collecting a wide range of valuable and much needed data about river water quality and educating a new generation on the need for taking positive action to preserve and protect the river and lands of the basin, the River Watch program will build a cooperative cadre of persons from across the basin who will be motivated to work cooperatively in future years to preserve the water and other natural resources of the Minnesota River Basin.

Annual end of year conference/forum and team competition

All members of each River Watch team; all adult advisors, and as many concerned citizens as possible, specifically elected officials and Watershed District and Watershed Management Organization board members and staff, will be invited to an annual Conference/Forum. The main purpose of the forum will be to allow each watershed team to present a report on team activities during the previous year. This report presentation will be judged both on extent of team activities and the quality of the presentation.