

### **Water Quality Monitoring**

In early calendar year 2007, with the vision that this project would expand into a much larger area than originally planned, discussions between the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Fond du Lac County LWCD lead to the idea of beginning a water quality monitoring program in the West and South branches of the Rock River in Fond du Lac County. This would establish a baseline of water quality parameters to assess the results of planning and application of water quality practices such as buffers, filter strips, and nutrient management plans. Decisions to proceed lead to the contact with the Water Action Volunteer program, associated with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Water Action Volunteers (WAV) is a statewide program for Wisconsin citizens interested in improving the quality of Wisconsin's streams and rivers. That contact lead to another contact to Trout Unlimited-Wisconsin, and Park Water-2010 of Fond du Lac which provided interest of several volunteers from each of these organizations. The detailed water quality monitoring of three sites on the West Branch and South Branch of the Rock River in Fond du Lac County began in July, 2007. This monitoring with these volunteers providing the in-field time and effort continues at this time. This is once-per-month monitoring with analysis of samples for various nutrient contaminants being completed by the Water Quality Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and the Waste Water Treatment Facility, City of Fond du Lac. Initial purchase of needed equipment, and analysis costs are being covered by a grant provided by the WAV program in mid-2007. In-stream parameters monitored by the volunteers include dissolved oxygen, temperature, transparency, flow and habitat. The WAV program also provides the volunteers with annual training to maintain their education needed in monitoring practices.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Geological Survey and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have installed a daily monitoring site at the present Site #3. This is a critical location just prior to the combined West and South Branches of the Rock River entering the north end of the Horicon Marsh NWR.

By mid 2010 the volunteers from Trout Unlimited and Park Watch 2010 Fond du Lac will provide 480 hours of volunteer time for this monitoring effort.