

Early Summer Greetings to All of You Lipscomb-ites!!

I hope this finds you well and all your loved ones safe after a particularly violent string of spring storms. Joplin is my home town and though the losses were great, I am grateful my family was spared even though much was destroyed. Now I'm in discussions with EPA and the Natural Resources Defense Council on a possible road back that can serve as a positive model for other communities experiencing similar storms. I'll keep you posted.

For those of you who knew we'd been invited to submit a full proposal for a global Green Harbors Project - it's almost done! I'll be keeping those of you who indicated interest in participating "in the loop". We should find out in September. If you don't know about this and are interested, shoot me an e-mail.

Finally, I have four resources below that I thought you might find interesting, or in the case of the latter, be interested in potentially commenting on prior to July 1.

- The first are a couple of opportunities with the Cumberland River Compact and partners right in your back yard!
- Following these is a new study on updated findings on the relationship between urban development and biodiversity.
- After that, you'll see a YouTube on Bill McKibben's Washington Post piece last month. Although I may feel like some of the video is sensationalized, it also has some powerful points and facts. In other words, this is not a balanced piece - but one I think is important for you to have as you continue to develop your thoughts on sustainability - and action plans.

Best to all - Be well,

Margo

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Rainwater Harvesting & High Efficiency Irrigation Workshop

Learn to harvest one of the most valuable resources on the face of the planet and use it to irrigate your garden. Learn about the different rainwater harvesting techniques such as rain barrels, eco swales, rain gardens and underground tanks. Learn how to distribute and conserve what you have harvested with high efficiency irrigation.

**Co-Sponsored by Ewing Irrigation & Cumberland River Compact Friday,
June 17, 6:30 to 9:00 pm and Saturday, June 18, 9:00 am to 1:30 pm**

Friday evening the group will discuss key water efficiency topics and Saturday morning we will enjoy an irrigation field demonstration.

Workshop details, location and registration information <http://sustainablelivingguild.com/rainwater-harvesting-2> . (Kevin Guenther runs the Guild so for those of you still interested in seeing his place - you can get in touch.)

**Middle Tennessee's First Green Homes Tour Coming To A Home Near You In October 2011!
Call for Volunteers and Site Nominations**

The Cumberland River Compact and the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council are teaming up to hold the first Middle Tennessee Green Homes Tour. We're making plans to host educational tours through a range of homes that meet high performance, green building certified standards that save money, improve family health, and protect the environment. We plan to showcase green building features that span a range of price points, building types, and geographic locations. The planning committee is meeting monthly and would welcome others with an interest in helping to plan and conduct the tour. If you're interested in assisting with this new and exciting event or you'd like to suggest a possible home to include on the tour, please contact Gwen Griffith gwengriffith@gmail.com for additional information.

Baylor Study Finds Widespread Stream Biodiversity Declines at Low Levels of Urban Development

by Staff Writers

Waco TX (SPX) Jun 13, 2011

A new study from biology researchers at Baylor University and the University of Maryland-Baltimore has found that there are

consistent and widespread declines in stream biodiversity at lower levels of urban development more damaging than what was previously believed.

The study found that aquatic life actually shows significant loss of biodiversity with less than two percent of developed land in a watershed. This is much less than what a decade-old analysis widely cited by environmental policymakers suggests that it takes up to 15 percent of solid surfaces like roads or parking lots, or 20 to 30 percent developed land in a given area before local water systems no longer sustain normal aquatic life.

"The findings are alarming and imply that water quality in streams is degraded rapidly with relatively low levels of development, which clearly has significant implications to the organisms that live in these streams," said study co-author Dr. Ryan King, associate professor of biology at Baylor.

"Perhaps of even greater concern is that the decline of stream-dwelling animals implies that there is chemical pollution that could also be detrimental to human health via groundwater and downstream drinking water supplies. It is unlikely that it's just the rapid runoff of water from the impervious cover that is causing the loss of biodiversity, but more likely that chemical pollution is also responsible."

The researchers used samples from about 2,000 streams around Maryland and compared satellite imagery and land cover datasets to analyze how the water ecosystem and biodiversity responded to various levels of impervious cover, which are areas where infiltration of water into the underlying soil is prevented. Roads, parking lots and buildings account for the majority of impervious cover.

Published research in recent years has consistently shown a strong relationship between the percentage of impervious cover in a watershed and the health of the receiving stream.

Scientists generally agree that stream degradation consistently occurs at relatively low levels of imperviousness, such as 10 to 20 percent.

However, when King and his research team applied a new statistical analysis method that they created called the Threshold Indicator Taxa Analysis (TITAN), it showed biodiversity loss at much lower development levels in the study area.

In fact, the analysis showed that approximately 80 percent of the biodiversity loss came between .5 and two percent of impervious cover, and the remaining 20 percent of loss came between two and 25 percent.

"This new statistical analysis method is more precise than current methods and when we applied it to real world environments, it revealed a dramatically lower ecological 'tipping point' at which species are threatened," King said. "The implications of these findings are very important in water management strategies."

The study appears on-line in the journal Ecological Applications.

<http://www.grist.org/climate-change/2011-06-11-the-most-powerful-climate-video-youll-see-all-week>

EPA and USACE Seek Comment on "Draft Guidance on Identifying Waters Protected by the Clean Water Act"

On May 2, 2011, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) jointly published in the [Federal Register](#) their proposal to issue clarifying guidance for determining which waters and wetlands are protected under the Clean Water Act (CWA) programs. During a 60-day comment period, the agencies are soliciting comments on the proposed draft guidance from interested parties. The agencies are interested in whether the proposed guidance would result in any

disproportionate adverse effects or benefits for environmental justice communities. **The comment period ends July 1.**

How to Comment

EPA and the Corps are accepting comment on the draft guidance until July 1, 2011. The draft guidance and the May 2, 2011 Federal Register notice announcing it are available in docket [EPA-HQ-OW-2011-0409](#) at [Regulations.gov](#).

Please submit your comments, identified by docket identification number EPA-HQ-OW-2011-0409, by one of the following methods:

- **Online:** [Regulations.gov](#). Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- **Email:** ow-docket@epa.gov. Include "EPA-HQ-OW-2011-0409" in the subject line of the message.
- **Mail:** Send the original and three copies of your comments to:

Water Docket
Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code 2822T
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460
Attention: Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2011-0409

- **Hand Delivery/Courier:** Deliver your comments to:

EPA Docket Center
EPA West, Room 3334
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20460
Attention Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2011-0409

Such deliveries are accepted only during the Docket's normal hours of operation, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. Special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information. The telephone number for the Water Docket is [202-566-2426](tel:202-566-2426).

For more information on the draft guidance, visit <http://water.epa.gov/lawsregs/guidance/wetlands/CWAwaters.cfm>.

Background

EPA and the Corps have developed draft guidance for determining whether a waterway, water body, or wetland is protected by the Clean Water Act. This guidance would replace previous guidance to reaffirm protection for critical waters. It also will provide

clearer, more predictable guidelines for determining which water bodies are protected by the Clean Water Act. The draft guidance will be open for public comment until July 1, 2011 to allow all stakeholders to provide input and feedback before it is finalized.