



# *Friends of the Minnesota Valley*

## *Fall 2016 Newsletter*

### **Friends of the Minnesota Valley to Launch River Watch Program**

Friends of the Minnesota Valley is planning to launch a River Watch program in the Minnesota River Basin. River Watch monitoring will take place on the main channel and the tributary rivers and streams of the basin. The planned River Watch program is modeled after a very successful program based in the Red River Valley and operated by the International Water Institute. To learn more about the River Watch Program on the Red River, go to <http://www.iwinst.org/education/participate>

### **Teams of High School Students to Practice Citizen Science Water Quality Monitoring**

Through the River Watch program, teams of students from high schools across the Minnesota River Basin will work with a trained adult leader, a teacher or local volunteer, to monitor water quality at 3-5 locations on a river or stream near the high school.

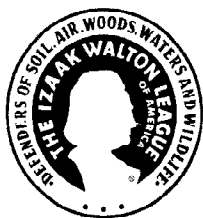
Students will learn water quality monitoring techniques, will learn how to report monitoring results, and students will have an opportunity to present data at a basin wide River Watch forum held at the end of the school year.

Our goal is to recruit between 20 and 25 high school based teams from across the Minnesota River Basin to participate in River Watch.

A high school based River Watch team will function like a Knowledge Bowl or Science Club team or be part of a high school class.

### **Thank You**

Since May 2015, the Minnesota Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America has provided free office space to the Friends of the Minnesota Valley. We are located in their Chapter House at 6601 Auto Club Road in Bloomington.



**Your donation will help us launch the River Watch Program**

**Every dollar you donate to this appeal will be reserved for the River Watch Program.**

**Return your check in the enclosed envelope or donate online at <http://www.friendsmnvalley.org/>**



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### **How Your Donation Will Help Launch River Watch**

Friends of the Minnesota Valley must hire a part time person now to organize and plan the first year of River Watch.

Some of the tasks that needs to be completed this year are to recruit schools, identify an adult volunteer leader for each team, arrange for adult leader training, and start making arrangements for the first annual River Watch Forum.

We estimate the cost to employ this person, provide travel expense reimbursement, create materials to give to schools, and cover miscellaneous expenses to be about \$30,000 for the year.

Some funding commitments have been received, but we need your donation now to assure that we can move forward with River Watch.

Operating River Watch beyond the planning year will require additional funding which is being sought from foundations, government agencies, and other sources. Your donation will enable FMV to meet match requirements of these potential funders.

### **Here is a Description of the River Watch Water Quality Monitoring**

Each team will select 3-5 water monitoring points on a river or stream near the high school.

On a regular basis throughout the year, each River Watch team will draw a water sample at the monitoring sites.

The water sample will be tested using a sophisticated test probe, furnished to the team by Friends of the Minnesota Valley.

The Water sample will be tested for dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, ph, water transparency, and temperature.

Sampling and data collection will follow protocols of the MPCA.

Data will be posted to an online web site for public review and will be submitted to the MPCA.

Increased water quality monitoring can provide valuable data to pinpoint ways to improve water quality in the Minnesota River Basin



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### **River Watch Will Train Tomorrow's Leaders**

River Watch will provide a hands-on water science learning experience to a large number of high school students who live in the Minnesota River basin. Many of these students will develop a lifelong commitment to preserving and protecting the water quality of the Minnesota River.

**Get Involved!** Several high schools have already asked to participate in River Watch. We will need adult team leaders.

### **Do you know a teacher or administrator at a local high school?**

Feel free to tell them about River Watch and ask them to contact Friends of the Minnesota Valley at [FriendsMNValley@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsMNValley@gmail.com) if they would like more information or would like to be contacted when we start to enroll schools.

### **Would you like to be a River Watch Team Leader?**

If so, contact [FriendsMNValley@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsMNValley@gmail.com)

### **Send your donation today to help us launch River Watch on the Minnesota River**

**Return your check in the enclosed envelope or donate online at**

**<http://www.friendsmnvalley.org/>**

**Every dollar you donate will be reserved for the River Watch Program.**

### **River Watch Will Be More Than Just Taking Water Samples**

As River Watch continues in future years, teams will identify water quality strategies that can be implemented in their area of the river, to improve water quality in the Minnesota River basin.

Imagine teams of River Watch students contacting landowners to promote planting of cover crops.

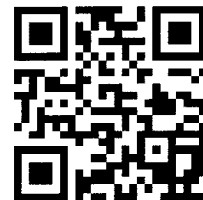
Imagine a River Watch team working with a municipal government to improve storm water management.

Imagine a River Watch Team leading an effort to promote rain gardens in their own community.

*Check out our web page at*

*[www.FriendsMNValley.org](http://www.FriendsMNValley.org)*

*Scan here to go to our website*




<p><b>Please submit enclosed envelope or use this form.</b></p> <p><b>Mail to: Friends of the Minnesota Valley, PO Box 20697, Bloomington, MN 55420</b></p> <p><b>I want to help the Friends of the Minnesota Valley with a fully tax-deductible contribution.</b></p>		
Name	<input type="checkbox"/> Become a New Member <input type="checkbox"/> Renew my Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> Make additional donation
Address	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Household <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Supporter <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sustainer <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____
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**The Friends of the Minnesota Valley is making a difference:**

- **Friends of the Minnesota Valley seeks to launch a River Watch program in the Minnesota River basin. Learn more about the River Watch program in this newsletter.**
- **Friends of the Minnesota Valley applied for and received a grant from the McKnight Foundation to fund the Minnesota River Congress this year.**