#### Upper Iowa River Watershed

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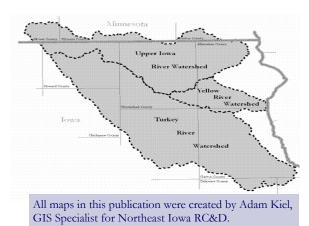


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## Berland Hired as Regional Watershed Coordinator

Paul Berland has recently been hired as a Regional Watershed Coordinator for Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D), Inc.

A native of Decorah, Berland is returning to Northeast Iowa after working with the Agricultural Research Service division of the USDA in



Charleston, SC. Berland received his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 2000 and his Master of Science degree in Environmental Studies from the Graduate School at the College of Charleston, SC in 2004.

In the Regional Watershed Coordinator position at Northeast Iowa RC&D, Berland will be coordinating water quality monitoring and improvement projects in the Upper Iowa River, Yellow River and Turkey River Watersheds. He will work with agencies, organizations, and landowners to continue to facilitate water quality activities in the Upper Iowa River Watershed, expand the UIRW model to develop a comprehensive watershed assessment in the Yellow River Watershed, and begin to build an alliance of project partners in the Turkey River Watershed. In addition, Berland will be coordinating public outreach efforts for the watershed projects.



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#### **Upper Iowa River Watershed**



# **Upper Iowa News**

December 2004

## Upper Iowa River Watershed Alliance Releases Water Quality Data

The Upper Iowa River Watershed Alliance Technical Committee, a group of natural resource professionals in Northeast Iowa and Southeast Minnesota, would like to announce the completion of water quality testing in the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries for 2004. The results of the water testing are being used to identify areas requiring special attention to improve water quality in the region.

The Upper Iowa water sampling program tests water samples on a monthly basis from April through October. Samples were collected from 28 sites within the watershed, 2 from the Upper Iowa River and 26 from tributaries that flow into the river. Each sample is tested for nitrates and nitrites, *E. coli* bacteria, ammonia nitrogen and total phosphate. Locations upstream from Decorah are also tested for atrazine. Samples are shipped to the Iowa Hygienic Lab at the University of Iowa for analysis.

2004 water sampling showed nitrate levels in some tributaries as high as 25 mg/L, most of which were near or above alltime sampling highs. The highest levels were recorded at locations in the western portion of the Upper Iowa River Watershed during the high rainfall periods in the spring of 2004. Nitrate levels in the Upper Iowa River at Decorah were measured to have a geometric mean of 6.28 mg/L. The EPA's drinking water standard for nitrates is 10 mg/L.

Bacteria levels, specifically *E. voli*, in the Upper Iowa River Watershed varied greatly across sampling location and date.

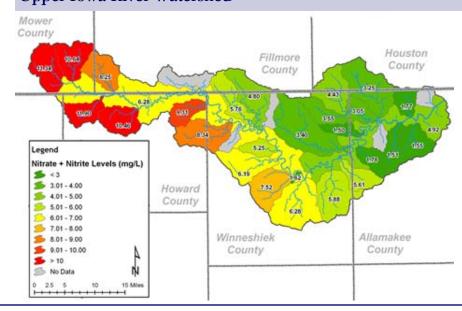
In the Upper Iowa River at Decorah the geometric mean was measured at 78.6 colonies/100 mL. The State of Iowa standard for recreational use waters is 126 colonies/100 mL. However, there was a sampling high of 1800 colonies/100 mL following a period of heavy rains and high runoff. Continued sampling of the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries is necessary to acquire a true evaluation of water quality.

The Upper Iowa River Watershed Alliance has been collecting water quality data periodically since 1999. Recent and historic water quality data and additional GIS maps on the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries can be viewed at the Upper Iowa River Watershed website at www.northeastiowarcd.org/uirw.

The 2004 water sampling program was made possible by donations from private individuals, the Palisades Chapter of the Isaak Walton League, Fred Carlson Company, Winneshiek County Conservation, Conservation Districts of Iowa, Lime Springs Fish and Game, Craft's at Bluffton, the City of Decorah, Winneshiek County, McKnight Foundation and sales of the Upper Iowa River Canoe Guide.

The Upper Iowa River Watershed Project is coordinated through Northeast Iowa RC&D. For more information please contact Regional Watershed Coordinator Paul Berland at NE IA RC&D at (563) 864-7112 or by e-mail at pberland@northeastiowarcd.org.

# Nitrate + Nitrite Levels in Various Sub-watersheds of the Upper Iowa River Watershed



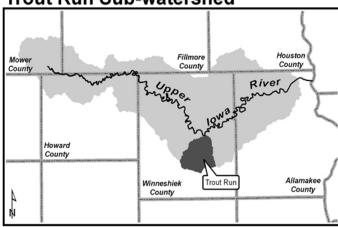
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# Trout Run Reforestation Project Aims to Improve Water Quality in Area Watershed

The Trout Run Reforestation Project succeeded in enrolling Trout Run Sub-watershed nearly 42 acres of highly erodible cropland in the Trout Run Watershed into a reforestation program. The project was implemented with the goals of reducing soil erosion and positively impacting water quality in the Trout Run Subwatershed and the encompassing Upper Iowa River Watershed.

Through support and landowner incentives provided by the Iowa Farm Bureau, Winneshiek County Farm Bureau, Iowa DNR-Forestry Bureau, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Division of the USDA Forest Service, the McKnight Foundation and Northeast Iowa RC&D, landowners were encouraged to reforest highly erodible cropland that had a slope of over 12% and was based on fragile forest-formed soils.

In 2003, 24 total acres were enrolled by two landowners and during the 2004 sign-up, an additional 18 acres were enrolled by three landowners. The acres enrolled in the program will most likely be both direct seeded and planted with hardwood seedlings. Reforesting these designated "hot spots" will effectively reduce soil erosion, not only saving valuable soil, but also improving the water quality of the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries. Along with reducing erosion, the added timber will provide increased habitat for wildlife and serve as a long term financial investment for the landowner. The project also heightened landowner awareness of soil erosion and water quality within the Trout Run Watershed.



For more information on the Trout Run Reforestation Project, please contact Forestry Coordinator Richard Kittelson at the Northeast Iowa RC&D office at (563) 864-7112 or by e-mail at kittelson@netins.net.

This project has been funded in part by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Nonpoint Source Management Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act).

Be sure to check out our website: www.northeastiowarcd. org/uirw

# 2004 Friends of the Upper Iowa River

Many thanks to the following individuals and organizations that contributed to the Friends of the Upper Iowa River Fund during 2004.

Randy & Cheryl Brenton Fred Carlson Co. City of Decorah Conservation Districts of Iowa Craft's at Bluffton Jon & Mary Hart John Hoines Dave & Jane Jensen Paul & Pat Johnson Palisades Chapter - Izaak Walton League

Ronald R. Reis

Larry & Deanna Stevenson Lime Springs Fish & Game Club Steve & Donna Story Ted Wilson Winneshiek County Winneshiek County Conservation Jean Young In-Kind Sponsors Decorah Bicycles Chimney Rock Campground & Canoe Rental

Kevin & Leslie Sand

### Volunteers Make 2004 Upper Iowa River Clean-up a Success

The third annual "Upper Iowa River Clean-up" took place September 25th, 2004 and was a tremendous success. Nearly 75 volunteers floated the 17-mile stretch from Kendallville to Bluffton in canoes and kayaks removing over 1300 pounds of trash and recyclable materials from the river.

The project was a collaboration between Chimney Rock Canoe Rental and Campground, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Northeast Iowa Resource Conservation & Development. Northeast Iowa RC&D Forestry Coordinator Richard Kittelson, who co-directed the clean-up, was impressed with the volunteer turnout.

"The attitude and effort of the volunteers was absolutely terrific. It's great to see such a large turnout of individuals that are committed to making sure we all have clean rivers to enjoy," stated Kittelson. Including travel time, the volunteers logged over 965 hours to improve the water quality and scenic beauty of the Upper Iowa River.

Special thanks go to the many sponsors whose contributions helped make the clean-up possible. Chimney Rock Canoe Rental and Campground donated the use of canoes and campsites to volunteers. Food and drinks were provided by K&S Grocery, Fareway Grocery, Subway of Decorah, Mike's Fruit Market, Wal-Mart of Decorah, Casey's of Decorah, Kwik Star of Decorah and Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. of Decorah.

Door prizes were provided by Ozzie's Outdoors, Upper Iowa Marine, Fred Carlson Co., Cabela's, Wal-Mart of Decorah, Happy Joe's Pizza & Ice Cream Parlor, Mabe's Pizza, Pizza Hut of Decorah, Oneota Lanes, Subway of Cresco, O'Henry's Stitches & Prints, Valley Inn of Kendallville and RV Sales & Service of Cresco. Recycling partners for the clean-up included; Spectrum Recycling, Decorah Tire and Service, McCaffrey Scrap Metal, Rockweiler's Appliance and Clayton County Recycling.

For more information on the Upper Iowa River Clean-up Project and/or NE IA RC&D's other projects please contact Northeast Iowa RC&D at (563) 864-7112 or by e-mail at neircd@ia.usda.gov.

#### Donations Sought for 2005 Water Quality Testing

Northeast Iowa RC&D is currently seeking donations to fund monthly water quality testing in the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries in 2005. Continued water quality monitoring is crucial to the success of our watershed improvement projects. Please fill out the pledge card below and help us protect the Upper Iowa River.

## Become a Friend of the Upper Iowa River!

Don't miss your chance to provide much needed financial assistance to continue water testing in the Upper Iowa River and its tributaries. Just clip the form below and send with your tax deductible contribution. Together we can make a difference!

2005 **Annual Pledge** Card

Name	
Address	
City	State Zip
Phone	Email
Yes! I/We would like to become a Friend of Upper Iowa River with a gift of:	
\$25	Other Amount
\$50 \$100	Please check here if you wish to remain anonymous
\$250 \$500 \$1000	Please make your check payable to Northeast Iowa RC&D, Inc. Send to: PO Box 916, Postville, IA 52162