

WRAPS project looks to protect local waterways

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Delta George

Have you ever thought about how your actions may affect those downstream of you, in a positive or a negative way? Grass waterways, crop rotation, terraces, following label directions and composting all have positive affects on the Marmaton Watershed.

According to Wikipedia, a watershed is a region of land within which water flows down into a specified body, such as a river, lake, sea or ocean; a drainage basin or catchment basin.

There is a group of local stakeholders who are working on the Marmaton Watershed WRAPS project. You may be thinking what is WRAPS? A Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy or WRAPS is a process where local citizens take the opportunity to identify watershed needs. With guidance and technical assistance, the group develops and takes action to address the identified needs.

An important aspect of the Marmaton Watershed WRAPS project is the fact that it involves more area than the Marmaton Watershed District you may have previously heard of. This plan includes the drainage area of both the Marmaton and the Mill Creek Watershed Districts and other areas not represented by a watershed district. This area spreads north to Devon, east to the state line, south to Arma, and west to Elsmore. These towns and those in between all eventually drain into the Marmaton River, thus the Marmaton Watershed.

There are four phases of this WRAPS process: development, assessment, planning and implementation. The development phase involves organizing the leadership team, compiling information, identifying concerns, and planning educational structures.

The project implementation plan for the assessment phase has been written and approval is pending; therefore, Marmaton WRAPS will soon be able to begin identifying restoration and project needs, collecting water samples, performing a field and stream assessment, utilizing a watershed model, and developing further expectations of the project.

The planning phase will involve establishing goals and actions needed, as well as determining cost estimates and implementation strategies. Progress will be monitored and documented, resources will be secured, and any revisions can be made during the implementation phase, which is the last phase.

Do you know where your water comes from? The Marmaton Watershed provides water for over 20,000 people. The City of Fort Scott water treatment facility, Consolidated

Rural Water District #2, and Bone Creek PWWSD #11 all get their water from this Watershed.

Water in the Marmaton runs to the Little Osage, up to Truman Lake or Lake of the Ozarks, to the Osage River, to the Missouri River, and ends up in the Mississippi near St. Louis.

So, what do you do in the watershed? And how does it impact those down stream of you? Just a couple questions the stakeholder team would like you to think about. If you are interested in becoming part of the team, feel free to contact Kara at (620) 756-1000.

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