

# Fostering Attention to Surface Water Issues with Paddlers, Photographers, River Angels and Citizen Scientists

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Retired WDNR Water Quality Specialist



# Outline

- My Monitoring Background
- River Angel, Paddling & Photography Networks
- Social Media - Facebook
- News Media

**Focus: Mississippi River & La Crosse River Marsh**



## Water Quality Monitoring & Research Activities/Locations

### Monitoring & Research Focus:

*Rock River/Horicon Marsh*  
*Big Eau Pleine River/Reservoir*  
*Wisconsin River*  
*Mississippi River*

Point Source Impacts  
Water Quality Modeling  
Sediment & Water Contaminants  
Eutrophication Impacts  
Habitat & Hydraulic Studies

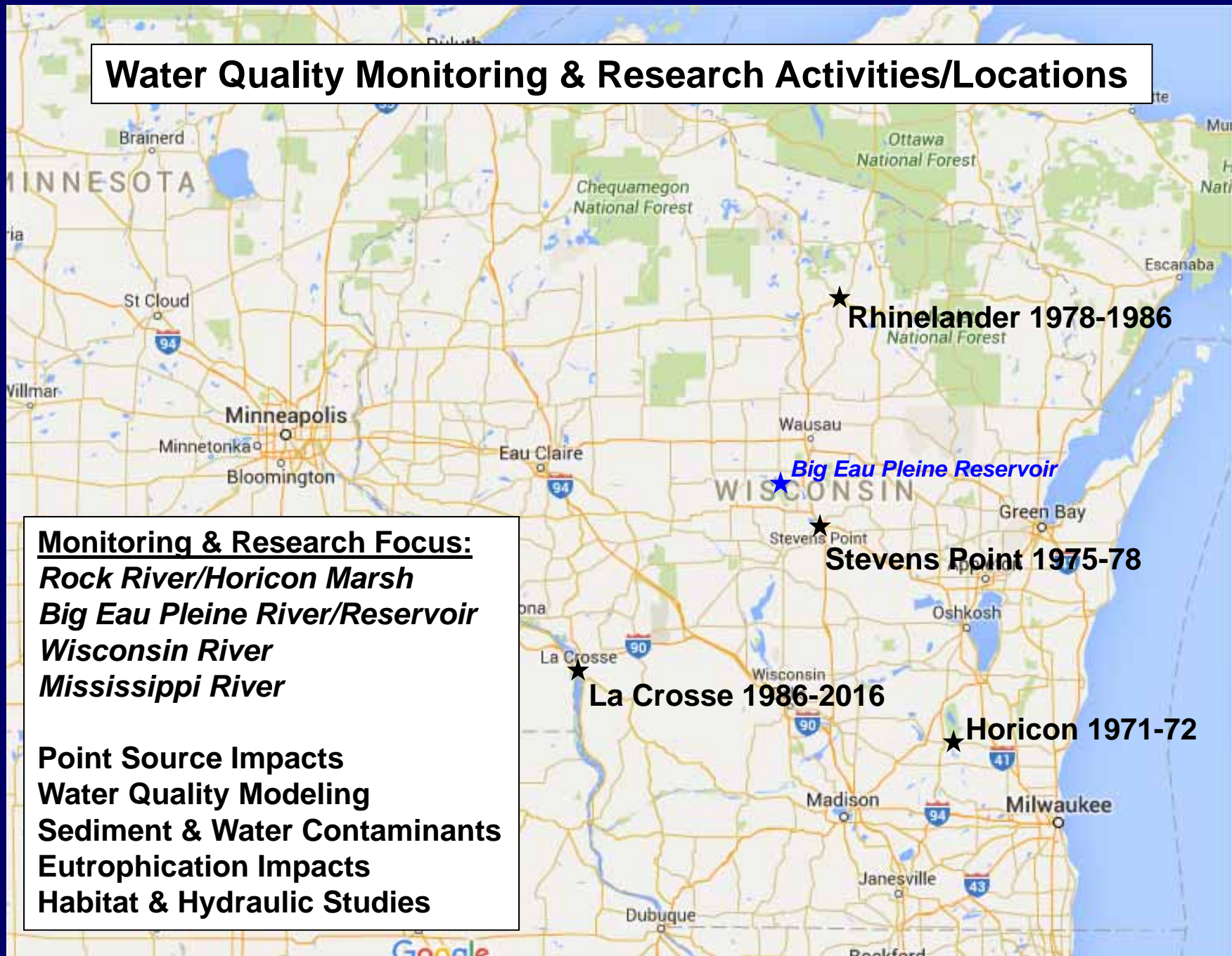
★ Rhinelander 1978-1986

★ Big Eau Pleine Reservoir

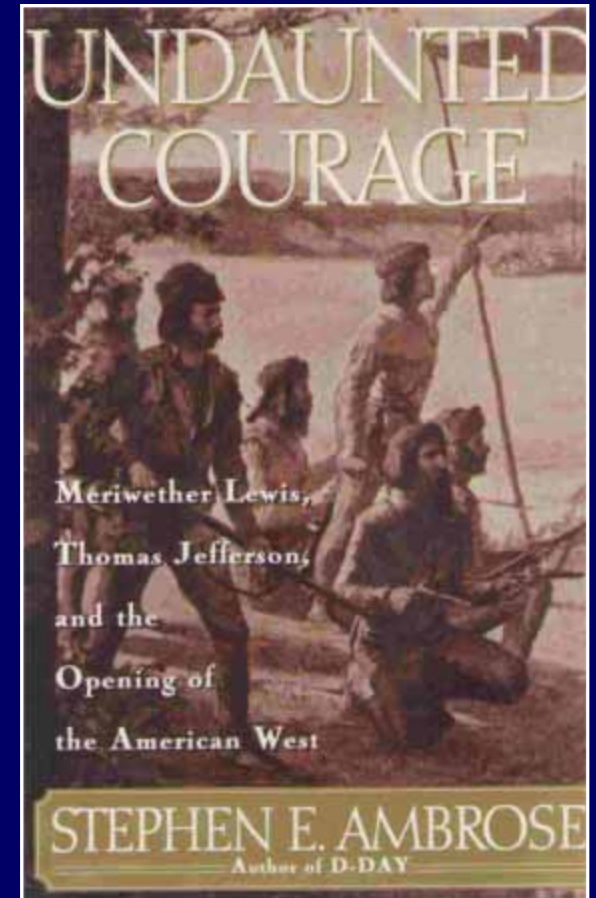
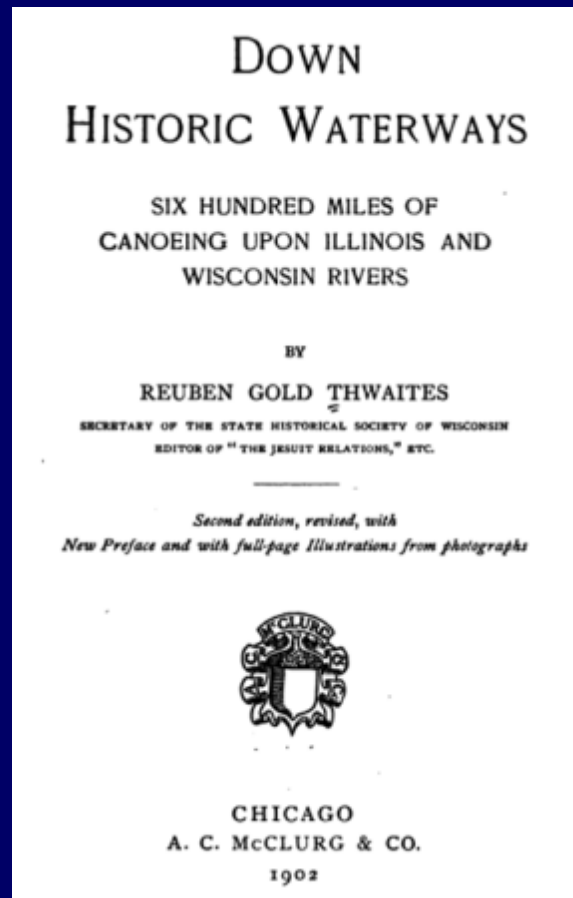
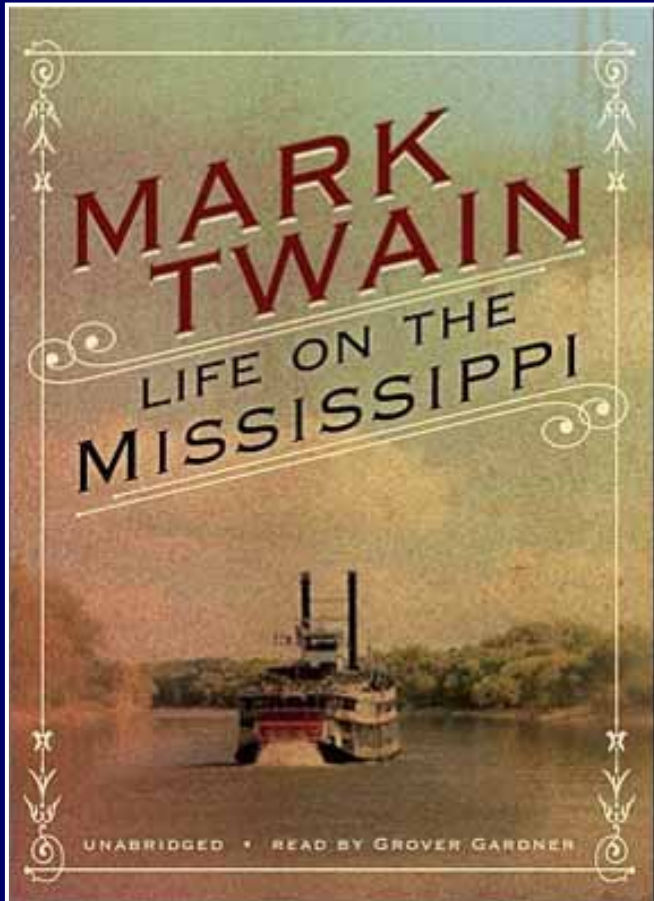
★ Stevens Point 1975-78

★ La Crosse 1986-2016

★ Horicon 1971-72



# Raising Resource Awareness Through Books



# Pathways to the Mississippi



About 2,000 miles (3,219 km) across

# River Angels



# Examples of Assistance Provided

River Information  
Water  
Shower  
Campsite or Bed  
Food

Ride for supplies  
Ride to Itasca/Start  
Wash Clothes

Electricity (charging)  
WIFI – Internet access  
Computer access  
TV (news & weather

Moral Support &  
Encouragement



# Focused Waterway Groups:

Missouri River Paddlers

Mississippi River Paddlers

Lower Mississippi River Paddlers

The screenshot shows the Facebook interface for the 'Mississippi River Paddlers' group. At the top, the search bar contains the group name. The user profile 'John' is visible with navigation options for 'Home' and 'Find Friends'. The main content area features a map of the Mississippi River basin with the group name 'Mississippi River Paddlers' overlaid. Below the map are navigation tabs for 'Discussion', 'Members', 'Events', 'Photos', and 'Files', along with a search bar for the group. The left sidebar lists user options like 'Edit Profile' and 'News Feed', and a 'PAGES' section with various links. At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Write Post', 'Add Photo / Video', 'Create Poll', and 'Add File', followed by a text input field for writing a post. On the right, there is an 'ADD MEMBERS' section with an input field and a 'MEMBERS' section showing '1,121 Members (4 new)'.



# Causes

Juvenile Diabetes Research  
Breast Cancer Research  
Post Traumatic Stress - Vets  
Suicide Prevention  
Buddies not Bullies

Climate Awareness  
Water Quality – Citizen Scientists  
Education – Augsburg College

Youth Camps  
Youth Homes

History Museums



# Media Coverage

**Fresh off Appalachian Trail, former Marine paddling Mississippi River**

CHRIS HUBBUCH chubbuch@lacrossetribune.com Sep 24, 2015

**La Crosse Tribune**

POPULAR IN THIS SECTION

1 seriously injured

**ABC News Channel 19**

## Mississippi River 2015 Thru-paddlers

**Big River Magazine**

*By John F. Sullivan*

The paddling season started early this year, with the departure of the Rediscovers North America Expedition at the Gulf of Mexico on January 2 (see *Big River*, May-June 2015). Six paddlers launched their three canoes into the Gulf of Mexico, then proceeded up the Aichafalaya River to the Mississippi. There they turned their canoes into the swift cold waters of the Mississippi and paddled all the way to the mouth of the Minnesota River at St. Paul. Fortunately the river was unusually low last spring, but cold weather, snow and ice slowed their progress at times. The expedition crossed Minnesota via the Minnesota and Red rivers and then followed a maze of big lakes and rivers in Canada to reach the Arctic Ocean September 2, after paddling 5,230 miles.

Another ambitious paddler, Steve Postek, attempted a similar trip from the Gulf on March 3 and struggled with high water until reaching Memphis on April 11. There Steve quit the river and continued his adventure on bicycle — peddling into New York City on June 21.

Top: Richard Sojourner approaches Lock & Dam 5. (John Sullivan)  
Above: Ahzram Pahl and Leanne Davis pass St. Louis. (Leanne Davis)

In 2015, a total of 51 thru-paddlers started at the source of the Mississippi River, Lake Itasca, from just after ice-out in mid-May through early September. One notable paddler, Dale Sanders, who had just turned 80, started with three friends and a film crew on May 15. They battled snow storms and cold windy weather early in their trip near Bemidji, Minn. Dale's paddling partners had a hard time keeping up with him as he pursued his goal of reaching the Gulf in 80 days! Dale paddled into the Gulf on August 15 with at least three of the original team members — Richard Sojourner, Austin Graham and Brad Tallen — raising more than \$23,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

Both Dale and Richard completed their trips in 80 days of paddling. However, Richard took a break in late July at Vicksburg, Miss., due to heat

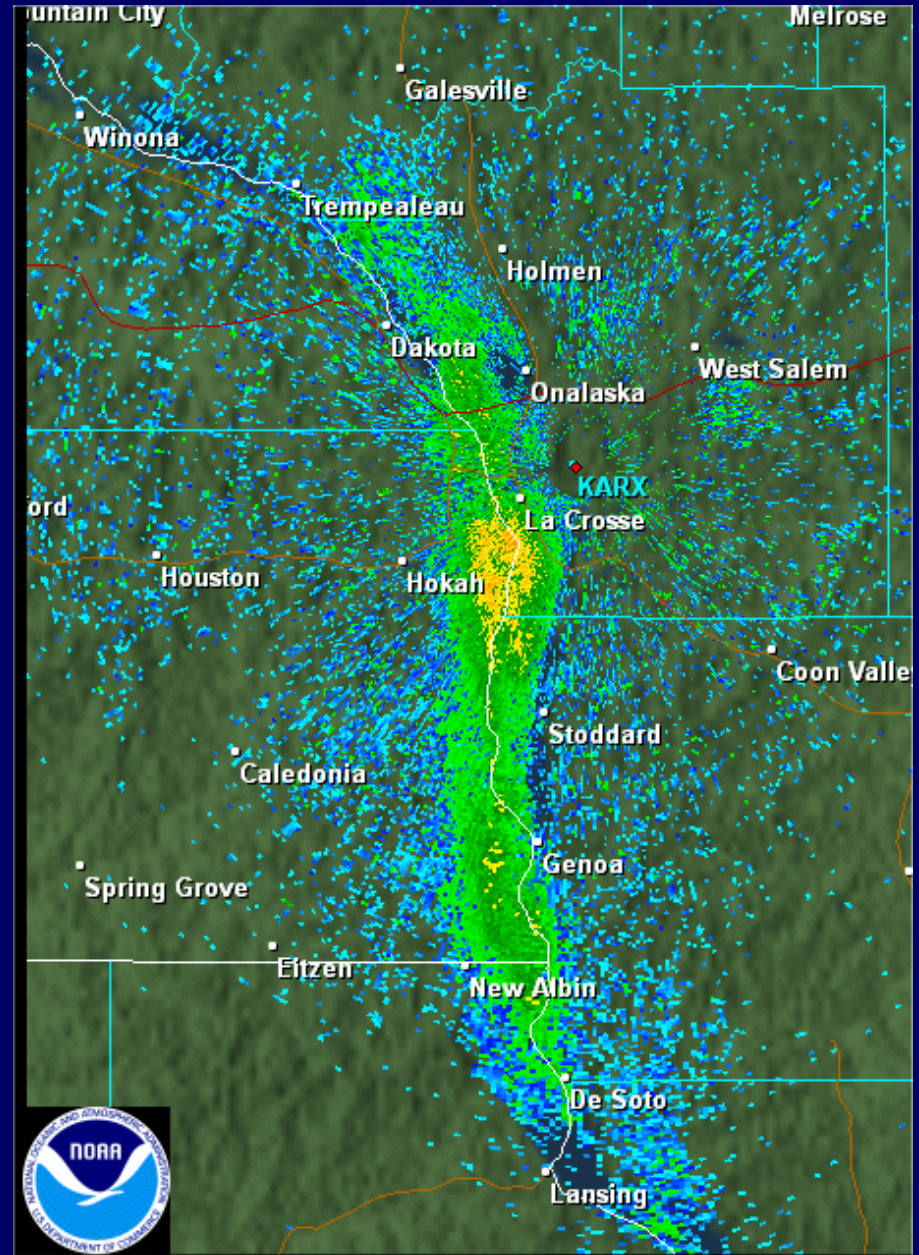
Dale Sanders paddles above Wabasha, Minn. (John Sullivan)

18 Big River Magazine / January-February 2016

# Mississippi River Mayfly Emergence Monitoring



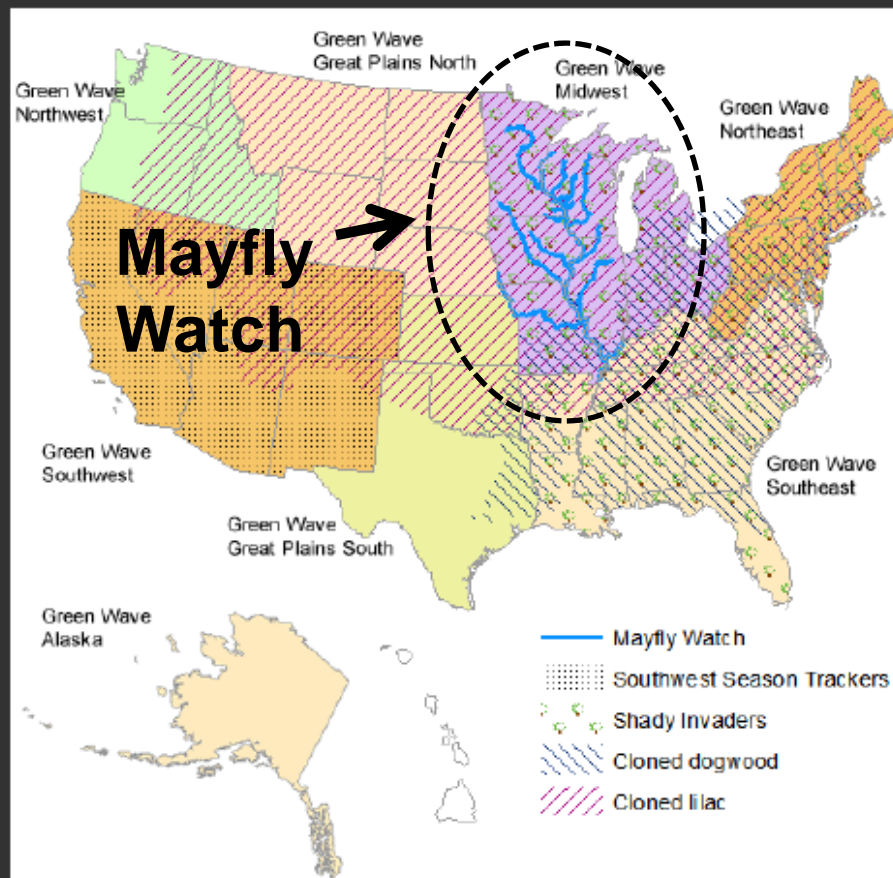
Jim Tate



# USA National Phenology Network - Mayfly Watch



## 2016 Regional Phenology Campaigns



# Mississippi River Photos Facebook Group

Mississippi River photos

Public Group

Joined Share Notifications

Discussion Members Events Photos Files

Search this group

Write Post Add Photo / Video Create Poll Add File

Write something... **> 14,000 members!**

ADD MEMBERS

+ Enter name or email address...

MEMBERS 14,074 Members (182 new)

Information and Education  
River History  
River Geography  
River Ecology  
Environmental Problems

Wildlife Monitoring  
Phenology Monitoring  
Invasive Species Distribution  
Hydrology & Weather  
Cultural Events

# Mississippi River Photo Shoots

February 1, 2015

July 4, 2015

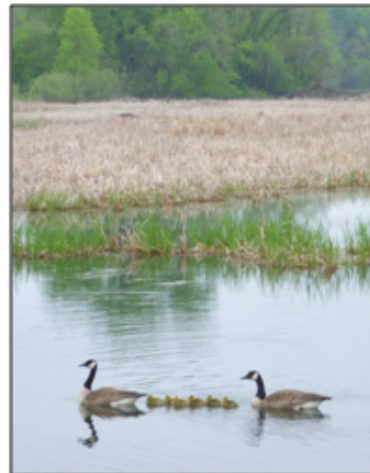
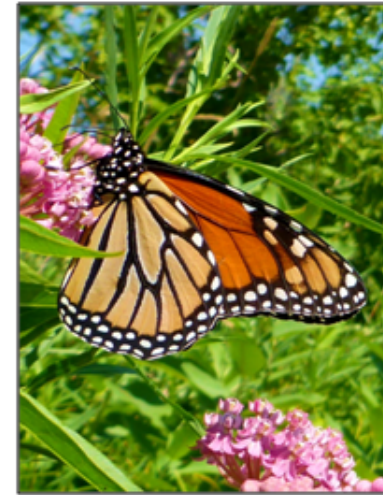


# Friends of the La Crosse Marsh

Vegetation Plantings  
Water Level Monitoring  
Trail Maintenance  
Habitat Enhancement  
Education



## La Crosse River Marsh Strategic Plan Prepared by *Friends of the La Crosse River Marsh*



March 2016

# Wild Rice Project La Crosse Marsh



## Expansion of wild rice in the La Crosse Marsh provides ...

[www.wxow.com/.../expansion-of-wild-rice-in-the-la-crosse-marsh-...](http://www.wxow.com/.../expansion-of-wild-rice-in-the-la-crosse-marsh-...) WXOW ▾  
Sep 18, 2015 - Expansion of wild rice in the La Crosse River Marsh means a positive change for the animals that inhabit that area. Friends of the La Crosse ...  
You've visited this page 2 times. Last visit: 3/29/16

## La Crosse marsh sites selected for wild rice growing project ...

[www.washingtontimes.com/.../la-crosse-river-sites...](http://www.washingtontimes.com/.../la-crosse-river-sites...) ▾ The Washington Times ▾  
Sep 15, 2015 - An advocacy group hopes to boost the wild rice growing in the La Crosse River marsh. Its goal is to improve habitat for migrating waterfowl and ...  
You've visited this page 5 times. Last visit: 3/29/16

## Group hopes to grow wild rice in marsh - La Crosse Tribune

[lacsossetribune.com/...wild-rice...marsh/article\\_0293b...](http://lacsossetribune.com/...wild-rice...marsh/article_0293b...) ▾ La Crosse Tribune ▾  
Sep 15, 2015 - A wood duck swims among cattails Monday in the La Crosse River Marsh. The Friends of the La Crosse Marsh want to try growing wild rice in ...  
You visited this page on 3/29/16.

**15 WMTV**  
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### La Crosse River sites selected for wild rice growing project

Updated: Tue 1:28 PM, Sep 15, 2015

Home Headlines List Article

Posted Tuesday, September 15, 2015—10:03 a.m.

LA CROSSE, Wis. (AP) -- An advocacy group hopes to boost the wild rice growing in the La Crosse River marsh. Their goal is to improve habitat for migrating waterfowl and other wildlife that lives above and below the waterline.

The group, Friends of the La Crosse Marsh, has selected two sites on the southwest Wisconsin waterway where environmentalists will take canoes to go in and plant wild rice seeds in the fall and spring.

Spokesman John Sullivan, a retired water quality biologist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, said the sites involved in the



**Thank you!**







# Pathways to the Mississippi



# Status Update of a Citizen-Scientist Mayfly Emergence Monitoring Network for the UMR

Mark Steingraeber  
USFWS  
La Crosse FWCO



UMR Mayfly Watch  
Campaign

