

## Friends of the Little Plover River

Your support will help the Friends of the Little Plover River continue their efforts to:

- ◆ Raise awareness of the Little Plover River
- ◆ Promote water quality and quantity issues
- ◆ Promote wise management of water and land resources
- ◆ Increase education of water resources through the Little Plover River Appreciation Day
- ◆ Protect the groundwater that recharges the Little Plover River and that residents drink every day

Select donation amount (Donations are tax deductible)

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 Leader \$50.00      Benefactor \$75.00      Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please make checks payable to:  
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In the memo line please put Friends of the Little Plover River or FLPR

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1462 Strongs Avenue  
Stevens Point, WI 54481

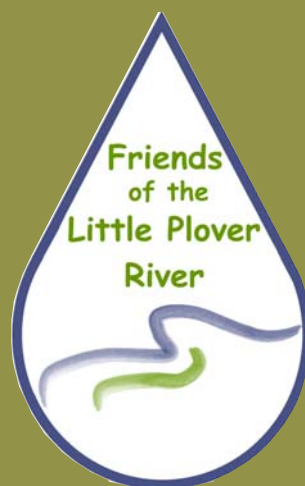
\*All donors giving at Sponsor Level or higher will have their names published in the next edition of Community Currents

### JOIN US!

Improving the health of the Little Plover River is a community project. The Friends of the Little Plover River have come together to work towards the goal of protecting and educating the community about this gem of a stream for future generations.

Friends of the Little Plover River

Contact us:  
Barb Gifford     Barb Feltz  
715-344-3539     barbfeltz@charter.net  
barbaragifford@charter.net



### Future Meeting Dates:

September 18  
October 8  
November 12  
December 10

(See website for Times & Locations)



# Little Plover River Community Currents

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## LITTLE PLOVER RIVER APPRECIATION DAY A SUPER-SUCCESS

On May 4, 2007, the Friends of the Little Plover River hosted 134 fourth grade students from nearby Roosevelt and Plover-Whiting Elementary Schools to raise awareness of protecting our water resources.

The event was held at the Little Plover River Park, just off Hoover Avenue, in the Village of Plover. Students, along with their teachers, Faye Miller from Roosevelt and Betsy Wiberg from Plover-Whiting, walked from their schools to the park, bringing a brown bag lunch to enjoy before the afternoon's hands-on activities began. Students were given a Passport to be stamped at each station plus a bag to hold handouts, a conservation wheel, buttons, and tree seedlings.

While at the park, students walked the trails along the river, stopping at seven stations to participate in activities that had water conservation, education, and recreation themes.

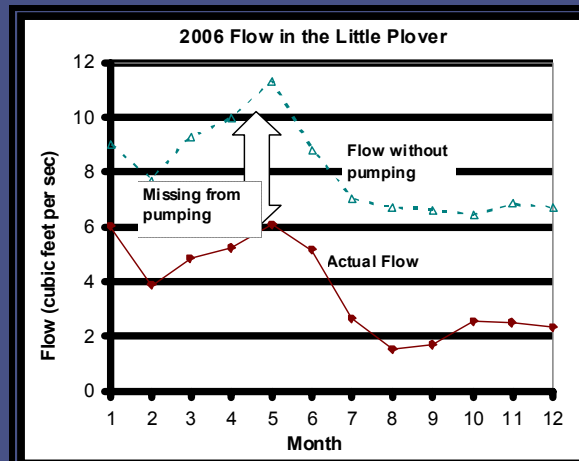
Story Continued on Page 2



Little Plover River at Bluebird Road August 2007  
Flow on the River is being augmented by pumping water into the river from an irrigation well owned by Curt Soik and his family.



Students looking at Macro-invertebrates at the Stream Flow Station during the Appreciation Day.



## Scientists Assess Pumping Impact

UWSP scientists funded by the Department of Natural Resources have concluded that groundwater pumping took 50 to 80% of the natural flow in the Little Plover River in 2006.

"Without pumping, the river would never have gone dry," concluded Professor Katherine Clancy. "Actually, river flows would have been pretty healthy, even though we're in a drought period, without groundwater pumping." Clancy was able to construct what the natural flow in the Little Plover would be without groundwater pumping by comparing historical flow records of the Little Plover with other streams in the area that have not been affected by pumping. "Other streams unaffected by pumping are low, but only at 10 to 20 year lows. The Little Plover in contrast is way below its entire 50 year record."

This piece of the Little Plover puzzle is important because it established definitively that flows have been affected by pumping, and provides a basis for restoring stream flows to some healthier level.

## APPRECIATION DAY Continued...

Continued from Page 1

- Station 1: Fly Tying Instruction. Students made their own flies. [Trout Unlimited](#).  
 Station 2: Stream Flow Measurement. Students learned the importance of water flow and quality and how they and we are connected. [UWSP Chapter of the American Water Resource Association](#).  
 Station 3: Trout and Macro Invertebrate Viewing. Students saw trout and other stream dwellers up close and personal. [Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Biologists](#).  
 Station 4: Would You Drink This Water? Students evaluated water samples for quality by sight, smell, and taste. [SPASH Wisconsin River Academy](#) students assisted in the demonstrations.  
 Station 5: Water Conservation. Students learned at home water conservation and tips. [Village of Plover](#) and [Wisconsin Rural Water Association](#).  
 Station 6: The Incredible Journey. Students followed a water drop through its water cycle journey-at each stage in the cycle they collected a bead. [UWSP College of Natural Resources Waters Graduate Student](#) and [SPASH Wisconsin River Academy](#).  
 Station 7: Fly Casting. Students learned the art of fly casting. [Trout Unlimited](#) and [Wisconsin Wildlife Federation](#).

A special thanks to all the organizations that prepared and staffed these stations.

Roosevelt School's Faye Miller was very enthusiastic in her assessment of the event: "Students absolutely loved the afternoon! On the walk back to school, they constantly talked about how much fun they had and all they learned. This was definitely a positive educational experience and I hope it will be repeated next year." This is what one student had to say after the day outside: "Thank you for the gift bags and the tree, it's planted in my backyard. My favorite stations were stations 6 and 2."

We would like to thank these volunteers:

Al Kunst	Dan Holland	Justin Barrick	John Radig	Lee Zetter	Tom Meronek	Jake Thompson-
		Jason Spaeth	Barb Gifford	Ellie Brush	Jami	Lydia
		Ashley	Brittany	Dave Fritsch	Jen Kinglsey	Christine
		Stu Grimstad	Jake Machol	Matt Rogge	Lynn Holborn	Ann Bloom
		Barb Feltz	Jerry Knuth	Pat Andrews	Steve Bradley	Bill Ebert
		Jim Gifford	Jodi Wieber	Patrick Harrington		

Due to the success of this year's event, the Friends of the Little Plover River will sponsor another Appreciation Day for a whole new group of fourth grade students in May 2008.

Anyone wishing to volunteer for next year's event can contact:  
 Barb Gifford  
 (715) 344-3539  
 email: [barbaragifford@charter.net](mailto:barbaragifford@charter.net)

Students learning to cast a fly rod at the Appreciation day



Students answering questions about fish and the river with the Fisheries Biologist

### Springville Pond Update

Again this year as in 2005 and 2006, the diminished flow of the Little Plover River has caused a dramatic drop in the water level in Springville Pond. When LPR flow rates into Springville Pond fall below 4 cubic feet per second (cfs)—10 cfs is the 30 year average—the level in the pond drops daily, due to water absorption into the soil, evaporation, and leakage around the dam, even with all the dam gates fully closed.

The lowest flow rate this summer, recorded on July 8, 2007 at County Road R was .5 cfs virtually bringing the river to the brink of drying up once again. At this time the Soik well pumping plan was implemented which brought the flow rate up to 1.5 cfs. This was helpful in averting fish mortality but unfortunately it is still a flow rate insufficient to maintain Springville Pond water levels which continue to drop daily. Springville Pond levels are currently down approximately 18 inches and water quality and use by residents is greatly diminished. (All measurements current as of August 13, 2007)



## LITTLE PLOVER RIVER WORKGROUP EFFORTS

The Little Plover River Workgroup continues to meet and implement projects to help restore a healthy flow to the River. The Workgroup is made up of: "Friends of the Little Plover River", Villages of Plover and Whiting, UWSP, DNR, Portage County, Trout Unlimited, Del Monte Inc., Stora Enso, Neenah Paper, several area potato and vegetable growers and WI River Alliance, along with advisory support from: WI Wildlife Federation, WI Geologic and Natural History Survey, USGS, USDA-NRCS, US EPA, Golden Sands RC&D, Rural Water Association, and Earth Tech.

With most of the groundwater modeling completed by George Kraft of UWSP, the Workgroup is now focusing its efforts to develop a Flow Management Plan for the River. The group will attempt to reach consensus on a flow goal for the River and decide how to achieve it. Some possible methods may include land acquisitions; land use changes, pumping alterations, conservation, agricultural management changes, stormwater management & wastewater recharge.

Workgroup member, Curt Soik, has allowed one of his irrigation wells to be used as a temporary emergency measure to pump water into the River so it did not dry up again this year. The Village of Plover and DNR will be helping out the Soik family with the cost of this effort. The Village of Plover also has reduced pumping from their two wells closest to the river and is obtaining 89% of their water supply from a well # 3, which is farther from the river.

You may have heard about plans to pump cooling water from Del Monte to a pond near the headwaters of the River to increase flows. After hearing citizen concerns, Del Monte and the Village of Plover will instead work with an area vegetable grower and pump the water to an irrigation system close to the River to reduce pumping from a high capacity well near the River.

For further information on Workgroup activities or if you have suggestions to include in the Flow Management Plan, contact Steve Bradley, Portage County Conservationist, at 715-346-1334.

Little Plover River, July 9, 2007  
 At its lowest point before the Soik well was turned on to increase the flow of the River



## ROUTE 51, CENTRAL WI WATER FEATURED

On Thursday April 26<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 6 p.m., *Route 51* the regional talk radio that features local discussions of concerns up and down Route 51, featured a live broadcast of a forum on the Central Wisconsin River Watershed, and its importance to the economy and the environment. The program was titled 'Our Watershed, The Economy & The Environment'.

In recent years, heavy use of the watershed combined with near drought conditions has all but dried up portions of the Little Plover River, several lakes in Portage and Waushara Counties, and wetlands that are important to local wildlife populations. Yet the watershed continues to be a vital resource for the region's economy, both for farmers and local municipalities. The competing environmental and economic issues were addressed by an all-star panel that consisted of:

- ◆ George Meyer, Executive Director, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation; Former Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- ◆ Mike Carter, Executive Director, Wisconsin Potato and Vegetable Growers
- ◆ George Kraft, Professor of Water Resources & Director of the Central Wisconsin Center for Groundwater, UW Stevens Point

Glen Moberg hosted this special edition of *Route 51* before a live audience in The Founder's Room on the UW Stevens Point campus. In the audience were Brian Wolff, a property owner on Long Lake, Barb Feltz, Friends of the Little Plover River, Dan Mahoney of the village of Plover, and Jake Barnes of the Wisconsin River Alliance. Call-ins were also aired.

Questions and concerns that were discussed include:

- 1.) Causes and effects of the dry up—the dry up is triple of what we were seeing historically, due in large part to pumping.
- 2.) How should the general public be involved? Legally, the streams belong to all people of Wisconsin and it's not only up to the people who are using the water to decide.
- 3.) Declining property values of waterfront property. Waterfront properties are at premium prices in more areas than along the Little Plover River.
- 4.) Have there been any other watersheds with similar problems and how have they addressed these issues?
- 5.) There is legislation protecting the water but it isn't enough to protect the streams that are being over-pumped.
- 6.) Somehow we have to learn how to manage our pumping of surface water.

*Route 51* is heard every Thursday from 5-6 p.m. on these Wisconsin Public Radio Ideas Network stations: 91.9 WLBL-FM Wausau, 930 WLBL-AM Auburndale-Stevens Point, and 90.3 WHBM-FM Park Falls.