

FOX RIVER NEWS

The Fox River Ecosystem Partnership's newsletter for the Fox River Watershed community

SPRING 2003

West Nile Virus: An ecological perspective

Our partnership is known as **FREP**

The Fox River Watershed lies mainly within the counties of:

Cook
DeKalb
DuPage
Kane
Kendall
Lake
LaSalle
McHenry

Fox River Watershed Facts:

- b 1,720 square miles
- b 130 miles in length
- b Over 400 lakes
- b 15 dams
- b 214,000 people depend on the Fox River for drinking water
- b Over 150 state-threatened & endangered species within the Watershed
- b The Watershed Biodiversity Inventory includes over 360 sites: prairies, marshes, fens, bogs, woods, preserves, wetlands & bluffs

West Nile virus was first recognized in the United States in 1999 in the state of New York. It is commonly found in Africa, West and Central Asia, and the Middle East. The virus was detected in Illinois in 2001. By January 2003, Illinois had the highest number of recorded human West Nile virus cases (877) in the U.S., including 62 deaths. This was not, however, the highest rate of human infection per capita in the country.



While there are many unknowns regarding this virus, overreacting can cause many problems as well. Since many agents that could be used in mosquito control are not specific, they can kill many non-target species, including beneficial insects. Mosquito populations can be monitored for WNV, and when present, a relatively mosquito-specific larvicide (kills the aquatic mosquito larva) can be used for control.

West Nile virus has a life cycle that primarily circulates between birds and mosquitoes. Other vertebrate hosts such as humans and horses are also affected, though they are thought to be "incidental hosts" as they do not help complete the virus life cycle. Preliminary data indicate that over 150 species of birds, as well as, horses, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians have been affected by WNV. In Illinois researchers detected WNV in birds, horses, squirrels, dogs, and a young zoo-raised wolf, as well as, mosquitoes and humans. In its native range, there are occasional flare-ups of WNV-related illnesses, but in most years there is not widespread human health concern.

Personal protection is always recommended and includes the use of effective insect repellants, and wearing long sleeves and pants when outdoors.

West Nile Q & A

What is the transmission cycle of WNV in the environment?
Mosquitoes become infected with WNV when they feed on infected birds. These infected mosquitoes then can transmit WNV to humans and to other birds or animals when a mosquito bite occurs.

Is it only humans who become ill when infected with WNV?
No. Certain animals also can become ill when infected with WNV. For example, horses exposed to WNV can develop encephalitis. Also, certain birds – particularly crows, blue jays and certain hunting birds, such as hawks and falcons – can become ill and die with WNV infection.

If I travel to an area where birds with WNV have been reported and I am bitten by a mosquito, am I likely to get sick?

No. Even in areas where mosquitoes do carry the virus, very few mosquitoes (usually less than one out of 500) are infected. The chance that one mosquito bite will be from an infected mosquito is very small. Even a bite from an infected mosquito might show no or very minor symptoms in those with strong immune systems.

Why does the State test birds (especially crows) for WNV?
Crows appear to be highly sensitive to the virus and provide an early warning system for detecting WNV activity in a community. Knowledge of infected birds in a neighborhood or community allows public health officials to alert citizens about the increased risk of mosquito-borne diseases.

Sources: CDC, Illinois Department of Health



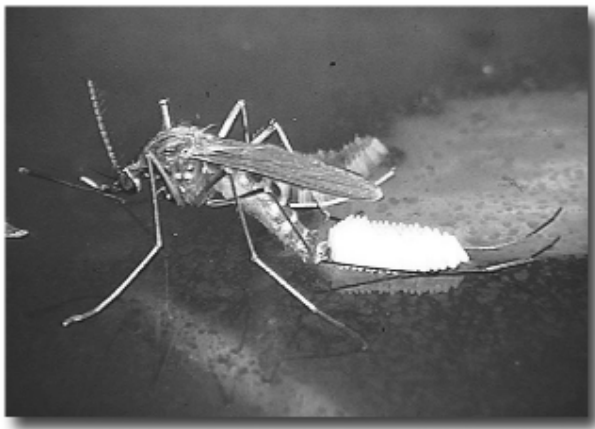
**Centers for Disease Control
as of May 28, 2003:
Verified cases of avian, animal or
mosquito infections reported
include: Alabama, Florida, Georgia,
Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan,
Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey,
North Carolina and Pennsylvania.**



Inside...

June 18 FREP Noon Network on West Nile Virus & Mosquito Issues

The Honor Roll of Endorsements for FREP's
Integrated Management Plan for the Fox River Watershed



Culex pipiens “house mosquito” laying eggs

Website Links for West Nile Virus and Mosquito Issues

American Mosquito Control Association

www.mosquito.org

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm

CDC West Nile Statistics, Surveillance & Control

www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/surv&control.htm

Clarke Environmental Mosquito Management

www.cmosquito.com

Harvard School of Public Health Mosquito-Borne Viruses

www.hsph.harvard.edu/mosquito

Illinois Department of Public Health

www.idph.state.il.us/envhealth/wnv.htm

National Pesticide Information Center

npic.orst.edu

Public Health Entomology Research Education Center

www.pherec.org

Society for Vector Ecology

www.love.org

USDA Center for Medical, Agricultural and Veterinary Entomology

cmave.usda.ufl.edu

Lake County Forest Preserves Model Mosquito Program

Enclosed in this issue is an information sheet about the Lake County Forest Preserve Mosquito Surveillance & Control Program.

In response to the West Nile Virus outbreak, Lake County Forest Preserve District convened a Technical Advisory Committee to draft a policy on mosquito control practices used in their preserves. The idea was to respond to public concerns with a pro-active, science-based policy. The committee included representatives of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lake County Health Department, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, Clarke Mosquito Control Inc., and natural resource managers and educators from Lake County Forest Preserves staff. The policy is also consistent with the Nature Preserves Commission's long-standing policy on mosquito control and pesticide use in dedicated nature preserves.

HONOR ROLL OF ENDORSEMENTS

Integrated Management Plan for the Fox River Watershed in Illinois

Applied Ecological Services, Inc.
 Batavia Park District
 Blackberry Creek Watershed Committee
 City of Aurora
 Conservation Design Forum
 Dundee Township
 Fox Valley Land Foundation
 Fox Valley Park District
 Friends of the Fox River
 Illinois Smallmouth Alliance
 Kabbes Engineering, Inc.
 Kane County Board
 Kane County Forest Preserve
 Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District
 Kendall County Forest Preserve
 Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District
 Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District
 Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
 Land Foundation of McHenry County
 LaSalle County Soil & Water Conservation District
 Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation
 McHenry County Conservation District
 McHenry County Defenders
 McHenry County Soil & Water Conservation District
 Nippersink Creek Watershed Planning Committee
 North Cook Soil & Water Conservation District
 Oswegoland Park District
 Sierra Club of Illinois
 Sierra Club/Valley of the Fox Group
 Ted Gray & Associates
 The Conservation Foundation
 The Nature Conservancy
 US Fish & Wildlife Service/Chicago Field Office
 Village of Fox River Grove
 Village of Montgomery
 Village of Wayne
 Watershed Resource Consultants, Inc.

ENDORING & IMPLEMENTING

the Integrated Management Plan

FREP created this plan for our watershed and everyone's involvement is needed. An Implementation Tool Kit assists "stakeholders" in studying and utilizing Plan recommendations. Governmental bodies and organizations within the Watershed are asked to adopt/endorse the *Integrated Management Plan*. A sample endorsement resolution is in the Tool Kit.

To obtain a copy of the Tool Kit:

Email info@foxriverecosystem.org

or call Becky Hoag, FREP Communications Manager at:

630/482-9157

Components of the Tool Kit can be obtained in Adobe PDF format at our website: foxriverecosystem.org

FREP NOON NETWORK



This successful FREP activity is a great opportunity for those seeking information and a time for networking. FREP members, friends and all interested persons are invited to participate. Join us for these upcoming Noon Networks.

◀ **Wednesdays NOON – 1:30 PM** ▶

June 18, 2003

West Nile Virus & Mosquito Issues

**Presenter: Jeff Mengler, US Fish & Wildlife Service
and George Ballis, Clarke Mosquito Control**

Learn about the latest research, management plans, and what is being done throughout the watershed this year to combat this public health threat

Randall Oaks Golf Course

Binnie Road, just west of Randall Rd., West Dundee

August 20, 2003

***Best Management Practices & Buffers
for Stormwater Basins***

**Presenter: Tom Price, Conservation Design Forum
Prisco Center, McCullough Park**

Just east of Rt. 31 on Illinois Avenue, Aurora

*Bring your lunch, along with questions,
concerns, information & experiences to share.*



ANNUAL FREP PICNIC

Thursday, July 24, 2003, 5 PM
Fox River Shores, Carpentersville
Williams Road, East Side of Fox River

Meat & Beverages Provided
Bring a dish to share
Families Welcome

2nd Annual FREP Whiffleball Championship!
**Bring your bikes and canoes and
enjoy this beautiful
Kane County Forest Preserve setting**

This is in place of a July FREP membership meeting

FREP MEMBER PROFILE

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has as its mission:
“Working with others, to conserve, protect and restore fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.”

Although the City of Chicago is highly urbanized, the region as a whole still has numerous preserves and parks that contain good examples of most plant communities and wild-life species found here prior to European settlement. The USFWS office located in Barrington was established by Congressional appropriation in 1991, as the “Chicago Metro Wetlands Office.”

As the name implies, the original role was to increase conservation of wetlands habitats being impacted by increasing urbanization. Since then, the agency has played an expanding and instrumental role in the conservation of the unique aquatic and terrestrial habitats in northeastern Illinois. Over time the office name changed to reflect the expanded role and to be consistent with other field station naming within the agency.



Today, the **CHICAGO ILLINOIS FIELD OFFICE** goals are 1) To preserve, protect, enhance, and restore terrestrial and aquatic habitats for Service trust resources, and 2) To promote environmental education in the Chicago metropolitan area and throughout Illinois. The “trust” resources are primarily endangered and threatened species and migratory birds.

Part of the Ecological Services Division within USFWS, the office currently employs ten biologists, two administrative support staff, two-three interns, and one law enforcement agent co-located in the Barrington office. The biologists are responsible for programs that include review of federal projects, education and outreach, environmental contaminants, endangered and threatened species, private lands, and a myriad of other activities that fall outside of these traditional USFWS program areas.

Some of these non-traditional activities include involvement with partnerships such as FREP and Chicago Wilderness. These partnerships enable U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to better fulfill its mission and goals, while leveraging resources with those of the local community and sister agencies.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Chicago Illinois Field Office

1250 S. Grove, Suite 103, Barrington, IL 60010 847-381-2253
Website for Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region: midwest.fws.gov

Fox River Ecosystem Partnership

c/o Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District
545 S. Randall Road
St. Charles, Illinois 60174-1592

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
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Geneva, IL
Permit #147

FREP on the Web at: foxriverecosystem.org

If the addressee is no longer at this address, please share this newsletter with his/her replacement or another appropriate person. We appreciate updates to our address list and welcome additions. Please email: foxriverinfo@aol.com

FREP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Officers Paul Anderson, Illinois Institute of Technology, president; Cindy Skrukud, Friends of the Fox River & Sierra Club, vice president; Marianne Nelson, Fox Valley Land Foundation, secretary; Jack Cook, Kane County Forest Preserve, treasurer; John Thompson, past president.

Committee Chairs Agriculture: Joe Bybee, Illinois Department of Agriculture; **Conservation Design:** Ksenia Rudensiuk, The Conservation Foundation; **Education/Newsletter:** Barbara Sheffer, Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District; **Government Relations:** Marianne Nelson, Fox Valley Land Foundation; **Habitat & C2000 Grant Review:** Jeff Mengler, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; **Lakes:** Mark Pfister, Lake County Health Department & Holly Hudson, NIPC; **Recreation:** Bill Donnell, Fox Valley Park District; **Water Resources:** Rick McAndless, North Cook Soil & Water Conservation District
Ecosystem Administrator Nancy Williamson, IDNR **Communications Manager** Becky Hoag 630/482-9157 info@foxriverecosystem.org

FREP and the issue of dams and dam removal

Originally formed in 1996, the Fox River Ecosystem Partnership (FREP) is one of 39 Ecosystem Partnerships recognized by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). IDNR created the Ecosystem Program to integrate the interests and participation of local communities and private, public, and corporate landowners to enhance and protect watersheds through ecosystem-based management. Consistent with that purpose, FREP is comprised of individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations, agencies, and governments that live or work within the Fox River Watershed. In 1998, many of these people joined in a comprehensive planning process to develop the Integrated Management Plan for the Fox River. The vision that guided that planning process was to balance all the uses and demands of our natural resources while preserving and enhancing a healthy environment.

What is the FREP position on dams? Two years ago, the FREP executive committee prepared, and the membership adopted, a position paper in response to growing questions about various management alternatives for dams on the Fox River. That paper states that from a strict ecological standpoint, FREP believes dam removal is the soundest alternative. The statement also notes that dams can have beneficial uses, and many factors need to be considered when reviewing alternatives for dam management. FREP continues to cooperate with groups such as the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Fox River Study Group. They are working to get a better understanding of the effects dams can have on all the resources, including the people, in a watershed.

More detailed information about FREP and partnership activities can be found at foxriverecosystem.org. In addition to the position paper on dams and the Integrated Management Plan, the site includes a listing of groups that have endorsed the plan, a summary of projects throughout the watershed, and a schedule of the upcoming meetings. FREP now has seven committees (Agriculture, Conservation Design, Education, Government Relations, Habitat, Lakes, Recreation, and Water Resources) that focus on specific issues in the watershed. If you enjoy the benefits of the Fox River Watershed, if you want to promote sustainable, healthy growth, and especially if you think your perspectives have not been heard, we encourage you to participate.

MEMBERSHIP IN FREP

FREP membership is open to all "stakeholders" in the Fox River Watershed — individuals, governments, businesses and organizations. General meetings are held bimonthly, at 1:00 p.m., usually on the third Wednesday of the month. Upcoming 2003-04 meetings are planned for 9/17, 11/19, 1/21/04. Meetings are held at different locations in the watershed.

FREP members receive a bimonthly newsletter and are encouraged to participate in one of the committees (see above).

A membership application can be obtained from our website at: foxriverecosystem.org, or call Barbara Sheffer at 630/584-7961 x 3.