

# Working Together to Preserve and Protect the Dix River Watershed

*First Quarter Progress Report*

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## What, Why, and Who?

All across Kentucky, there are many streams that flow into larger bodies of water, a central feature in Kentucky's landscape. In fact, these streams and the surrounding land represent some of Kentucky's most valuable natural, cultural, and historical resources.

Kentucky streams provide us with more than 100 kinds of fish native to our waters. They provide recreational opportunities, such as swimming on the streams and rivers of more than 4 million people.

Today most water pollution comes from pastures, construction sites, parking lots, housetops, lawns, and driveways. Nonpoint source pollution is the contamination that rain washes off surfaces and carries into streams and lakes. *Because most pollution is now "nonpoint source," it's often hard to find.* A pipe pouring chemicals into a river is easy to spot. But runoff comes from virtually everywhere and carries a mix of pollutants with it.



Think about it! Every time it storms, the water runs off the land toward a stream. *Anything on the ground—like pesticides, trash, or soil—runs off the land with the water and eventually ends up in our streams, as well.*

When it rains, all the water falling to the land resupplies the groundwater and stream flows. This surrounding land is called a watershed. *No matter where you live in Kentucky, you live in a watershed.*

There are twelve major watersheds, or river basins, in Kentucky. The Dix River Watershed is located in the Kentucky River Basin. A relatively small number of issues account for most of the problems in the Kentucky River Basin. These problems were documented in the Kentucky Division of Water's most recent Report to Congress as required by the Clean Water Act.

Water quality issues in the basin include straight pipes, contamination by animal waste, erosion and siltation, alteration of flow, removal of streamside vegetation, and contaminated stormwater, as well as some point sources of pollution, such as permitted discharge pipes.

None of the water quality problems that exist in the Dix River watershed will be easily solved, but we can achieve significant progress by prioritizing and building community consensus for solutions. The principle of a watershed approach is to seek integrated solutions at a watershed level that take into account all the land uses and needs of the community and the environment.

Third Rock Consultants, LLC (Third Rock) was retained in the fall of 2005 by the Kentucky Division of Water to estimate the amount of point and nonpoint source pollution in the Dix River watershed to support the development of the TMDLs and an effective watershed management plan.

To this end, Third Rock biologists have implemented a comprehensive sampling effort that will allow the full consideration of all potential sources of pollution. *A total of 39 stations in five counties are being sampled, including four on Lake Herrington and 35 stream stations.* Sampling began in March 2006 and will continue twelve months through February 2007.

Work is overseen by a Watershed Advisory Council composed of interested citizens and agency personnel. If you are interested in volunteering your time to serve on the council, please contact Lee Colten at 502-564-3410 or [lee.colten@ky.gov](mailto:lee.colten@ky.gov) or Malissa McAlister at 859-324-0845 or [mimcal2@uky.edu](mailto:mimcal2@uky.edu) today.

## Spreading the Word

Part of Third Rock's role on this project team is to get the message out about what we are doing and how you, as an interested party, can work with us to protect and preserve the Dix River Watershed. As a result, we've participated in several events already, including an Earth Day festival in Garrard County and forums hosted by the Herrington Lake Conservation League (HLCL) and EARTH Angels.



For more information about the watershed and our efforts to date, log onto our web site at [www.dixriverwatershed.org](http://www.dixriverwatershed.org) or join us Saturday, August 5<sup>th</sup> for a Pig Roast hosted by the Herrington Lake Conservation League (HLCL) located at Chimney Rock from 2:00-11:00.



## Want to Know More?

There's a lot to consider when you begin to talk about what we've set out to do in the Dix River watershed. Some considerations are understanding what a watershed is, how it's impacted, what the Division of Water can do, what you can do, etc. Here are some good resources you can consult to educate yourself about the subject. For more information, feel free to contact Lee Colten, Division of Water ([lee.colten@ky.gov](mailto:lee.colten@ky.gov) or 502-564-3410) or Malissa McAlister (or [mimcal2@uky.edu](mailto:mimcal2@uky.edu) or 859-324-0845).

KY Division of Water Watershed Management Initiative  
[www.water.ky.gov/watersheds](http://www.water.ky.gov/watersheds)

How land use affects our watersheds  
[www.inyourwater.org](http://www.inyourwater.org)

Interactive map of Kentucky watersheds  
[www.map.nr.state.ky.us/website/watershedsz](http://www.map.nr.state.ky.us/website/watershedsz)

KY River Basin Management Plan Watershed Summary  
[www.uky.edu/WaterResources/Watershed/KRBMP/KRB MPws.htm](http://www.uky.edu/WaterResources/Watershed/KRBMP/KRB MPws.htm)

KY River Watershed Watch  
<http://kywater.org/watch/ky.htm>

Clark's Run Environmental & Educational Corporation  
<http://www.clarksrn.org>

Herrington Lake Conservation League  
<http://www.hlcl.org>

"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a *difference*." -- Tom Brokaw