



Ozark Folk Center site of Watershed Conference Nov. 18-20

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For immediate release-Sept. 2, 2010

Arkansas Watersheds: The Future is in Your Hands. That's the theme for the 2010 Arkansas Watershed Advisory Group's (AWAG) Watershed Conference on Nov. 18-20 at the Ozark Folk Center in Mountain View, situated in the Middle White River Watershed. Registration is \$50 per person by Oct. 15th and \$70 after that date. Some scholarships are available. For continuing education credit, add \$5 to the fee. To find out more, visit www.awag.org.

"We are really excited about our keynote speaker, Chad Pregracke, author of *From the Bottom Up* and organizer of the only 'industrial strength' river clean-up organization and founder of Living Lands & Waters, an organization recently featured on the Discovery Channel," said Sarah R. DeVries, Watershed Coordinator for the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality. "Pregracke will recount watershed stories and describe his journey along the Mississippi, North America's largest river."

The conference also will include speakers addressing topics such as river restoration projects, point and non-point sources of pollution, hydraulic fracking in the Fayetteville Shale, and how to protect Arkansas waterways for designated uses including drinking water, fisheries and recreation.

In addition, a pre-conference watershed tour and an environmental education workshop will be offered, but space is limited. The watershed tour will include visits to the Ozark St. Francis National Forest, a U.S. Geological Survey monitoring station, stream restoration sites, and a local water and wastewater treatment plant. The environmental education workshop will include nationally and state recognized Project WET, Project WILD, and Project Learning Tree for formal and non-formal educators.

"Anyone with an interest in water issues in Arkansas will find this conference to be educational and valuable," DeVries added. "Registrants typically include people from all walks of life and many professions. The crowd will include citizens from watershed groups, professionals from drinking water facilities, environmental engineers, hydrologists, educators, journalists, environmental regulators, you name it. It's a mixed bag that represents a broad cross-section of individuals. Water and watersheds matter to everyone, since clean water is essential to sustain life and quality of life. We welcome anyone with an interest to join us and learn more about how we can safeguard Arkansas' water and watersheds now and for future generations."