

Protecting Our Watersheds for a Better Future

Written by Jeff Smith, State Senator District 31

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<http://newiproggressive.com/images/stories/S5/wetlands-wi-s450.jpg>



Our rivers, streams, lakes and wetlands can only sustain us if we remain committed to caring for them. Jeff Smith writes about our connection to water sources here in Wisconsin.

BRUNSWICK, WI - Since humans have inhabited the Great Lakes region, waterways have been an integral part of travel, trade, farming and culture. Our shallow lakes supplied First Nations people with the wild rice that played an essential role in their culture and diet. Rivers provided a travel route for diplomacy and trade among cultures, allowing for the transportation of fur, timber and trade goods. Streams and wetlands provided homes to an amazing variety of plants and wildlife.

This month, the River Falls Preservation Committee is hosting a traveling exhibit from the Wisconsin Historical Society. The exhibit, entitled “Great Lakes Small Streams: How Water Shapes Wisconsin”, is geared towards adults and secondary school students, and will be housed in various locations until October 29th (see below for details).

Wisconsin boasts plentiful groundwater and a great expanse of surface water, from the lakes Michigan and Superior to the Mississippi river and the network of rivers, streams, wetlands and lakes in between. The U.S. Geological Service estimates fifteen percent of Wisconsin is covered by groundwater, the fourth highest by area in the United States.

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