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News Release

For Immediate Release

Watershed, City and Partners Gain \$1 million Stormwater Grant

The Watershed Committee of the Ozarks and partner agencies — including the City of Springfield — have been awarded a \$1 million grant by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources for the Springfield/Greene County Urban Watershed Stewardship Project. The project will include installation of numerous "green" stormwater management practices, monitoring of their effectiveness at reducing and treating pollutants commonly found in urban stormwater runoff, and will educate the public about stormwater.

The grant is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, and is administered by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The Watershed Committee of the Ozarks applied for the grant in partnership with the City of Springfield's Department of Public Works Stormwater Engineering Division, Missouri State University's Ozarks Environmental and Water Resources Institute, Greene County Resource Management, James River Basin Partnership, Missouri Project WET, and Ozark Greenways. The grant requires a match of funds and in-kind services that bring the total value of the project to more than \$1.6 million. The award was announced Friday by MNDR Director Sara Parker Pauley last week.

"This was a collaborative project from the beginning," said Loring Bullard, Executive Director of the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks. "The partners got together beforehand and decided to submit one proposal for funding, rather than competing with each other. This produced a much stronger project."

The Section 319 grant will help fund "green" stormwater practices that reduce and treat runoff from streets, buildings and parking lots, thereby protecting area streams, lakes and springs. "Green" solutions generally involve directing runoff through natural, vegetated treatment and infiltration systems such as rain gardens and bioswales rather than concrete channels, as well as rainwater harvesting and alternatives to impervious surfaces such as pervious pavement and green roofs. The improvements may be located in areas such as the Government Plaza, the campus of Missouri State University, the South Creek corridor, streetscape projects, or area parks, homes, and businesses. The grant will help fund workshops, field days, public service announcements, brochures, and other efforts to educate students, teachers, engineers, and the general public about stormwater impacts and solutions.

Crucially, the grant will also fund monitoring of water quality before and after the improvements are built. This will allow local experts to measure the effectiveness of these natural solutions for reducing, absorbing and treating stormwater runoff and improving the quality of local streams such as Pea Ridge Creek, South Creek, Jordan Creek, Fassnight Creek and the James River.

"There are a lot of projects like this being done around the county, but it will be very valuable to have local data on the effectiveness of these 'green' stormwater management practices," said Todd Wagner, Principal Stormwater Engineer with Springfield's Department of Public Works. "These 'green' stormwater solutions reduce the stress on the City's aging drainage infrastructure where \$700 million in unfunded needs have been identified."

The monitoring will be conducted by Missouri State University's Ozarks Environmental and Water Resources Institute, who will receive grant funding and provide in-kind services as match. Other in-kind services include grant administration, project coordination and education carried out by the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks and James River Basin Partnership, and technical assistance by the City and County. Local matching revenue will come from a portion of the 2006 Countywide Parks Sales Tax that was already dedicated to lake, waterway and stream improvements. This grant will enhance the improvements that have been planned with these funds.

For more information, contact: Stacey Armstrong, Watershed Committee of the Ozarks Projects Coordinator, (417) 866-1127; or Carrie Lamb, City of Springfield Public Works Stormwater Technician, (417) 864-1996.



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