May 03, 2011

News Release

For Immediate Release

Storm Drain Art Conveys Colorful Water Quality Message

James River Basin Partnership (JRBP) and the City's Department of Public Works Storm Water Services Division have partnered on a new project called Storm Drain Reveal. This project uses public murals to raise awareness that storm drains lead directly to our streams and rivers. Soapy water, litter, yardwaste and other pollutants that end up in storm drains can impact water quality. Stormwater runoff can also pick up and carry pollutants from the landscape such as excess lawn fertilizer, pet waste and sediment from construction sites. Ten storm drains in the downtown area have been transformed into beautiful reminders of their connection to waterways. These storm drains lead to Jordan Creek which drains to the James River and eventually Table Rock Lake.

Two participating artists will be available for media interviews, videos and photographs at their storm drain murals from 2:30-3:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 4. Brad Davenport will be located at the corner of Walnut and Market near Springfield Brewing Co. and Laura Lynch will be on East Trafficway in front of Jordan Valley Park. Photos of all storm drains are available upon request.
The project is modeled after JRBP's popular Rain Barrel Reveal from previous years. Local artists submitted sketches, and artwork was chosen by JRBP and City staff. The storm drains feature the artwork of eight students from Ozarks Technical Community College and two local professional artists.

Local artist Michele Ellison said about her participation: "As an educator, I place a high level of importance on public education. I believe in the strength, intelligence and goodwill of the American people and I am optimistic that if they have a broad understanding of how things work, they will act in a responsible manner. I am pleased to participate in a project that raises public awareness of the James River Basin Partnership and their work and includes everyone in the attempt to be good stewards of our land."

Locations of the storm drain murals are available at www.jamesriverbasin.com. Photographs of the storm drains along with educational information will be on display at Canvas Art Gallery at 315 South Avenue for the First Friday Artwalk May 6th and at the James River Basin Partnership booth during Artfest on Walnut Street May 7th & 8th. For the remainder of the month they can be viewed at the Mudhouse, 323 South Avenue. The public is encouraged to "vote with dollars" for a people's choice award at these events. Proceeds will support JRBP's water quality programs.

This project is part of the City's ongoing stormwater education/outreach efforts. Public education/outreach is a requirement of the City's stormwater MS4 permit, a federal mandate of the Clean Water Act. JRBP assists the City with education/outreach as part of its mission to protect water quality in the James River Basin. Information on the City's efforts to address the water quality impacts of stormwater runoff and how individuals can help is available at www.springfieldmo.gov/stormwater.

Many contributed to help make this project a success: Kat Allie, Instructor of Fine Arts at Ozarks Technical College, allowed her students to work on this project and provided valuable input; Pressure Tech, LLC pressure washed all the storm drains; Seal Krete donated the concrete primer and clear coat; and the Urban Districts Alliance, the Springfield Regional Arts Council, Canvas Gallery, and the Mudhouse are providing time and space to feature the photographs of the storm drains.

For more information, contact Tiffany Frey, James River Basin Partnership, at tfrey@missouristate.edu or (417) 836-6183; or Carrie Lamb, City of Springfield Storm Water Services Division, at clamb@springfieldmo.gov or (417) 864-1996.