

Water Quality Monitoring Program

The chemical and biological characteristics of a river system are indicative of the quality of the water. Conversely, the quality of the water dictates the kinds of plants and animals that will live there. Nutrient overloading from agricultural practices and shoreline development can result in a dramatic change in water quality. Pesticides and other chemicals can also be devastating as well as increased fecal coliform bacteria.

The potential for increased development in the Ocqueoc River watershed must be considered. The lakes in the watershed are sure to see more change during the next few decades as the last front lots and more back lots are developed along with more stream front development. Man will have more and more impact on the water resource. More septic systems placed along the river and around the lakes and landscaping practices may have a negative impact on the ecosystem. This can already be seen in some of the lakes in the watershed that are experiencing excessive weed growth partially caused by nutrient enrichment.

A “**water quality monitoring program**” was implemented in 2007, by the Ocqueoc River Watershed Commission, to develop a baseline of data and then monitor the river system for any significant changes. This will enable early recognition of problem areas and then implementing corrective measures. An educational component will be developed to involve students of various schools throughout the county. The Hammond Bay Area Anglers Association provided a startup grant of \$5000 to begin the monitoring program. Other funding to sustain the program has been provided by Case Township, Presque Isle County, and Wolverine Power Cooperative.

The Presque Isle County Conservation District and the County Drain Commissioners Office is responsible for administration of the program on behalf of the Ocqueoc River Watershed Commission. The data will be shared with the MDNRE.

The following parameters are being monitored:

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Dissolved oxygen | pH |
| Temperature | Nitrates |
| Phosphates | Turbidity (particulates) |
| Fecal coliform bacteria | |

(Note: This Water Quality monitoring program is available on a limited basis for county groups and residents for a small fee.)