



March 2012

# Coordinator's WATERSHED CORNER

A note to the Clean Water Committee, Paso del Norte Watershed Council and Stakeholder Group from the 319(h) Grant Watershed Coordinator, *Brian Hanson*



## Water Festival

The Coordinator participated in the Water Festival March 15 with the City of Las Cruces for about 1,000 students in grades 5 and 6. Students were bused in and had to fill in a “passport” for different water quality and quantity. The question for our display was – Where does non-point source pollution come from? The answer is it comes from many sources. Peter Bennett and I set up 2 enviroscape models; one with a healthy water and another with pollution. The students sprayed the model with water and the contaminated model had various color dyed water to represent contaminants. We had small plastic frogs on each model and the contaminated model had frogs that were upside down. We also handed out facts about watersheds. What an effective way to reach hundreds of students.

## Last Stakeholder Meeting . . .

At the last stakeholder meeting March 28 we discussed how to group sources of *E. coli* for the Watershed Based Plan and Ray Lister presented a summary of how the Bureau of Land Management manages grazing. At the next meeting April 23 we will address this further.





# WATERSHED TIP

## WATER TURBIDITY

Decreasing water turbidity can decrease contaminants. Water turbidity can interfere with disinfection because the particles can act as shields for viruses and bacteria and provide a medium for microbial growth. Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms that make you sick. The presence of *E. coli* in water can also indicate that other more serious pathogens may be in the water.

In the United States, the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) sets strict standards for approximately 90 different types of contaminants that can be found in drinking water. Grouping of these contaminants include - Microbes ~ Radionuclides ~ Inorganics ~ Volatile Organics ~ Disinfectants ~ Disinfection Byproducts ~ MTBE. The microbe group includes bacteria and parasites. *E. coli* bacteria comes from warm blooded animals. These bacteria can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms. Cryptosporidium parasite causes cryptosporidiosis, a mild gastrointestinal disease. However, the disease can be severe or fatal for people with severely weakened immune systems. Giardia lamblia parasite causes gastrointestinal illness (e.g. diarrhea, vomiting, cramps). Giardia, like cryptosporidium, can survive long periods of time outside the body and is also difficult to treat with just basic chlorine disinfectants.

For more information go to - <http://www.freedrinkingwater.com/water-contamination/water-contaminants-pollutants-list.htm>

**The next 319 stakeholder meeting is April 23, 2012 at 9 a.m.**

at Frank O'Brien Papen Community Center, 304 Bell Avenue, Las Cruces.

We will discuss how we will address sources of *E. coli* in the Watershed Based Plan

*See you next month!*

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