

# BE WISCONSIN WATER WISE

Ever wonder why streams and lakes don't have as many desirable fish and aren't as clean as they once were? A big reason is polluted runoff. Follow the stream to find out how our work and play affect water quality.


Every rain washes a smorgasbord of oil, chemicals, pet wastes and debris off streets and parking lots into storm drains, which flow directly to a lake or stream.

Soil from farm fields and construction sites covers aquatic plants and fish spawning beds and injures fish gills.

Phosphorus and nitrates from manure and fertilizers cause too much plant growth. Algae- and weed-filled water becomes cloudy, smelly and low in life-giving oxygen. Native aquatic plants, essential fish habitat, thrive in less fertile lakes.

Wildlife and people are the losers when soil clogs waterways and fills in wetlands. Flooding increases, destroying wildlife habitat and damaging homes, farms and businesses.

## Everyone Lives in a Watershed



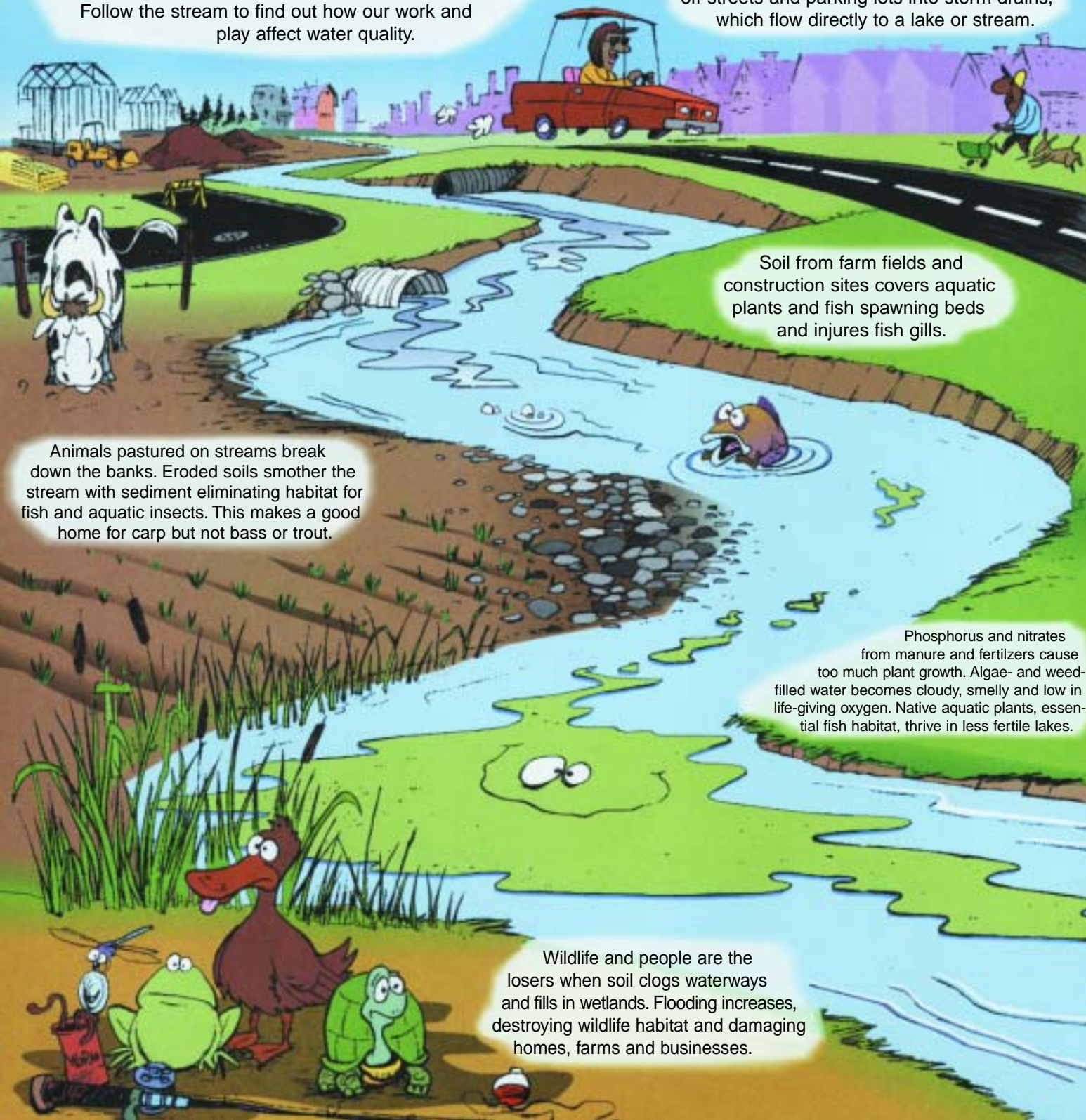
The map shows various watersheds across Wisconsin, including Lower Wisconsin, Upper Rock, Lower Rock, Upper Koshkonong Creek, Upper Sugar River, Yahara River and Lake Monona, Grant Platte / Sugar-Pecatoica, West Branch Sugar River / Mt. Vernon Creek, Allen Creek and Middle Sugar River, Badfish Creek, and Lower Koshkonong Creek. Major cities like Madison, Milwaukee, and Janesville are also marked.

*Find out what's happening in yours!*

Join a friends group, build a rain garden or participate in Yahara Lakes Week  
 Contact the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission at 608-267-0118, and check out their website: [www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes](http://www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes)  
 Mark storm drains, become a water monitor or learn what you can do around the home.  
 Call 608-224-3718 or e-mail [habecker@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:habecker@co.dane.wi.us)  
 Help with Take a Stake in the Lakes  
 E-mail [goldstein@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:goldstein@co.dane.wi.us) or call 608-224-3601  
<http://www.co.dane.wi.us/parks/adult/volunteer/takelake.htm>

From streams to rivers to lakes—pollution adds up.

See other side for some pollution solutions, and



# YOU'RE THE SOLUTION TO WATER POLLUTION!

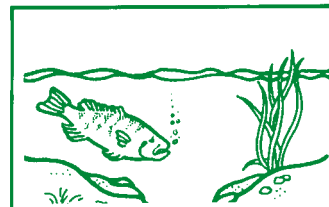
## Search and Find



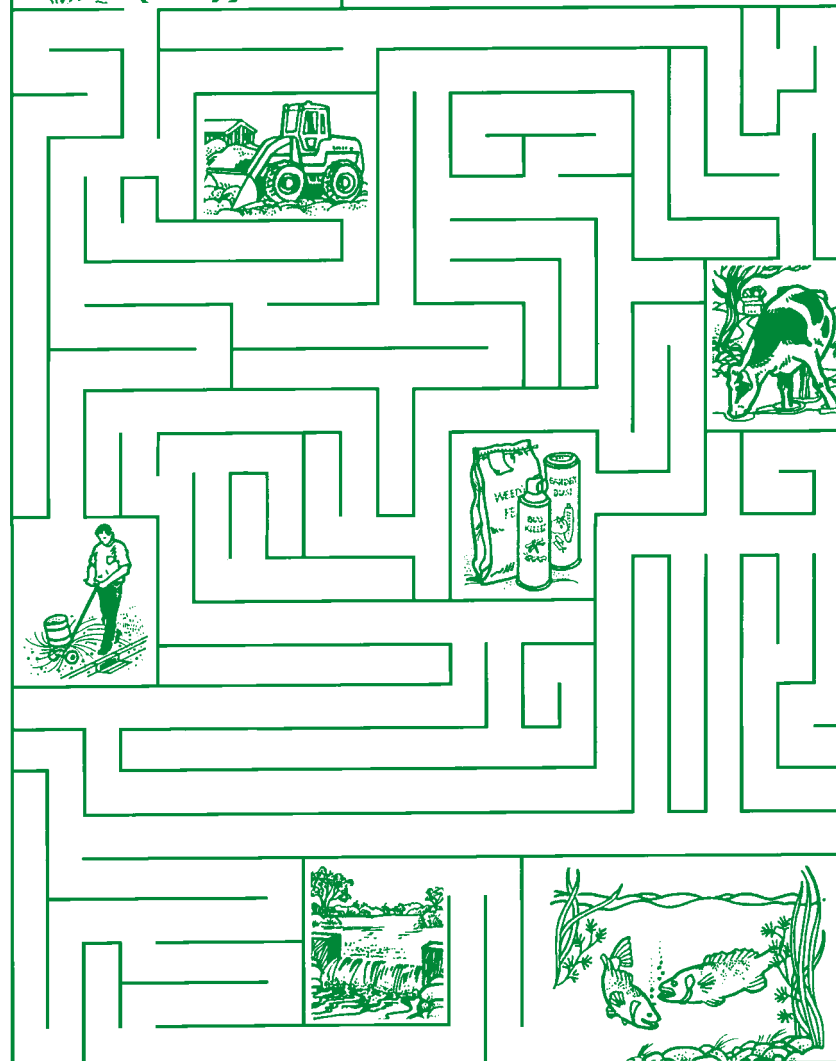
Find the fourteen animals that are hiding in this picture: crayfish, beetle, songbird, snake, fish, turtle, dragonfly, duck, rabbit, snail, frog, butterfly, raccoon's head and a person's face.

## Maggie's Maze

Find the clean-water path for Maggie the smallmouth bass as she moves from her winter home in a big river to the shallow gravel beds of her spawning (nesting) area. Help Maggie around these dangers:



- soil from construction and farms
- destroyed habitat
- improper pesticide use
- too much fertilizer
- dams blocking the way.



Developed by University of Wisconsin-Extension.

The distance between your yard and the water's edge is as close as the nearest storm drain or road ditch. Rainwater gushes down sidewalks, driveways and streets, carrying leaves, grass clippings, pet waste, soil, oil, fertilizers and pesticides into the storm drains. In rural areas, these same pollutants can find their way to our waters via road ditches and drainage ways. In fact, what goes into the gutters, goes directly to Dane County's lakes and rivers and streams.

Protecting and improving the quality of Dane County's waters is simple: to keep it out of the lakes and rivers and streams, keep it out of the gutter.

## Are you a part of the solution?

Put a check (✓) by the things you already do. Draw a smiley face (☺) by the things you will do.

### YOUR HOME

- \_\_\_\_\_ Compost leaves and lawn clippings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plant shrubs and ground covers to protect soil and absorb rain water.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Direct downspouts away from paved areas and onto lawns.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bury or flush pet waste.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recycle cans, bottles and paper.

### YOUR CAR

- \_\_\_\_\_ Recycle waste oil. Don't dump it down the storm drains or in the yard.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wash your car on the lawn to keep soap and debris out of storm sewers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep your car well tuned.

### YOUR COMMUNITY

- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in Take a Stake in the Lakes annual clean up.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Join a watershed group ([www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes/friends.shtml](http://www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes/friends.shtml) to find a group near you).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tell elected officials about your concern for cleaner water.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Write, call or surf the web for more information about things you can do to prevent run-off pollution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Write an article for your neighborhood newsletter about water quality and tips.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Learn about invasives like zebra mussels, how they affect our water resources, and how to stop their spread.



Prepared and distributed by the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission with thanks to UW Extension.

The Commission is a coordinating and advisory agency whose charge is to protect and improve water quality as well as the scenic, economic, recreational and environmental value of Dane County's water resources.

For more information, please see our website at [www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes/](http://www.co.dane.wi.us/commissions/lakes/).

To learn more about water pollution and how to stop it, call the Dane County Extension office at 608-224-3700 and ask for the free publications, "Brown Water, Green Weeds" (GWQ003), the "Yard Care and the Environment" series or "Storm Sewers, the Rivers Beneath Our Feet" (GWQ004).