



Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed Association

Water Quality Updates

Barr Lake is just beginning to thermally stratify (warmer, lighter water floating on top of cooler heavier water). It is 14 degrees C (57 degrees F) at the top and 12 degrees C (54 degrees F) on the bottom. Recent cooler and windier weather has accelerated mixing. Warmer weather and longer days will quickly warm up the top water, keeping the bottom water near 54 degrees F. Water clarity decreased with an increase in oxygen and pH. Algae growth is greater than the respiration and consumption by the zooplankton. The interactions between algae (primary producers) and zooplankton (consumptive grazers) can impact water quality on a short time scale.

Milton Reservoir is fully mixing and the entire water column is slowly warming up. The water temperature is about 58 degrees F top to bottom. As the days get longer and warmer, the upper water will become warmer and lighter and will float on top of the cooler bottom water. For now, the entire water column is mixing, sunlight is able to reach the bottom of the reservoir, and algae can grow anywhere. Zooplankton are still grazing on the algae and maintaining good water clarity while keeping oxygen below 100% saturation. There are flows coming in from the S. Platte River and the outlet is releasing water from the reservoir.



Welcome to the quarterly newsletter of the Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed (BMW) Association assembled by the BMW Information and Education Committee. The mission of the Committee is to reach out to all people in the watershed and provide water quality information important to the health of Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir.



Urban Waters Cycle Tour South Platte River

Learn—Cycle—Share

What is the relationship between water use, river health and community development? Why is the South Platte River important to understanding our relationship to public health? Explore this waterway by bicycle along with citizen leaders, scientists, planners and water managers to discover more!

Urban Water Cycle Tour Route—It is about a 10 mile route beginning at Johnson Habitat Park, going up to Riverside Cemetery and back-tracking to a RINO Brewery.

Dates/Location:
Tuesday, June 6, 2017
9:00am—1:00pm
Lunch included

Wednesday, June 7, 2017
1:00—5:00pm
Happy hour included

Meet at Johnson Habitat Park SPREE Headquarters (shuttles back to starting location are available)

Registration:
www.yourwatercolorado.org
FREE but space is limited
Questions?
Contact Amy Conklin at 303.795.5925 or amy.conklin@comcast.net



Undeniable Storm Water Benefits from North Denver Projects

Caught up in the middle of several major North Denver improvement projects, storm water is something that everyone needs to understand and appreciate. Storm water is runoff from impervious (water tight) surfaces that includes rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, and roads. An isolated thunderstorm that stalls out over a neighborhood like Park Hill can generate an enormous amount of water in a blink of an eye. Many curbed streets and storm drains just can't handle the sudden burst of rain. Side note, storm drains are connected to our rivers and streams that lead to the South Platte River. There is no catch-all treatment plant that cleans the rainwater once it enters the storm sewer system just as there are no acrobatic turtles down there to save the day.

The focus here is the importance of treating storm water. No matter the outcome of the North Denver projects, it is certain that storm water needs to be treated. Runoff from rain and snow plays a major role in keeping the urban area safe and clean. Storm water is important, and it impacts everyone.

The two major concerns with storm water are quantity and quality. Better managed storm water means fewer flooded basements and less pollution entering the South Platte River and traveling downstream to popular drinking water reservoirs like Barr Lake.

Platte-to-Park Hill is one of these projects that can both reduce storm water and help clean downstream waters. This storm water project is a great thing for the watershed, which is the Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed (BMW). The BMW Association is a nonprofit watershed organization that works towards improving water quality through the urban corridor because the water ends up in Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir.

Controlling storm water from flooding houses will always be priority number one. Park Hill and North Denver were hit with gully washers in June of 2015. The aftermath included soggy carpets, stranded fire trucks, and people demanded that something be done. Denver has since raised storm water fees and is proposing some major projects that deal with storm water issues. It won't be fixed overnight, but this is good news for downstream neighborhoods like Globeville. The Platte-to-Park Hill will help slow down the storm water to reduce flooding along the South Platte River.

When it comes to water quality, storm water is dirty. It carries away anything in its path - dirt, mulch, sand, leaves, car fluids, fertilizers, and pet waste. This cocktail of urban runoff eventually enters the South Platte River. If you have not seen the Platte during the first flush of a storm, then take a trip down to the river the next time it rains.

Whether you care about golfing, your house flooding, or the quality of water that ends up in Barr Lake (just a day's flow downstream of Denver), the importance of working with the congested, urban landscape to find ways to treat and slow down storm water should be high on your list.



Fun Activities at Barr Lake

Visit www.barr-milton.org and look at the Oasis Newsletter for a list of all the fun activities at the park. Please visit us on Facebook for weather updates!

Important Websites:

BMW Association <http://www.barr-milton.org/>

Barr Lake State Park <http://www.cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/BarrLake>

Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky_mountain_arsenal/

Weather www.crh.noaa.gov/bou/

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