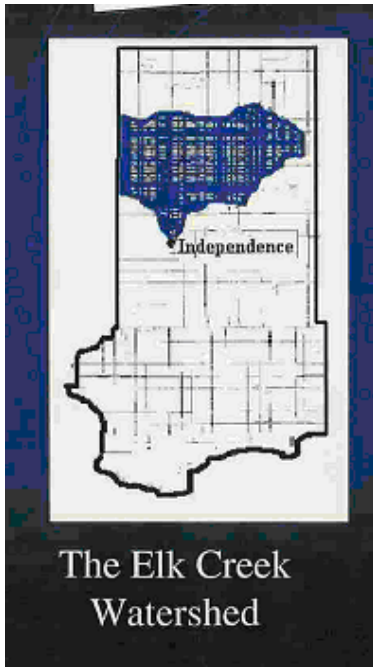


Important Information for Elk Creek Watershed Landowners

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BUGLE LAKE SURFACE WATER TESTS REVEAL ABNORMALLY HIGH BACTERIA LEVELS



In 2001, the Trempealeau County Health Department ordered the removal of the swimming raft from Bugle Lake. This testing was performed to determine the levels of fecal coliform and fecal strep bacteria present where human contact was likely. Fecal coliform is associated with livestock manure while fecal strep is associated with human septage. Although all test results showed the presence of bacteria associated with animal manure and human septage, the test results for Bugle Lake were alarming. Based on the 2001 water quality

testing, the Health Department was awarded a grant to conduct surface water testing of the millponds throughout the County. This testing was performed to determine the levels of fecal coliform and fecal strep bacteria present where human contact was likely. Fecal coliform is associated with livestock manure while fecal strep is associated with human septage. Although all test results showed the presence of bacteria associated with animal manure and human septage, the test results for Bugle Lake were alarming. Based on the 2001 water quality

Since 2001, the Trempealeau County Health and Land Conservation Departments have performed water quality sampling of Bugle Lake and the Elk Creek watershed to attempt to determine the sources of the bacterial contamination. During the summer of 2003, water quality sampling was performed in Bugle Lake and five other locations within the watershed. Please refer to the article below and to the map on page 2 to view the water quality results of the water quality

tests by sampling site. Although fecal coliform counts were very high throughout the watershed, the test results for samples taken on Swede Valley Road were 139 times higher than the safe body contact level.

In 2004, water quality sampling shall be focused at the drainage area above the Swede Valley sampling site. See map on page 2 entitled 2003 Sampling Sites. You are receiving this information due to the fact that you reside within and/or own property within this drainage area.

GALE-ETTRICK-TREMPEALEAU STUDENT CONDUCTS WATER SAMPLING FOR SCHOOL PROJECT

In July-August, 2003, water sampling was done by Amy Wallner, a student from Gale-Ettrick-Trempealeau High School conducting research to present at a Junior Science Symposium, regarding fecal coliform and fecal strep bacteria levels in Elk Creek and Bugle Lake. The two bacteria exist in animal and human feces, and have been contaminating the Elk Creek Watershed for over 30 years. The Junior Science research paper is available upon request from the Land Conservation Department.



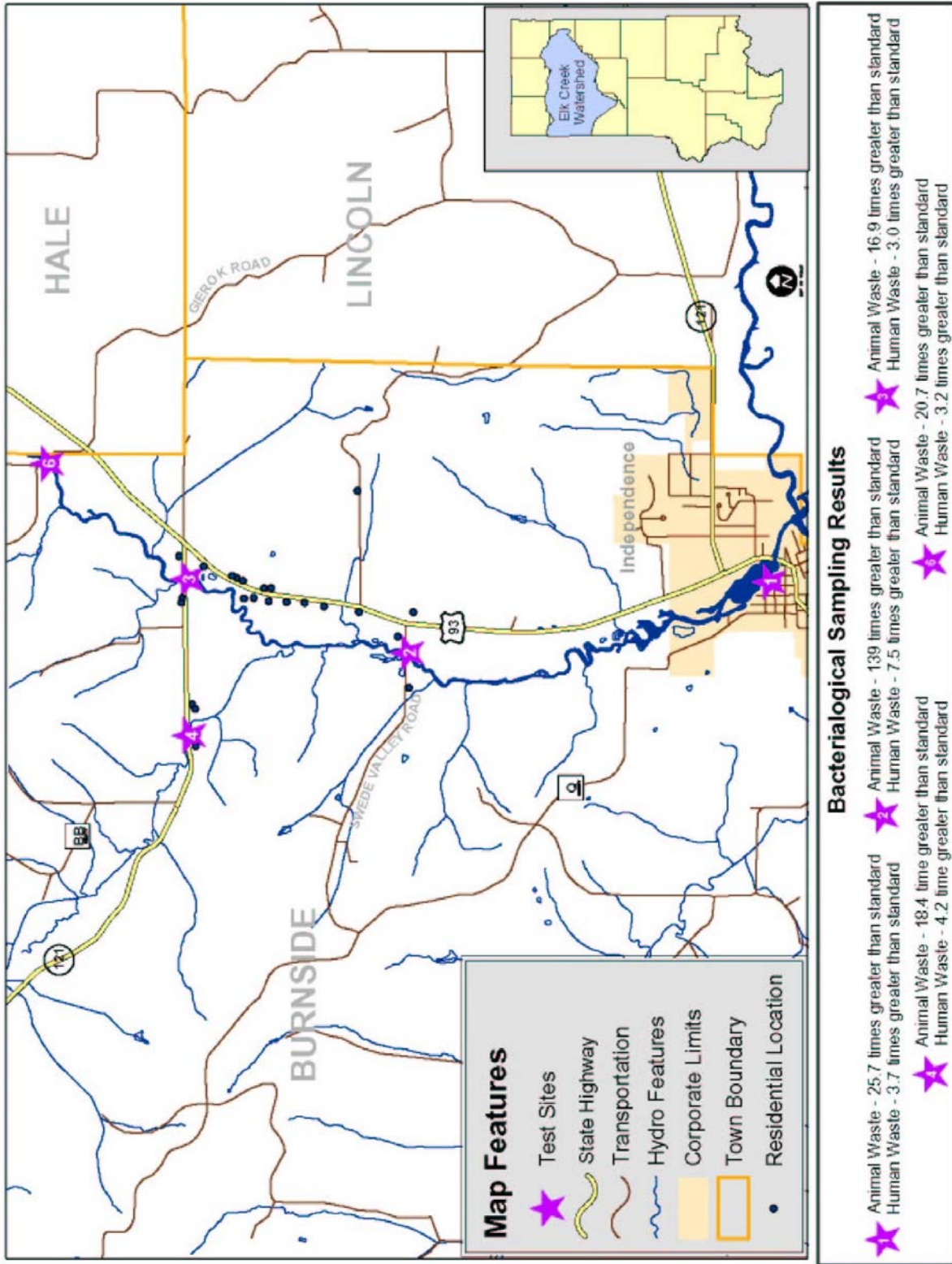
SOURCES OF BACTERIAL CONTAMINATION

Fecal coliform is the operational term for E. Coli. Fecal coliform is associated with livestock manure. Fecal coliform is transported to surface waters through runoff from barnyards and feedlots, unsafe manure storage, surface spreading of manure and unlimited livestock access to surface waters.

Fecal strep is associated with human septage. Fecal strep is transported to surface waters through direct discharge from residences to surface waters (straight pipes), illegal pumping of septage tanks onto soil surfaces or directly to surface waters and failed and/or leaking septic systems.

Visit us on the web at www.trempealeaucounty.com/landmanagement

2003 SAMPLING SITES - ELK CREEK WATER CONTAMINATION



Note: Site # 5 has been omitted from the above maps as it was tested only once, therefore the data was not statistically significant.

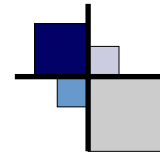
COMMON ILLNESSES ASSOCIATED WITH HUMAN CONTACT WITH FECAL COLIFORM AND FECAL STREP

Waterborne illnesses result either from :

- (1) ingestion of contaminated water or ice,
- (2) contact (bathing, wading, swimming, eye exposure) with water, or
- (3) inhalation of aerosols generated from water that contains harmful organisms. Water becomes contaminated by chemicals or by harmful microorganisms from sewage, septic tank overflows or seepage, from urban or agricultural runoff, from surface water movement, from recreational water use, or during storage or distribution.

ILLNESS'S	SYMPTOMS*	HOW THESE DISEASE'S ARE SPREAD**
E. COLI 0157 GIARDIASIS CRYPTOSPORIDIOSIS CAMPYLOBACTERIOSIS	Diarrhea, severe abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, fever, headache. Some individuals may become infected but display no symptoms. *Not a complete listing of symptoms.	Eating or drinking contaminated food and water. Direct or indirect contact with fecal matter from an infected person, animal or pet. Person-to person spread of the bacteria is possible and has occurred. These diseases may also occur in settings where hand washing practices are poor. ** Not a complete description of how diseases are spread.

RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FROM TREMPEALEAU COUNTY



ZONING DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE REPLACING SEPTIC SYSTEMS

1. A licensed plumber could inspect your system if you are unsure of how it is functioning. The plumber would look for sewage ponding on the ground surface, sewage being directly discharged to a stream, sewage being discharged to ground water or into fractured bedrock. Washing machine wastewater qualifies as sewage(contains pathogenic organisms) and cannot be discharged to the ground surface, surface waters or groundwater.
2. The process for replacing a failed septic system would be to have a licensed soil tester conduct a soil test to determine what type of system could be installed. A licensed plumber could then use that soil test information to design a new system , acquire a sanitary permit and then proceed in the replacement of the failed system.
3. Owners of septic systems should remember to have their septic tanks pumped and inspected regularly by a licensed tank pumper. Maintenance of septic tanks is important to a properly functioning septic system and it increases their life span.
4. Contact the Zoning Office if you would like a list of local plumbers or pumpers or if you have questions on your septic system. The Zoning Office also has septic system records dating back to 1972. Your cooperation is appreciated in the effort to improve water quality in Bugle Lake, Elk Creek and Swede Valley Creek. Hopefully these waters can once again be used without the threat of contracting an illness from the high levels of animal waste and human sewage currently found here.

WI FUND PROGRAM

Trempealeau County participates in a grant program designed to help people replace their failing septic systems. Eligibility depends on the age of the system , the owners income and the type of system failure. The grant award is based on the type of system required and its size. More information can be obtained from the enclosed informational brochure or by contacting the Zoning Office at (715)538-2311, Ext. 223.

HELP FROM THE LAND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

If you are an agricultural producer that is concerned about possible runoff from your farming operation you can contact the Land Conservation Department at (715)538-2311, Ext. 260 to set up an appointment to discuss your concerns. If you would like to have a conservation staff member visit you on your farm to evaluate potential pollution sources and to discuss options for pollution control, a farm visit can be arranged to accommodate your schedule. Financial assistance may also be available to pay up to 70% of costs to install practices and/or structures needed to control polluted runoff. Common sources of polluted runoff include:

- Runoff from barnyards and feedlots
- Manure stacking in runoff areas
- Application of manure to croplands
- Livestock access to surface waters

Financial assistance may also be available to pay up to 70% of costs to install practices and/or structures needed to control polluted runoff.

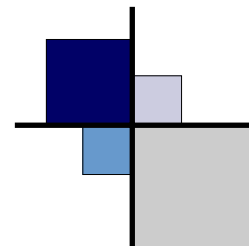
HEALTH DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE

WATER TESTING & DRINKING WATER QUALITY

The Trempealeau County Health Department will be offering well water screening tests for nitrates, pH, iron, and hardness free of charge. A well water sample may be collected into a clean container from a faucet where the water has been run approximately 5 minutes. Please call to let Health Department staff know when the sample will arrive in the office for testing at (715) 538-2311 ext. 220.

The Health Department is available to answer drinking water questions and concerns associated with:

- Bacterial and chemical contamination (Fee-based testing available)
- Nitrates
- Iron & Copper
- Radium (radon) in drinking water (Limited fee-based testing available)
- Lead in drinking water (Limited fee-based testing available)
- Water hardness and pH



PRIVATE WELL INSPECTION PROGRAM

In April, 2003, Trempealeau County adopted an Ordinance to regulate; the location of *newly* constructed private wells, existing transient (public facility) private water systems, and the proper abandonment of old/unused wells and drillholes. A permit is issued to county residents authorizing the location of new or replacement wells. An inspection is done by Health Department staff to ensure the well complies with State codes, which includes ensuring the proper distance from potential contamination sources.

In addition, Health Department staff will require the abandonment of wells no longer in service, or wells that are unused or considered to be unsafe. Improperly abandoned wells can serve as a contamination pathway into the underground aquifer (drinking water source) that you and your neighbors may be sharing. If you have concerns regarding what has been done with old wells located on properties where people no longer live, old or unused windmill or irrigation wells, or other drill holes which could impact our local groundwater supply, please contact the Health Department at (715) 538-2311 ext. 224.

Feel free to contact us by telephone (715)538-2311 or Toll-free 1-877-538-2311

Land Conservation , Ext. 260

Zoning Office, Ext. 223

Health Department, Ext. 220

or via E-Mail

Land Conservation Department—tremplcd@tremplocounty.com

Zoning Department—mroberts@tremplocounty.com

Health Department—trempeha@tremplocounty.com

