



Water association reviews past year

Staff Reports

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PLATTEVILLE -- Members of the Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed Association discussed the declining quality of water in reservoirs at its third annual stakeholder meeting and picnic last week.

The event took place at Pelican Lake Ranch east of Platteville.

Formed in 2005, the association is a nonprofit group dedicated to improving water quality in Barr Lake, Milton Reservoir and the streams and canals that flow into the reservoirs. Water quality impairment in the reservoirs caused by high water pH, a measure of acidity or alkalinity, was part of the association's discussion. The high pH sometimes found in Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir is related to high levels of nutrients, which fuels massive algae growth in the lakes, members were told.

In 2002, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment included Barr and Milton as medium priority sites on the state's list of impaired water bodies for pH violations, said Alice Wood, association coordinator.

Barr Lake, west of Hudson, and Milton Reservoir, east of Platteville, are popular spots for outdoor recreation, bird-watching, and fishing, provide habitat to nesting bald eagles, and store water used for both agricultural and drinking water supplies, Wood said in a press release.

The association focus area includes all of the water that eventually flows into the lakes, she said, noting watershed area stretches north and east for more than 850 square miles. It begins at Chatfield Reservoir in the Denver metropolitan area and covers that area as well a portions of Adams, Arapahoe, Denver, Douglas, Jefferson and Weld counties..

The association's ultimate goals are to develop and install a watershed management plan that will address water quality problems in reservoirs, and to develop an information/education program to educate the public about how to prevent future water quality issues, Wood said.

The group strives to meet these goals with the cooperation of 25 organizations, which include cities and towns, wastewater and drinking water providers, agricultural water users, developers, recreational groups and watershed residents.

Learn more

The 2006 Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed Management Plan and more information about the group can be found at www.barr-milton.org.

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