



CITY OF UNIVERSITY CITY NEWS RELEASE

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U. City Receives Water Quality Grant from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources

JEFFERSON CITY, MO., February 22, 2006: The Missouri Department of Natural Resources has granted an award of \$441,389 to the City of University City for a four-year River des Peres Southwest Branch Water Quality Project. U. City will provide a matching contribution of \$294,672 over the life of the project – now through January 2010 – for a total project cost of \$736,061.

The River des Peres watershed is a 114 square-mile area. The River des Peres is listed as one of Missouri's impaired waters because of low dissolved oxygen, with the source of impairment being urban nonpoint sources. Nonpoint source pollution occurs when rain, snowmelt, or irrigation runs over land or through the ground, picks up pollutants, and carries them into streams, lakes, rivers and coastal waters or introduces them into ground water. Imagine the path taken by a drop of rain from the time it hits the ground to when it reaches a river, ground water, or the ocean. Any pollutant picked up on its journey can become part of the problem.

The River des Peres extends approximately 20 miles through St. Louis County and the City of St. Louis before discharging into the Mississippi River. The U. City branch of the watershed encompasses 8,200 acres in east central St. Louis County. One-third of the watershed area is within U. City's jurisdiction – a population of approximately 40,000 residents.

The goal of the project is to protect and improve the quality of water entering the River des Peres. This will be accomplished in several ways:

- Educational information provided to residents, businesses, city officials, and employees about the project, and how their actions can impact the extent of nonpoint source pollution throughout the River des Peres watershed.
- Demonstration sites at city facilities, including the Ruth Park composting site and the golf course, to include signage and progressive coverage of the project. Demonstrations with participating landowners may include cost-share to implement best management practices (BMP) on their properties and conducting tours so others can learn from them.
- Monitoring will include before and after water testing at demonstration sites and during storm events.
- Visual assessments of the river and its tributaries will also be documented with photos. Implementation of BMPs that will reduce nonpoint sources of pollution will be ongoing during the project. The BMPs will be selected based upon monitoring data and watershed planning.
- The public will be able to follow the progress of the project through exhibits, presentations, public meetings, tours, and the City's website: www.ucitymo.org.

The Environmental Protection Agency Region 7 provided partial funding for this project under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources will administer the funds. For more information, contact Evelyn Shields-Benford, U. City Director of Public Works: 314.505.8556.

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