

Public invited to Tour of Lake Monroe Watershed

By Maggie Sullivan
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Friends of Lake Monroe invites you to a tour of the Lake Monroe watershed on Saturday, Oct. 2. The tour will travel on a school bus with staggered seating and open windows for ventilation and will be limited to 20 people.

More than 440 square miles of land drain to streams that flow into Lake Monroe. This watershed area is incredibly diverse with its forests, wetlands, ponds, lakes, pastures, crop fields, homes, and towns as well as more than 1,250 miles of streams. Freshwater ecosystems are a vital component to life and require both protection and appreciation.

"When a piece of litter or a pile of dirt is left on the ground unprotected, it can be washed into our streams when it rains," said watershed coordinator Maggie Sullivan. "What happens in the watershed has a huge impact on water quality in Lake Monroe. While we are fortunate to have a watershed that is over 80 percent forested, it is essential to understand what actions we can take in the watershed to prevent sediment and pollutants from entering the lake."

The watershed tour was organized as part of a larger grant-funded project to develop a watershed management plan for Lake Monroe, Bloomington's source of drinking water. Tour stops will include Stillwater Marsh, Yellowwood Lake, Nashville and Stone Head Nature Preserve.



Maggie Sullivan

"There are three main tributaries that flow into Lake Monroe – North Fork Salt Creek, Middle Fork Salt Creek, and South Fork Salt Creek," says Sullivan. "It can get a little confusing since each stream is locally known as "Salt Creek" but the

North Fork flows through Nashville while the Middle Fork flows through Stone Head and the South Fork flows through Kurtz."

One unusual stop will be the Nashville Sewage Treatment Plant. "A lot of people don't want to think about what happens after they flush the toilet," says membership coordinator Mary Madore, "but I think sewage treatment is fascinating. We are so grateful to the Nashville Utilities Department for this opportunity to learn how our wastewater is treated."

Registration and a COVID vaccination is required, and masks are encouraged when physical distancing of six feet cannot be maintained. There will be staggered seating and open windows for ventilation. To learn more and register, please visit friendsoflakemonroe.org/event/october-lake-monroe-watershed-tour/.

Maggie Sullivan is Lake Monroe Watershed Coordinator for Friends of Lake Monroe – Friends of Lake Monroe is a 501(c)3 non-profit that was formed to protect and enhance Lake Monroe and its watershed through science, advocacy, and public involvement: working collaboratively with citizens, government, and business to improve and support lake water quality.



Maggie Sullivan, Lake Monroe Watershed Coordinator for Friends of Lake Monroe points to a fossil at Falls of the Ohio State Park on the Indiana/Kentucky border.

Which creeks flow into Lake Monroe?

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