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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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World Water Monitoring Day set for Sept. 18
Department of Environmental Conservation and Anchorage
Waterways Council to host hands-on event
Water testing to promote awareness of
water quality issues in Anchorage area

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA - Chester Creek will be the focus of this year's World Water Monitoring Day in the Anchorage area. Water quality testing of Chester Creek is scheduled for September 18 from 6-8 p.m. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is providing test kits and water quality experts. The Anchorage Waterways Council (AWC) will also be on hand to assist people with the water quality testing. Parking for this public event will be at Valley of the Moon Park on West 17th Ave. where Arctic and E Street converge.



“Our main goal is to raise awareness of water quality issues,” said Cindy Gilder, Environmental Manager with DEC’s Division of Water. “The World Water Monitoring Day folks developed an easy-to-use test kit that enables everyone from children to adults to sample local water bodies. People can test a core set of water quality parameters with these kits including acidity (pH), clarity (turbidity), dissolved oxygen and temperature.”

The Anchorage Waterways Council also tests these parameters, plus several others, using more sophisticated equipment to determine the quality of water in many local streams and seeks to identify those with problems. The AWC then provides the State with data and DEC works with local government, nonprofits, industry, and residents to develop a plan to address water quality problems. One stream of concern in Anchorage is Chester Creek.

“We wanted to highlight Chester Creek because it has been listed as an impaired stream since 1990,” said Holly Kent, Executive Director, AWC. “Like many of

Anchorage's streams and lakes, Chester Creek is adversely affected by urban runoff—with common pollutants like sediment and fecal coliform bacteria.”

World Water Monitoring Day attempts to raise awareness of the issues affecting all water bodies.

“What we really need are concerned citizens who want to take action, and more funding to support those actions,” said Kent. “World Water Monitoring Day is a great opportunity to raise that awareness and for folks to get some simple hands-on interaction with our waterways that will hopefully inspire them to take more interest in the quality of Anchorage’s waters.”

Although free use of test kits is available only at the Chester Creek event, those interested in testing other water bodies through September and October can order the kits on-line at www.worldwatermonitoringday.org. The kits cost \$13 plus shipping. The web site is also the place where the water quality data can be logged in and compared with other sites from around the world.

For more information about the Anchorage Waterways Council go to:
<http://www.anchoragecreeks.org>.

For more on DEC water quality information:
<http://www.dec.alaska.gov/water/wqsar/>

Media Note: There will be experts from the Anchorage Waterways Council and DEC available for interviews during the event.