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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 12, 2008

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**World Water Monitoring Day set for Sept. 18**  
**Department of Environmental Conservation and Tanana Valley**  
**Watershed Association to host hands-on event**  
*Water testing to promote awareness of*  
*water quality issues in Fairbanks area*

FAIRBANKS, ALASKA—The Chena River will be the focus of this year's World Water Monitoring Day in the Fairbanks area. Water quality testing of the Chena 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 Tanana Valley Watershed Association (TVWA) will also be on hand to assist people with the water testing. There will also be water related games for children. Parking for this public event will be at Pioneer Park near Paddlers Cove.



“Our main goal is to raise awareness of water quality issues,” said Nancy Sonafrank, 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 and learn about 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.”

DEC 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. DEC then works with local government, nonprofits, industry, and residents to develop a plan to address water quality problems. One stream of concern in Fairbanks is the Chena River.

“We wanted to highlight Chena River because it has been listed as an impaired river since 1990 and is so important to Fairbanks,” said Christy Everett, President of the TVWA. “The river is adversely affected by urban runoff—with sediment and petroleum hydrocarbons such as oil and grease being the pollutants that cause us the most concern.”

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 who support more funding for clean water,” said Everett. “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 Fairbanks’ waters.”

Although free use of test kits is available only at the Chena River event, those interested in testing other water bodies can order the kits on-line at [www.worldwatermonitoringday.org](http://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.

The Tanana Valley Watershed Association also has an Adopt-A-Stream program for those who want to continue to monitor or help improve area waterways.

For more information about the Tanana Valley Watershed Association go to: <http://www.tvwatershed.org>.

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

*\*\*Media Note: There will be experts from the Tanana Valley Watershed Association Council and DEC available for interviews during the event.\*\**