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Kankakee River Development Conference Set for June 7

WaterWorks attracting public and legislators to cultivate river action plan.

KANKAKEE, IL – May 26, 2011 – The state of the Kankakee River and avenues for its protection and development will be explored at the June 7 “WaterWorks” conference to be held at Kankakee’s Hilton Garden Inn, 455 Riverstone Pkwy. in Kankakee. Benefits of and threats to area’s most vital waterway will be showcased through displays, guest speakers, small group breakout sessions, and the premier of a promotional video and dedicated website – www.gokankakeeriver.org.

Principal sponsor of this free event, which aims to bring together local and state legislators, private investors and the public, is the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley.

“The health of the Kankakee River has a distinct and measurable impact on our local economy,” notes Mike Van Mill, President and CEO, Economic Alliance of Kankakee County. “A comprehensive examination of our area’s greatest natural resource will enable us to identify shared goals and set an effective course of action to reach them.”

Impetus for the WaterWorks event stemmed from the action plan segment of a new Kankakee River Study document drafted by the Kankakee River Roundtable. The Roundtable is an open committee that meets monthly to address challenges facing the river and troubleshoot solutions. The group also identifies the river’s untapped potential in the realms of conservation, economic development, and tourism and recreation.

The June 7 conference will run from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., with a formal program rollout and video presentation at 5:00 p.m. On the WaterWorks schedule are speakers from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Chicago Metropolitan Area Planning, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Geological Survey and Illinois State Water Survey. Keynote speakers are Dr. John Marlin, IDNR, addressing the Mud to Parks program, and Dr. Nani Bhowmik, addressing ISWS Kankakee River Study highlights.

Drawings will be held for: a 1-hour boat ride for 10 people, sponsored by Duffy Electric Boats; two tickets for tours of the Frank Lloyd Wright Bradley House; and two 6-mile canoe trips, sponsored by Reed's Canoe Trips. Complimentary refreshments also will be served.

Confirmed exhibitors for the event include ISWS, IDNR, Rock Island U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kankakee River Basin Commission, Northern Illinois Anglers Association, Kankakee County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Aqua, Economic Alliance/Kankakee County Planning Dept, Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, Main Street Momen, Reed's Canoe Trips, POWER Squadron, Duffy Electric Boats, Northwestern RPC - Indiana, Upper Iroquois River Watershed Initiative – Indiana, Northwest Indiana Paddling Association, Kankakee Marsh Restoration, US Geological Survey, Kankakee Farm Bureau and Metropolitan Planning Council.

Kankakee River Roundtable and the "Go Kankakee River" project are initiatives of the Community Foundation of Kankakee River Valley, Economic Alliance of Kankakee County, Kankakee County Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Partnership for Conservation. Major corporate sponsor is Aqua.

For more information or a detailed schedule of events, visit www.gokankakeeriver.org or phone 815-935-1177.

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