

IOWATER Snapshots Provide Picture of Water Quality Statewide

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Biographical Sketch of Author

Lynette Seigley is a research geologist with Iowa's Water Monitoring Program. She received a B.A. in geology from the College of Wooster in Ohio and an M.S. in geology from the University of Iowa. She has worked for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Iowa Geological Survey since 1987. Currently, she helps coordinate the monitoring of Iowa's water resources in order to assess status and trends. She is also involved in IOWATER, Iowa's volunteer water monitoring program, and has facilitated snapshot samplings statewide.

Abstract

IOWATER, Iowa's volunteer water monitoring program, has been successful in coordinating 21 snapshot sampling events in various counties and watersheds across Iowa. In order to provide these "snapshots" of water quality in time, multiple sites throughout a county or watershed are sampled within a short period of time. These monitoring partnerships between volunteers and state/county/local officials have been extremely beneficial. On National Monitoring Day in October 2002, IOWATER attempted its first statewide snapshot sampling event. National Monitoring Day provided an opportunity for IOWATER monitors across Iowa to collect data from their monitoring sites using IOWATER methods and submit their data to the IOWATER online database (www.iowater.net). National Monitoring Day was the springboard for subsequent statewide snapshot events in Iowa, with a second event held May 2003 and a third held in conjunction with International Monitoring Day on October 18, 2003. Data submitted by IOWATER monitors as part of these snapshot events are summarized in a report sent to all participants and made available on the IOWATER website. Because of growing interest in the statewide snapshot samplings, IOWATER continues to sponsor events in the spring, summer, and fall of each year as an event in which IOWATER volunteers can participate. With each statewide snapshot, a steady increase in the number of participants and the number of sites sampled has been observed. The number of sites monitored has grown from 68 sites sampled in October 2002 to more than 140 sites in October 2003. Results from the statewide snapshots will be presented.