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UPCOMING SPEAKER DISCUSSES WATER QUALITY

Terry Lee, Olmsted County Water Coordinator, will be the featured speaker on Monday, February 23rd, at the Decorah Public Library. Lee will speak from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. about the “Decorah Edge” and how development in this unique geographic area has impacted the City of Rochester. The Decorah Edge, named for its presence around the city of Decorah, extends from north of Rochester, Minnesota, south to Dubuque, Iowa. This land area features wetlands that naturally filter the groundwater that supply drinking water for the region’s cities and farms.

To understand the impact of the Decorah Edge, one must first understand the geology of the region. The landscape is made up of varying layers of limestone, sandstone, and shale. Surface water travels through the cracks in the limestone layers until it reaches the Decorah Shale, a water-resistant layer. The water runs along the shale until it reaches an edge, such as a hillside, where it can spill over. The water then travels through vegetation in this wetland area (the Decorah Edge), which acts as a purifier, removing pollutants.

The Decorah Edge has been the subject of recent controversy in Rochester, Minnesota, where Lee is employed as the County Water Coordinator. The Olmsted County Board is considering an ordinance restricting development on Decorah Edge sites, which is meeting resistance from area developers. Lee will discuss the Decorah Edge in greater detail and the recent controversy facing Rochester, Minnesota.

The presentation will be held in the lower level of the library and is free and open to the public. It is sponsored by the Northeast Iowa RC&D in support of the Upper Iowa River Watershed Project. This project has been funded in part by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Federal Nonpoint Source Management Program (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act).

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