

## CONSERVATION CORNER

### White River Algae Study results

Thank you to all who attended the White River Algae Study presentation last Thursday evening. The meeting was well attended with familiar and new faces who all asked great questions. White River and Douglas Creek



Conservation Districts' Executive Director, Callie Hendrickson, provided a brief background of the previous studies conducted on the White River with information related to algae. USGS Biologist, Natalie Day, presented the data and analysis of the multi-year study.

After reviewing the data analysis, the USGS and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has concluded that, reduced spring and summer streamflow is a major contributor to algal blooms across years. Several other factors including water temperature, nutrients, and streambed stability also contribute to increased benthic algal biomass.

To grow, algae needs a stable streambed, warm water temperatures, light, water, and nutrients. With lower streamflows, the river has more stable streambeds and higher temperatures for longer periods of time. While Nitrogen has decreased, Phosphorus has significantly increased in the White River over the past 20 years providing sufficient nutrients for algal growth. Note, phosphorus was found to have steadily increased at similar rates in both the North and South Forks of the White River. It has been reported to have increased in multiple other locations in the western United States, over a similar time period, in other studies.

The formal USGS reports on this study are expected to be finalized and made public by the end of 2022. In the meantime, see the USGS PowerPoint presentation on the Districts' Algae Page at [www.WhiteRiverCD.com](http://www.WhiteRiverCD.com). All the White



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River Algae Study notes and multiple research papers are also available on the website. Please call the White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts' office at 970-878-9838 for more information.