

WATER WEEK



Everyone enjoys spending time beside a gurgling river, swimming in a dam, splashing in puddles. We are fortunate that these things are still possible in the Midlands. However, our water sources are under severe strain and everyone should make an effort to use water wisely and take care of our rivers.

Do your bit to conserve our precious water resource – starting this week:

- Report illegal abstraction of water and dumping of waste into rivers and streams.
- Adopt a river or stream near to you – with your family, your school or your company – and take care to keep it litter free.
- Report main water supply leakages to your local municipality.

- Start becoming water wise in your home and business – harvest rainwater, fix leaking taps, wash cars with buckets, avoid watering gardens (especially on hot days).

Call Penny Rees of DUCT on 082 340 7571 or call the Department of Water Affairs on their toll free number 0800 200 200.



The river is under tremendous pressure, and becomes increasingly negatively impacted as it flows towards Durban. Litter, polluted storm water and toxins from industries, sewage and excess nutrients from fertilizers, alien plants flourishing on the river banks and choking its waters are just some of the “additives” that turn this river from a pristine water course at its source, to a polluted soup as it nears the sea. Cumulative effects from the uMngeni’s tributaries compound the problem – the fish in one of the dams are toxic for human consumption, whilst Albert Falls

Dam is in early stages of eutrophication and unless trends are reversed, this dam is predicted to be pea green with algae in ten years time.

The more polluted the water becomes, the more difficult and costly it is to treat to acceptable potable levels which makes it more expensive for users. It also becomes more dangerous for communities who use water directly from the river in the absence of piped potable water. Thus the ability of this river to sustain related ecosystems, supply water to KZN's population and economy and serve as a buffer to Climate Change is being compromised.



The dire situation of the river has inspired members of the Duzi Umgeni Conservation Trust (whose mission is to champion the health of the uMngeni and uMsunduzi Rivers) to plan an epic walk down the length of the uMngeni River from source to sea, in order to raise public awareness regarding the importance of

the river and the problems related to its current state of decline; to document all impacts on the river and involve the rivers communities in a “Fellowship of the River” whereby they participate in the restoration of this river. In May 2012, a team of six members will undertake the walk :

- The team will follow the length of the river, always keeping it in sight. This will entail walking through thick bush, infestations of invasive exotic plants, footpaths and roads, crossing the river at bridges or rapids, and at times walking in the river or rock hopping.
- All impacts will be recorded by means of photography, film, GPS and dictaphone.
- Overnight points will be alongside the river.

We are looking for people interested in joining **The Fellowship of the River** by committing to “adopt” a section and help restore, care for and maintain the river.

You can begin by FOLLOWING this blog – just click the FOLLOW button on the right of the page. Send this page to everyone on your mailing list this week, encourage them to join The Fellowship of the River, too.

Source: <https://umngeniriverwalk.wordpress.com/2012/03/05/water-week/>