

*Remarks for the
“Clean Water Month” Press Conference (Macon)
October 8, 2002*

(recognize Charles Chisholm, other dignitaries)

Today we are gathered here in Noxubee County to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Clean Water Act. Because of this anniversary, earlier this year I declared 2002 as the “Year of Clean Water” in Mississippi, and October as “Clean Water Month” in Mississippi.

There have been many activities in Mississippi and around the nation to focus attention on the quality of our nation’s waters.

National Water Monitoring Day is one of the many activities that will take place in observance of this anniversary. The national goal of America's Clean Water Foundation is to have one million citizens across America sampling on or near October 18. Today, I want to help lead that effort with the citizens of Mississippi.

Thirty years ago, our nation's rivers and streams were not suitable for fishing or swimming.

Efforts by the dedicated professionals at the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality have helped to make Mississippi's waters cleaner. Cities and industries have cleaned up their pollution problems where our rivers and streams now support a healthy fish population and are suitable for recreational activities.

Now we're addressing the remaining problems, which are primarily caused by pollutants washed by rainfall into our streams, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters.

I join Charles Chisolm and the scientists and engineers at MDEQ in the belief that the people of Mississippi deserve and desire a clean and healthy environment.

Therefore we encourage the citizens of Mississippi to volunteer to monitor a stream, river or lake on or near National Water Monitoring Day on October 18.

Individuals, clubs, groups, schools, businesses may purchase a kit like this one online at www.yearofcleanwater.org, register their site and then record their monitoring results.

All of the data entered on the Year of Clean Water's web site will be used to determine the quality of the waters across our nation.

Working together we can make a difference and can continue to improve the water quality in our state and nation.