

PRESS RELEASE

July 25, 2019



Media Invited to Wolf River-Memphis Aquifer Research Day

The Center for Applied Earth Science and Engineering Research (CAESER) at the University of Memphis, under the Herff College of Engineering, has enlisted the help of the general public and Wolf River Conservancy (WRC) to assist with finding threats to our drinking water supply.

The research effort is part of the \$1 million a year study from Memphis Light, Gas and Water (MLGW) funded through 1.05% of users' water bills. The effort addresses water quality impacts to Memphis' drinking water where natural gaps, or "breaches," in the protective clay layer above the Memphis aquifer have been discovered. These breaches allow historical pollution to seep deeper into the sand aquifer than previously known.

Dr. Brian Waldron, director of CAESER, said, "We suspect there are more breaches in Shelby County, but we don't know where. We're deploying seepage meters into Wolf River with experienced WRC river guides to navigate canoes downriver in an attempt to find new breaches in the protective clay. This is a cost-effective way to find where the Wolf River water may be leaking into an unknown breach."

As experts of the land and geography of the Wolf River, the WRC team has also provided invaluable knowledge relating to access points and river conditions. As research over the next four years continues, additional investigations on the Loosahatchie River and Nonconnah Creek may help locate new breaches.

WRC Executive Director Keith Cole explained, "the Wolf River Conservancy values our partnership with CAESER, and we as a community should be appreciative of having CAESER as a valuable academic resource helping us to protect our drinking water. This collaborative project allows our Volunteer River Guides a unique and important way to contribute to our conservation efforts."

All media outlets are invited to the shores of the Wolf River at Germantown Parkway on the [northwest trailhead](#) Friday, July 26, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. to learn more about the project and see *Your Water, Your Research* in action.

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About CAESER:

For more than 25 years, the Center for Applied Earth Science and Engineering Research (CAESER) at the University of Memphis has studied the aquifers beneath the Memphis area, our rivers and their interaction. CAESER, is a research center in the Herff College of Engineering, comprised of University faculty, a professional staff and highly-motivated students to strengthen communities by improving environmental and social conditions through collaboration and research. *Strengthencommunities.com*

About Wolf River Conservancy:

The Wolf River Conservancy is an accredited land trust organization that is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the Wolf River and its watershed as a sustainable natural resource. WRC was founded in 1985 as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and has helped to protect over 16,000 acres in the Wolf River corridor, including the beautiful Ghost River State Natural Area, launched the transformational Wolf River Greenway project, and connected thousands of people of all ages to the Wolf River through education and recreation programs. *Wolfriver.org*