

Hello all,

As we get close to the end of the year our thoughts begin to turn to the possibilities of next year. I have received many positive comments about the MN River Weekly Update and I appreciate the feedback (this also includes any constructive criticism). For the upcoming 2008 year I plan to continue with this email update and will be looking for information from the various groups, organizations, agencies and individuals working on Minnesota River issues. If you have an event, job opening, grant opportunity, etc. please send it my way.



Explore Minnesota Tourism Council will soon have twelve position openings soon, including a spot for someone from the Chamber of Commerce, County Representative and a Trails Representative. For more information, http://industry.exploreminnesota.com/Tourism_Council2.html

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has issued an announcement to solicit applications for the planning, arranging, administering and/or conducting of conferences, workshops, and/or meetings that focus on research to protect human health and safeguard the environment. For more information, http://es.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/2008/2008_baa.html

Jobs:

Brown-Nicollet-Cottonwood Water Quality Board is looking for a Water Quality Specialist/Water Quality Program Director. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/waterqualityspecialist.pdf>

Cannon River Watershed Partnership is hiring a Water Quality Project Coordinator to increase landowner compliance with existing agricultural Shoreland ordinances in the Lower Mississippi Basin. For more information on the job, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cannonriver.pdf>

Events:

On January 10th a Minnesota BMP CHALLENGE & Water Quality Credit Trading (WQT) Workshop will be held at the Redwood Valley Lodge from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (lunch will be provided) in Redwood Falls, MN. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/bmpchallenge.pdf> or at the web site www.bmpchallenge.org or contact Lori Steckervetz, BMP CHALLENGE Program Coordinator at 608-2323-1425 or lori.steckervetz@bmpchallenge.org

The St. Paul Sportsmen's Boat, Camping & Vacation show will be held January 9 -13 at RiverCentre. For more information, http://www.cenaiko.com/sports/sports_sp.html

Mark January 17th on your calendar to see Carrie Jennings, Glacial Geologist with the Minnesota Geological Survey present a program on "The Geology of the Minnesota River" at 7 p.m. at the Chippewa County Courthouse Assembly Room in Montevideo.

Check out additional upcoming events and workshops on the Minnesota River Calendar at <http://mrbdc.mnsu.edu/calendar/index.html>

Water Quality Articles:

End in sight – Second purchase signals completion of Pilot Knob saga. This historically significant site had been part of proposed townhouse development until a collection of partners worked to save the property, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/endinsight.pdf>

\$25,000 grant to further restoration of historic Pilot Knob. Over \$82,000 has been raised to restore Pilot Knob, including a \$25,000 grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control. The funds will be used to install interpretive trails, signage and an overlook, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/restorationhistoricpilotknob.pdf>

Big Coal's Dirty Plans for Our Energy Future (with shocking photos). This article comes from Rich Smith's LivingWeb Consulting web site, <http://www.livingwebconsulting.com/article.asp?pagetype=article&articleid=6307>

Rain gardens soak up storm water. The community of New Auburn on the shores of High Island Lake is looking to rain gardens to control their storm water and improve water quality in the lake, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/newauburnraingardens.pdf>

A new way to hold water: Rain gardens seen as better method for collecting runoff. A housing development in St Cloud is forgoing the traditional storm water pond and will be using rain gardens instead, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/raingardenscollectrunoff.pdf>

Joining forces for growing local, organic food. Putting Green and MRCI WorkSource are developing plans to work together to grow local, organic foods in New Ulm, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/joiningforcesorganicfoods.pdf>

Biomass power plant planned for Minneapolis. A biomass plant in the form of wood chips is being planned just west of Hiawatha Avenue in south Minneapolis, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/minneapolisbiomassplant.pdf>

Feedlot Fiasco. Commissioners in Rice County continue to grapple with changes to the feedlot ordinance due to a muddled misunderstanding of the rule, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/feedlotfiasco.pdf>

Lawsuits: Target, others sold 'organic' milk that wasn't organic. Lawsuits are filed against Colorado-based Aurora Organic Dairy for labeling its products organic, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/organicmilknotorganic.pdf>

Senate approves energy bill containing auto fuel economy increase, more ethanol use. This trimmed-back energy bill requires higher fuel efficient vehicles and the increased use of ethanol, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/senateenergybill.pdf>

Solar Start-Up Plans to Start Leasing Residential Systems. A Minneapolis entrepreneur is starting up a company to lease solar panels to customers for a monthly fee to replace their normal home electric bill, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/solarresidentialsystems.pdf>

Bruininks slow to sign college climate change commitment. More than 450 college presidents and chancellors across the country have signed a commitment to make their campuses more sustainable but not the University of Minnesota, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/collegeclimatechangecommitment.pdf>

Global Warming A "Hot Topic" Within Ski Industry. The ski industry has been dealing with shorter seasons and what to do about Global Warming, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/globalwarmingskiindustry.pdf>

Judge rejects automakers' lawsuit, says California has authority to regulate vehicle emissions. California scored a major victory in its fight against global warming,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/californialawsuiteonemissions.pdf>

Lawsuit over Chaska septic system dismissed. A lawsuit over an alleged malfunctioning septic system against a neighbor and Carver County has been thrown out,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/chaskasepticsystemlawsuit.pdf>

US says it has spent more than any other country combating climate change. U.S. delegates at the U.N. conference on climate change said America had spent more than any other country on climate change-combating activities,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/combatingclimatechange.pdf>

Willmar MUC must decide soon on amount of energy to purchase from Big Stone II plant. The Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission must decide by January 1st on how much energy it wants to buy from the proposed Big Stone II power plant,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/willmarbigstoneplant.pdf>

How to 'go green on a budget. This article on MSN.com offers ideas on how you can be a green-minded consumer and still stretch a dollar,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/greenonbudget.pdf>

Biomonitoring: Has pollution spread to body? Minnesota health officials are poised to test for arsenic in 100 children and for chemicals formerly made by 3M in 200 adults,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/biomonitoringthebody.pdf>

Cities ponder lawsuit over pollution law. Mankato and North Mankato are considering a contribution toward a lawsuit against the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to fight a new phosphorus regulation, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/citiesponderpollutionlaw.pdf>

Do you think farm subsidies are excessive? Jerry Groskreutz a Faribault farmer provides his opinion on the new Farm Bill and subsidies,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmbillsubsidiesexcessive.pdf>

UN conference to approve forest conservation as part of climate plan. This program would pay mostly developing tropical countries to keep their trees in the ground and continue to absorb carbon instead of cutting them down for a profit,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/forestconservationclimateplan.pdf>

Mercury in mascara? New Minnesota law bans the toxic substance from beauty products. On January 1st a new law takes effect to ban mercury from mascara, eye liners and skin-lightening creams, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mercuryinmascara.pdf>

Outpost sells trees, conservation. A business in the Fergus Falls areas sells trees to make a profit and also have preservation of the environment in mind,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/outpostselltreesconservation.pdf>

Pawlenty appears in PSA on cable. Governor Pawlenty has filmed a public service announcement for the Discovery Home Channel on easy ways people can reduce energy consumption, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pawlentypublicserviceprogram.pdf>

Plowing more acres isn't without cost. Tony Dean writes in the Forum newspaper about staff of Ducks Unlimited being concerned over the impact of climate change on ducks,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/plowingmoreacres.pdf>

Pollution standards for sewage treatment plants not up to par, says environment groups.

Environmental groups across the nation are demanding the U.S. EPA set new standards to control nitrogen and phosphorus pollution from sewage treatment plants,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pollutionstandardssewageplants.pdf>

Trempealeau County to pass restrictive wind turbine ordinance.

Wind energy is becoming a divisive issue across the country as people ask for stricter ordinances with the construction of wind turbines, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/restrictivewindturbineordinance.pdf>

Ecolab's Apex: Rethinking dishwashers. Ecolab's Apex system helps restaurants run their machines more effectively, conserving resources as well as money,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/rethinkingdishwashers.pdf>

Senate passes \$286 billion farm bill expanding subsidies for growers and food stamps. By a 79 to 14 vote the U.S. Senate approved a new Farm Bill that expands subsidies for wheat, barley, oat, soybeans and several other crops,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/senatepassesfarmbill.pdf>

Outdoors Notebook: Group wants citizens to have more say in state conservation

funding. A coalition of conservationists, hunters, anglers and environmentalists are looking for the Legislature to provide more state conservation funding,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/stateconservationfunding.pdf>

Watershed district now sees storm water as a liquid asset.

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District once saw runoff as a problem but now looks at it as a resource to be harnessed, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/stormwaterliquidasset.pdf>

Xcel ready to pare back on fossil fuel. The utility's long-term plan will use more wind and nuclear power to lower greenhouse gases,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/xcelenergyfossilfuel.pdf>

Competitive spirit at work as Youth Energy Summit teams develop clean energy projects.

100 young people in 10 different communities are in competition to find clean energy solutions for their communities to win the first Youth Energy Summit prize,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/youthcleanenergyprojects.pdf>

A great gash, 355 miles long and as much as 250 feet deep and five miles wide, runs diagonally across central Minnesota from Browns Valley through Mankato to Minneapolis. This gash cuts through young glacial materials, older marine and terrestrial deposits, and into ancient heat-borne stone. It exposes some of the world's oldest known rocks. Across its floor flows a relatively diminutive silt-laden, meandering river. The valley and river, as the state, is known as the Minnesota – "cloudy waters," Constance Jefferson Sansome ("Geology of the Minnesota River Valley – Currents)

Please register at the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's bulletin board at:

<http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa> to receive regular updates on what is happening in the Minnesota River Watershed.

The Minnesota River Watershed Alliance (Watershed Alliance) is an organized network of citizens, public agencies, and private organizations dedicated to communicating the benefits of an ecology healthy Minnesota River Watershed to others and are actively working towards its improvement and protection. We meet four times a year and encourage landowners and recreational users of the river to be part of the effort. For more information on the Watershed Alliance: www.watershedalliance.blogspot.com

Thanks, Scott