

National Park Service to restore land near Ft. Snelling

by [Jessica Mador](#), *Minnesota Public Radio - December 4, 2008*

St. Paul, Minn. — Federal officials say the National Park Service will take over the management of abandoned federal land near Fort Snelling as part of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Over the next few years, the land will be cleared of abandoned buildings and restored to its natural conditions.

The project includes restoration of Coldwater Spring, a site that has spiritual significance for Native Americans.

The property is located just south of Minnehaha Falls Regional Park, west of the Mississippi River. For decades, it was a research campus of the U.S. Bureau of Mines, a federal agency closed by the government in the mid-1990s.

Paul Labovitz, Superintendent for the Mississippi River site, said once the park is complete, it will give visitors a sense of what it might have looked like in the early 19th Century.

"And understand some of the stories the park was set up to protect and talk about. This national park is here to commemorate the Mississippi River which arguably is one of America's greatest stories and places," Labovitz said.

Labovitz said the National Park Service is working closely with Native American groups to create interpretive materials for the park.

Grass Powers Growth

ALTURA — When Eric Kreidermacher came up against a modern problem in his family's commercial greenhouse and hog farming businesses, his solution was an age-old resource. His family owns Pork and Plants in Altura, Minnesota. They progressively seek sustainable, environmentally responsible methods of operation. Biomass boilers are a big part of the operation using agricultural by-products to heat buildings.

The modern problem he faced is not unfamiliar to many others: climbing costs of LP gas. Kreidermacher also wanted to make sure any solution would be sustainable and kind to nature. The answer was a fuel source people have been using for centuries: prairie grasses and other Ag residues. Not only would such a solution cut LP costs, but he could produce it himself.

For the rest of the article go to: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/grasspowersgrowth.pdf>

Job Opportunities:

Hawk Creek Watershed Coordinator Position

The Prairie Country Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) is seeking to hire a Project Coordinator to work in the Hawk Creek Watershed headquartered in Olivia, MN. Excellent communication skills, computer and organization skills, grant writing and technical and scientific background in water quality/environmental sciences required. A strong ag background is desirable. Must be willing to travel and organize evening meetings.

A position description is available by contacting Prairie Country RC&D. Send resume and cover letter explaining why you are qualified for and interested in this position by close of business on December 15, 2008 to: Prairie Country RC&D, 1005 High Ave. NE, Willmar, MN 56201. Phone (320)231-0008, Ext. 5; Fax (320) 235-8751; e-mail: bonnie.williams@mn.usda.gov.

Check out the Hawk Creek Watershed Project web site at: <http://www.hawkcreekwatershed.org>

Shoreland Stewardship Specialist – MN DNR

This position is funded through the Clean Water Legacy Act. It provides assistance to Department of Natural Resources field staff, local governments and shoreland property owners on the establishment of effective Best Management Practices, performance standards and native vegetation restoration in shoreland areas of impaired waters and sensitive shorelands. It requires a good grounding in science, the ability to educate and present scientific information on practical local applications to a wide variety of different audiences, and the ability to work with and encourage people to effect good results and land practices that benefit the water quality and natural resource value of Minnesota's waters and shorelands. Employment Condition: Limited Full-time - 100% FLSA Status: nonexempt Temporary Position End Date: 06/30/2009 Days of Work: Monday through Friday; Hours of work: 08:00 AM-04:30 PM Work Area:

To view job posting: https://statejobs.doer.state.mn.us/JobPosting/View?_posting=08DNR000755

If you have any questions about the above postings, contact the Bureau of Human Resources at (651) 259-5888.

Events:

December 10th (Wednesday) is the **New Office Open House** for Clean Up the River Environment (CURE) from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at 117 S. 1st Street (Main Street) in Montevideo. For more information, www.curemnr.org/index.html

December 20th (Saturday) is the **2008 Christmas Bird Count** to be centered around the Ney Nature Center outside of Henderson and will take place all day. For more information, <http://neycenter.org/calendar/>

December 23rd (Tuesday) is an **Open House Reception in Honor of Commissioner Charles Guggisberg** retiring after serving as District 3 Brown County Commissioner from 1988 to 2008 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioner's Room 204 of the Brown County Courthouse (14 S. State) in New Ulm.

January 20th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's Quarterly Meeting** starting at 6 p.m. with a social hour and food. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. and will take place at the Hutchinson Event Center. For more information contact Scott Kudelka at 507-389-2304 or scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu

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

Water Quality Articles

[Ag folks winced at Obama's 'millionaire farmers' remark](#) (Minn Post). At one of his recent transition news conference, President-elect Barack Obama paired two words that jangled some nerves across Minnesota and other agricultural states: "millionaire farmers."

[Lac Qui Parle and nearby counties get agricultural aid](#) (Minn Post). A severe thunderstorm that swept through Lac qui Parle County in far west central Minnesota July 31 brought high winds and hail that devastated crops in the area. Now U.S. Agriculture Secretary Edward Schafer has designated Lac qui Parle, along with the neighboring counties of Big Stone, Chippewa, Swift and Yellow Medicine, to be agricultural disaster areas.

[Area farmers call it a harvest](#) (Morris Sun Tribune). The area crop harvest is all but in the books, and, like last year, yields vary depending on who was lucky enough to get some summer rainfall.

[Prof named interim head of outdoor council](#) (Minnesota Daily). At its first meeting Monday, the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council selected University of Minnesota forest resources associate professor Mike Kilgore as its interim head.

[Minnesotans to be offered shares in wind-energy project](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A 78-megawatt wind-energy project in southeastern Minnesota is being launched with a public offering intended to involve community members and reduce the required minimum investment.

[Lead, other chemicals remain in many toys](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). As parents check off their gift lists for their kids, a new report shows that lead and other dangerous chemicals remain in many toys.

[Gas prices down, old habits return?](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Gas prices dipped Tuesday, hitting their lowest level since January 2005. High gas prices over the summer turned Minnesotans into frugal drivers. Many people slowed down and took fewer unnecessary trips. Gas consumption in Minnesota was at the lowest level in nearly a decade. Now that gas prices have plummeted, are drivers reverting back to their old gas-guzzling ways? Not necessarily. There's some evidence that suggests people are continuing to conserve.

[Judge Rules VeraSun Can Break Corn Contracts](#) (Associated Press). A bankruptcy judge in Delaware has ruled that VeraSun Energy Corp., can renege on its recent corn contracts for ethanol plants in Janesville and Welcome in southern Minnesota.

[Some fear state might seek money meant for environment](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Of all the people keeping a worried eye on the projected state budget shortfall, environmental advocates are probably a little less worried than most. That's because of the historic vote in November for a new sales tax to boost investments in Minnesota's natural resources. Of all the people keeping a worried eye on the projected state budget shortfall, environmental advocates are probably a little less worried than most. That's because of the historic vote in November for a new sales tax to boost investments in Minnesota's natural resources.

[Lessard Council kicks off with first meeting](#) (Outdoor News). The group that will recommend to the Legislature as much as \$90 million a year in fish and game habitat projects met for the first time Monday, with members pledging to be open and accountable to the public.

[Hot spots: Minnesota's north woods cabins](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesotans' love of the cool north country is creating hot spots for electric utilities that are scrambling to keep up with the growing demand.

[Gene Merriam: Minnesota voters favor preserving freshwater](#) (ECM Publishers). What we do, and do not, know about our water by Gene Merriam, Freshwater Society.

[Conservation pays off for rural Rochester farmers](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin). While organic milk and food products have become increasingly popular at local grocery stores, dairy farmers Jerome and Julie Walch of rural Rochester will tell you the transition from conventional farming to certified organic farming is a learning experience.

[Interest grows for environmentally friendly burials](#) (St. Cloud Times). Local cemeteries tend to be highly manicured and dotted with marble and granite headstones. Many require all caskets to be placed in concrete vaults. And Minnesota is the only U.S. state that requires bodies to be embalmed for public viewing.

[Recyclables' prices plummet: Haulers, cities lose out on profit](#) (St. Cloud Times). Countries with fast-growing economies such as China and India were demanding recycled materials such as scrap metal, plastic and paper, pushing up their prices to unseen levels. The price of one commodity — copper — rose so high thefts of copper wire became a common nuisance for law enforcement.

I remember a hundred lovely lakes, and recall the fragrant breath of pine and fir and cedar and poplar trees. The trail has strung upon it, as upon a thread of silk, opalescent dawns and saffron sunsets. It has given me blessed release from care and worry and the troubled thinking of our modern day. It has been a return to the primitive and the peaceful. Whenever the pressure of our complex city life thins my blood and benumbs my brain, I seek relief in the trail; and when I hear the coyote wailing to the yellow dawn, my cares fall from me – I am happy. – Hamlin Garland

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: <http://www.watershedalliance.blogspot.com>

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.

Thanks,

Scott

Scott Kudelka
Minnesota River Watershed Alliance
Communications Coordinator
Water Resources Center
184 Trafton Science Center S
Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-2304
scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu
<http://watershedalliance.blogspot.com>