

MSCTC, Fergus Falls and Honor the Earth to Host Energy Forum

On March 5th at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, MSCTC, Fergus Falls and Honor the Earth will be hosting a public forum to discuss the region's energy future and consider alternatives that will benefit the health of people and planet as well as the local economy. A key topic will be Otter Tail Power Company's projected Big Stone II coal plant. We will be discussing its pros and cons including potential renewable alternatives. Those confirmed to speak will be Harvard-educated economist and Minnesota resident Winona LaDuke, Otter Tail Power Company Vice President for Energy Supply Ward Uggerud, Fresh Energy and Union for Concerned Scientists consultant Barbara Freese, as well as a representative from the local Sisseton Dakota tribe. Doors at Legacy Hall at MSCTC will open at 6 p.m. A public question-and-answer session will follow the presentations. The energy forum is hosted by students enrolled in Sociology Service Learning at MSCTC. For more information call Marci King at MSCTC, Fergus Falls, at 218-736-1625.



This comes from Patrick Moore of CURE:

- CURE is chartering a bus this Wednesday March 5 to attend a Public Forum on Big Stone II from a Native American Perspective to be held in Fergus Falls (Otter Tail Power Co's home town) from 7 to 9 p.m. at Legacy Hall on the campus of Minnesota State Community and Technical College. The bus will leave at 4 p.m. from the parking lot behind CURE's office in Montevideo. We will stop in Milan and Morris along the way. To reserve your seat on the bus, **call us today at 1-877-269-2873**.
- Poets Joe and Nancy Paddock have indicated that they will be joining us on the bus as have several students from the U of M Morris Chapter of MPIRG.
- The event is free and the public is welcome and invited to attend. Featured speakers at the forum will be Winona LaDuke and Myrna Thompson. LaDuke is an enrolled member of the White Earth Anishinaabe and Executive Director of the national organization, Honor the Earth. Thompson is from the Sisseton Wahpeton Dakota tribe's Office of Environmental Protection.
- Both Duane Ninneman and I will be on the bus Wednesday. We hope you can join us for an interesting evening of cultural and information exchange. Sincerely, Patrick J. Moore
www.curemriver.org

p.s. – Thirty Seven 6th graders turned out for the Leap Day Broom Ball Game on the Minnesota River last Friday. A great time was had by all!

Hawk Creek Watershed Project Web Site

A web site has been developed by the Hawk Creek Watershed Project. The site covers a number of categories including Best Management Practices, Watershed Facts, Partners & Staff and a Calendar. Check it out at: <http://www.hawkcreekwatershed.org>

Big Stone County Water Plan

There will be a public informational input meeting on March 13, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Clinton Memorial Building which is located on Main St. in Clinton, MN. Comments will be taken up to that meeting, but not after.

CURE's Capitol Bus Trip

I am sending out a reminder about March 18th, CURE's third bus trip to the Capitol. This year should be more exciting than ever. I have your representatives lined up with ears open waiting to hear what you have to say. All you need to do is register at <http://www.mepartnership.org/protectmfuture> or call me, at the CURE office (1-877-269-2873)

and I will personally save a seat on the bus for you. Don't miss out on this great opportunity, this is democracy 101 and this is your opportunity to use your voice for the Minnesota you want. Can't wait to see you on the bus, Brooke Herling CURE Organizer www.curemnriver.org

Minnesota River Board Legislature Testimony on Watershed Bill

The Minnesota River Board testified at the recent legislature hearing for the House Bill 2536 – To establish Basin Boards. Here is the written testimony, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverboardlegislaturehearing.pdf>

Agricultural/Civic Engineer with Scott SWCD

The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District is hiring an Agricultural/Civil Engineer with a Water Resource emphasis. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/scottcountycivilengineer.pdf>

The Commons: The Power of Landscape Level Partnership in Watershed Conservation

The 5th Annual MN Chapter of the Society for Conservation Biology Conference: Local and state policies affect conservation not only on public lands, but also where people live, work, and play. This meeting is an opportunity for leaders and concerned citizens in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin conservation community to explore the relationship between the public decision-making process and principles and values of Conservation Biology. To be held on March 8th and 9th at the Eagle Bluff, Environmental Learning Center, Lanesboro, MN. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/partnershipwatershed.pdf>

Events:

March 6th (Thursday) Fred Harris, Ph.D., Plant Ecologist/Botanist of MN DNR will be giving a presentation at 7:00 p.m. entitled: "Rare Plants in Temporary Rainwater Pools on Bedrock Outcrops: Recent Discoveries on Some of Southwestern Minnesota's Most Scenic and Threatened Habitats at the Minnesota Native Plant Society meeting at the Dakota Lodge in West Saint Paul. For more info and a map of the meeting location, go to the Native Plant Society website at: http://www.mnnp.org/monthly_programs.htm

March 6th (Thursday) is a Hazardous Algal Bloom Workshop from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Minnesota Pollution Control offices in St Paul. To see it on the webcast go to: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.cfm>

March 10th (Monday) is the 3rd Crop Producer Meeting sponsored by Rural Advantage from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fairmont. For more information call 507-238-5449 or send an email to jeff@ruraladvantage.org

March 11th (Tuesday) is an Open House: Prevent River and Lake Pollution!! This will start at 8:00 a.m. in the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce building. For more information call 507-276-2280 or 952-881-9065.

March 13th (Thursday) is the CURE's Bridge Builder's Gathering from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Old Milan School. For more information go to www.curemnriver.org

Job Openings:

Yellow Medicine River Watershed District is looking to hire an Administrator position. For more information on this position: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/yellowmedicinedirector.pdf>

Chippewa River Watershed Project is accepting applications for a 12-week summer intern position (must be postmarked by Friday, March 7, 2008). For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cwrpintern.pdf>

Water Quality Articles:

Supporters of wildlife, arts money dismiss possible tax backlash. Supporters of the “Legacy Act” aren’t worried the passage of the Minnesota’s gas tax will affect how voters respond to another tax increase, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/backlashforlegacytax.pdf>

Cargill puts off plans for new ethanol plant. With the cost of corn rising and the price of ethanol down, Cargill suspended plans to build a Nebraska plant, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cargillputsoffethanolplant.pdf>

End of biofuel payments prompts questions. The state of Minnesota continues to provide subsidies to about a dozen corn-based ethanol plants, but policymakers soon will begin discussing how else to spend the money, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/endofbiofuelpayments.pdf>

Frederickson explains support of gas tax bill; Finstad hoped for a better deal. Brown County’s two Republican lawmakers found themselves on opposite sides when it came to an “up-or-down” vote on overriding the Governor’s veto of a \$6.6 billion transportation bill, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/fredericksonfinstadgastax.pdf>

All will pay – and benefit – from gas tax. A gas tax will mean higher costs at the pump when you fill up, but two Lyon County Commissioners said Tuesday it will also mean more money to maintain roads in the county, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/gastaxhasbenefits.pdf>

Gas tax is no help for Legacy Act. Minnesota’s gas tax is set to get a few bumps by this fall – bad timing for supporters of a November ballot measure to boost the state sales tax to pay for wildlife and arts programs, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/gastaxnohelplegacyact.pdf>

Lawmakers consider market-based program to tackle greenhouse gases. Environmental groups support the bill and feel the state should set tough standards to get results. Business representatives criticize many of the provisions because it will cost the state its competitiveness, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/marketbaseprogramforgreenhousegases.pdf>

Government study finds pesticides, other contaminants prevalent in West’s national parks. Pesticides, heavy metals and other airborne contaminants are raining down on national parks across the West and Alaska, turning up at sometimes dangerously high levels in lakes, plants and fish, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/nationalparkspolluted.pdf>

No free ride in quest for better roads. How much transportation taxes will cost depends on who you are – and who you ask, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/nofreerideforbetterroads.pdf>

Pawlenty outlines state role in warming fight. Speaking to a climate-change group, the governor noted that states can be a strong testing ground for initiatives, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pawlentyoutlinesmnwarmingfight.pdf>

Reaction to transportation bill is positive. When the Minnesota House succeeded in overriding Governor Pawlenty’s veto of the \$6.6 billion state transportation package, many southwest Minnesota residents viewed it as a victory for rural roads, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/positivereactiontogastax.pdf>

Poet, ISU researcher to examine starch levels in corn varieties. The nation’s top ethanol producer is teaming with an Iowa State University researcher in hopes of squeezing more ethanol out of a kernel of corn, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/starchlevelsincorn.pdf>

Minnesota landowners can sell ‘carbon crop.’ Minnesota agricultural producers, grassland and woodland owners have an opportunity to receive payments for their “carbon crop,” their land’s ability to remove carbon from atmosphere,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/landownerscansellcarboncrop.pdf>

Endangered whooping cranes could be threatened by growth of wind farms, federal officials warn. Whooping cranes have waged a valiant fight against extinction, but federal officials warn of a new potential threat to the endangered birds; wind farms,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/whoopingcraneswindfarms.pdf>

Rain gardens an added prospect. As the City of Fairmont prepares for street construction, a new topic has entered the discussion: rain gardens,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/raingardensaddedprospect.pdf>

Big development draws big concerns. The overall size of a lake development in Douglas County has many citizens concerned about its impact on water quality, erodible soils, stormwater treatment and boat traffic, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/bigdevelopmentbigconcerns.pdf>

Ethanol subsidies are fueling starvation. The red-hot Congressional love affair with the alternative fuel ethanol is starting to leave many supermarket customers feeling mighty blue these days as they pay inflated prices for grocery staples,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ethanolsubsidiesfuelstarvation.pdf>

Farmers must weigh pros, cons of wind turbines. Farmers are being heavily courted by wind farm developers eager to lock up lease agreements for wind turbines,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmersweighprosconswind.pdf>

How healthy and ethical is bottled water? In using bottled water not only do we negatively impact the environment with excess waste but we impact the access to safe drinking water that everyone worldwide should have,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/howhealthyethicalbottledwater.pdf>

Xcel to use massive batteries to store wind-generated power. Batteries can yield power even when air is calm, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/massivebatteriestorewindpower.pdf>

Soybean growers hold up University of Minnesota funds to protest biofuels paper. The University of Minnesota isn’t going to receive any research funding from the state’s soybean growers council until the two parties have a heart-to-heart talk next week,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/soybeanprotestbiofuelspaper.pdf>

Water contaminant PFBA not as toxic as previously thought. East metro residents finally have more clarity about the safety of their drinking water more than a year after the Minnesota Department of Health revealed a contamination problem,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/watercontaminantpfba.pdf>

Coal-fired S.D. project awaits greener Minnesota’s approval. An environmental movement in Minnesota that led to a law to cut greenhouse gas emissions is threatening to put the brakes on a power plant expansion across the border in South Dakota,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/coalfiredprojectawaitsmnapproval.pdf>

We know ourselves to be made from this earth. We know this earth is made from our bodies. For we see ourselves and we are nature. We are nature, seeing nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature. – Susan Griffin, *Woman and Nature*

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

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