

Spring seems to finally have arrived and now summer doesn't feel that far off. There has been a lot of activity in the fields as farmers' seed their crops in the ground. Spring also means its time to get into the water to paddle your favorite river or go casting for that big fish. As Memorial Day Weekend quickly approaches there is a wide range of activities to enjoy in the Minnesota River Watershed.

New Ulm – Capitol for a Day

Last Thursday the city of New Ulm became Capitol for a Day as the Governor and other staff spent the day enjoying this community along the Minnesota River. One of the big highlights of the day was the release of a 35-pound flathead catfish by Lt Governor Carol Molnau and local 6th grader Kyrie Sellnow.

- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/catfishrelease.pdf>

16th Annual Rivers and History Weekend

Over the weekend a large, diverse group of people gathered at the Upper Sioux Agency State Park on the Minnesota River to enjoy two days of paddling, camaraderie and a chance to learn about the history of the area. According to Patrick Moore of CURE (sponsor of the event) this was the biggest year yet with people from 20 different countries having a dialogue about what is happening around the world when it comes to environmental issues.

Minnesota River Board meeting in the Yellow Medicine River Watershed

On Monday a large crowd gathered for the MN River Board meeting at the Southwest Sportsman's Club in Minneota. There were presentations from Jay Gilbertson of East Dakota Water Development District and on the Living Systems Project by Linda Meschke. Representatives from Big Stone II and the MN Department of Natural Resources offered different perspectives on how the proposed coal plant on Big Stone Lake will affect water levels during low-flow conditions. In the afternoon many of the participants enjoyed a tour of conservation practices in the Yellow Medicine River Watershed.

Minnesota River Bike Ride Successful

The first bike ride along the Minnesota River near Shakopee and Chaska proved to be a resounding success. This family event helped the participants connect to nature and also promoted the Minnesota River. Over 100 people came out to ride.

Paddling Adventure continues for the Chaska Teenagers

After starting out at the end of April for Hudson Bay, Sean Bloomfield and Colton Witte paddled the entire length of the Minnesota River and have now hit easier paddling on the Red River. They hope to reach the Hudson Bay in a month.

- <http://wcco.com/video/?id=41839@wcco.dayport.com>
- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/twothousandplusmilesadventure.pdf>
- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/chaskateensdeterminedhudsonbay.pdf>
- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/chaskateensrevisithistoriccanoejourney.pdf>
- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/twopaddlinggroundtheclockhudsonbay.pdf>

Events:

May 24th (Saturday) is a **Civilian Conservation Corps presentation** starting at 2:00 p.m. at the Fort Ridgely Historic Site commissary. For more information, <http://mrdbc.mnsu.edu/calendar/pdfs/fortridgelyeventccc.pdf>

May 26th (Monday) is a **Twilight Prairie Stroll** from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Ney Nature Center, Henderson. For more information, <http://neycenter.org/>

June 5th (Thursday) is a **State Conservation and Preservation Plan Public Forum** from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Best Western North Mankato (111 Range Street). The public will have a chance to provide input on draft recommendations for conservation and preservation of Minnesota's environment and natural resources. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/statewideconservationpreservationplan.pdf>

June 14th (Saturday) is a **Hike at the Gneiss Scientific & Natural Area** near Granite Falls. Please meet at the Hardees parking lot (147 Highway 212 E.) at 9:00 a.m. We will drive out to the site from there.

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

Water Quality Articles:

AGSI Recycling is harvesting a new crop. The Savage firm is opening the state's first film-recycling plant that shreds, cleans and converts agricultural plastic film trash into pellets that manufacturers can use to make new plastic lumber, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/agsirecyclingharvestingnewcrop.pdf>

Ambulances Trying To Save Gas While Saving Lives. Faced with record gas prices, families can drive less and slow down. But what if your job was speeding around town and saving lives? <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ambulancetryingsavegas.pdf>

Big Stone II rejected. A judicial panel recommends the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission reject an electric transmission project in western Minnesota that is linked to the proposed Big Stone II power plant, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/bigstoneiirejected.pdf>

Coleman makes 'victory lap', extols virtues of farm bill. Senator Norm Coleman made a stop in Willmar on what he called a "victory lap" for the 2008 farm bill, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/colemanmakesvictorylap.pdf>

Conservation council established. A Minnesota House-Senate conference committee agreed to establish a conservation council to oversee about \$90 million in prospective fish and wildlife funding, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/conservationcouncilestablished.pdf>

The energy crisis: Only bold steps will help. Senator Amy Klobuchar writes: For eight years, under Bush, we've been back on our heels. We need leadership that will set the bar high, invest in cutting-edge technologies and homegrown energy, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/energycrisisonlyboldsteps.pdf>

Energy efficient facilities could cut down costs. It's not the reason supporters of the upcoming Owatonna school bond referendum are pushing for the \$128.5 million package. It is, however, one of the byproducts of building new schools in the district, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/energyefficientfacilitiescosts.pdf>

Farm bill only inches toward real reform. Congress failed to go far enough on new income limits, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmbillonlyinchesreform.pdf>

Farm bill sent to president; Klobuchar, Coleman praise \$290 billion package. The new five-year farm bill headed to President Bush's desk contains many Minnesota-written provisions, especially in promoting renewable fuels, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmbillsenttopresident.pdf>

WCCO meteorologist: Global warming 'extremism' uses 'squishy science.' Longtime WCCO-TV meteorologist Mike Fairbourne says that the environmental movement is practicing

“squishy science” when it ties human activity to global warming,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/globalwarmingextremism.pdf>

Greenway bike center makes biking no sweat. Today is bike-to-work day. It also marks the grand opening of a bike center in Minneapolis along the Midtown Greenway,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/greenwaybikecenterbiking.pdf>

House passes election-year farm bill. The House passed a \$290 billion farm bill with a strong veto-proof majority, offering more subsidies for farmers, food stamps for the poor and special projects that lawmakers can bring home to voters this election year,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/housepassesfarmbill.pdf>

Lake Carlos selected as ‘sentinel.’ Lake Carlos is one of two dozen Minnesota lakes included in a statewide water quality study, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/lakecarlossentinellake.pdf>

Minnesota senator says farm bill is ‘tremendous’ win for state. Minnesota’s senators voted for the 2008 Farm Bill, and they praised funding provisions for feeding hungry people that are paired with a safety net for farmers and funds for development of cellulosic ethanol,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnsenatorfarmbilltremendous.pdf>

ND regulators asked to suspend review of Big Stone II. Opponents of a proposed South Dakota power plant are asking North Dakota regulators to suspend their own review of whether the project is the best option for providing low-cost electricity,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ndregulatorsbigstonereview.pdf>

Pipeline pollution inevitable. The Sheyenne River and communities downstream are in greater danger from the Keystone Pipeline than before,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pipelinepollutioninevitable.pdf>

Polar bears to be protected species. The Interior Department has decided to protect the polar bear as a threatened species because of the decline in Arctic sea ice from global warming,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/polarbearsprotectedspecies.pdf>

S.D. governor critical of Big Stone decision. South Dakota’s wind energy industry would face a setback because of an administrative ruling against building electric transmission lines in Minnesota, Gov. Mike Rounds said,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/sdgovernorcriticalbigstone.pdf>

Slimmer Farm Bill irks conservationists. The federal Farm Bill always is immensely important to hunters and anglers because of the extensive conservation provisions,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/slimmerfarmbillirksconservationists.pdf>

Steger: Polar Bears Highlight Global Warming. The polar bear just got listed as a threatened species, but veteran polar explorer Will Steger and the team he’s heading in the Canadian Arctic found themselves threatened - - by the bears,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/stegerpolarbearsglobalwarming.pdf>

The end of coal? The fossil fuel generates the lion’s share of electricity in this country. But concerns about pollution could signal change, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/theendofcoal.pdf>

Reps. Walz, Kline help push Farm Bill to veto-proof margin in Congress. Reps. Tim Walz, D-Mankato, and John Kline, R-Lakeville, helped push passage of the Farm Bill to a veto-proof margin, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/vetoproofmarginfarmbill.pdf>

Without Big Stone II, utilities would need to think short-term. If the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission agrees with two Minnesota administrative judges’ recommendations for the Big

Stone II transmission line project, five utilities would need to look at short-term solutions to fill the transmission needs, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/withoutbigstoneutilitiesshortterm.pdf>

Bill could throw monkey wrench into burner plans. The measure, on Gov. Pawlenty's desk, would require more study of cumulative pollution in the neighborhood, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/billthrowmonkeywrenchburner.pdf>

Newspaper Questions Heat Up Global Warming Debate. WCCO meteorologist Mike Fairbourne is expressing concern that some environmental groups are blaming humans too much for global warming, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/newspaperquestionsglobalwarming.pdf>

Shrinking 'footprint' benefiting sugar company. Leaving a "smaller footprint" has become an environmental mantra. It has also become good business for the Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Cooperative, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/shrinkingfootprintbeetcoop.pdf>

Coal company suspends efforts to build ND power plant; impacted by proposed Big Stone II. After seven years of planning, a coal company has suspended development of a 500-megawatt power plant in southwestern North Dakota because of uncertainty about federal carbon dioxide rules, a company official says, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/coalcompanysuspendeffortsbuiltndpowerplant.pdf>

President Bush vetoes farm bill. President Bush vetoed the \$300 billion farm bill, calling it a tax increase on regular Americans at a time of high food prices in the face of a near-certain override by Congress, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/presidentvetosfarmbill.pdf>

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>

*I do not know much about gods; but I think that the river
Is a strong brown god – sullen, untamed and intractable
Patient to some degree, at first recognized as a frontier;
Useful, untrustworthy as a conveyor of commerce;
Then only a problem confronting the builder of bridges.
The problem once solved, the brown god is almost forgotten
By the dwellers in cities – ever, however, implacable,
Keeping his seasons and rages, destroyer, reminder
Of what men choose to forget. Unhonoured, unpropitiated
By worshippers of the machine. – T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) from Four Quartets*

Thanks,

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