

Request for Proposals for Resource Investigation Project Grants for the Protection of Unimpaired Waters through the State Clean Water Partnership Program

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MCPA) hereby announces that it will accept proposals for waterbody protection project grants through the State Clean Water Partnerships (CWP) Program. In 1987, the Minnesota Legislature established the CWP Program (*Minnesota Statutes 103F.701 through 103F.761*) to protect and improve surface and ground water in Minnesota through financial and technical assistance to local units of government. For more information <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mpcacwpprogram.pdf>

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Minnesota Shallow Lake Protection Study

Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) seeks to hire a consultant to examine county planning and zoning efforts that provide protection for shallow lakes in DU's Emphasis Areas in Minnesota. Shallow lakes, which are larger than 50 acres in size, have permanent or semipermanent water regimes and are typically dominated by wetland habitat (less than 15 feet deep). Ducks Unlimited is currently working with its conservation partners to provide shallow lake protection through its Living Lakes Initiative in Minnesota and Iowa. Find out more at www.ducks.org/livinglakes

Federal Gas Tax Holiday

Reducing gasoline prices by 18.4 cents per gallon will provide little more than a psychological boost for American motorists. Fuel prices, averaging about \$3.60 a gallon, can fluctuate by 18.4 cents — up or down — within just a few weeks. That is why proposals that the federal tax on gasoline, 18.4 cents a gallon, should be suspended for the summer don't make much sense. President Bush, in telling reporters this week that he is open to considering any ideas that may help motorists, including suspension of the tax, pointed out what ought to have been obvious for years: Congress simply hasn't taken actions with reasonable likelihood of decreasing U.S. dependence on foreign sources of oil. Allowing exploration and drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and making it easier for oil companies to build new refineries are two things Congress could do to affect gasoline prices, Bush pointed out. But lawmakers have been unwilling to take such actions. It is time for them to reconsider — to make a real impact on fuel prices. (New Ulm Journal)

- **Editorial: Focus on policy, not politics, of gas tax.** According to a Minneapolis Star Tribune editorial, Gas tax attack ads need to be put into context, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/focusonpolicynotgastax.pdf>
- **This is not an energy policy. This is money laundering.** According to Thomas Friedman, "It is great to see that we finally have some national unity on energy policy. Unfortunately, the unifying idea is so ridiculous, so unworthy of the people aspiring to lead our nation, it takes your breath away," <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/notenergypolicymoneylaundering.pdf>
- **Editorial: Put the brakes on U.S. gas tax holiday.** According to a Minneapolis Star Tribune editorial, "Suspending it for the summer doesn't make any sense," <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/putbrakesongastaxholiday.pdf>
- **Our View – Gas tax holiday a bad idea all around.** When Republican presidential candidate John McCain suggested suspending the federal gas tax for three months over the summer, he knew he'd tapped into an issue that might resonate with voters, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/gastaxbadideaallaround.pdf>
- **McCain and Clinton use gas tax politics.** Proposed suspensions to federal and local gasoline taxes is political pandering, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/gastaxreality.pdf>

Jobs:

- **Ecologist position with Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR).** This leading citizen organization works to protect and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities. This position will increase FMR's capacity to provide land management and restoration services to landowners in its conservation focus areas. The Ecologist will report to the Conservation Director and work closely with the Ecologist/Project Manager to conduct plant surveys, complete land use histories, and develop natural resource management plans. Deadline for the position is May 15th. For more information <http://www.nextstep.state.mn.us/jobs2.cfm?jobid=1141>
- **Energy Program Assistant with the Minnesota Project.** The Minnesota Project is a non-profit organization founded in 1979, connecting people with policy to nurture collaborations that build strong local economies, vibrant communities, and a healthy environment. This full-time position will be working with the clean energy program of the Minnesota Project to assist in event organization, grassroots mobilization and other organizing activities. Deadline for the position is ASP. For more information http://www.mncn.org/jobs/user_detail.asp?jobID=20690

Events:

May 11th (Sunday) is a **Spring Wildflower Walk** from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Ney Nature Center near Henderson. Come along and observe the profusion of spring flowers growing along the Ney Center trails. Learn some of the fun and interesting folklore surrounding these flowers and their colorful nicknames. Cost: \$5.00 per family w/NNC family membership and \$2.00 per individual w/NNC membership, \$7.00 per family and \$3.00 per individual for non-NNC members. For more information contact the Ney Nature Center at info@neycenter.org or 507-248-3474.

May 17th (Saturday) is a **Minnesota River Bike Ride** starting at 9:30 a.m. from the Memorial Park on the east side of Shakopee to Chaska Ballpark. For more information contact Jerry Hennen at 952-445-1013.

May 17th (Saturday) is the **Bloomington Community Clean-Up for Water Quality**. The clean-up will take place on Nine Mile Creek at 106th Street and go from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. For more information www.friendsofmnvalley.org

May 17th and 18th (Saturday & Sunday) is the **16th Annual Rivers and History Weekend** at the Upper Sioux Agency State Park, Granite Falls, MN. CURE is sponsoring this annual family centered event with help from the Granite Falls Historical Society, the Upper Sioux Agency State Park, the Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center and the EF Foundation for Foreign Study. Come and canoe the area rivers, camp out and learn of the region's rich history. Look for more details in upcoming mailings or by visiting: www.curemriver.org or by calling CURE toll Free at 1-877-269-2873.

May 19th (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board meeting** at the Minneota Community Center and held in collaboration with Yellow Medicine River Watershed District. The Executive Meeting is at 8:30 a.m., with the full meeting starting at 9:30 a.m. For more information call 507-389-5491.

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://mrbdc.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/>

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

Water Quality Articles:

Big Stone II project faces increasing scrutiny. Opponents of the controversial Big Stone II power-plant expansion are stepping up pressure in their three-year attempt to shoot down plans for the coal-fired electric generator just across the Minnesota border, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/bigstonefacingincreasingscrutiny.pdf>

Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company gets \$150K for corn cob ethanol project. Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company in Benson has been awarded a \$150,000 grant from the Minnesota Department of Commerce of Energy Security for the ethanol plant's evaluation of corn cob biomass energy systems, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/chippewavalleyethanolcorncob.pdf>

The dirt: Expo is green and growing. Green things tend to grow, and the Living Green Expo is no exception, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/expogreenandgrowing.pdf>

Redefining the daily commute. The Commuter Challenge is drawing in thousands of people who pledge to use alternative transit instead of driving, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/redefiningdailycommute.pdf>

UMM student signs on as first environmental studies major. University of Minnesota, Morris sophomore Katie Laughlin has registered for her fall 2008 classes as the first environmental studies major at University of Minnesota, Morris, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ummfirstenvironmentalmajor.pdf>

As summer nears, University, city brace for water demand. Maybe short showers and low-flow toilets aren't enough. Starting this month, the city of Woodbury will begin asking residents why they use so much water, specifically targeting the top 20 percent or so of water users, in hopes of getting them to be more efficient, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/universitycitybracewaterdemand.pdf>

Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company takes next step. Ethanol's promise has been to replace some of the foreign oil we use in our vehicles with renewable biomass raised on America's farm lands, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/chippewavalleyethanolnextstep.pdf>

Forum editorial: The culprit is energy, not corn. Today's issue: Corn ethanol criticized for causing rise in food prices. Our position: The critics are wrong. Its energy and worldwide demand, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/culpritenergynotcorn.pdf>

John Farrell: An energy incentive is drifting in the wind. Federal tax law discourages individual investment and local ownership of turbines, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/energyincentivedrifting.pdf>

Farmers say ethanol not to blame for higher food prices. Farmers and ethanol producers defended their good fortune in the nation's capital, where more lawmakers are blaming a corn-for-fuel policy for soaring food prices, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmerssayethanolnotoblame.pdf>

Food prices affect farm bill. Most people call it a farm bill. But it's really more of a food bill. That's even more true this year as negotiators, spurred by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other urban lawmakers, move dollars from crop subsidies to food stamps and other programs for feeding the needy, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/foodpricesaffectfarmbill.pdf>

High prices for scrap steel cleaning the landscape. High prices for scrap steel have helped push a widespread cleanup of the Minnesota landscape this spring. Scrap steel prices have risen more than 40 percent in the last year. That's causing farmers, business owners, and everyday

citizens to dig out iron that's been ignored for years, maybe decades,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/highscrapsteelprices.pdf>

North, south oppose N.D. water project. Parts of northwestern North Dakota have been waiting more than 20 years for a pipeline that will bring a stable supply of Missouri River water,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/northsouthopposendwaterproject.pdf>

Phase out the toxins, phase in clean alternatives. When researchers at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine conducted their groundbreaking 'biomonitoring' study to determine human exposure to synthetic chemicals, the results were alarming. The nine otherwise healthy individuals they tested carried an average of 91 industrial compounds and other pollutants inside their bodies, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/phaseouttoxinsphaseinalternatives.pdf>

Poet will not build second ethanol plant. Sioux Falls, S.D. – based Poet Biorefining will not construct an ethanol plant at the Agra Resources Industrial Park west of Glenville, home to an existing, farmer-owned ethanol refinery managed by Poet,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/poetnotbuildsecondethanolplant.pdf>

Putting Green, MRCI farm together. Two local entities teamed up to create a 2-acre; sustainable, small-scale farm that will benefit area youth, vocational services clients and yield organic vegetables and fruit for local consumers,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/puttinggreenmrcifarm.pdf>

State will pay for cleanup of Inver Grove Heights couple's tainted land. Minnesota will cover \$67,000 for contamination it caused in 1982 on an Inver Grove Heights property,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/statepaycleanupinvergrove.pdf>

Storing wind energy in a bottle. U of M chemical engineering professor Bill Smyrl will be testing the capabilities of sodium sulphur batteries used by Xcel energy to provide long-term storage for excess electricity generated by wind turbines in southwestern Minnesota,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/storingwindenergybottle.pdf>

Subsidies at center of fight over farm bill. Farm subsidies, alternative fuels and nutrition are at the top of the list of the constantly changing 2008 farm bill being discussed in Congress, but the No. 1 concern is the president's threat to veto if there isn't enough subsidy reform,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/subsidiescenterfarmbill.pdf>

Suburban sprawl: Is there another way? Most of Scott County's open land is slated for subdivisions, but a group with a different vision is gaining momentum,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/suburbansprawlanothway.pdf>

Sun powers heaters for low-income families. As the home heating season comes to an end, one Minnesota non-profit group is starting to install dozens of solar powered heating systems free of charge in low income households,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/sunpowersheaterslowincome.pdf>

Will Pawlenty kill paint recycling bill? A bill that would make it easier for consumers to recycle leftover paint may fall victim to Gov. Pawlenty's veto pen because the measure's funding source could be portrayed as a new tax,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/willpawlentykillpaintrecyclingbill.pdf>

Farm Bill agreement in hand. A congressional conference committee will be working through the weekend in an effort to finalize a \$300 billion Farm Bill. The legislation pays for farm subsidies, conservation, alternative energy and nutrition programs for the next five years. The process has been contentious and may end with a showdown between Congress and the President, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmbillagreementinhand.pdf>

Auto Industry Focuses on States. A state-by-state battle by auto makers and dealers to dissuade lawmakers from following California's move to regulate greenhouse-gas emissions is beginning to bear fruit, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/autoindustryfocusesonstates.pdf>

'Greener' future closer, thanks to a long-distance partnership. A trip to Sweden during the darkest days of winter gave Bob Ryan of Bird Island a look at what could be a bright future for west central Minnesota, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/greenerfuturecloserpartnerships.pdf>

Student: High School Should Buy Solar Panels. On a day when Albert Lea school board took one step closer to going green – by making its meetings completely paperless – a student advised other ways the district could become eco-friendly, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/highschoolsolarpanels.pdf>

A new threat to duck populations. Ducks in the Upper Mississippi Refuge are dying by the thousands. Since 2002 nearly 50,000 ducks have died from intestinal parasites they picked up by eating snails in the Mississippi River. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hasn't found a way to protect the birds and the parasites are spreading, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/newthreatduckpopulations.pdf>

NRCS develops energy-saving tools for farmers. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has developed four energy tools designed to increase energy awareness in agriculture and to help farmers and ranchers identify where they can reduce their energy costs. The results generated by these tools are estimates based on NRCS models and are illustrative of the magnitude of savings, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/nrcsdevelopsenergysavingtools.pdf>

Republican Senators ask EPA to consider halting ethanol mandate amid rising food prices. Senate Republicans have asked environmental regulators to use their power to halt the country's plans to expand ethanol production amid rising food prices, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/republicanshaltethanolmandate.pdf>

David Wallinga and Lindsay Dahl: Scare isn't the last, only the latest. Parents should be able to buy a baby bottle without worrying about health hazards. That standard requires a change in the system, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/scareoverbabybottles.pdf>

Gone with the wind turbines? Schools want to recapture missing funds. Some southern Minnesota school districts that lie in the state's fertile wind corridor were caught off-guard last year, when the Legislature passed a technical amendment – without a public hearing – that sent substantial revenues from the giant wind turbines blown' in the wind away from educators, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/schoolwindturbinesfunds.pdf>

Turning sugar beets into electricity. A pilot project in Moorhead will turn sugar beet waste into methane that could be used to provide heat or generate electricity. The project has the potential to save American Crystal Sugar Company millions of dollars, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/turningbeetsintoelectricity.pdf>

*I understood when I was just a child that without water, everything dies.
I didn't understand until much later that no one "owns" water.
It might rise on your property, but it just passes through.
You can use it, and abuse it, but it is not yours to own.
It is part of the global commons, not "property" but part of our life support system. – Marq de Villiers, Water, 2000*

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.

Thank you,

Scott

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