

### **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance Quarterly Meeting – January 20<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday)**

Don't forget to attend the next Quarterly Meeting of the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance. We will be choosing our 2009 "Clean Up the Minnesota River" issue from the these five ideas:

- An event focus with nontraditional constituents,
- Produce a TV documentary on the MN River incorporating aerial photography,
- MN River Friendly Label and MN River Paddle Patch / Decal Program,
- Cross fertilization between Lake Pepin and MN River groups,
- Backyard drainage awareness campaign.

The meeting starts at 6:00 p.m. with a social hour and food and at 7:00 p.m. the formal part of the meeting starts. We will be meeting at the Hutchinson Event Center at 1005 Highway 15 South Plaza 15 on the south edge of the city. For more information

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/january2009invitation.pdf>

### **New Hawk Creek Watershed Project Coordinator**

Cory Netland, Farm Bill Technician for Renville Soil and Water Conservation District has been hired as the Hawk Creek Watershed Project Coordinator, replacing Darrell Schindler, who is now a Project Manager for MPCA. Before coming to Renville SWCD in 2005, Cory worked three years at Lac qui Parle SWCD in the same position. In 2003, Cory graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology. He has served on a volunteer basis as the Habitat Coordinator for both the Lac qui Parle and Renville Chapters of Pheasants Forever.

Cory's new duties include overseeing the office, grant writing and reporting, organizing meetings, and assisting staff in water monitoring and project planning. According to Cory, "Being an outdoors enthusiast, I feel it is imperative to protect our precious natural resources. I firmly believe that conserving our natural resources serves the best interest of both the general public, and farmers, as it is essential to maintaining fertile soil and clean water. I am thrilled to be working in a position that involves issues that I truly am passionate about. I look forward to working with the citizens, private businesses/organizations, and government agencies in the Hawk Creek Watershed."

For more information on Hawk Creek Watershed Project go to, [www.hawkcreekwatershed.org](http://www.hawkcreekwatershed.org)

### **Wally the Walleye and Peter the Pike – A Story about Pollution and Energy**

Here is a story about Wally the Walleye floating downstream to a larger river where he meets Peter the Pike and finds out about three types of pollution – Water, Air and Land. Peter the Pike also teaches him about the different types of energy including fossil fuels, nuclear, geothermal and hydroelectric. This children's book was written by Fred Netz and illustrated by Melissa Kohn. For more information or to buy a copy contact the author: Fred Netz at [fnetz@aol.com](mailto:fnetz@aol.com)

### **High Resolution Digital Elevation (Topographic) Data**

As implementation plan development for the MN River and Lake Pepin TMDLs approaches, there is an increasing need for high resolution digital elevation (topographic) data for the MN River Basin. This data layer is used in selecting sites for water storage, controlled drainage, erosion control structures, ravine repair, streambank protection, and many other mitigation practices. It is also used for terrain analysis, water flow modeling, flood modeling and mapping, as well as transportation and land use planning applications. Accurate to within six inches vertical resolution, it is obtained by a laser scan of the earth's surface from aircraft and is called LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging). This data is being or has been acquired for the Red River Basin, southeast Minnesota, most Metro area counties and a handful of other counties including Blue Earth. Most of the MN River Basin does not have the data. A current map of LiDAR coverage is found at [http://www.gis.state.mn.us/committee/elevation/resources/lidar\\_mn\\_map\\_dec08.pdf](http://www.gis.state.mn.us/committee/elevation/resources/lidar_mn_map_dec08.pdf) .

Opportunities to fund completion of the Basin may arise through the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment or the yet-to-be-passed federal stimulus package. Statewide completion of LiDAR coverage, beginning with the MN River Basin, has been presented to the Clean Water Council as a priority of the Minnesota River Board. Statewide coverage is also a priority of the Association of Minnesota Counties in a 2007 resolution. For more information, contact Les Everett, UM Water Resources Center, [evere003@umn.edu](mailto:evere003@umn.edu)

### **Xcel offers \$1 energy-saving bulbs**

Minneapolis-based Xcel Energy is trying once again to get people to buy more energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs with a reduced-price program. Xcel plans to subsidize the cost of up to 530,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs at prices as low as \$1 a bulb throughout its service area in Minnesota. In the Twin Cities area, a limited supply of bulbs is available at Cub Foods and Costco stores.

The compact fluorescent light bulbs normally cost \$2 to \$3. Use of a single such bulb over its life can reduce a household energy bill by up to \$72, said Kim Sherman, Xcel's product portfolio manager.

A compact fluorescent typically lasts 10,000 hours, or 10 times as long as an incandescent bulb, she added. The utility sponsors this reduced-price program in the fall or winter because people don't buy as many lights in the summer, she said.

In fall 2007, Xcel offered 300,000 of the energy-saving bulbs for a buck apiece, Sherman said. It expanded its program this year to help it meet a goal of reducing overall energy consumption by its customers by 1.5 percent per year. If every household in Minnesota used at least one compact fluorescent bulb equal to a 100-watt incandescent, utilities could save enough electricity to light all the houses in St. Paul for 180 days, she said. *By Leslie Brooks Suzukamo, Pioneer Press*

## **Job Announcements:**

### **Principal Engineer with Metropolitan Council**

This position will be responsible for managing the planning, design and construction related services on a variety of large diameter pipelines, high capacity pumping stations, forcemains and major regional wastewater treatment projects. These projects are generally the largest scope projects within the region employing state of the art technology and construction techniques.

Duties include:

- ✓ Develops project plans of large, complex, often multi-disciplinary projects requiring substantial coordination with internal user groups, the general public, regulatory agencies, and state and local.
- ✓ Conducts research, develops and recommends policy and procedure on a variety of regulatory subjects. Prepare operations procedures.
- ✓ Develops project budgets and schedules; monitors costs and progress; anticipates potential problem areas; identifies and implements measures to keep the projects within budget and on schedule. Recommends revisions to the project budgets, as necessary.

For more information, <http://www.nextstep.state.mn.us/jobs2.cfm?jobid=1285>

### **Crew Leader/Assistant Leader/Interpreter with MN Conservation Corps Summer Youth Program**

Summer Youth Program crew leaders and assistant crew leaders will work together to lead a crew of 6 youth, ages 15-18, on projects throughout MN, WI, & MI for 35 hours each week. Each weekday also includes 1 hour of educational activities. Weekends will be spent exploring the local area, doing laundry, hiking, swimming, and relaxing. The summer begins with 2.5 weeks of training for staff. The following 8 weeks of the summer will be spent traveling, learning, and working with youth to complete trail maintenance & construction, erosion control, invasive species

removal, basic construction, and other conservation work. Each project lasts 1-3 weeks, between which you will return to our base camp in St. Croix State Park. Most of the summer will be spent living in tents, cooking over a camp stove.

MCC is a challenging, full time commitment, but the experience is well worth it. Staff fluent in ASL will serve both as a Crew Leader or Assistant Crew Leader, as well as an interpreter.

Complete a Summer Staff Application ([www.conservationcorps.org](http://www.conservationcorps.org)), and send it, along with a cover letter and resume, to Minnesota Conservation Corps Summer Program, 2715 Upper Afton Road, Suite 100, Maplewood, MN 55119 or email to [alyson.johnson@conservationcorps.org](mailto:alyson.johnson@conservationcorps.org)

## **Events:**

January 14<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) is the second **“Community Wealth” Lunch Talks** from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. at the new Clean Up the River Environment (CURE) office on the main street (117 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street) of Montevideo. For more information, [www.curemriver.org](http://www.curemriver.org)

January 15<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) is a **Chippewa River Turbidity TMDL Public Meeting** at McKinney’s on Southside in Benson at 7 p.m. Each meeting will include a review of the TMDL process, water quality data that led to the impairment listing and a presentation by Wenck and Associates on the modeling processes that will be used during the TMDL study.

January 16<sup>th</sup> (Friday) is a **Chippewa River Turbidity TMDL Public Meeting** at McKinney’s on Southside in Benson at 10:30 a.m. Each meeting will include a review of the TMDL process, water quality data that led to the impairment listing and a presentation by Wenck and Associates on the modeling processes that will be used during the TMDL study.

January 20<sup>th</sup> (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](mailto:scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu)

January 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> (Wednesday thru Friday) is the **Radical Abundance – A Theology of Sustainability (39<sup>th</sup> National Theological Conference)** at Gustavus Adolphus College. The full three day conference experience features keynotes live via webcast from New York, and interfaith discussion small groups to consider radical ideas about abundance, sustainability and well being. Cost is \$20 per person and includes printed materials and refreshments. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/trinityflyer.pdf>

January 29<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) is the **Local Energy Security roundtable discussion** from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Wesley United Methodist Church (202 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street) in Marshall. For more information, [www.curemriver.org](http://www.curemriver.org)

February 7<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) is the **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of CURE** from 5 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (meal served at 6:30 p.m.) at the Hollywood Theater on Main Street in Montevideo. Keynote speakers are Dr. Carrie Jennings & Dr. Shawn Schottler talking about “The Real Dirt on the MN River.” For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cureannualmeeting.pdf>

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

## **Water Quality Articles**

[USA Today report raises concern, skepticism](#) (Mankato Free Press). A study showing high rates of air pollution near many schools is raising concerns and questions about the validity of the assumptions made.

[Area farmers face uncertainty as economy falters](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin). After a couple years of record income, crop farmers face uncertainty as they head into the new year amid an economic downturn.

[As 2008 comes to an end, 2009 will bring new financial challenges](#) (Worthington Daily Globe). The year 2009 is upon us, and with it comes the hope of a new year and time to look back at the one that just passed.

[The not-so-wee house](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Architect Geoffrey Warner hopes to make factory-built housing more popular by focusing on sustainability and smart design with his modular weeHouses. That concept has evolved from a one-room cabin to this three-level house in south Minneapolis.

[Success Of Free E-Recycling Could Lead To Fees](#) (WCCO TV). Until this month, most Minnesotans could take used TVs and computers to get recycled free. But that has changed in some counties across the state, partly because the program was so popular.

[Dennis Anderson: Getting moving on conservation](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Concerned Minnesotans are enthusiastically pitching in and taking steps to save and enhance the state's natural resources before it is too late.

[Power plant decision next week impacts Alexandria](#) (Alexandria Echo Press). After years of delays and debating, state regulators may clear the air next week on a pending Western Minnesota electric transmission project related to the Big Stone II coal-fired power plant.

[Big Stone II a necessary expansion](#) (Fergus Falls Daily Journal). As demand for energy continues to grow, power plants must expand and step up in order to remain effective for the public in terms of services and cost, according to a Big Stone II official.

[Updates planned for state Wetland Conservation Act](#) (Outdoor News). Changes to the state's Wetland Conservation Act likely will improve Minnesota's wetland laws, but some say they don't go far enough. The Board of Water and Soil Resources is working on the rule changes - the most substantive in more than a decade - as a result of legislation passed during the 2007 session.

[Money to spend, a legacy to build](#) (Pioneer Press). Much of the talk around the Capitol in St. Paul has to do with a \$5 billion problem — the projected state budget deficit for the next two years. The heck with that, for a moment. Let's return instead to Minnesota's \$7 billion opportunity. It's spread over 25 years, but it may well be the more urgent matter.

[Big Stone II vote is Thursday](#) (Marshall Independent). The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission will likely decide the fate of the proposed Big Stone II project during a hearing Thursday.

[What Others Think: Ethanol vision is a flawed one](#) (Worthington Daily Globe). Imagine a plant that can be easily grown on farms all over America. Imagine it can be turned into a fuel through a simple process. Imagine we burn that fuel in our cars to reduce our dependence on foreign oil. That sounds wonderful. But that plant is not corn. That process is not simple. And that fuel is not ethanol.

[Snowy owls turning up at Raptor Center](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). On a table in the Raptor Center treatment room, a great horned owl is wrapped in a towel, enduring an examination. It got tangled up in a fishing hook and line. Veterinary technician Greg Hansen says someone found it along a riverbank.

[Minnesota DNR selling state lands to fill budget holes](#) (Pioneer Press). With his voice booming over a loudspeaker, Kevin Ausland on Friday had a small audience of hunters and conservation leaders grumbling "No way!" and shaking their heads in disapproval.

[DNR Concerned About TV's Getting Dumped](#) (MSNBC). The Department of Natural Resources expects many TV owners will simply dump their old analog sets when the broadcast signal switches to digital in about six weeks.

[Recyclers Getting Stuck With Trash](#) (WCCO TV). Our ailing economy has recyclers swamped with materials they're having a tough time getting rid of. In just the past couple of months prices for recycled paper, plastic and aluminum have tanked.

[Climate change action plan: Utilities worried about future](#) (Bemidji Pioneer). Unless Minnesota adopts a climate change action plan this session, state law bans construction of any new coal-fired power plants as of Aug. 1, and that scares utilities.

[Democrat: Drill, baby, drill](#) (Finance and Commerce). Minneapolis Rotary Club hears oil-energy pitch from pro-drilling, ex-Texas U.S. Rep. Stenholm.

[Swan Deaths Follow Effort to Force Migration](#) (WCCO TV). In the three decades since Minnesota began breeding and releasing trumpeter swans back into the wild, the recovery program has exceeded all expectations.

[Ice Age about to freeze out global warming](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The historical record suggests that the current 12,000-year warming trend is about to be replaced by a 100,000 year ice age.

[Carp roundup is a net gain for Minnesota's lakes](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The weather helped scientists, out to rid lakes of the damaging fish, round up 90 percent of the carp in Chanhassen's Lake Susan.

*It will do us little good to wire the world if we short-circuit our souls. There is no delete button for racism, poverty or sectarian violence. No keystroke can ever clean the air, save a river, preserve a forest. This transformational new technology must be an extension of our hearts as well as of our minds. The old rules still apply. Love your mother – Mother Earth. – Tom Brokaw, Journalist*

**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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