

MN River Valley National Scenic Byway Road

The paving of the river bottom road/recreational trail along Renville County Road #5 will be a phased project. This paving project will go from the county line to Renville County Road #3 or the "Peterson Bridge". According to the MN DOT, the Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway project specifications are as follows: CSAH 5 design, assessment, acquire right of way and construction south of Renville county line to County Road 3 for a total of \$3,170,000.

Michael Pollan spreads the word about eating food

By [Euan Kerr](#), *Minnesota Public Radio (May 19, 2009)*

Journalist and food expert Michael Pollan was often asked for advice about the best things to eat. After a lot of research he came up with a seven word formula: Eat food, not too much, mostly plants. This credo is the centerpiece of Pollan's book "In Defense of Food." He argues many of America's health problems would vanish if people stick to a diet of simple, if possible, home cooked fare, preferably from local farmers and growers. "In Defense of Food" is now out in paperback. Pollan told Minnesota Public Radio's Euan Kerr he's been amazed at how his simple formula has made a big splash.

Getting Back to Basics With Rain Barrels

By *Brooke Patterson, Rush River Clean Water Partnership Project Coordinator*

Although rain barrels have been around for thousands of years, there is a growing interest to use them as a way to protect our lakes and rivers, while also saving money on water bills. A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rainwater from a roof that would otherwise flow into our lakes and rivers via storm drains. The water that falls directly from the sky is not the problem. The problem is the runoff that flows over impervious surfaces and yards picking up things like fertilizers, pesticides, pet waste and automotive liquids; all of which have detrimental effects on water quality. By diverting water from storm drains, rain barrels help decrease the impact of runoff on streams and other waterways, while reducing the volume and velocity of runoff. A rain barrel is also a great way to save money on your water bill and to start thinking about water conservation.

For the rest of the article (Page 3) and other information on the Rush River and High Island Creek watershed projects go to: <http://mrfdc.mnsu.edu/major/lowminn/subshed/hi/pdfs/spring2009.pdf>

Grant Opportunities:

Got an Idea for a Water Trails Project?

The National Park Service helps partners plan successful locally-led outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation projects. August 1 is the deadline for the next round of assistance from their Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss project ideas with RTCA staff before submitting an application. Visit www.nps.gov/rtca for more information. Click on "Apply for Assistance" in the left hand column.

Job Announcements:

Engineering Technician – Ducks Unlimited

Duck's Unlimited has announced the bidding for an Engineering Technician, located at the Fergus Falls NRCS Area Office. This position will work as a contractor providing engineering support to the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) throughout West central and Northwestern Minnesota. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ducksunlimitedposition.pdf>

Events:

May 28th (Thursday) is the **Minnesota Environmental Partnership Meeting** from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Elks Nature center in Mankato. Jeff Brand of MEP will discuss what worked, what passed and what needs to be worked for next session. Bob Tammen will talk about sulfide mining in Minnesota.

June 16th (Tuesday) is the **Cottonwood River Canoe Trip** hosted by the Redwood Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA). The trip will start at the canoe access on County Road 11 and paddled into Flandrau State Park in New Ulm. For more information, http://www.rcrca.com/canoe_trip_home.htm

June 18th (Thursday) is the **Redwood River Canoe Trip** hosted by the Redwood Cottonwood Rivers Control Area (RCRCA). The paddle will go from County Road 6 into Redwood Lake at Redwood Falls. Meet at Perk's Place to be driven out to the put-in point. For more information, http://www.rcrca.com/canoe_trip_home.htm

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

Water Quality Articles:

[Pawlenty uses line-item veto to reduce two ag appropriations](#) (Agri News). Gov. Pawlenty used his line-item veto authority to strike two appropriations from the agricultural and veterans funding bill.

[EPA bans pesticide carbofuran from all food crops](#) (Agri News). The Environmental Protection Agency issued a final rule last week banning the use of the pesticide carbofuran on food crops, saying it poses an unacceptable health risk, especially to children.

[Legislature approves amendment spending](#) (Outdoor News). It took until the final minutes of the session, but lawmakers approved Legacy Amendment legislation that would spend nearly \$397 million over the next two years on fish and wildlife habitat, clean water, parks and trails, and the arts.

[Legacy fight has winners, losers](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Lawmakers built or damaged reputations while pushing through a bill aimed at funding the outdoors and culture.

[Minnesota's impaired waters will only improve when citizens' thinking and behavior change](#) (Twin Cities Water Examiner). Two-part forum featuring the water quality of Minnesota's lakes and rivers hosted by the Freshwater Society and the League of Women Voters features speakers from Freshwater Society, MPCA and others. Two-part forum featuring the water quality of Minnesota's lakes and rivers hosted by the Freshwater Society and the League of Women Voters.

[Xcel envisions solar panels along Central Corridor light-rail line](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). Xcel Energy, the nation's top wind-energy provider, wants to install solar panels along the Twin Cities' proposed Central Corridor light-rail line to show solar energy can work in Minnesota, too, the utility's CEO said Wednesday.

[Legislature adjourned with a lot of 'ifs'](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Unallotment. The poorest of the poor. Nanny state. Cocoa bean mulch. If none of those terms means much to you, you haven't been paying attention to the recently adjourned legislative session.

[Bug threatens urban forest](#) (Mankato Free Press). Jeanne Reiner was watching a KARE-11 news report about the emerald ash borer when she was struck with a terrible thought.

[She inspires companies to become lean, green](#) (Star News). Judy Wlodarczyk once saw a company save \$19,680 a year just by making one change.

[Underwater sensors help scientists monitor water](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A U study promises a better, faster way to watch area lakes and rivers for water pollution.

[Sowing seeds into community gardens](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). More cities are inviting residents to get their hands dirty in community gardens.

[Water, land and legacy funding gives Minnesota new bragging rights](#) (MinnPost). Minnesota can claim some new bragging rights since Monday's passage of the funding for the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.

[DNR announces four new critical habitat license plates](#) (Jordan Independent). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) revealed four new critical habitat license plate designs Friday during a ceremony at the Hennepin County deputy registrar's office in Minnetonka.

[Stimulus energy aid found to favor cold regions](#) (MinnPost). A huge boost in federal funds to help low-income families weatherize their homes provides more than \$3 on average in the coldest states for every \$1 given to warm-weather states, an analysis of the aid program shows – even though exposure to extreme heat and cold are both health risks.

[Kids do some dirty work](#) (Mankato Free Press). Project brings trees, shrubs, benches Washington Elementary.

[Opinion: Ethanol eyes only](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesota's Collin Peterson is evidently willing to throw climate-change legislation under the bus to coddle an unsuccessful industry.

[Pawlenty uses line-item veto sparingly on finance bill for cultural and outdoor resources](#) (MinnPost). With the exception of one \$200,000 appropriation, Gov. Tim Pawlenty has signed into law the Omnibus Cultural and Outdoor Resources Finance Bill, which implements the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment passed by voters in November.

[Opinion: A chance to stop the dirtiest oil](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesotans should work to halt a pipeline that would expand the market for tar sands extraction.

[Testing for toxins on the fly](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Scientists are heading to treetops to learn what baby eagles can tell us about environmental toxins. They hope to connect the dots about how some chemicals move through the food chain.

[Peterson ready to break ranks on climate bill](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Citing how a sweeping climate bill could affect farmers working in the U.S. ethanol industry, Minnesota Rep. Collin Peterson said he's ready to join others in blocking the legislation from moving forward in Congress.

[Unwanted paint is their raw material](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Recycling paint from hazardous-waste dropoff sites is a thriving business for a Fridley company that also recycles the cans and pails.

[SW Minn. beach closing lingers on following manure spill](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A significant manure spill in southwestern Minnesota that is keeping a state park beach closed is being blamed on a dairy farm's clogged pipe.

[More teeth in penalties for ATVers who trash wetlands](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). All-terrain-vehicle riders who destroy wetlands in Minnesota face tougher criminal penalties, a year-long ban

on riding and, if caught a second time, seizure and forfeiture of their vehicles under a measure signed into law Friday by Gov. Tim Pawlenty.

[Shoreview experiment may eliminate storm drains](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Shoreview's new "green" street surface lets rainwater pass right through to prevent damaging runoff.

"Have to squeeze the last drop of utility out of the land has the same desperate finality as having to chop up the furniture to keep warm." – Aldo Leopold, [A Sand County Almanac](#), 1949

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,

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