

Minnesota River Banquet

Hey, Minnesota River Huggers, Mark your calendars for Saturday April 28th for the Annual Minnesota River Banquet in New Ulm at Lola's Larkspur in Downtown New Ulm. Check out the flyer in the file attached. Great program, great food and refreshments, great raffle and prizes and a chance to see your Family of the River. If you like stimulating conversation about all things river and more, this is the night for you. It's also a great chance to catch up on what is on the horizon for actions to improve our watershed and to find out what CCMR will be focusing on. Just respond to this email to reserve a spot. Or you can send a check for \$25 per person to CCMR, P.O. Box 488, New Ulm, MN 56073. If you reserve we ask for payment. If you do a walk in you can pay at the door, but you will be taking a chance that we may be full. We are limited for seating so you will want to act soon.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/minnesotariverbanquet.pdf>

EARTH DAY 5K FUN RUN WALK

The Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District is celebrating Earth Day this year with a 5K Fun Run/Walk/Bike on Saturday April 21. Earth Day is a great time to get outside and enjoy our natural resources. By having a Fun Run throughout the watershed we hope to create the feeling of a watershed community. In this respect, a 5K Fun Run/Walk will be held simultaneously in Hendricks (the Headwaters of the Lac qui Parle River), Canby, Dawson and Madison (all communities of the Lac qui Parle River).

All four Fun Runs will begin with registration at 8:15 a.m. and the Run/Walk will start at 9:00 a.m. Families are encouraged to attend. Pre-registration for the event by April 11 will help with the coordination of all four Fun Runs. Registration Forms are available at local businesses and online at www.lqpywatershed.org or by emailing mary.homan@lqpc.com or calling Mary Homan at 320-815-1521. Earth Day T-shirts are available for the first 150 registered participants. This event is being coordinated by the Lac qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District, Lac qui Parle SWCD, Big Stone Therapies in Madison, Johnson Memorial Health Services in Dawson, Sanford Health in Canby and the Hendricks Parent Teacher Organization.

Registration Form, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/funrunregistrationform.pdf>

Big Stone County Citizens Continue Campaign for Outcrops at April 17 Hearing in Ortonville

Citizens challenging a conditional use permit request by Strata Corporation to create a new granite crushing and blasting quarry next to homes, a bike trail and the Minnesota River are hoping to be joined by River Valley tourism advocates at a Big Stone County Board hearing on Tuesday, April 17, 7:00 p.m. at the Ortonville Armory, 309 Madison Avenue, Ortonville, MN.

Growing public outcry against the plan has prompted the commissioners to move the hearing to the Armory, one of the largest public spaces in the county at the headwaters of the Minnesota River. Organizers are urging supporters of the emerging nature and culture tourism industry from throughout the Minnesota River Valley to turn out and express their opposition to the mining permit.

"The way things are shaping up, it appears that a YES vote for Strata's permit is a NO vote for the people of Big Stone County and the anticipated National Blueway designation designed to bring tourist dollars and new residents to the region," Clinton resident and Land Stewardship Project organizer Rebecca Terk said. "The growing coalition of local residents opposed to this permit intend to present new information at this hearing about the ways in which approval of Strata's permit application will be detrimental to habitat, property values, human health and the region's growing tourism industry."

Residents of Ortonville Township, site of the proposed 300 foot deep mining pits, and their allies in Big Stone County and beyond are being allowed to present 5 minute long testimony at the public hearing which will become part of the public record if future lawsuits are filed. For the past several weeks, the

township board has been meeting with individual County Commissioners to discuss numerous concerns with the proposed permit.

In February, the Ortonville Township Board of Supervisors passed a moratorium on large industrial development to gain time to draft zoning rules that will address residents' concerns. "The Township moratorium is enough to put the proposed quarry on hold, but we are asking the County Commissioners to vote it down at the county level as well to send a message to Strata that their plan poses too much risk for current residents," stated Nancy Aune, one of the local organizers.

The mining issue has attracted statewide media coverage by the [West Central Tribune](#), [Minnesota Public Radio](#) and the [Star Tribune](#). For more information on the issue visit Big Stone Bolder website: <http://bigstonebolder.wordpress.com/> or call 320-269-2984.

Founded in 1992, CURE is a grassroots non-profit organization based in Montevideo that focuses on celebrating and protecting the Minnesota River Watershed. For more information, visit www.cureriver.org.

MPCA extends comment periods for water-quality reports on Mississippi, Minnesota rivers

St. Paul, Minn. — The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is extending the public comment periods for reports about water quality in the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers.

Due to a high level of interest, the public comment period has been extended to May 29, 2012, for the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) draft reports about Minnesota River turbidity and South Metro Mississippi River total suspended solids. The comment period for the reports began Feb. 27 with a notice in the "State Register."

The TMDL reports focus on turbid water caused primarily by sediment. Turbidity is caused by suspended and dissolved matter, such as clay, silt, organic matter, and algae. High turbidity results in poor water quality for aquatic habitat, recreation, industrial use, and human consumption.

The two documents are available for public review and comment on the MPCA's [TMDL Projects and Staff Contacts webpage](#).

Comments must be received by the following contacts by no later than 4:30 p.m. on May 29.

- For the Minnesota River Turbidity TMDL, written or oral comments, petitions, question, or requests to receive a draft of the TMDL report and requests for more information should be sent to Larry Gunderson, MPCA, 520 Lafayette Rd. N., Saint Paul, MN 55155-4194. (Phone 651-757-2400 or 800-657-3864, fax 651-297-8676, or email larry.gunderson@state.mn.us.)
- For the South Metro Mississippi Total Suspended Solids TMDL, written or oral comments, petitions, questions or requests to receive a draft TMDL report and requests for more information should be directed to Robert Finley, MPCA, 12 Civic Center Plaza, Ste. 2165, Mankato, MN 56001. (Phone 507-344-5247 or 800-657-3864, fax 507-389-5422, or email robert.finley@state.mn.us.)

For either of these draft TMDLs, TTY users may call the MPCA teletypewriter at 651-282-5332 or 800-657-3864.

MPCA awards \$5.2 million for water-quality projects

Reducing phosphorus in lakes, protecting water resources, and addressing failing septic systems are among the projects funded by \$5.2 million in financial aid recently approved by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). As funded by the Clean Water Partnership (CWP) program, 10 agency partners across Minnesota will receive grants and/or loans to investigate pollutants in lakes and rivers and take action to protect waters from those pollutants.

The following projects will begin this spring and continue for three years:

- "Neighborhood Lakes Management Plans," city of Eagan, \$167,000 grant, Minnesota River Basin;

- “Chippewa River Accelerated Restoration,” Chippewa County, \$900,000 loan, Minnesota River Basin;
- “Heron Lake TMDL Phosphorus Reduction Project,” Heron Lake Watershed District, \$450,000 loan, Des Moines River Basin;
- “Kanabec Water Resources Protection Project,” Kanabec Soil and Water Conservation District, \$201,892 grant, St. Croix River Basin;
- “Lake McCarrons Subwatershed Best Management Practices (BMPs) Project,” Capitol Region Watershed District, \$275,000 grant, Upper Mississippi River Basin;
- “Lower Sauk-Metro Area Water Quality Protection,” Sauk River Watershed District, \$298,000 grant and \$150,000 loan, Upper Mississippi River Basin;
- “Protecting North and South Fork Yellow Bank River,” Lac Qui Parle-Yellow Bank Watershed District, \$260,900 grant and \$370,000 loan, Minnesota River Basin;
- “Snake River Watershed Resource Protection Project,” Snake River Watershed Management Board, \$400,000 loan, St. Croix River Basin;
- “Steele County Septic System Loan Program,” Steele County, \$700,000 loan, Lower Mississippi/Cedar River Basin; and
- “Targeting BMPs in the Crow River Watershed,” Crow River Organization of Water, \$1.1 million loan, Upper Mississippi River Basin.

Created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1987, the Clean Water Partnership program provides financial and technical assistance to diagnose and address threats to water resources. The next funding round will begin this fall.

For more information, visit the MPCA website at www.pca.state.mn.us or contact Peter Fastner, Clean Water Partnership Coordinator, MPCA, 520 Lafayette Rd. N., Saint Paul, MN 55155 (phone 651-757-2349, email peter.fastner@state.mn.us).

Biomass Heating Feasibility Guide Industry Forums

Please join the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute for industry forums focused on the findings, implications and next steps of a *Minnesota Biomass Combustion Heating Feasibility Guide*. The purpose of the guide is to provide information on biomass as a heating option with an overview of the fuels, combustion technologies available, applications, installation projections and economics.

For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/biomassheatingfeasibilityforums.pdf>

MN Air Spectacular Volunteers Needed

Volunteer applications are now being taken for the 2012 MN Air Spectacular. The Air Show will be held June 9 & 10, 2012 at the Mankato, MN Regional Airport. Our featured show will be "The Blue Angels"! For more information about the MN Air Spectacular and all the acts go to www.mnairspectacular.com

Volunteering for the MN Air Spectacular is a fun way to get involved. While you are volunteering you will see, hear and feel the excitement all around you. We are looking for volunteers age 16 and older to volunteer their time to work at the Air Spectacular. Volunteers must be available for a minimum of six hours. A t-shirt & lunch will be provided. \$15 per person per day will be paid to your non-profit organization.

For information on volunteering see the You Tube Video (link below):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tNqRVhD8FI>

Complete the attached Volunteer application or go to www.mnairspectacular.com and click into the volunteer section to get a form. Complete the form in its entirety and mail to: MN Air Spectacular, Verizon Wireless Center, Attn: Volunteer Coordinator, 1 Civic Center Plaza, Mankato, MN 56001 or you can fax your Volunteer Application to 507-345-1627

(fax). A follow-up packet containing specific information and volunteer waivers will be mailed to your Group Leader no later than April 30, 2012.

MPCA completes investigation into distribution of hazardous mercury skin creams

St. Paul, Minn. — Cosmetics containing hazardous levels of mercury that were marketed as skin-lightening preparations to ethnic communities are no longer available at Twin Cities retailers thanks to an investigation by several state and county agencies.

The Minnesota Department of Public Health (MDH) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) worked jointly with staff from Hennepin and Ramsey counties, the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Minnesota Poison Control System, and representatives from Twin Cities ethnic communities to identify products containing mercury and outlets that sold them, remove the products from distribution channels, and educate consumers about why they're unsafe and how to properly dispose of them.

"This was a serious public health and pollution issue which the MPCA and our partner agencies moved to address quickly," MPCA Commissioner Paul Aasen said. "Mercury is toxic. Even in small amounts it's a danger to human health and the environment. The concentration of mercury in some of these products is 165,000 times the federal threshold for hazardous waste."

The drive to identify and remove the hazardous products started in last May, when Ramsey County public health staff, in their preventive health work with ethnic communities, learned that skin creams containing mercury were being sold at retail stores and kiosks in the Twin Cities and obtained samples of some of the products. Because state law prohibits selling cosmetics or toiletries containing more than one part per million (ppm) mercury, the county brought in the MDH and the MPCA.

Through the spring and early summer of 2011, the MPCA and Hennepin County investigated potential distributors of the hazardous products. Stores were inspected and products were screened using a hand-held device that detects mercury vapor. Products found to contain mercury above one ppm were seized. The MDH public health laboratory provided comprehensive chemical analysis of the seized products. Nearly 22 boxes of goods were seized and sampled, and the products found to be banned under state law were destroyed. The FDA also has been able to use the MDH's analytical data to stop importation of several previously unknown mercury-containing cosmetic products.

In May 2011, the MPCA sent out about 1,350 cease-and-desist letters, and received 105 letters or emails in response. Included in these letters was a list of products known to contain mercury, compiled by Ramsey County Public Health and the MPCA.

The MPCA issued an Administrative Order to Panorama Fashion & Beauty in Minneapolis in May 2011, and a Notice of Violation to CoCo Beauty Supply in Brooklyn Park in January 2012. Those actions now have been formally closed, and MPCA staff have confirmed that all mercury-containing products have been removed from the shelves of those sellers.

"Our investigation removed some major sources of these illegal products," Aasen said. "It's possible that someone may still try to sell them, but they need to know that it's illegal to sell these products and that penalties for the continued sale or distribution will be assessed. We urge all consumers not to buy or use these hazardous products, and to let the MPCA or county health departments know if they see them for sale."

Along with the health risks of using mercury-containing skin-care products, the task force's other main concern was that once word got out, consumers who had products at home would simply dispose of them in household trash, increasing the amount of mercury released to the environment. Messages to the public emphasized that consumers should not just avoid buying and using these products, but also ensure that products already purchased are disposed of properly at a household hazardous waste facility.

For more information on why mercury-containing skin products are unsafe, visit the MDH website at www.health.state.mn.us/topics/skin/index.html.

Cover Crop Field Day – Goodhue County

Join University of Minnesota Extension and Rural Advantage for a cover crop field day on April 13, 2012, from 11:00am to 1:00pm near Red Wing, Minnesota.

Cover crops offer multiple benefits to farmers. They can reduce soil erosion, increase water infiltration, increase soil health, act as an emergency forage, and much more. Cover crops are most easily established after canning crops, small grains, or silage, but can also fit into the corn-soybean rotation.

Red Wing area farmer Kevin Ballman partnered with Rural Advantage and University of Minnesota Extension in fall 2011 on a cover crop project looking at different broadcast planting rates of winter rye after soybeans. A later-than-expected establishment date and dry fall conditions appeared to be a recipe for disaster. Instead, warmer than usual March temperatures have provided a recipe for success.

Join the project partners on April 13 from 11:00am to 1:00pm to discuss and view the winter rye cover crop project. The field day will be an informal event; feel free to come and go as your schedule allows. The field day will be held rain or shine. Please dress accordingly.

For directions and more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/covercropfieldday.pdf>

EPA Environmental Education Webinars April 17, 18, and 19

EPA's Office of Environmental Education (OEE) will host three webinars for educators during National Environmental Education Week (April 16-20, 2012). The webinars will be part of a kick-off for a new initiative at EPA, called Environmental Education in Action (EE in Action), that will showcase environmental education programs and resources, including grant projects funded by OEE. See <http://www.epa.gov/education> for more information.

Join us on the following dates to learn about EE resources available to formal and informal educators across the country. All webinars will be recorded for those who cannot join us live. You must pre-register for each webinar using the links provided below.

Webinar #1: Environmental Education for Everyone: EPA's 'K through Grey' Educational Resources

Date: April 17, at 4:00pm EST.

Summary: EPA's Office of Environmental Education (OEE), has a wealth of information on educational resources that educators can use off the shelf in formal school classrooms and informal educational settings, or in development of a larger curriculum. OEE has programs for students of all ages - "K through Grey" - and will walk you through all of these great resources available on the OEE website.

Webinar pre-registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/291032976>

Dial-In Number on 4/17: (877) 290-8017, Conference ID 69115722

Webinar #2: Creating the Link Between Emerging Urban and Existing Environmental Education Programs

Date: April 18, 2012, at 4:00pm EST.

Summary: Many novel and vibrant EE initiatives are emerging in cities across the United States. However, these programs and more established environmental education (EE) efforts are often disconnected from each other. The webinar will examine how recent urban EE approaches and established EE networks are coming together through the Expanding Capacity in Environmental Education (EECapacity) Project. Cornell University's Civic Ecology Laboratory manages the Project with funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Webinar pre-registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/677103408>

Dial-in number on 4/18: (877) 290-8017, Conference ID 691206

Webinar #3: Greening STEM: Environmental Resources and Tools for Inspiring 21st Century Learning

Date: April 19, 2012, at 4:00pm EST.

Summary: Recognizing the environment as a compelling portal for STEM learning, the nonprofit National Environmental Education Foundation is celebrating National Environmental Education Week 2012

(eeeweek.org) by providing resources and tools to help educators utilize the environment to engage their students in STEM. Webinar participants will learn about NEEF's wide range of environmental education resources including free educator toolkits focused on incorporating STEM into popular environmental topics, as well as educator webinars, online standards-based curricula, lesson plans and hands-on lab activities.

Webinar pre-registration: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/309392217>
Dial-In Number on 4/19: (877) 290-8017, Conference ID 69123562

Job Opportunities:

Watershed Coordinator

The Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) has a full-time, temporary opening for a West Fork Des Moines River (WFDNR) Watershed Coordinator in the HLWD office, located in Heron Lake, Minnesota. The main responsibilities for this position will be assisting with a Level III Feedlot Inventory in Nobles, Jackson, Murray, and Cottonwood Counties. The position would also pursue funding for education and implementation efforts for the WFDNR watershed TMDL Implementation Plan in southwest Minnesota.

Specific tasks include conducting a Level III Feedlot Inventory, designing educational materials, organizing and hosting meetings, grant and technical writing, and collaborating with local governments, environmental groups, and the general public. The applicant must have strong technical writing skills, a public speaking background, and the ability to work with little supervision.

Minimum requirements for this position include a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent from a four-year college or technical school in Agriculture, Natural Resources, Soils, or Soil and Water Resource Management or similar field; or a minimum of three years previous experience and/or training; or equivalent combination of education or experience.

Starting salary of \$19.06 per hour is dependent upon qualifications. This is a temporary, full-time position working 40 hours per week, Monday through Friday, from May 2012 through December 2014. Use of personal vehicle required. Mileage will be reimbursed at the federal rate.

A full job description can be obtained from Jan Voit at the HLWD office, PO Box 345, Heron Lake, MN 56137, telephone 507-793-2462 or found on HLWD's website: hlwdonline.org. Interested parties must submit an application form, letter of interest, resume, and references. Applications must be received by 4:30 pm on Thursday, May 3, 2012.

For the full job description, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/heronlakewatershedcoordinator.pdf>

Job application, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/heronlakeapplication.pdf>

Executive Director of the U's Central Regional Partnership

The University of Minnesota is hiring a Director of Central Regional Partnership, one of the five U of M Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships located throughout Greater Minnesota. This is a great position for someone interested in working on community-University Partnerships to advance sustainability in food and agriculture, natural resources and clean energy, and sustainable tourism.

Here's the link to apply on line: <http://employment.umn.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=100211>

Student Worker

The North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program is seeking a U of M student worker to assist with office and communication outreach work related to sustainable agriculture grant projects. Duties include but are not limited to: website updates, entering and gathering information from databases (Access) and spreadsheets (Excel), preparing PowerPoint presentations

Details:

- Assist with entering new information for contacts, reports, and dates in the database, and retrieve information using Microsoft Access, and updating as needed.
- Assist with creating new charts and updating Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.
- Assist with image library project.
- Assist in updating website.
- Assist with developing information products.
- Help set up Adobe Connect conference call meetings.
- Assist with proofreading, writing, media organization, website content management, and other communications activities.
- Other duties as requested

Qualifications: Well organized; familiarity with computers, knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access and email; excellent writing and communication skills, willingness and motivation to complete repetitive tasks.

Preferred Qualifications: Experience using content management systems, especially EZ Publish, Adobe InDesign and Photoshop, and experience developing databases. Starting Date: As soon as possible. Pay Range: \$10.00/hr. Hours: Ten to fifteen hours per week, flexible Monday through Friday between 8:00 and 4:30.

Please submit resume, cover letter and short writing sample of a few paragraphs or something you have written for class. Contact Person/Email/Telephone: Beth Bedell, bbedell@umn.edu, 612-626-3134; NCR-SARE Program; 120 BAE University of Minnesota; 1390 Eckles Ave.; St. Paul, MN 55108; Fax: 612-626-3132

Trail Staff, Internships and Urban Wilderness Boat Captains

Wilderness Inquiry is now accepting applications for Trail Staff, Internships, and Urban Wilderness Boat Captains for summer 2012. We're looking for people with outstanding leadership and decision-making skills, high energy, and a willingness to work hard.

If you know of someone who would be good and interested, could you please send them our way? They can apply for the positions by going to: www.wildernessinquiry.org/jobs

Please distribute the following announcement flyers as you see fit:

Trail Staff Flyer: <http://fmp.wildernessinquiry.org/doclib.php?doc=3028>

Internship Flyer: <http://fmp.wildernessinquiry.org/doclib.php?doc=5343>

Events:

April 12th (Thursday) is the **Second Annual Ice Out/Loon In Fundraising Event** sponsored by the Minnesota Freshwater Society from 5:30 to 8:30 at the Lafayette Club in Minnetonka Beach. The event will include Exciting silent auction items Including...Twins Suite behind home plate for 14 guests with food and drink; kayaking around Split Rock Lighthouse; silver loon pendant on a silver chain; a sightseeing cruise on Lake Minnetonka; a week at a resort near Steamboat Springs and much more! Emcee is Paul Huttner, MPR Meteorologist and there will also be a raffle, hilarious loon calling contest, great music, food and beverages. For more information click [here](http://www.freshwater.org), or contact Diane Lynch at 952-314-8134 or dlynch@freshwater.org

April 24th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance Quarterly Meeting** in Room 141 Ridgewater College, Hutchinson MN starting at 6:00 p.m. with a social hour and food. The formal meeting starts at 7 p.m. and we will wrap up the discussion by 9 o'clock. We will be focusing on planning a Mayor's Fishing Opener.

April 28th (Saturday) is the **Ney Nature Center Spring Fling – Benefit Dinner & Silent Auction** starting at 5:30 at the Montgomery American Legion Post 79 (102 Elm Avenue SW0 in Montgomery. Featured guest speaker is Don Shelby, an environmental journalist, nature lover, one of the most decorated and honored local television journalists in the country, and recently WCCO-TV News Anchor. For more information call or email Becky at the Ney Nature Center – 507-248-3474 or info@neycenter.org

May 21st (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Place and location to be announced. For information: 507-389-5491 or karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu

July 16th (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the St. Peter Community Center, Room 219 (600 South 5th Street). For information: 507-389-5491 or karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu

September 17th (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Health & Human Services Building Multipurpose Room (2200 23rd Street NE) in Willmar. For information: 507-389-5491 or karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu

November 19th (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Place and location to be announced. For information: 507-389-5491 or karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu

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

Environmental/Conservation Articles:

[Hope for Spring Crops: Grain, Oil, Currency](#) (Minnesota 2020). Minnesota farmers are back in their fields preparing land and planting new crops, spurred on by extremely warm and dry winter weather leaving April fields inviting for heavy farm tractors and equipment.

[New food rules felt on the farms](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Concern about human resistance has led to a push to limit antibiotic use in livestock. New FDA guidelines have the attention of Minnesota farmers.

[Minneapolis League of Women Voters hosts forum on growing local food economy](#) (TC Daily Planet). For Minneapolis and Hennepin County residents interested in improving access to locally grown fresh foods, growing the local economy, creating more urban friendly farming policies, and enhancing environmental sustainability, the Minneapolis League of Women Voters hosted an informational forum on Thursday March 22.

[Toxic Waters](#) (Minnesota 2020). Last week, a report by [Environment Minnesota](#) (and co-authored by the Frontier Group) was released summarizing some findings from the EPA's Toxic Release Inventory (TRI). The report (available [online](#)), titled *Wasting our Waterways 2012: Toxic Industrial Pollution and the Unfulfilled Promise of the Clean Water Act*, gives an overview of the 226 million pounds of toxic chemicals that were dumped into over 1,400 different waterways throughout the US in 2010.

[From farm to distributor to table: The forgotten middleman in Twin Cities' local food market](#) (TC Daily Planet). You may have tried Brian and Leslie Axdahl's Stillwater-grown vegetables. If you bought sweet corn or green beans at Byerly's or tried Crave restaurant's creamed corn or ordered the sesame quinoa and green bean salad at Birchwood Café, there's a good chance the Axdahls had a hand in growing your dinner.

[At U of M-Morris, alternative energy on par with low-priced fossil fuels](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Officials at the University of Minnesota Morris were thrilled to find out this week that even with natural gas prices at 10-year lows, heating the campus with biomass was a competitive alternative to burning fossil fuels.

[Zebra mussels vanish from stretch of St. Croix River](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A St. Croix River menace that's waged war on the healthiest native mussel population in Minnesota has retreated, bringing hope of a turning point in what had seemed a relentless invasion.

[House passes \\$105 million Legacy funding bill](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The Minnesota House on Wednesday, April 4, passed a \$105 million bill that pays for an array of outdoors preservation and restoration projects with Legacy Amendment dollars.

[Anderson: In House, clueless lead clueless on outdoors issues](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Lawmakers follow a wearily familiar script of professing to stand up for our resources while trying to ruin them.

[MPCA: Skin products with mercury removed from store shelves](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Ramsey County health workers were the first to hear about skin lightening products being sold in Minnesota after speaking with members of the Twin Cities Somali community.

[Editorial: Pink slime controversy will hurt farmers](#) (Albert Lea Tribune). Consumers are always right, even when scientific evidence says they are wrong.

[Editorial: Food isn't any safer without 'pink slime'](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Debate was rushed, reflecting a lack of trust in beef industry.

[Letter: Home sweet home - planet Earth](#) (TC Daily Planet). The first Earth Day on April 22, 1970 was initiated by Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin. A catalyst was the publication in 1962 of Silent Spring, the best-seller by Rachel Carson, alerting many people for the first time to critical environmental problems.

[Move up fishing opener? Not all resorters are game](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Moving Minnesota's fishing opener up a week might sound like a great idea for walleye-hungry anglers, but not everyone is thrilled.

But the prairie world is now crisscrossed by a labyrinth of tiles and drainage ditches. Its ponds don't hold water anymore. With the disappearing ponds have vanished many of the waterfowl, many of the insects, many of the predators. The great herbivores have long since disappeared. It is by now a pale ghost of the world that once existed in this place. – Paul Gruchow, Journal of a Prairie Year

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 Basin.

Thanks,

Scott

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