

Minn. River basin watersheds get closer look

By Tim Krohn, The Free Press

MANKATO — The latest list of rivers and lakes failing to meet pollution standards — including in the Le Sueur watershed — are up for public scrutiny.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency analyzes data from selected major watersheds across the state and every two years releases the list of waterways that don't meet state and federal standards. Sixteen watersheds are the focus of this year's list, with three — the Le Sueur, Chippewa and Pomme de Terre — in the Minnesota River basin.

Lee Ganske, watershed unit supervisor for the MPCA's southwest region, said the information leads to projects that improve water quality.

"These are big, long-term solutions. In many ways the rivers are holding their own. There are great angling opportunities on the Le Sueur, Blue Earth and Minnesota (rivers) and lots of recreation," he said.

For the entire article: [Minn. River basin watersheds get closer look](#)

As sediment flows downriver, resentment builds upriver

By Dennis Lien, St. Paul Pioneer Press

Dec. 18--Already hamstrung by tight budgets, communities across much of Minnesota are bracing for what could be an \$843 million bill -- this one aimed at reducing the amount of sediment reaching Lake Pepin on the Minnesota-Wisconsin border.

And many resent having to pay so much for what amounts to a relatively small bump in water quality. Especially while agriculture, a much larger source of sediment, is let off the hook.

"This kind of thing is just beyond the pale for what is acceptable and what we feel is how we should be spending our taxpayers' money," said Klayton Eckles, Woodbury's city engineer.

The developing urban-rural tiff will get new legs soon when the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency releases a study explaining the sediment problem, establishing goals and outlining ways to reduce the amount of silt getting into Lake Pepin, the widening of the Mississippi River southeast of the Twin Cities.

For the entire article, <http://www.publicworksmagazine.com/industry-news.asp?sectionID=760&articleID=1782800>

Outcrop Mining Public Hearing January 5th in Clinton

By Duane Ninneman, CURE Consultant

CURE members work to restore, protect, and celebrate the Upper Minnesota River Watershed. That work often starts with shining a light on new threats as they emerge.

Near Ortonville, in Big Stone County, just as the Minnesota River begins its 335 mile journey to the Mississippi, a proposed industrial aggregate quarry will destroy much of western Minnesota's most panoramic and unique landscapes forever. The target zone is the eco-rich granite outcrop just south of Big Stone Lake, just north of the [Big Stone National Wildlife Refuge](#), and lying between US Highway 75 and the Minnesota River.

Amid the outcrops, cacti, and cedars, [Strata Corporation](#) of Grand Forks, North Dakota proposes to begin mining more than 100 rare acres. The granite will be blasted and crushed for industrial export and in the end, Big Stone County will be left with deep open pits where this rarified beauty now hugs the river.

On Thursday, January 5, at 7:30 PM, Big Stone County's Planning Commission will meet to hear from local residents and other stakeholders in consideration of granting a conditional use permit to Strata Corp. The hearing location is the Clinton Memorial Building in downtown [Clinton, Minnesota](#).

Local concerns surrounding this development range from blasting noise, silica dust, and decreased property values to the destruction of the scenic outcrops, loss of wildlife and rare plant species, and the quarry's close proximity to the city itself. Representatives of Strata Corp. will be on hand to talk about the project and answer questions. After also hearing from the public, The Big Stone County Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the Big Stone County Commission for final authorization.

If you are interested in learning more about this situation, call CURE toll free at 1-877-269-2873 or reply to rivervoic@qwestoffice.net

Lake Pepin problem goes deeper than sediment

By Edward Lotterman, St. Paul Pioneer Press

Lake Pepin is filling with sediment, slowly but steadily. That hurts Minnesotans and Wisconsinites in particular. Yet, the only policy measures currently available to reduce this are unfair and economically wasteful. This need not be.

Twenty years ago, the nation had an opportunity to move to more market-friendly methods of dealing with environmental problems.

Economists finally had convinced many Democrats of the advantages of approaches such as emissions taxes and tradable permit systems that had long been advocated by environmentally knowledgeable Republicans. There was a core of bipartisan support in both houses of Congress for sensible reforms to environmental policy, just as there was for health care and other problem areas.

But a golden window of opportunity closed, never to open again, in 1990 when President George H.W. Bush's chief of staff, Richard Darman, told Congress the administration had nothing else it wanted to accomplish in the remaining two years of its term. It had no policy reform initiatives at all: none, nada, zip.

Why does this matter? Lake Pepin, on the Mississippi River downstream from St. Paul, is a valuable resource not only for its scenic beauty and recreation opportunities but also as a vital part of the river's ecosystem. But it is rapidly accumulating sediment that, if unchecked, eventually will turn it into shallow marshes and mudflats.

For the entire article: [Lake Pepin problem goes deeper than sediment](#)

Putting Farmland On A Fertilizer Diet

by Dan Charles, National Public Radio

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently released a [document](#) that got no attention on the nightly news, or almost anywhere, really. Its title, I'm sure you'll agree, is a snooze: National Nutrient Management Standard.

Yet this document represents the agency's best attempt to solve one of the country's — and the world's — really huge environmental problems: The [nitrogen](#) and phosphorus that pollute waterways.

There's a simple reason why this problem is so big, and so hard to solve. Farmers have to feed their fields, before those fields can feed us. Without fertilizer, harvests would dwindle. But lakes, estuaries, and coastal waters lie downstream from highly fertilized farmland, and now they are choking to death on too much nutrition.

Those nutrients typically come from commercial fertilizer, but they don't have to. Organic growers need to feed their fields, too. Farmers can also use animal manure (which is really recycled fertilizer from the fields that fed those animals) and legumes — crops like alfalfa or chickpeas, which add nitrogen to the soil.

The problem is, those nutrients don't stay where they're needed. They migrate into groundwater, streams, or the air, and everywhere, they cause [problems](#). They feed the growth of microbes and algae, turning clear water cloudy and depriving fish and other creatures of essential oxygen. (There are other important sources of nutrient pollution as well, including urban sewage and the burning of fossil fuels, but fertilizer is the biggest.)

In the United States, the best-known casualties of nutrient pollution include the Chesapeake Bay and a portion of the Gulf of Mexico called the "dead zone." But similar problems exist in many [other places](#) as well, including lakes and coastal areas of China and Europe.

For the entire article, <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/features/npr.php?id=143659204>

DNR urges caution with fires; burning permits now required

Winter is usually a time of low fire danger in Minnesota, but this winter is different, with snow drought in most of the state. Fuels such as grasses and brush, which are usually covered with snow, are freeze-dried and available to burn this winter. Because of these conditions, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is asking people to be careful with fire, to check previous fires for possible rekindling, and make sure they get a burning permit before burning vegetation.

On Monday, Dec. 26, 750 acres burned near the northwestern Minnesota city of Gully, in Polk County. The fire burned rapidly through wooded areas due to dry fuels and high winds. That fire is now contained, and firefighters are mopping up heavy fuels today. Fighting fires in the winter is difficult, however. Due to cold weather and low wind chill temperatures, firefighter frostbite and freezing pumps are concerns.

Burning restrictions will change as weather conditions and snow cover change. Burning permits are required whenever there is less than three inches of continuous snow surrounding a planned burn area. Right now, with the exception of Cook County in northeastern Minnesota, burning permits are needed for debris and vegetation burning. Permitted burning hours vary by geographical area. Campfires are allowed without burning permits.

For information about burning permits, contact a local DNR Forestry office or check the DNR website at www.mndnr.gov and search for burning permits.

With little or no snow cover, Jack Frost may be nipping at your septic system

It's beginning to look a lot like potential problems for rural septic systems this holiday season. "It may not be such a happy new year for some households if we don't get snow cover before temperatures really start to drop," Dan Olson, public information officer with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), said. "Snow helps to insulate septic systems and keep them from freezing. Fortunately, temperatures across the state have remained relatively mild so far, but that could change any time."

The University of Minnesota Onsite Sewage Treatment Program provides tips for homeowners on how to prevent septic system freeze-ups and how to deal with them should they occur:

- Place a layer of mulch eight to 12 inches thick over the pipes, tank and soil treatment system to provide extra insulation. This can be straw, leaves, hay or other loose material that will stay in place and not become compacted. This is particularly important for new systems that were installed so late in the year that vegetative cover could not be established. However, if the system is currently frozen, don't add mulch now; it will delay thawing in the spring.
- Let the grass or native vegetation growing over the tank and soil treatment area get a little taller in the late summer and fall to provide insulation and help hold snow.
- Use water — the warmer the better — if you're worried that your system is starting to freeze. Spread out your laundry schedule so you run one warm/hot load a day. Use the dishwasher and

take hot baths. However, DO NOT leave water running all the time, as this will hydraulically overload the septic system.

- Going away for an extended period? Plan accordingly. Have someone use warm water in your home regularly while you are gone or have your septic tank pumped out before you leave. If a shallow tank is left full for several winter months, the sewage will become very cold and can freeze.
- Fix any leaky plumbing fixtures or appliances in your home. This will help prevent freezing problems and help your system perform better all year long.
- If you have appliances that generate very low flows, such as high-efficiency furnaces, you can put heat tape in the pipe, and have someone come by and run warm water for a while you are on vacation. Alternatively, install a small condensate pump that holds and discharges two gallons per cycle.
- Keep all vehicle, animal and human traffic off the system. This is a good rule to follow all year long as compacted snow and soils cause frost to go down deeper and faster. Pay special attention to the area between the house and the septic tank.
- Make sure all risers; inspection pipes and manholes have covers. Sealing them and adding insulation is a good idea. Insulation may be added during construction particularly if the top of the septic tank is within two feet of the surface.
- Keep an eye on your system. If any seeping or ponding occurs, contact a septic systems professional to help determine the cause and remedy.
- Add more insulation to your system. This could include replacing pipe with insulated pipe, installing expanded foam panels over the septic tank, or adding more soil cover.

A common cause of freeze-ups are pipes that are not installed with the proper slant or that have settled, resulting in dips in the line. Where a dip or flat spot occurs, sewage can collect and freeze. Pump lines can develop a dip right next to or above the septic tank as a result of soil backfilled during tank installation settling.

If your septic system freezes, call a septic system professional. The MPCA website includes a search tool for finding certified professionals in your area. Search the Internet for "[MPCA SSTS licensed business search](#)." The pros have steamers and high-pressure jetters for thawing pipes.

Other methods used to fix a freezing problem include adding heat tape and tank heaters. Cameras can be sent down pipes to determine where freezing is occurring. If the soil treatment system is full of ice, or there is evidence of leaking, skip trying to thaw the lines leading to the treatment area as it cannot accept liquid until the area thaws in spring.

If it's not feasible to correct a problem, the only option is using the septic tank as a holding tank until the system thaws naturally. Have a pumper empty the tank when it starts to fill up. In this situation, reduce water use by limiting the number of toilet flushes, taking short showers, and using the dishwasher at full capacity.

There are some things you should NEVER do to try to fix a frozen system:

- DO NOT introduce antifreeze, salt or a septic system additive into the system.
- DO NOT pump sewage onto the ground surface.
- DO NOT start a fire over the system to attempt to thaw it out.
- DO NOT run water continually to try to thaw the system. This can overload the system.

For information on keeping your system healthy all year, visit the University of Minnesota [Onsite Sewage Treatment Program website](#).

MPCA recommends low-salt diet for Minnesota waters

St. Paul, Minn. – For years doctors have told people to stick to a low-salt diet. According to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), our waters should follow the same advice.

When snow and ice start to accumulate on Minnesota roads, parking lots, and sidewalks, one of the more common reactions is to apply salt, which contains chloride, a water pollutant. When snow and ice melt, most of the salt goes with it, washing into our lakes, streams and rivers. Once in the water, there's no way to remove the chloride, and it becomes a pollutant.

According to Brooke Asleson, MPCA project manager for the Twin Cities Metro Area chloride project, "Salt is a real threat to water quality. It only takes one teaspoon of road salt to permanently pollute five gallons of water. We are trying to spread the word that less is more when it comes to applying road salt because at high concentrations, chloride can harm the fish and plant life in our waters."

There are many ways to reduce salt use while maintaining high safety standards.

- Shovel. The more snow and ice you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it can be. Break up ice with an ice scraper and decide if application of a de-icer or sand is even necessary to maintain traction.
- More salt does not mean more melting. Use less than four pounds of salt per 1,000 square feet (an average parking space is about 150 square feet). One pound of salt is approximately a heaping 12-ounce coffee mug.
- 15 degrees is too cold for salt to work. Most salts stop working around this temperature. Instead, use sand for traction.
- Sweep up extra salt. If salt or sand is visible on dry pavement, it is no longer doing any work and will be washed away.

To learn more about what you can do to reduce chloride in our waters, or to read more about MPCA's role on this issue, visit the agency's [Twin Cities Metro Area Chloride Project](#) webpage.

Job Announcements:

General Manager

Bluff Country Co-op is hiring a permanent General Manager. Bluff Country Co-op's store is 3,500 square feet staffed by 26 employees who help to generate about \$2,000,000 in annual sales. We use a "policy governance" system of leadership. General Manager duties and relationship with the governing board are detailed in our policy governance document - <http://bluff.coop/home/gm-search/> - The General Manager will lead the co-op so that it achieves the vision determined by our Board of Directors.

Duties of the General Manager:

- Deal with staff and volunteers in a humane, fair and forthright manner.
- Maintain financial conditions that do not incur fiscal jeopardy or compromise Board goals and priorities.
- Provide information to the Board that is timely, complete and accurate (via monthly monitoring reports).
- Protect and maintain assets.
- Develop and operate with a financial plan that includes adequate detail and disclosed assumptions.
- Maintain compensation and benefits which reflect the integrity of all work done at the Co-op, taking into account market conditions, regional comparisons and internal needs.
- Purchase goods and services for the Co-op based on a good value per dollar spent, without giving the appearance of or incurring real conflict of interest.
- Provide exceptional value and service to our members and customers.

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

Production Coordinator

Big River Farms is looking to hire a Production Coordinator for the 2012 season. The Big River Farms Program of the Minnesota Food Association (MFA) operates an immigrant and minority farmer training program together with a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and wholesale distribution service. The

Production Coordinator has primary responsibilities to help oversee the coordination, production, and distribution of organic certified vegetable produce for Big River Farms. This includes production for the CSA and wholesale markets and the coordination and operations of the greenhouse and hoopouses.

The position would run from March 1 – November 15th, 2012. This is a full-time position, 40 hours per week. The expected pay range is \$10 - \$12/hr. depending upon experience. Successful applicants would have at least 2 full seasons on an Organic vegetable operation involving all aspects of Organic vegetable production, plus a strong work ethic and recognition of the physical and time demanding aspects of farm work. Preferred qualifications include: experience in supervising workers, proven abilities in greenhouse production, and experience and proven interest in working with people from diverse backgrounds. Rustic on-farm housing is available. MFA is an equal opportunity employer.

If you are interested please click for a [full job description](#) or visit our website www.mnfoodassociation.org for more information about our farm and programs. Deadline for applications will be January 15th.

Bird Survey Technicians

The Minnesota Breeding Bird Atlas is hiring 5 – 7 individuals to conduct bird surveys in assigned areas in Greater Minnesota. Surveyors will record evidence of breeding birds using standard Atlas procedures. This includes identification of species by sight and sound, assessing behaviors for evidence of breeding, and recording the appropriate evidence code for each observation reported. Preparation prior to surveys includes reviewing current species data and route planning to maximize time efficiently. Accurate online data entry within 2 weeks of the survey date is required. Applicants must have experience identifying birds that regularly breed in Minnesota, have a valid driver's license, and be willing to spend extended time in remote areas.

- Survey duration: 7-8 weeks between 5/15/12 – 7/15/12
- Pay: \$13.25/hr for a 40 hr. week plus expense reimbursement

This position is for temporary, full-time employment with the National Audubon Society, Bird Survey Technician, position 2011-1234. Please apply online at: <https://careers-audubon.icims.com/jobs/1234/job>

Watershed Grants Coordinator (High Island Creek and Rush River watersheds)

Sibley County is hiring a fulltime Watershed Grants Coordinator to manage restoration and protection projects in the High Island Creek and Rush River watersheds of the Lower Minnesota River Watershed. The position is funded primarily through state and federal grants including but not limited to Clean Water Partnership (CWP), Section 319, Clean Water Fund (CWF) and through the development of total maximum daily load (TMDL) reports, TMDL implementation plans, restoration activities, environmental monitoring and watershed planning. Deadline for the position is January 6, 2012 or open until successfully filled.

For more information,

<http://www.mncounties.org/Employment/Web%20site%20watershed%20coord%202012.2011.pdf>

River Protection Steward

The St. Croix River Association (SCRA) is hiring a fulltime River Protection Steward to focus on the SCRA core function: Improving water quality, recognizing its interconnection with land use. The SCRA River Protection Steward will work in the entire St. Croix River Watershed. The St. Croix River watershed comprises 7,760 square miles, and encompasses 10 counties in Minnesota and 9 in Wisconsin, with the river itself forming the border between the two states for much of its length. This position will office in St. Croix Falls, WI. Extensive travel within the watershed is expected, and may include work in the field. The person hired for this position will work with a wide diversity of partners to: Develop a new basin wide framework to ensure that state agencies, local government programs and others focus on geographic areas and specific on-the-ground actions that will do the most for St. Croix water quality; and Shape forest conservation and management in the northern basin to achieve improved water quality benefits.

For more information, <http://stcroixriverassociation.org/news/river-protection-steward-job-opportunity/>

Summer 2012 Naturalist Corps

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is hiring Naturalists (interns) for the summer at a wide range of state parks across Minnesota including Fort Snelling and Sibley state parks. These interns will assist the Parks and Trails naturalists to provide interpretation for visitors on the park's or trail's natural and cultural features. Naturalist Corps members work directly with the public, presenting programs and sharing information one on one with park visitors. Conducted programs include hikes, Power Point programs, campfire programs, auto, bike or canoe caravans, demonstrations, and information duty. Additional experience may be gained in display development, resource management, park and trails operations, and/or enforcement. Formal and on-the-job training and uniforms are provided.

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

Grant Opportunities:

Nutrient Efficiency Grant

The Minnesota Crop Production Retailers (MCPR), Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center (MAWRC), and Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) are partnering to offer grants to ag-professionals for the purpose of evaluating and/or demonstrating nutrient management practices that enhance nutrient efficiency and have a positive impact on water quality.

The total amount available for the 2012 growing season is \$25,000. Applications in the range of \$5,000 to \$7,000 are appropriate.

Grant Application can be found at: <http://www.mawrc.org>. Applications are due on January 10, 2012. Send application materials to: Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center; Attn: Warren Formo; 3080 Eagan, MN 55121-2118; Email: warren@mawrc.org.

For questions and additional information contact Brian.C.Williams@state.mn.us or 507-665-6806

Ag professionals, Minnesota farmers, Minnesota educational institutions and non-profit organizations are eligible for funding. Funding is intended for the establishment of on-farm nutrient management evaluation/demonstrations, compensate professionals for time commitments, additional resources, and educational outreach. The applicants must be residents of Minnesota with projects conducted in fields of cooperating farmers.

Evaluation/Demonstration Ideas:

- Nutrient application timing and placement
- New technologies to enhance efficient use of plant nutrients
- Use of cover crops to increase nutrient efficiency and reduce erosion
- Engineering modifications to reduce nutrient loss

Initial funding for this grant has been made possible through West Central, Inc., Koch Nitrogen Co., CF Industries, Inc., ADM-Benson Quinn and Northern Ag Suppliers.

Events:

January 5th (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: Okie Noodling** at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. For centuries, a unique breed of fishermen has been catching monster catfish with their bare hands in the rivers and lakes of Oklahoma. Today, the tradition of "noodling" still has Okie anglers hooked. Admission is free. Sponsored by St. Peter Public Schools, Nicollet County Historical Society, River Rock Coffee and St. Peter Food Co-op. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/documentaryfilmseries.pdf>. Please contact 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org for details.

January 5th (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary; Green Fire** at the New Ulm Library (17 North Broadway Street) at 7:00 p.m. *Green Fire* is the first full-length, high definition documentary film ever made about legendary conservationist Aldo Leopold. The film explores Aldo Leopold's life in the early part of the twentieth century and the many ways his land ethic idea continues to be applied all over the world today. Admission is free. Sponsored by the Many Rivers Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiast, Center for Rural Ministry and Earth Spirituality, and the Water Resources Center at Minnesota State University Mankato. For more information contact Kris Wiley, Assistant Director New Ulm Public Library, 507-359-8334 or kwiley@tds.lib.mn.us

January 17th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance Quarterly Meeting** from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Ridgewater College (2 Century Avenue SE) in Hutchinson. Sponsored by the Friends of the Minnesota Valley, the meeting begins at 6 p.m. with a social hour to give participants time to interact with each other along with sharing stories and concerns about what is happening in their part of the Minnesota River Basin. At 7 p.m., the formal part of the meeting starts, with the group striving to wrap up all discussion by 9 o'clock. For more information, <http://watershedalliance.blogspot.com/>

January 19th (Thursday) is the **Agricultural Wetland Mitigation Banking meeting** from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Best Western Plus (1111 Range Street) in North Mankato. This meeting is to provide the background needed for an individual or group to make lands available for agricultural wetland mitigation banks. The meeting is step one in a process, and continued assistance will be available to fulfill the desire of having quality wetlands to mitigate the loss of farmed wetlands throughout Minnesota. Audience: Individuals, organizations, those interested in forming an organization for the purpose of identifying potential wetland mitigation sites, acquiring the land rights needed to offer the property for mitigation, and conducting wetland restoration needed to provide high value wetlands that are available for agricultural mitigation. To register, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mitigation.pdf>

January 23rd (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Redwood Area Community Center, Room 2 (901 Cook Street). For information: 507-389-5491 or karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu

February 2nd (Thursday) is a **Showing of the documentary: River Revival – Working Together to Save the Minnesota River** at 7:00 p.m. at the New Ulm Public Library (17 North Broadway Street). "River Revival" tells the story of the Minnesota River Basin from its geological origins to the present day. Through the seasons and throughout the basin, the documentary examines the river's many pollution problems and highlights the efforts of people from all walks of life – academics, farmers, natural resource professionals, anglers, homeowners, students, paddlers, politicians and citizen activists – to restore the river. John Hickman, Executive Producer of River Revival will be on hand to share his insights of making the documentary and answer questions. For more information contact Kris Wiley at 507-359-8334 or kwiley@tds.lib.mn.us

February 11th (Saturday) is the **Clean Up the River Environment (CURE) Annual Meeting** at the Hollywood Theater (Main Street) in Montevideo from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. (meal served at 6:30 p.m.). Speakers include Scott Sparlin, founder of the clean up the Minnesota River movement; Dennis Frederickson, DNR Region 4 Commissioner; and Jon Olson, Board of the directors of the Mississippi Market Food Co-Op in St. Paul. Malena Handeen will be joined by artists and musicians from throughout the state to put on a special show. Cost of the meeting is \$25 per person if you register by February 7th (includes local foods banquet, door prizes and entertainment). Cost of registration after February 7th will be \$30. To reserve a spot, mail in your reservations (117 South 1st Street; Montevideo, MN 56265), call Dixie Tilden at 1-877-269-2873 or email cure@cureriver.org. For more information, http://www.curemriver.org/events.html#annual_meeting

March 19th (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Knights of Columbus Hall (920 East 10th Street) in Fairmont. For information: 507-389-5491 or karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu

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:

[Going wild for conservation](#) (Woodbury Bulletin). Mike and Trudy Berggren were named the 2011 Outstanding Conservationists by the Washington County Conservation District.

[EPA clamps down on power plant pollutants](#) (Associated Press). In Minnesota, Xcel Energy is already moving to cut down on mercury emissions.

[Minnesota regulators OK Big Stone retrofit](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Coal-burning plant just across South Dakota border would get new pollution controls.

[Eyes on the birdies](#) (Marshall Independent). Local bird counts are held across the United States every December to help gather information on "the ebb and flow" of winter bird populations.

[Researchers: Zebra mussels spreading fast on Lake Minnetonka](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Lake property owners' worst fear is coming true: The zebra mussel population in Lake Minnetonka is spreading rapidly, according to researchers studying the distribution and density of the invasive species.

[Drieslein: Thoughts on LCCMR director's firing... What the hell is going on?!](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). The Legislative-Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources doles out the funds that enter the Environmental Trust Fund from the lottery, and to my knowledge, its staff always has passed the nonpartisan litmus test with flying colors.

[GOP caucus fires state environment panel director](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Authority of GOP caucus over LCCMR is in dispute.

[Questions raised about firing of director of Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). Head of a Minnesota state office that helps direct how lottery proceeds are spent for special environmental and natural resources projects was fired.

[Coordinator: New system to make recycling easier](#) (Fairmont Sentinel). When it was announced that a new one-sort recycling effort was beginning in January, there was some excitement and confusion.

I have never seen a river that I could not love. Moving water . . . has a fascinating vitality. It has power and grace and associations. It has a thousand colors and a thousand shapes, yet it follows laws so definite that the tiniest streamlet is an exact replica of a great river. – Roderick Haig-Brown

[Please register at the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's bulletin board at http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa](http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa) to receive regular updates on what is happening in the Minnesota River Watershed.

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>

Thanks,

[Scott](#)

[Scott Kudelka](#)
[Watershed Assessment Specialist](#)
[Water Resources Center](#)
[184 Trafton Science Center S](#)
[Mankato, MN 56001](#)
[507-389-2304](#)