

Watershed wide, Citizen-Led, Water Quality Conversation Scheduled for Dec. 6th in Mankato

The public is invited to attend a watershed wide, citizen-led conversation on water quality issues facing the Minnesota, the Blue Earth and Mississippi River south of the Twin Cities to be held on Tuesday December 6 at the Mankato City Center Hotel from 5 to 8 p.m. The event is free, but advanced registration is required.

The conversation is being sponsored by a wide range of grassroots citizen groups, farm groups, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and InCommons. The dialogue comes on the eve of public comment periods for proposed water quality goals for the three rivers. The purpose of the meeting is to explore how citizens, businesses and government can share leadership by collaborating to restore water quality in the Minnesota, Blue Earth and Mississippi Rivers.

The meeting will feature a meal and round table discussions facilitated by InCommons - a community-based initiative that connects Minnesotans to share tools, knowledge and resources to address complicated problems. This past summer, InCommons helped sponsor a series of meetings around the state about the state government shutdown and revenue shortfall.

For this meeting, InCommons was asked by event organizers to connect with “*Art of Hosting*” trained facilitators to help facilitate “courageous conversations” about proposed water quality goals among farmers and environmentalists, upstreamers and downstreamers, business owners and government agency employees, urban and rural citizens.

“We hope to create a judgment free space where we can experience what it is like to really listen to each other with everybody taking on a piece of the work, based on what the proposed water quality goals are,” said one of the event organizers.

The public is invited to attend. To register for the meal and dialogue call [1-877-269-2873](tel:1-877-269-2873) by November 30, 2011. Seating is available for 80 people on a first come, first served basis. Organizers are expecting a full house, so don't delay.

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

Minnesota River's revival gaining steam

By David Peterson and Katie Humphrey, Minneapolis Star Tribune

After decades of neglect and abuse, cities and counties along the volatile banks of the Minnesota River are plotting billions of dollars in riverside developments and spending millions to buy and refurbish land, bridges, trails and parks.

Some believe the movement will finally unlock the river's potential as a recreational hub and a magnet for development.

"For 60 years we've viewed it as more of a nuisance than a resource," said Tim Lies, the mayor of Belle Plaine. "Even in a riverfront city like mine, people don't understand it, or are afraid of it, or are living under old ideas about how dirty and unmanageable it is."

But decades into an agonizingly slow and monumentally expensive cleanup, a vision is forming of a third major amenity alongside the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers.

"Eventually, the way things are going, you will have 80 miles of riverfront from Fort Snelling to Le Sueur almost totally in public hands," said Mark Themig, Scott County's chief of parks and trails, "That's a huge, incredible resource -- far surpassing in some senses even the St. Croix."

The entire article can be found at: <http://www.startribune.com/local/south/133750813.html>

Contamination plume from Kandiyohi County, MN, landfill pinpointed

By Carolyn Lange, West Central Tribune

WILLMAR — The cost for resolving groundwater contamination near the Kandiyohi County landfill may not be as great as initially expected. The Kandiyohi County Board of Commissioners learned today that barrels of paint buried in the Kandiyohi County landfill about 40 years ago are no longer generating tetrachloroethene. That means the sludge will not have to be dug up, saving the county about \$4 million. A report also indicates that a plume of vinyl chloride, a byproduct of tetrachloroethene that's been moving through the groundwater from the landfill, is headed for Shakopee Creek. Consultants say that's good news because oxygen from the river will degrade the contaminant. The county has spent about \$500,000 in the last two years to find the source and spread of the plume. More testing will be done this winter and next summer.

Burning renews prairie

Ed Lee, St. Peter Herald



Scott Seigfreid, a volunteer with Prairie Enthusiasts, helps burn the Treaty Site Prairie last week. "Prairies evolved with fire over thousands of years to remove dead plants, provide nutrients to the soil, and promote new growth," said Nicollet County Historical Society Director Ben Leonard. "Dakota people, and other American Indian nations used fire to manage the landscape for generations. Today trained professionals like the volunteers from Prairie Enthusiasts are helping to make Traverse des Sioux a healthier more sustainable prairie with fewer invasive species." Photo by Scott Kudelka of the Water Resources Center at MSUM

<http://stpeterherald.com/content/burning-renews-prairie>

Scaling Up Local Foods Workshop to be Held November 30th

Are you a gardener, produce grower or fruit producer and ever wondered what it would take to really expand your production and sales? Perhaps you sell to the local farmers market or a couple of bushels of canning tomatoes to some neighbors. Initial questions might be; how would I get started? How can I grow the healthiest food possible for my customers? What sorts of food safety issues would I need to be aware of? These and many more questions and other issues will be addressed at an upcoming Scaling up Local Foods Workshop Wednesday, November 30th at the Knights of Columbus Hall located at 920 E. 10th St., Fairmont, MN from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

Rural Advantage is hosting this workshop for growers of all sizes to provide information needed to grow your operation and capitalize on the emerging trends in local food sales. Topics include the larger local foods movement, food quality & soil health, the basics of scaling up food production, food safety/GAPs plans, and preserving quality in harvested produce.

This is a free workshop but RSVP is required for lunch. For additional information or to RSVP contact the Rural Advantage office at 507-238-5449, or email kim@ruraladvantage.org

Rural Advantage is a nonprofit corporation based in Fairmont, Minnesota. Their mission is to promote the connections between agriculture, the environment and rural communities in order to improve ecological

health, economic viability and rural vitality. Their work centers around efforts to reduce agricultural nonpoint source pollution with major programming focused on the 3rd Crop Initiative, ECoPayPack development, Martin County Farm2Cafeteria Network and building the Madelia Model concept. Contact them at 507.238.5449 or visit their website at www.ruraladvantage.org for more information.

MPCA begins accepting applications for \$350,000 in clean diesel grant funding

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) continues to utilize funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to clean up diesel engines and help improve Minnesota's air quality. Nearly half of all air pollution in the state is created by transportation, and older diesel engines are a strategic target of both the MPCA and the EPA.

In recent years the MPCA has used state and federal funding to help reduce emissions on about 2,500 heavy-duty diesel engines in the state, beginning first with school buses and then public snowplows and dump trucks.

Beginning Nov. 14, the MPCA will be seeking applicants to use its federal Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) grant funding to improve a wider range of fleets. Applications must be received by Dec. 22, 2011, and projects must be completed by Aug. 31, 2012.

The MPCA's new target will be public and private on-road and off-road diesel fleets older than 2007 that operate in Minnesota, with preference given to those operating in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area. Focus remains on the Twin Cities because air quality there is close to exceeding the national air quality health standards for fine particles and ozone.

"Diesel engines are essential due to their longevity and efficiency, but older diesels pollute significantly more than other vehicles in terms of fine particle pollution," MPCA Assistant Commissioner David Thornton said. "Overall the air quality is improving in the state, but more medical studies showing health problems at lower levels of air pollution prompted the EPA to make standards more strict in recent years," he explained.

The current Request for Proposal (RFP) will fund EPA-approved technologies, including idle reduction, emission controls, hybrid replacement and engine re-powers. Vehicle and equipment examples include on-road class 5 (16,000 lb. gross vehicle weight) or larger delivery trucks, off-road construction equipment, generators of 100-300 horsepower, and refrigeration units for delivery trucks.

The minimum award is \$10,000 and the maximum award is \$150,000. Vehicles and equipment must be in working order to be eligible for grant funding and no work can begin until a contract agreement is approved by the MPCA. For a copy of the Request for Proposal (RFP), contact Martina Cameron by email at contracts.pca@state.mn.us or call her at 651-757-2259. Applicants will need to give an email address to receive the RFP application and supporting materials electronically. The email subject line should read: "CR5220, Clean Diesel RFP." More information can be found online on the MPCA's [Grants/Financial Assistance for Clean Diesel Projects page](#).

Job Announcements:

Environmental Scientist/Engineer

Houston Engineering Inc is hiring an Environmental Scientist/Engineer for their Maple Grove office. Duties include Coordination and management of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies; Water quality sampling, data analysis and report preparation; Hydrologic analysis; Preparation of TMDL study reports and implementation plans; Assist with the preparation of Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Statements; Prepare and present projects at public meeting to audiences with varied interests; Assist with the preparation of watershed plans and technical reports for the management of rural nonpoint pollution and water chemistry; and Business development activities including direct client contract and managing environmental projects

Please pass the information along and encourage interested parties to contact Janae Hardina (jhardina@houstoneng.com; the lead HR person) with any questions.

For more information, <http://www.houstoneng.com/archives/4343>

District Technician – West Polk SWCD

This full-time position will perform a variety of technical and administration work to support all aspects of the programs and activities of the West Polk SWCD. Potential activities include, but not limited to, bookkeeping, (QuickBooks), the Wetland Conservation Act, Polk County Comprehensive Water Plan, District's Tree Program, West Polk County Feedlot Program, State Cost Share Program, Environmental Education, data management and assisting in the planning and reporting procedures concerning SWCD, State and Local programs. This position will also be responsible for promoting conservation related programs and services provided by the District.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- A minimum four year degree is preferred in biology, environmental science, soil and water conservation, natural resource management, or related field. Practical work experience in natural resource or other related natural resource field. Field work experience is strongly desired. Must be physically able and willing to work effectively in various field conditions including rough terrain and all-season weather. Must be able to lift and move up to 50 lbs. Must have basic knowledge of vehicle maintenance and a valid Minnesota driver's license; Experience in the operation of implements and the maneuvering of implements; Must possess strong organizational, interpersonal, and communication skills, both written and verbal. Ability and willing to work with individuals of varied ages and social backgrounds; Must have experience with computers and be able to use Arc GIS, GPS equipment and software, programs including Outlook, Internet Explorer and Microsoft Office 2007. Must be able to work independently, indoors and outdoors, with a minimum of direct supervision; Applicants should be able to learn quickly, follow instruction, handle multiple projects, and adapt to changing job duties and/or responsibilities;
- Be a team player with coworkers.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATION:

- Experience with SWCD, State, and/or Local administration and technical support of programs, data management, assisting in the planning/reporting procedures, and implementation of conservation practices concerning the SWCD.
- Knowledge of design, survey, and construction of erosion control and other conservation practices

PRIMARY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Perform administration and technical support for the SWCD, State, and/or Local administration and activities of programs.
- Work cooperatively with state, federal and local agencies, boards and organizations in promoting various conservation programs and accomplishing the goals and objectives of established plans; Assist with preparation of various reports and plans within required deadlines;

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people in this position. They are not to be constructed as an exhaustive list of all duties performed by personnel in this position.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

Cover letter, completed application and resume with 3 references must be submitted to the West Polk SWCD, 528 Strander Ave, Crookston MN 56716 or emailed to nicole.bernd@mn.nacdnet.net. Applications may be obtained from the West Polk SWCD office or from the West Polk SWCD website- www.nwmnswcd.org/westpolk. Candidates selected for an interview will be notified by telephone. Additional information may be obtained from the district's website, or by calling 218-281-6070 or emailing nicole.bernd@mn.nacdnet.net.

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

District Manager/Technician – Freeborn County SWCD

This full-time (40 hour per week) position is responsible for implementation of District Programs following policy and direction from the Freeborn County SWCD, Board of Supervisors.

The position will provide technical assistance in survey, design and installation of conservation practices. Plan and implement soil & Water resource protection and improvement programs in Freeborn County. This position requires that the individual work cooperatively and effectively with other state, federal or conservation partnership employees in an Ag Service Center Environment.

Some of the duties and responsibilities of this position include:

- Implements SWCD Programs and Policies according to guidelines set by the SWCD Board.
- Provides Engineering assistance to landowners for conservation practice application.
- Makes recommendations to the board for new programs or changes in the existing ones in cooperation with federal, state and county programs or initiatives.
- Assumes responsibility for the preparation of draft copies of the SWCD's Annual Plan and Annual Report for review by the board.
- Works with the Administrative Assistant in preparing an annual budget and helps present this to the County Board of Commissioners.
- Supervises and directs SWCD Employees, Administrative Assistant and Technician.
- Directs a public information program including newspaper articles, newsletter, radio spots, presentations to public groups, tours, etc.
- Works to maintain an active "partnership" with various local, state and federal agencies and/or organizations involved in conservation activities in our county.
- Coordinates SWCD involvement with landowner needs for assistance from federal, state or local agencies.
- Serves on the local Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) for the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). This includes assisting landowners involved in wetland issues, while administering the intent of the Wetland Conservation Act.
- Serves as technical representative to the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA).
- Assumes responsibility for the administration of the State Cost Share Program.

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

Local Foods Program Assistant

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy seeks a detail-oriented and enthusiastic individual with interest in and knowledge of local food and sustainable agriculture issues to provide administrative and programmatic assistance to its Local Foods team. The Local Foods Program at IATP works to build local food systems across the US and in Minnesota through market-based change, policy innovation, public education and partnerships. A time commitment between 0.8 and 1.0 FTE will be considered. This position will involve a combination of administrative support services (approximately 0.3 – 0.4 FTE) and programmatic activities.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) works at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems, locally and globally. IATP has offices in Minneapolis and Washington. This position is based in Minneapolis.

More information and application instructions are available at: <http://www.iatp.org/about/jobs-and-internships/local-foods-program-assistant>

Events:

November 17th (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Green Fire*** at the Treaty Center in St. Peter 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 and the Nicollet County Historical Society. For more information contact 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org.

November 21, 2011 (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board meeting** at Camp Sacajawea Lodge (5121 McAndrews Road) in Apple Valley. The Executive Committee meeting starts at 8:00 a.m. and the Full Board meeting at 9:00 a.m. Agenda items include Asian Carp Planning Process (Tim Schlagenhaft, DNR), Turbidity Reduction Discussion (Paul Nelson, Scott WMO), and Vermillion River Watershed (Mark Zabel, WRWJPO). Full agenda is found at <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverboardagendanov.pdf> and board packet at <http://www.minnesotariver.org/>

December 1st (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Reel Injun*** at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. Hollywood has made over 4000 films about Native people; over 100 years of movies defining how Indians are seen by the world. *Reel Injun* takes an entertaining and insightful look at the Hollywood Indian, exploring the portrayal of North American Natives through the history of cinema. 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.

December 7th (Wednesday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Green Fire*** at the School Sisters of Notre Dame (170 Good Counsel Drive) in Mankato 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 Scott Kudelka at 507-389-2304.

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.

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

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

Environmental/Conservation Articles:

House Legacy chairman: Reports on spending will improve (Minnesota Public Radio). The representative who oversees Legacy spending in the Minnesota House said he expects reporting on where money from the constitutional amendment is being spent will improve under new rules.

[New citizens committee will advise on Legacy parks spending](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A new advisory committee made up of citizens and professionals will soon be formed to help oversee Legacy Amendment spending for the state's parks and trails.

[Austin: Poll Shows Minnesotans Oppose Using Legacy Funds for New Vikings Stadium](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Should constitutionally dedicated funding to the outdoors, environment, and arts be used to help pay for a Vikings stadium?

[Letter: Give the EPA the ability to protect us](#) (Minnesota Daily). On Oct. 31, a large section of bluff on the Wisconsin shore of Lake Michigan collapsed next to the We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant.

[Lutsen can draw down Poplar River, for now](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). DNR says the North Shore ski resort must find a way to pump water up from Lake Superior within three years.

[Minnesota DNR investigating trumpeter swan deaths](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is investigating four incidents in which federally protected trumpeter swans have been shot during the fall waterfowl season.

[Conservation Legacy grants awarded to improve Minnesota habitats](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Smaller grants that are part of Legacy Amendment funding for the state's environment and fish and wildlife habitats have been awarded.

[Deal in the works on dispute over state land in BWCA](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). A long-running dispute over state land inside the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness finally could be at hand.

[Shelby: Why I'm building an energy-efficient house](#) (MinnPost). The news broke last week that the world dumped 564 million tons of additional CO2 into the atmosphere in 2010.

[Habitat for Humanity unveils model energy-efficient home](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota says a family has moved into the most energy-efficient home the organization has ever built, part of an effort to help lower utility bills for Habitat homeowners.

[Editorial: Big Coal suit would big-foot Minnesota](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). It's hard to see how suing one of your best customers in hopes they'll buy more from you is a smart business decision.

[Border bill pits security against the environment](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Opponents say bill to allow security patrols in sensitive areas such as the BWCA is solution in search of problem.

[Gravel pit: We won't solve your issues, city says](#) (Jordan Independent). Jordan won't participate in any groundwater pollution mitigation for the gravel pit proposed by Jordan Aggregates.

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul. – John Muir

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.

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

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