

Kayak on Madelia's own Watonwan River

By Pat Baskfield, Sportsmens Club; Madelia Times-Messenger

I consider myself fortunate that I live on the Watonwan River, and over the 14 years I have spent exploring its banks and waters have learned quite a bit about the best times and ways to recreate on this little river. Prior to moving to the area, if I went fishing it was in a motorized boat with lakes and occasionally large rivers my destinations of choice.

So, of course, the first thing I tried to do when I moved to the Watonwan was to fish it using my 14-foot aluminum boat. My first expedition was in the fall after the air temps cooled and the bugs were gone. I launched my boat, headed upstream and made it about a quarter mile before I realized if I kept going I was going to ruin my prop and water pump on my outboard. The Watonwan is typically very shallow in the fall and full of rocks.

I next tried my boat the following spring when the water was high. After a harrowing experience, when my anchor let loose and I floated into a logjam, I decided fishing this river in high water from a boat was also not a good idea.

For the entire article, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/kayakingonwatonwan.pdf>

Organic farming leader Fred Kirschenmann to speak Nov. 10 on 'Water and the Challenges Facing U.S. and World Agriculture in the 21st Century.'

Fred Kirschenmann, a national leader in the organic food and farming movement, will deliver the next free public lecture sponsored by the Freshwater Society and the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences.

Kirschenmann is a distinguished fellow at Iowa State University's Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. He will speak on "Water and the Challenges Facing U.S. and World Agriculture in the 21st Century."

The lecture, the sixth in a series, will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 10, in the theater of the Student Center on the university's St. Paul campus. Seating is limited. Please [register](#) to reserve your place.

There are lots of ways to describe Kirschenmann: philosopher, farmer, author and advocate. In addition to his work at the Leopold Center, he is president of the board of directors of the Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture in Pocantico Hills, N.Y. He wrote *Cultivating an Ecological Conscience: Essays from a Farmer Philosopher*, published in 2010 by the University Press of Kentucky. This year, he was honored by the James Beard Foundation for "lifelong work on sustainable food and farming systems."

The message of his lecture, Kirschenmann says, will be that serious changes must be made in the way America and the world grow food.

A series of crises -- the drawing down of groundwater reserves around the world; depletion of fossil fuels; looming shortages in two basic agricultural fertilizers, phosphorus and potassium; and a changing climate -- are occurring at the same time that population growth and changing diets around the world are increasing demand for food.

Organic agriculture, the kind Kirschenmann long has advocated and practiced on his own 2,400-acre farm in North Dakota, is not enough of an answer, he says. Nor is any single technological fix.

For the past century, he says, agriculture has been designed as an industrial operation, assuming that the natural resources to fuel that industry and the sinks in nature to absorb its wastes would always be in sufficient supply. Tomorrow's agriculture has to be designed to mimic nature, with the intention to make it more resilient and largely self-renewing.

Kirschenmann's lecture is part of the Moos Family Speaker Series, which honors the late Malcolm Moos, president of the University of Minnesota from 1967 to 1974.

About the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences - The College of Biological Sciences provides education and conducts research in all areas of biology, from molecules to ecosystems, supporting applications in medicine, renewable energy, ecosystem management, agriculture and biotechnology. For more information about research and degree programs, go to www.cbs.umn.edu/

About the Freshwater Society - The Freshwater Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and inspiring people to value, conserve and protect all water resources. Located in Excelsior, Minn., adjacent to Lake Minnetonka, it has a long history of association with the University of Minnesota. Learn more at www.freshwater.org.

Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (GBERBA) to hold Turbidity TMDL Forum.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency staff will be giving a presentation at the semi-annual GBERBA Policy and Technical committee meeting about three related turbidity TMDL's. The Turbidity TMDL's are for the Greater Blue Earth River, the Minnesota River, and the South Metro Mississippi River.

Following the presentation attendees will break into small groups and answer specific questions dealing with turbidity. These questions will address many of the difficult issues surrounding potential solutions for the turbidity in our rivers. These issues include program funding, targeting, payment rates to landowners, water storage opportunities, landowner participation, are we making progress, and others. The small group conclusions will be presented to the larger group with an opportunity to discuss further. The GBERBA joint meeting will be held on November 18th, 2011, 9:30 a.m. at the Mankato Armory, 100 Martin Luther King Drive, Mankato Minnesota. The MPCA turbidity presentation will begin at 11:00 a.m. and should wrap up by 12:30.

Managing Water. Harvesting Results

Check out the new video highlighting agricultural drainage management systems and technologies by Jon Carlson and John Hickman of H2O videos - <http://h2ovideos.com/>

Produced for the Agricultural Drainage Management Coalition and the Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Center. With an introduction and afterword from Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Dave White. Premiered at the Ag Water Management Summit, Bloomington, MN October 12, 2011.

Grant Opportunities:

Minnesota Department of Agriculture Announces a Request for Proposals

Funding is available to support research related to agriculture and water quality. Specifically, research that helps quantify agriculture's impact on water resources and research that evaluates the costs and benefits of specific best management practices.

- Minnesota Department of Agriculture has \$1,050,000 available for research
- Any organization, research entity, or individual can apply for these funds
- A call for proposals is NOW OPEN (October 17, 2011)
- Information is available in the [State Register](#) on page 447
- Project proposals are due December 9, 2011

To request proposal instructions and to receive application materials, please call, e-mail, or write for the full RFP which will be sent free of charge. All inquires should be addressed to: Minnesota Department of Agriculture; Adam Birr, Impaired Waters Technical Coordinator; 625 Robert Street North; St. Paul, MN 55155; Adam.Birr@state.mn.us; Phone: 507-206-2881

For more information about MDA's Clean Water Research Program, supported research projects and research priorities, please check out [MDA's Clean Water Fund website](#).

Job Announcements:

Organic farm Tenant Sought

Curtis Speck is looking to secure a mature graduate student to live at and maintain his organic farm near Good Thunder from January through May 15, 2011. The name of the organic farm is Tecumseh Morgen Farm. Tecumseh is named after the well known Indian Tecumseh which also was at one time the name of the township where the farm is located. They grow oats, rye/hairy vetch, wheat, barley/peas/corn and soybeans along with raising about 150 chickens and 12 cats. The farm also includes a restored wetland, adopted by the local elementary school Maple River. Part of their vision is to become a resource center for the community including local schools and universities. If you have any interest in this opportunity, please contact Curtis directly at 2622 Mc Allister Street; San Francisco, CA 94118 or 415-386-0849.

Ag Lands Solutions Specialist – Chippewa River Watershed

The Land Stewardship Project announces the creation of a new full-time salaried position with benefits within the Chippewa 10% Project, a joint watershed improvement initiative with the Chippewa River Watershed Project, Pope County SWCD and other project partners.

The person filling this new "Ag Lands Solutions Specialist" position will conduct outreach to farmers and agricultural landowners within the Chippewa River watershed to help them plan the right mix of conservation incentives, production practices and market-based farming enterprises and/or strategies to enhance land stewardship and farm profitability and mitigate environmental and production risks.

Chippewa 10% Project

With about three-quarters of the land in the Chippewa River Watershed devoted to agriculture production, how the land is farmed plays a huge role in the health of the Chippewa River, surrounding ecosystems and farm communities. The Chippewa 10% Project aims to show that when agricultural practices include more perennials, meaningful improvement in water quality and wildlife habitat can come from even just a 10% increase in perennials on the landscape.

The Chippewa 10% Project is based on the idea that ecological diversity in an agricultural landscape can add many benefits, including a clean environment, local food and fuel, more farmers on the land and stronger rural communities. Both scientific studies and practical experience also suggest an essential link between diverse farming systems and the economic sustainability and resiliency of farms and farming communities. The success of the Chippewa 10% Project rests upon helping farmers and landowners pencil out practical and profitable ways to add economic and ecological diversity to their farms through enterprises that make use of perennials and innovative crop and livestock production systems.

The Chippewa 10% Project is co-led by the Land Stewardship Project and the Chippewa River Watershed Project. Project partners include the USDA's North Central Soil Conservation Research Lab, University of Minnesota-Morris, University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center and Louisiana State University AgCenter, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, with funding provided by USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, the Walton Family Foundation and the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund of the state of Minnesota.

For more information, visit the Chippewa 10% Project web page at <http://www.chippewa10.org>.

Position Location: This Land Stewardship Project position will be based out of the Pope County Soil & Water Conservation District Office, Glenwood, Minn., with outreach responsibilities to farmers and landowners throughout the entire Chippewa River watershed.

Primary Duties: Seek out and work with willing individual farmers and agricultural landowners within the Chippewa River watershed to help them develop customized farm stewardship and profitability plans that:

- keep valuable soil and nutrients on the land and out of ditches, streams, rivers and lakes; and

- help them connect to the appropriate community and agency resources to implement or complete their farm plans.

The application deadline for this position is November 7, 2011. To download a copy of the job announcement, click here: <http://www.landstewardshipproject.org/pdf/AgLandsSolutionsSpecialist.pdf>

To apply, please submit a cover letter and resume to: Julia Ahlers Ness; Chippewa 10% Project Coordinator; Land Stewardship Project; 301 State Road, Suite 2; Montevideo, MN 56265; janess@landstewardshipproject.org

MN DNR Positions

Working Title: Watershed Specialist
Class/Option: NR SPECIALIST INT-ECOLOGICAL SVCS
Position: 01014158 Location: Mankato
Bargaining Unit: MAPE
Employment Condition: Unlimited Full-time - 100%
FLSA Status: exemptpro Temporary Position End Date:
Days of Work: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday Hours of work: 08:00 AM-04:30 PM
Work Area: Previous Incumbent: N/A
View at: https://statejobs.doer.state.mn.us/JobPosting/View?_posting=11DNR000559

Working Title: Watershed Specialist
Class/Option: NR SPECIALIST SR-ECO SVCS
Position: 01013032 Location: Mankato
Bargaining Unit: MAPE
Employment Condition: Unlimited Full-time - 100%
FLSA Status: exemptpro Temporary Position End Date:
Days of Work: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday Hours of work: 08:00 AM-04:30 PM
Work Area: Previous Incumbent: N/A
View at: https://statejobs.doer.state.mn.us/JobPosting/View?_posting=11DNR000549

Working Title: Farmland WL Research Lead
Class/Option: NR PROGRAM SUPERVISOR SR - WILDLIFE RESEARCH
Position: 00044010 Location: Mankato
Bargaining Unit: MMA
Employment Condition: Unlimited Full-time - 100%
FLSA Status: exemptexec Temporary Position End Date:
Days of Work: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday Hours of work: 08:00 AM-04:30 PM
Work Area: Previous Incumbent: Richard Kimmel
View at: https://statejobs.doer.state.mn.us/JobPosting/View?_posting=11DNR000564

Working Title:
Class/Option: ACCOUNTING OFFICER
Position: 01002649 Location: St. Paul
Bargaining Unit: MAPE
Employment Condition: Unlimited Full-time - 100%
FLSA Status: nonexempt Temporary Position End Date:
Days of Work: Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday,Thursday,Friday Hours of work: 08:00 AM-04:30 PM
Work Area: Previous Incumbent: Kiersten Poliwoda
View at: https://statejobs.doer.state.mn.us/JobPosting/View?_posting=11DNR000562

Events:

November 1st (Tuesday) is the **Quarterly Meeting of the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance** from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Ridgewater College in Hutchinson. The meeting is sponsored by the Land Stewardship Project (LSP) office in Montevideo. The meeting begins at 6 p.m. with a social hour to give participants time to interact with each other and share stories and concerns about what is happening in their part of the Minnesota River Watershed. 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/>

November 4th (Friday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Rain in a Dry Land*** at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. How do you measure the distance from an African village to an American city? What does it mean to be a refugee in today's "global village"? *Rain in a Dry Land* provides eye-opening answers as it chronicles the fortunes of two Somali Bantu families moved to the U.S. 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.

November 5th (Saturday) is the workshop: "**Claim the Commons We're in it Together**" at the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato (170 Good Counsel Drive) sponsored by the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry. In this conference you will learn more about the commons, explore the dangers it is facing, understand our part in protecting it, and find ways to claim and protect it for all. Claiming the commons can instill us with a new vision of politics, culture and community. A new vision of the power we have together. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/commonsworkshop.pdf>

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.

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.

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

Environmental/Conservation Articles:

[Immigrant farmers plant seeds for a new life](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Farm incubator near Marine on St. Croix is a classroom for raising and marketing organic food.

[MN Republicans in Congress join fight against regulations, but strategy raises doubts](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Republicans in Congress, including the Minnesota delegation, contend that government regulations are holding back job creation, and there are GOP efforts in both the House and Senate to move legislation cutting red tape.

[Zebra mussels invade Lake Irene](#) (Alexandria Echo Press). Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) biologists fear they might be seeing a disturbing trend of zebra mussels hitchhiking on boat lifts that are moved from infested waters to uninfested lakes.

[Wetlands mitigation banking attracts farmers' interest in Alexandria](#) (Agri News). At a recent Wetland Mitigation Banking meeting in Alexandria, farmers learned more about wetland mitigation banking strictly for ag purposes.

We have not begun to imagine a life without corn. We have assumed, by the default of failing to think about it, that corn is eternal. But it is not any more eternal than the buffalo. In fact, because the corn we cultivate shares a common cytoplasm, it would take exactly one persistent pathogen to devastate our culture as we know it. – Paul Gruchow

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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