

Minnesota River named 5th most threatened river in the United States by American Rivers Representatives from Clean Up the River Environment (CURE), Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River (CCMR), Friends of the Minnesota Valley and Minnesota River Board along with State Representative Aaron Peterson, State Senator Gary Kubly, State Representative Rick Hanson and State Representative Kate Kueth were part of a press conference on April 17th to announce the Minnesota River being the 5th most threatened river in the United States by American Rivers. CURE brought along their River Otter mascot and served Coal Aide to highlight how the proposed Big Stone II Coal Plant will have on the environment. Most of the major TV stations sent out crews to cover the story along with a number of newspapers. On Friday night Duane Ninneman of CURE sat across from Big Stone II's Mark Rolfes in a debate about the proposed coal fired plant and its impact on the Minnesota River on Twin Cities Public Television's [Almanac](#) Public Affairs show. Duane did a great job at explaining why another coal plant is not needed and why it is important to look at other alternative energy sources. Below are a number of newspaper articles on this threatened designation and a way for individual citizens to get involved in this important debate.

- <http://wcco.com/video/?id=40557@wcco.dayport.com>
- **Minnesota River back on 'most endangered' list.** The Minnesota River has landed once again on the list of the 10 Most Endangered Rivers in America, this time due to plans for the \$1.6 billion, Big Stone II coal-fired plant, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverbackendangeredlist.pdf>
- **Minnesota River listed among 10 most 'endangered' in U.S.** The Minnesota River was named as one of the nation's ten most endangered rivers by American Rivers, a national clean river advocacy group based in Washington, D.C., <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverlistedamongendangered.pdf>
- **Minnesota River ranked as fifth most endangered.** A national group ranks the Minnesota River as the fifth most endangered river in the country, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverrankedfifthmostendangered.pdf>
- **Minnesota River wins unpleasant national ranking.** Minnesota River is on the environmental group's list of endangered waterways, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverwinsunpleasanranking.pdf>
- **Top 10 distinction raises more concern for river.** The Minnesota River was given a distinction in the last week that some environmental groups believe shows the impact the proposed Big Stone II project could pose, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/toptendistinctionriverconcern.pdf>

Patrick Moore, CURE's executive director offered this advice for the proposed Big Stone II Coal Plant: We are starting to have the kind of widely disseminated public debate about our clean energy future and our need to protect public water resources. If Big Stone II goes through, it will be in place for 50 years or more. In the middle of the next drought, we won't have the opportunity to go back and say, "Gee I wish we had talked about this and thought about it more." **Now is the time to speak.** Now is the time to act. [E-mail Governor Pawlenty](mailto:tim.pawlenty@state.mn.us) and insist that we do all we can as a state to convene the Minnesota South Dakota Boundary Waters Commission: tim.pawlenty@state.mn.us Your grassroots guide to the future we all want and deserve, Patrick J. Moore; www.curemriver.org

Chippewa River Watershed Project (CRWP)

If you want to see the hard work of a dedicated staff go visit the Chippewa River Watershed and spend a little time with Kylene Olson, Jenn Hoffman, Paul Wymar and Madeline Dalton. At their recent monthly Executive Committee meeting they covered a number of projects the staff is working on. They have been working with an active lake association group for Lake Emily

including developing a lake management plan, along with monitoring the water coming into and out of the lake. A major project for the CWRP staff is the Turbidity TMDL. Seven reaches have been listed as impaired in the watershed with one as part of the Minnesota River Turbidity TMDL. As part of the project they have hired a consultant to develop a model using the SWAT (Soil and Water Assessment Tool). According to Kylene, this will be a powerful tool to see what can be done across the watershed to direct Best Management Practices to specific pollutants. CRWP is also sponsoring a second Photo Contest to highlight citizen involvement in the project. Over the next few months the staff will be holding a number of special events to celebrate their 10th anniversary.

- June 11th CROP Walk – “Water for Life and Water for All” – the staff has been selected as honor walkers for their work to improve water quality
- June 21st Canoe Trip on the Chippewa River from Highway 40 to Watson Park
- July 17th Chippewa River Watershed Geology Presentation by Carrie Jennings at Starbuck Community Center

Civilian Conservation Corps presentation at Fort Ridgely Historic Site

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was born out of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal at the height of the Great Depression. The CCC supplied jobs to more than 77,000 Minnesotans in need. Their work left a lasting legacy, visible today in Minnesota’s thriving forests, state park amenities, and soil conservation practices. Barbara W. Sommer, author of Hard Work and a Good Deal – The Civilian Conservation Corps in Minnesota will be at Fort Ridgely Historic Site commissary on May 24, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. to give a presentation about her new book. Barbara has been an oral historian for more than 25 years and has served as director or co-director for numerous oral history projects. She is the founder of the Oral History Association of Minnesota.

- Barbara’s signed books will be available for sale the day of the program,
- Photos of the Fort Ridgely CCC Camp 2712 and Camp 2713 will also be on display in the commissary,
- IF you have CCC photos or a story to share please bring them to the program,
- Free will offering requested for this event.
- Sponsored by the Nicollet County Historical Society

Cub Scouts Help Clean Up Trash...And the Lakes!

A group of boy scouts from Lake Crystal with help from the Lake Crystal Clean Water Partnership conducted a clean up last week along with learning about water quality issues. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/scoutscleanup.pdf>

Start small to reduce impact on environment

Yesterday was Earth Day across the U.S. and much of the globe, and it gives all of us an opportunity to reflect on how what we do affects the environment. We don’t need to make major changes to reduce our environmental footprint; small, everyday changes, if made by many people, could have a lasting impact. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Can I walk or bike to work at least one day a week to reduce car emissions and save on fuel?
- Can I drink filtered tap water instead of bottled water to reduce the use of plastic bottles?
- Can I recycle more cans and bottles to reduce the amount of trash I throw away?
- Can I compost food scraps instead of putting them in the trash?

There are major changes that need to be made in the way we impact the environment, as well, but starting with small steps could have a greater effect than many of us realize.

Earth Day and the Environment

- <http://www.twincities.com/gogreen>
- **Beware the many shades of green in products’ eco-friendly claims.** Everywhere you go these days, you’re swamped with green. Beware of false eco-friendly claims, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/bewareshadesofgreenproducts.pdf>

- **Forum Editorial: Earth Day has become every day.** When Earth Day was established in 1970, it was a time in the United States when chemical-laden rivers ignited, the air was fouled and wildlife was at risk from pollutants. Today environmental protection precepts have become more than ideas, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/earthdayhasbecomeeveryday.pdf>
- **Let's make this Earth Day, a day when action begins.** According to Amy Klobuchar, solutions to climate change are also opportunities, if only we're willing to reach them, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/earthdayactionbegins.pdf>
- **Our view: Duluthians can be Earth warriors – and not just on Earth Day.** Earth Day is set aside each spring to reflect on green successes and to focus on environmental initiatives, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/earthwarriorsnotjustearthday.pdf>
- **Our view: We can do simple things to help Earth.** Thirty-eight years ago America marked the first Earth Day. Twenty years later, it became a global event. Today hundreds of millions in 175 countries will take part in 10,000 Earth Day events, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/simplethingstohelpearth.pdf>
- **Experts share tips to get started.** Green is in – that's clear. But with so much information out there, it's not clear which steps are easiest and most effective if you want to live a more eco-friendly lifestyle, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/expertssharegreentips.pdf>

Guidance on Agricultural Herbicide Use – 2008 Season

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is providing information to assist pesticide applicators in protecting the environment from potential adverse effects of pesticides use. For more information:

- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/herbicideinformation.pdf>
- <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/herbicideletter.pdf>
- www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticides

Events:

April 26th & 27th (Saturday and Sunday) is the **Lac qui Parle Outdoor Expo** at the Lac qui Parle County Fairgrounds from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information <http://www.exploreminnesota.com/event.aspx?EntityID=21425> At the same time check out the Salt Lake Birding Weekend in Lac qui Parle County.

April 30th (Wednesday), is the “**Mountaineering in Alaska, Hiking the Yukon**” program by Rachel Hall starting at 7 p.m. at Elks Nature Center, Rasmussen Woods. Sponsored by the Mankato Paddling and Outing Club. For more information contact Tom Marks at 388-3001.

May 11th (Sunday) is a **Spring Wildflower Walk** from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Ney Nature Center near Henderson. Come along and observe the profusion of spring flowers growing along the Ney Center trails. Learn some of the fun and interesting folklore surrounding these flowers and their colorful nicknames. Cost: \$5.00 per family w/NNC family membership and \$2.00 per individual w/NNC membership, \$7.00 per family and \$3.00 per individual for non-NNC members. For more information contact the Ney Nature Center at info@neycenter.org or 507-248-3474.

May 17th and 18th (Saturday & Sunday) is the **16th Annual Rivers and History Weekend** at the Upper Sioux Agency State Park, Granite Falls, MN. CURE is sponsoring this annual family centered event with help from the Granite Falls Historical Society, the Upper Sioux Agency State Park, the Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center and the EF Foundation for Foreign Study. Come and canoe the area rivers, camp out and learn of the region's rich history. Look for more details in upcoming mailings or by visiting: www.curemriver.org or by calling CURE toll Free at 1-877-269-2873.

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

Water Quality Articles:

Volunteers participate in watershed cleanup. Saturday mornings are often reserved for sleeping in and watching cartoons, but last Saturday was a little more productive for some Minneapolis residents, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/volunteerswatershedcleanup.pdf>

Sewer plan goes to supreme court. A proposed expansion at a local sewage treatment plant is on hold while the Minnesota Supreme Court considers if the state improperly issued a water discharge permit for it, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/sewerplansupremecourt.pdf>

A new reason to recycle. Recyclebank has established a system that makes recycling really pay off. This program uses points for the amount of items recycled, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/newreasontorecycle.pdf>

Viewpoint: Light bulb act may miss the forest for the trees. Congresswoman Michele Bachmann's recent venture into the forest of environmental politics caused an avalanche of publicity, but it is doubtful that she will win the hearts and minds of anyone interested in shaving a few dollars off their electric bill, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/lightbulbactbachmann.pdf>

Legislators discuss creation of low-carbon fuel bill. On a day when crude oil hit \$114 per barrel, legislators met to discuss the possibility of creating a low-carbon fuel standard and furthering an investment in renewable energy, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/legislatorslowcarbonfuelbill.pdf>

Legislators take step toward greener cars and trucks. Legislators took their first crack Tuesday at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from Minnesota's cars and trucks, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/legislatorsgreenervehicles.pdf>

Study shows rising food prices not connected to price of corn. The Minnesota Corn Growers Association is touting a study that shows corn prices have had little to do with rising food costs, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/foodpricesnotcornrelated.pdf>

St. Cloud Convenience Stores To Offer Recycling. Convenience stores in the St. Cloud area soon will offer customers a chance to recycle their old pop cans instead of tossing them into the regular trash, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/conveniencestoreofferrecycling.pdf>

Complaint alleges unsafe chemical used in baby formula. Supplements in some baby formulas are prepared using a petrochemical that can cause vomiting and diarrhea in infants, a watchdog group for organic foods says, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/complaintunsafechemicalbabyformula.pdf>

When life hands you carbon emissions, make shiny plastic coasters. Chemists in Japan have figured out a way to sequester carbon emissions into a polycarbonate plastic that could be used to make compact discs or DVDs, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/carbonemissionsplasticcoasters.pdf>

Farm Bill caught up in politics. While farm bill provisions have been extended until Friday, it is not yet clear whether the U.S. House and Senate can reconcile their versions of the bill without seeking another extension, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmbillcaughtupinpolitics.pdf>

It's easier to make eco-friendly dining choices. Green may be the hot new color, but when it comes to living the life, things can get overwhelming. It's hard to distinguish between the truly green and marketing ploys, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/easierecofriendlydiningchoices.pdf>

Electricity industry faces climate, demand issues. Electricity customers will have to pay for costs associated with meeting growing demand for power while simultaneously curbing emissions of greenhouse gases, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/electricityindustryfacesissues.pdf>

U Morris practices green energy. Even on the dawn of the annual "Beautiful U-Day" and its celebration of campus wide environmental sustainability, the University's Twin Cities campus isn't the only one seeing a shade of green these days, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/umorrispracticesgreenenergy.pdf>

Get rid of old electronics for free. Is your basement cluttered up with old TV's and computer equipment? Do you have so many outdated cell phones in your junk drawer that it won't even close anymore, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/getridofelectronicsfree.pdf>

Gov't raises safety questions about chemical in plastics. A chemical used to make baby bottles and other shatterproof plastic containers could be linked to a range of hormonal problems, a preliminary government report has found, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/governorraisesplasticissues.pdf>

Is the increased use of corn for ethanol responsible for soaring food prices? The popular misconception that increased usage of corn for ethanol production is the only factor driving higher food prices is just that – a misconception, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/increasedfooddemandfoodprices.pdf>

Our View – Farm bill must be fiscally fit. Disagreement between the U.S. House and Senate on authorizing a new five-year farm bill should be resolved like regular families are resolving their financial issues: When in doubt, go the cheaper route, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farbillmustbefiscallyfit.pdf>

Farm bill has to serve diverse interests. Congress is taking some time to come up with a farm bill that probably should have been passed by now, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farbillserve diverseinterests.pdf>

Walz says farm bill is a good compromise. U.S. Congressman Tim Walz said he believes lawmakers can work out their differences on the farm bill by the end of next week, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/walzfarbillcompromise.pdf>

High prices lure farmers from conservation program. Minnesota could lose up to 25 percent of the land currently set aside in programs to protect water and wildlife. Thanks to government subsidies for ethanol and high corn and soybean prices, farmers re turning more land over to grains, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/highpricesconservationprograms.pdf>

Congressional climate tough for farm bill. It's not a good year for a farm bill with crop prices sky-high and President Bush feeling the farm program is already bloated, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/congressionalclimatetoughfarmbill.pdf>

Claiming our share of river. Even though earth warming is expected to melt the popular ice fields and bring unwanted water to our coasts, public officials across the United States are hustling to establish claims on the nation's water resources, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/claimingourshareofriver.pdf>

Decades after the first Earth Day, many Americans suffer from ‘green’ overload. In so many ways, Mark and Laura Hambrecht are exactly the kind of couple that “eco-friendly” marketers long to lure, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/earthdayandgreenoverload.pdf>

Woodbury to use audits to ask biggest water users: Why so much? The Amazon rain forest gets soaked with about eight inches a rain a month. Yet there is a single lawn in Woodbury that makes the rain forest look like a desert – sloshing with nearly three times that much water, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/woodburyuseauditswaterusers.pdf>

Misguided crusade ignores realities of climate change. How many members of Congress does it take to change a light blub, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/misguidedcrusadeignoresrealities.pdf>

State’s next recycling target: old paint. Minnesota is one House vote and one governor’s signature away from a first-in-the-nation law that makes it easier to recycle old paint, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/statesnextrecyclingtargetoldpaint.pdf>

Energy company opens ultra-green headquarters. Great River Energy is dedicating its new energy efficient headquarters. The company says the building will be the first in Minnesota to apply for the highest level of LEED certification, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/energycompanyultragreenheadquarters.pdf>

Minnesota’s CRP wetland could shrink. Almost a third of 2 million acres of Minnesota wetland set aside in the Conservation Reserve Program could leave the program in the next two years and go back to cropland, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mncrpwetlandcouldshrink.pdf>

Retrofit finds a bright idea for environment. The business world and green activists have often been at odds. However, one company has proved that environmental protection and the entrepreneurial spirit can make good bedfellows, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/retrofitfindsbrightidea.pdf>

Smarter socket. Fluorescent lights are green, until they burn out. Then it’s up to consumers to do the right thing and keep mercury out of the environment, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/smartssocket.pdf>

If we human beings learn to see the intricacies that bind one part of a natural system to another and then to us, we will no longer argue about the importance of wilderness protection, or over the question of saving endangered species, or how human communities must base their economic futures – not on short-term exploitation – but on long-term, sustainable development. – Gaylord Nelson

If we learn, finally, that what we need to “manage” is not the land so much as ourselves in the land, we will have turned the history of American land-use on its head. – Gaylord Nelson

The Minnesota River Watershed Alliance (Watershed Alliance) is an organized network of citizens, public agencies, and private organizations dedicated to communicating the benefits of an ecology healthy Minnesota River Watershed to others and are actively working towards its improvement and protection. We meet four times a year and encourage landowners and recreational users of the river to be part of the effort. For more information on the Watershed Alliance: <http://www.watershedalliance.blogspot.com>

Please register at the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance’s bulletin board at: <http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa> to receive regular updates on what is happening in the Minnesota River Watershed.

Thanks,

Scott

Scott Kudelka
Minnesota River Watershed Alliance
Communications Coordinator
Water Resources Center
184 Trafton Science Center S
Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-2304
scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu
<http://watershedalliance.blogspot.com>