

Minnesota River Board Awards

At its recent annual meeting in Mankato, the Minnesota River Board presented two awards – Confluence and Tributary – for three people working hard to improve water quality in the watershed. Kylene Olson of the Chippewa River Watershed Project was chosen to receive the “Minnesota River Confluence Award.” The “Minnesota River Tributary Award” was given to Bob Brush and Jim Putnam of the Lura Lake Association.

According to Nominating Delegate Jim Dahlvang, “Kylene has been leading the Chippewa River Watershed Project for the 10 years since its inception. She provides motivation to her staff and her partners through her love of the river and her beliefs and values in enhancing the water quality of the Chippewa River, the largest tributary of the Minnesota River. Some of the programs created under her leadership, such as the Citizen Monitoring Program and the High School Biomonitoring Program have been used as a model in other watersheds like the Hawk Creek and Lac qui Parle Yellow Bank.”

“Bob Brush and Jim Putnam are the heart and soul of the Lura Lake Association. They have a fantastic partnership. Bob organizes the projects, the donations, the in-kind, the volunteers and other aspects and Jim carries out the details. Over the years they have organized, promoted, facilitated and actually done the work on so many projects. For 14 years they have organized Take Kids Fishing on Lura Lake and Bass Lake. Jim and Bob have organized and completed a long list of projects including: updating Lura Lake septic systems, installing two public access points on Rice Lake, installing 2 docks for Lura Lake, 4.5 miles of rip rap along Lura Lake. Their most recent project was to purchase 292 acres along the Blue Earth River and they are working to purchase another 80 acres,” stated Nominating Delegate Katy Wortel.

Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) Annual Board Tour & Meeting in Renville County

Each year, BWSR conducts an annual Board tour and meeting in a host Minnesota County. This year Renville County will host the day-long tour scheduled for Wednesday, August 27. A coach bus will depart the Sheep Shedde Inn, located in Olivia, MN, at 8:00 a.m. Various projects will be viewed on the tour including conservation easements (RIM, CREP), restored wetlands, CRP, ag waste, alternative intakes, ISTS, and other numerous best management practices established through local partnerships with Renville County, Renville SWCD, NRCS, MNDot, Hawk Creek Watershed Project and others. On Thursday, August 28, from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., the BWSR Board will hold its monthly meeting at Max’s Grill located adjacent to the Sheep Shedde Inn in Olivia. Tentative agenda items include whole farm planning, presentations on new conservation assessment and planning tools, an update on the 2008 Federal Farm Bill programs, and several grant program decision items. Please contact Mary Jo Anderson at 651-297-4290 or mary.jo.anderson@state.mn.us for further information.

The MN BWSR is the state’s administrative agency for 91 soil and water conservation districts, 46 watershed districts, 23 metropolitan watershed management organizations, and 80 county water managers. The BWSR’s purpose, working through local government, is to protect and enhance the state’s soil and water resources by implementing the state’s soil and water conservation policy, comprehensive local water management, and the Wetland Conservation Act as it relates to the 41.7 million acres of private land in Minnesota.

Job Announcements:

Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist – Big Stone SWCD

This position will work in a joint capacity with Pheasants Forever, Inc. (PF), Big Stone SWCD, and the Farm Bill Assistance Partnership (MN DNR, MN BWSR, and PF) to promote, coordinate and implement the conservation provision of the Federal Farm Bill and other related wildlife conservation programs.

- Application Deadline: August 8, 2008
- Salary: \$26,000 - \$32,000 depending on qualifications and benefits
- Apply: Send letter of interest and resume including 2 references to Joy Eastman, Pheasants Forever, Inc.; 1783 Buerkle Circle; St. Paul, MN 55110 or email: jobs@pheasantsforever.org
- For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/bigstonefarmbill.pdf>

Water Plan / TMDL Coordinator with Fillmore SWCD Coordinator

The Water Plan/TMDL Coordinator will coordinate the implementation activities in the Fillmore County Local Water Management Plan and coordinate the completion of the Root River Turbidity TMDL.

- Application Deadline: August 11, 2008 (Monday) at 4:00 p.m.
- Salary: \$35,593 to \$38,073 per year depending on qualifications/experience
- For more information, www.fillmoreswcd.org or <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/fillmoretmdlwaterplanner.pdf>

Events:

RIVER BLAST 2008

Don't forget to mark your calendar for River Blast – August 29th & 30th at Riverside Park in New Ulm. Look on www.riverblast.org to see a YouTube video link, and pictures of last year's event; along with the application (an updated one is forthcoming if it's not already there.)

The web site will be including ideas on how to build a stable vessel and have decided that one of the easiest ways to do that are to: use a boat and decorate it; put two canoes together and run plywood or planking between them; or use barrels. We have found that while inner tubes can work, if it gets too heavy, they have failed for some.

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

Water Quality Articles:

[Lack of green is threatening future of the Green Institute](#) (Star Tribune). As interest in green technology blooms, the 15-year-old Minneapolis nonprofit faces foreclosure because of debt.

[Water quality problem? Remove the water](#) (Star Tribune). A widely watched experiment in natural lake-weed control will begin in early August with the draining of two of the three Anderson Lakes near Hwy. 169 in Eden Prairie. The goal is to rid the lakes of curly-leaf pondweed and reduce the phosphorous that feeds the algae, which turns the lake water pea green.

[U.S. Corn Production Feeds Expanding Gulf Dead Zone](#) (Environment News Service). This year's dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico is likely to be the largest on record and growing U.S. corn production is a primary cause of the worsening conditions, federal and state scientists.

[New plan outlines vision for state's environment](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). A comprehensive plan, more than 18 months in the making, to protect and improve the state's natural resources has been completed. Sweeping in its scope, supporters say it provides more than 60 recommendations that will help lawmakers and others protect the environment now and into the future.

[Powering up solar education](#) (Star Tribune). With the housing market in the doldrums and interest in green energy on the rise, electricians are looking to the sun for a new line of business. The country's largest electricians' union has launched a program in Minnesota that trains electricians to install solar panels.

[Michael Gerson: Climate change at top of the globe](#) (Washington Post Group (published in Star Tribune and Rochester Post-Bulletin). A traveler to the high arctic islands encounters signs of the destructiveness of the crude oil economy.

[Utilities try to persuade consumers to conserve](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Minnesota's utilities face a daunting task: the state has told them to cut their sales of electricity and natural gas by one-and-a-half-percent a year. It's part of Minnesota's response to climate change. Heating, cooling and running our buildings account for almost half of all greenhouse gas emissions. But the demand for electricity has been growing by 2 to 5 percent a year, so utilities are scratching their heads to figure out how to get their customers to use less energy.

[From Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico: The lethal trickle down effect](#) (Chaska Herald). It's a problem the size of Massachusetts, and Minnesotans may be partially to blame.

[A Minnesota farmer checks his fields](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The most recent crop report shows most Minnesota crops are above average. Crop prices are high, but so are costs like fuel and fertilizer. We last talked with farmer Jeff Mortenson in February, when he was making plans for the growing season and was nervous about rising costs. He's still nervous about the increasing costs of farming, but anticipating a good harvest.

[Our View: Corn debate should be just the beginning](#) (Mankato Free Press). So much of the corn-based ethanol debate has grown sour. Corn-based ethanol is now a controversial subject, at best seen only as a piece of the puzzle and at worst a culprit in rising food costs throughout the world.

[Drill more now, pay less at the pump? Not so fast](#) (Star Tribune). Expanded oil exploration and drilling could have a big impact -- in the long run.

[Researchers get dirty in the Le Sueur River](#) (Mankato Free Press). The Le Sueur River is the bad boy of the Minnesota River Valley. It's not known whether it's just his nature or if it's how he was raised.

A team of geologists and researchers from across the country are here this summer to try to determine just that.

<http://www.minnpost.com/stories/2008/07/16/2581/most-hated-bird-in-the-world-sanctioned-killing-of-cormorants-continues-unabated-in-minnesota> (Minn Post)

Earlier this month, sharpshooters with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services wrapped their annual operation at Leech Lake, the sprawling and legendary fishing Mecca in north central Minnesota. In keeping with past practices, the sharpshooters set their sights on a spit of guano-covered rocks and mostly dead vegetation called Little Pelican Island.

Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. You are by accident of fate alive at an absolutely critical moment in the history of our planet. – Carl Sagan

I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use our natural resources, but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or rob by wasteful use, the generations that come after us. – Theodore Roosevelt, speech, Washington D.C.

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.

Thank you,

Scott

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