

Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River (CCMR) annual MN River Banquet

Hi All, Be sure to mark your calendars now for the annual Minnesota River Banquet to be held on Saturday April 5th in New Ulm, MN at the New Ulm Community Center located at the corner of Highway 15 North and German St. Doors will open at 5 PM with a social hour which includes free wine, beer and soft drinks. Dinner will be served at 6:30 PM. The cost of dinner is \$15 per person which will



feature lasagna with both a meat and vegetable only as choices. Following dinner a summary of current Minnesota River issues, initiatives, actions and activities will be provided by the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River Executive Director, Scott Sparlin. Then it gets interesting, tables will be pre-labeled with issues, initiatives, and/or actions that have an affect on the river. Each table will have at least one knowledgeable person of note at it regarding the labeled topic. An open discussion will be held at each table that will help people gain a greater understanding of the topic and give input. Examples of some of the topics are: Fish and Fishing on the river, Hard Rock Outcroppings, Legacy Amendment, Conservation Drainage Symposiums, Community Clean Ups for Water Quality, Big Stone 2 Coal Plant Expansion, Systems Dynamics Proposal as well as an open table to discuss the river in general. People will be encouraged to "intellectually graze" from table to table. There will also be a raffle with cash prizes. For reservations email yasure@lycos.com or call 507 276 2280 with the number attending. Reservations are strongly encouraged however a limited number of tickets will be available at the door. – from Scott Sparlin, CCMR Executive Director.

Cargill hit with environmental fine

Cargill Inc. has been ordered to pay a \$100,000 fine for environmental violations at an Iowa Falls biodiesel plant. Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller claims in a lawsuit filed Monday that the plant failed to adequately pretreat sludge released into the city's treatment plant for several months between 2005 and 2007. When the city refused to accept the sludge in 2006, the company hired a contractor to spread 135,000 gallons of sludge on pastures and some of it leached into a creek, killing hundreds of fish. Miller says Wayzata, Minn.-based Cargill is now properly discharging wastewater to the Iowa Falls treatment system. A judge's order filed in Hardin County also requires Cargill facilities in Iowa Falls, Sioux City, Des Moines, and Cedar Rapids to comply with the state law. Bill Brady, a Cargill spokesman, said the company was pleased to have reached an agreement in the case. "Cargill takes its commitment to environmental stewardship very seriously and worked cooperatively with authorities to successfully resolve these issues," Brady said. (from the Mankato Free Press)

Minnesota Waters statewide Conference postponed

After much consideration, Minnesota Waters has decided to postpone the 2008 bi-annual Lakes and Rivers Conference. Originally scheduled for September, 2008, the three-day conference will now be held in May, 2009 at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester, MN. "Current financial and staffing challenges would have made it impossible to put on the high-quality event that Minnesota Waters members have come to expect," said new Executive Director Marian Bender. "I'd like to focus our energy this summer on getting out and working with citizen lakes and river groups, to help them be more effective during the more active summer months. Then in the fall we'll start working to create the best Rivers and Lakes conference ever in May 2009, to kick off next summer's activities."

Events:

March 13th (Thursday) is the **CURE's Bridge Builder's Gathering** from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Old Milan School. For more information go to www.curemriver.org

March 14th (Friday) a **Water Resources Science Seminar - Relative Influence of Climate Change on Flows in the Minnesota River at Mankato** presented by Jeramy Kulesa – M.S. Student, WRS from 3:00-3:50 pm at 375 Borlaug Hall - University of Minnesota - St. Paul Campus. For more information: <http://www1.umn.edu/twincities/maps/BorH/>

March 17th (Monday) the **Minnesota River Board** is meeting at the Sibley County Courthouse – Lower Level – in Gaylord. 8:30 a.m. is the Executive Committee meeting and 9:30 a.m. the Full Board meeting. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverboardmarch.pdf>

March 27 – 28 (Thursday & Friday) is the Shallow Lakes Forum V – Managing Shallow Lake Habitats and Biota at the Bigwood Event Center, Fergus Falls. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/shallowlakesforum2008.pdf>

March 29th (Saturday) is the **Far North Symposium** sponsored by the Minnesota Canoe Association from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/canoeposter.pdf>

April 5th (Saturday) is **Unlocking the Secrets of the Minnesota River** presentation at 10:15 a.m. at the Linneaus Arboretum, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter. For more information: <http://mrdbc.mnsu.edu/calendar/pdfs/leagueofwomenvoterspresentation.pdf>

April 13th (Sunday) is the program **Water Presentation in Natural Settings** from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center, Mankato. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/holyspiritpresentation.pdf>

Job Openings:

Carver County is currently accepting applications for an Environmentalist II in their Environmental Services Department. One of the duties will be working on elimination of direct discharges to the MN River Watershed via our TMDL program. I encourage any interested party to call me and discuss this position and life with Carver County. Thanks! Michael Lein, REHS; Environmental Services Manager; Land and Water Division; Carver County; 952-361-1802. For more information, www.co.carver.mn.us or <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/carvercountyenvironmentalist.pdf>

Meeker Soil and Water Conservation District is hiring a Meeker County Feedlot Officer. This position will be responsible for permitting & administering animal feedlots, manure storage areas & registration programs according to Minnesota Rule Chapter 7020 and the Meeker County Feedlot Ordinance. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/meekerfeedlotposition.pdf>

Washington Conservation District is hiring a Natural Resource Specialist. They are seeking a talented, self-motivated individual to support watershed plan implementation, natural resource management, and water quality protection in Washington County, Minnesota. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/wcdposition.pdf>

The Crow River Organization of Water is looking for a full-time Watershed Technician, headquartered out of Buffalo, Minnesota. The position is responsible for implementing activities associated with water quality monitoring and assessment and other duties as assigned. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/crowrivertechician.pdf>

Water Quality Articles:

House bill would create database of Minn. pesticide use. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture tracks the sale of pesticides in the state but not how they are used. This bill would create a public database on how pesticides are being used, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pesticideusedatabase.pdf>

Legislation would force pesticide notification. A bill introduced in the House would require farmers to provide a notice on when they spray their crops with a pesticide like atrazine, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/legislationpesticidenotification.pdf>

Pesticides are a public problem. Legislation would make pesticide users accountable to the public and environment, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pesticidespublicproblem.pdf>

Pesticide tracking may prove a pesky task for farmers. Some legislators and farmers are not supportive of a bill to create a public database of pesticides used in the state, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pesticidetrackingbyfarmers.pdf>

Our View: Pesticide bill goes too far. According to the Mankato Free Press, the pesticide bill has good intentions but would be far too onerous for a negligible benefit, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/pesticidebillgoestooofar.pdf>

Vacuum Bags, Showers Could Be Dirtying Your Air. There are a number of ways you can improve the air quality in your house including in the bathroom and with your vacuum cleaner, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/whatsdirtyingyourhome.pdf>

Carbon trading brings ag opportunities. The concept of buying and selling carbon credits will be interesting to watch in future years, as industry comes under increased pressure to reduce carbon emissions, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/carbontradingagopportunities.pdf>

Bill advances in Senate to create a citizen's outdoors oversight group. A bill to create a citizen's council to oversee spending of an estimated \$91 million yearly for fish and wildlife habitat and land conservation advanced in the Minnesota Senate. <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/citizenoutdooroversightgroup.pdf>

Cottage Grove wary of water assurances. At a community meeting, residents voiced skepticism of a state study that said the safety level of drinking water was acceptable, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cottagegrovewaryofwaterassurance.pdf>

Study: Death rate up for 3M workers exposed to PFOA. The study examined death records among the 4,000 workers at the Cottage Grove plant from 1943 to 1997, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/deathrateupforexposedworkers.pdf>

Energy efficient house saves money with a small carbon footprint. The builders of a new house in Duluth have found a way to both reduce pollution and save money on the cost of energy, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/energyefficienthouse.pdf>

Ethanol a big factor, among several, driving up food prices. The impact of higher food prices is hitting people all over the place with much of the blame being placed on the growing ethanol industry, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ethanolbigfactorfoodprices.pdf>

Pawlenty wants feds to take a look at E20. The performance of vehicles using the 20% ethanol blend is comparable to that of vehicles using E10, two studies find, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ethanolblendforvehicles.pdf>

Farm Bill in limbo as March 15 deadline approaches. With the latest deadline for passing the farm bill looming most in the conservation community believe it wouldn't happen again, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/farmbilllimbo.pdf>

My Forbidden Fruits (and Vegetables). If you've stood in line at a farmers' market recently, you know that the local food movement is thriving, to the point that small farmers are having a tough time keeping up with demand, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/myforbiddenfruits.pdf>

GOP convention may go much greener than the party will. The Republican National Convention in St. Paul this summer should have all the hoopla but less trash and more environmental consciousness than the party's 2004 New York convention, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/gopconventionmaygreenerthanparty.pdf>

Institute grows ideas for Minnesota crops. Wheat from about 15,000 acres of Minnesota fields will end up in kitty litter boxes worldwide this year, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/institutegrowsideasmncrops.pdf>

Big Stone II concerns Native Americans. Environmental issues are raised at a forum discussing the South Dakota power plant, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/nativeamericanconcerns.pdf>

Organics push takes recycling beyond bottles, cans and paper. A company that provided curbside pickup of organic waste in Wayzata now offers service for businesses in Hennepin County, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/organicsrecyclingpush.pdf>

Outdoors investment an opportunity of a lifetime. Kent Hrbek says Minnesota is blessed with some of the best hunting and fishing opportunities in the country and the so-called Legacy Bill will provide a tremendous shot in the arm for our natural resources, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/outdoorlifetimeinvestment.pdf>

Paper cup ban isn't hard for council to swallow. Minneapolis City Council members extracts support for new mugging policy – and empties the cupboards in the process, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/papercupbancitycouncil.pdf>

Bill Boyne: Saving the earth means starting now. Bill Boyne writes that we need to start taking corrective action to avoid global warming and other environmental issues, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/savingearthmeansnow.pdf>

Some are cool to DFLers' greenhouse-gas reduction proposal. Two DFL lawmakers want to shape a pollution trading system designed to cut greenhouse gases, but they're running into obstacles, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/somecooltogreenhouseproposal.pdf>

State needs to continue leading the way toward renewable energy use. Governor Pawlenty is calling for gradually increasing our biodiesel requirement from the current 2 percent up to 20 percent and investments in new energy technology, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/staterenewableenergymovement.pdf>

Train spills antifreeze into river, Hwy. 10 reopened. A major commerce route for one of the nation's largest railroads was closed after a train ruptured on a bridge connecting Minnesota and Wisconsin, spilling 20,00 gallons of antifreeze, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/trainspillantifreezeintoriver.pdf>

Trains and boats and planes all expected to be affected by climate change. Flooded roads and subways, deformed railroad tracks and weakened bridges may be the wave of the future with continuing global warming, a new study says, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/transportationaffectedbyclimatechange.pdf>

UMM's clean energy bonds valued at \$5.6 million. University of Minnesota, Morris has received three Clean Renewable Energy Bonds that will continue to move the Morris campus forward as a national leader in renewable energy systems and to meet the campus goal of becoming energy self-sufficient by 2010, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/ummcleanenergybonds.pdf>

What's in the water? Pharmaceuticals and other drugs such as ibuprofen and sex hormones have been found in water supplies for 24 major areas, an Associated Press investigation showed, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/whatsinthewater.pdf>

From wind to fuel cells, wireless carriers look at making towers 'greener.' When wireless industry technicians speak of "green" cell towers these days, they're not just talking about making them look more like trees, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/windfuelcellgreentowers.pdf>.

Study indicates a decline of a vanishing icon. Minnesota's moose are in trouble. The population of this iconic mammal that symbolizes the northern Minnesota landscape is in decline, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/declineofvanishingicon.pdf>

Legislators seek a voice in a policies to curb greenhouse gases. As Governor Pawlenty works on a regional system for trading pollution credits to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Minnesota Legislature is considering ways to influence the outcome, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/lawmakerspoliciesgreenhousegases.pdf>

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Bill Gets Cool Reception. Two DFL lawmakers want to shape a pollution trading system designed to cut greenhouse gases, but they're running into obstacles, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/greenhousereductionbill.pdf>

When you put your hand in a flowing stream, you touch the last that has gone before and the first of what is still to come. – Leonardo da Vinci

High quality water is more than the dream of the conservationists, more than a political slogan; high quality water, in the right quantity at the right place at the right time, is essential to health, recreation, and economic growth. Of all our planet's activities - - geological movements, the reproduction and decay of biota, and even the disruptive propensities of certain species (elephants and humans come to mind) - - no force is greater than the hydrologic cycle. – Richard Bangs and Christian Kallen, Rivergods, 1985

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,

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