

Web of Life, Way of Life Conference

I was fortunate to attend the Web of Life conference last Saturday sponsored by the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry at the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato. Everyone who was involved in the planning and putting on the conference should be proud. They did a great job at making people feel welcomed, provided a delicious meal and had engaging speakers. I especially enjoyed the interaction between the audience and the various speakers, making it feel more like old-time revival. Well done and if you get a chance, please attend next year's conference, you wouldn't regret it.

Minnesota River Board Meeting

Representative Morrie Lanning from Moorhead, MN presented his viewpoints for a Watershed Management Structure for the State of Minnesota. He talked about his bill in the MN House to create watershed management districts for the entire state with all nine major basins organized in this fashion. The bill will have language that spells out the four points:

- There is a need to have a basin-wide approach in order to address all of the water quality problems the state is experiencing and an incentive for watershed districts to form.
- Need to deal with all water and land issues tied to water quality.
- Need to have a basin plan spelling out what are the issues and how each will be addressed.
- There still needs to accountability to make sure the work gets done.

Other comments:

- Who the representatives on the board will be still hasn't been decided.
- Taxing Ability – according to Lanning, we can't solve our water resource problems without funding. We can't completely rely on state and federal funds. There needs to be a local contribution.
- Help is needed to implement all the TMDLs (MPCA is looking at the basin approach for the TMDLs)

Darrell Schindler leaving Hawk Creek WP

Hawk Creek Watershed Project Executive Director Darrell Schindler has taken a new job with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as a project manager in the Willmar office. Hawk Creek Watershed Project will be hiring a new executive director in the near future. More information on this job opportunity will be provided as soon as it is available.

Colton Witte and Sean Bloomfield

If you missed hearing the story of Colton and Sean from Chaska and their paddling adventure to Hudson Bay, check out this article from Conservation Minnesota, <http://www.conservationminnesota.org/magazine/pages.cfm?subsec=106&id=725>

A 'Green Island' Paradise

WADENA — In central Minnesota, where prairie and woodlands meet near Wadena, a Green Island sits where once the venerable dairy farm reigned supreme.

Kent Scheer is developing his property in a way that considers stewardship of natural resources and potential profitability. Through methods both well-known and "new school," Scheer is working toward sustainable alternatives to familiar land uses, such as the family dairy farm once operated on the land he has lived on for 20 years, now called Green Island. For the rest of the article, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/greenislandparadise.pdf>

Job Opportunities

Soil and Water Conservation Society Executive Director

The Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) is still seeking applicants for the position of Executive Director. As a member of the Society, you have an important role to play in this process. We are asking that you take every opportunity to make known publicly of the open Executive Director position. If you also know of any individual that might be interested, please take the time in making him or her aware of the opening.

SWCS is seeking an individual who is committed to the conservation mission and who will provide strong leadership to the organization. This individual will be responsible for all aspects of the program, budget, and staffing. The Executive Director reports to the Board of Directors and serves as a key spokesperson for the organization. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/swcsexecutivedirector.pdf>

Events:

November 20th (Thursday) is “**Writing for Social Change**” **Panel Discussion** from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the United Church of Christ (212 North 4th Street) in Montevideo. Sponsored by Clean Up the River Environment (CURE), the panel discussion will include Joe Amato, Joe Paddock, Florence Dacey, Jim Van der Pol and Athena Kildegaard and moderated by Patrick Moore. For more information go to www.curemriver.org<<http://www.curemriver.org/>>

November 25th (Tuesday) is the “**Voyage down the Minnesota River**” **presentation** starting at 7:00 p.m. at the New Ulm Public Library (17 N. Broadway Street). Join Tim Krohn and John Cross of the Mankato Free Press for an amazing look at their journey down the Minnesota River this past summer and the interesting people they met along the way. This event is co-sponsored by the Regional River History Center of New Ulm and the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance. For more information contact Scott Kudelka at 507-389-2304 or by email at scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu<<mailto:scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu>>

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

Water Quality Articles

[All kids should be as lucky as Max](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Some kids have lots of outdoors opportunities, but the Conservation Fund is trying to help those who don't.

[Senator plans 2009 introduction of transmission 'superhighway'](#) (Finance & Commerce). North Dakota's Dorgan signs on to grid plan envisioned by T. Boone Pickens.

[Xcel looks to harness wind energy for use even when there's no wind](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The project, which also includes the state and a tech firm, is installing a battery that is the first U.S. device that can store wind power.

[Wood-burning heating devices could pose serious health risks](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Many homeowners worried about fluctuating fuel prices this winter are still turning to wood heating sources. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has certification programs to ensure that newer wood stoves and outdoor wood boilers burn cleaner and more efficiently than older models. Although these wood heating devices are more efficient, the smoke they emit is associated with lung and heart problems.

[Editorial: There's lots to like in 'Green JOBZ' push](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin). Gov. Tim Pawlenty still has at least two years remaining in his current term, so it's probably premature to speculate about what his legacy might be.

[Editorial: Legacy spending must pass smell test](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). “The Candidate,” a seminal 1972 film about unlikely U.S. Senate candidate Bill McKay (Robert Redford), ends with a surprise victory and McKay asking, “What do we do now?”

[Endangered species have home on market shelves](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). As Minnesota's immigrant communities hold onto their healing traditions, sales of illegal plant and animal products draw a federal crackdown.

[Talking Points -- We can't get fooled again](#) (Morris Sun Tribune). Many of us have spent months enduring the weeping and gnashing of teeth as the economy turns our 401Ks into 0.401Ks and our kids have to figure out a way to be paid like a doctor so they can afford to go to school to try become one.

[State's 'new energy' edge](#) (Pioneer Press). Minnesota's renewable energy boosters point to iconic images like Buffalo Ridge in the southwest part of the state, where rows of giant wind turbines spin; or to ethanol plants rising above green fields of corn; or maybe to onyx-colored solar panels tilting into the sun from the roofs of the Mississippi Market in St. Paul or a public works building in Minneapolis.

[Once booming, now beaten down, ethanol enters a new era with some ...](#) (Pioneer Press). Remember the golden era of ethanol? You should — it was only last year. Investors poured in, a plant-building frenzy hit the Corn Belt, and politicians raced to aid the boom.

[MDA helping organic, speciality-crop producers with scholarship](#) (Agri News). The Minnesota Department of Agriculture and several partners are offering scholarships to help all organic producers and non-organic speciality crop growers pay for farm business management classes.

[Wall Street mess worries wind power developers](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The Wall Street financial crisis may be slowing development of alternative energy sources like wind. Some of the largest wind energy projects in the nation are in our region. Wind energy developers are nervous, but still optimistic.

[Xcel using bus-sized batteries to store wind energy](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Wind turbines can generate electricity when the wind is blowing, but they don't when it's calm. That's one of the biggest problems with the alternative energy source. But now, Xcel Energy is experimenting with gigantic batteries as a way to solve one of wind power's most vexing problems.

[Editorial: Honesty About Ethanol](#) (New York Times). One of the 2007 energy bill's most ambitious provisions — the ethanol mandate — has turned out to be its most troublesome. The provision would boost ethanol production from 7-plus billion gallons today to 36 billion gallons by 2022. In practical terms, this means doubling the production of corn ethanol until advanced forms of ethanol and other biofuels kick in.

[Jim Olson: A well-kept secret at the water's edge](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). One of my favorite places to ride my bike is to Fort Snelling. Not to the fort itself, but down below to the river bottoms. This place has a storied history as the birthplace of Minnesota.

[MPCA chief resigns](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The head of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is leaving after two years on the job.

I remember a hundred lovely lakes, and recall the fragrant breath of pine and fir and cedar and popular trees. The trail has strung upon it, as upon a thread of silk, opalescent dawns and saffron sunsets. It has given me blessed release from care and worry and the troubled thinking of our modern day. It has been a return to the primitive and the peaceful. Whenever the pressure of our complex city life thins my blood and benumbs my brain, I seek relief in the trail; and when I

hear the coyote wailing to the yellow dawn, my cares fall from me – I am happy. – Hamlin Garland

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

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