

American River's Most Endangered Rivers List

Scott Sparlin of the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River was interviewed by KEYC TV in Mankato about the proposed Big Stone Coal II Plant and how it will affect the Minnesota River. http://www.keyc.tv/themes/keyc/dpvid_helper.php?autoplay=false&continuousPlay=false&articleID=&domain=keyc.dayport.com&categoryId=&playerInstanceId=80B21567-1EF0-FA42-AD86-2A112BF28250&enableFullScreenButton=false&playVideoAds=true&articleID=160070

A note from Patrick Moore of CURE

We had a great turn out for our spring clean up yesterday. 36 people collected 72 garbage bags filled with more than 200 pounds of bottles, cans, paper cups and other trash along the river between Wegdahl and Stony Run Creek north of Granite Falls along Hwy 212. It is amazing what a small army of people can do in just a few hours!

One last thought for these uncertain times: The river doesn't worry about where it is going. It flows with confidence and a relaxed, receptive awareness. It is always open to the next unfolding experience around the bend. This is how I want to be. Floating on a river, or sitting by its bank, is the best way I know to practice and soak in this wisdom.

Start planning your trip on a river this spring. The Lac qui Parle River is perfect right now. Line up your canoes and kayaks for May 16th and 17th for the [Annual River and History weekend](#). Get your camping gear and lawn chairs dusted off. Duane Ninneman is preparing a talk about the history of Religious Movements in the Upper MN River Watershed. Should be interesting! See ya outside. Patrick J. Moore 1-877-269-2873 www.cureriver.org

2009 Wheelies Expo & Family Bike Ride

Go for a "spin" with your family & learn all about bikes! The Free family event will be held on May 16th (Saturday) from 9 a.m. to 12noon at Huber Park, Shakopee. This bike ride will go from Shakopee to Chaska and back for a total of 10 miles. There will be a light refreshment and healthy snacks. Musical entertainment will be provided by The Splatter Sisters. In addition, there will also be bike registration, bike silent action & door prizes, bike safety & education handouts, bike maintenance demos, and much more. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/familybikeride.pdf>

Poisoned Waters

More than three decades after the Clean Water Act, two iconic waterways—the great coastal estuaries Puget Sound and the Chesapeake Bay—are in perilous condition. With polluted runoff still flowing in from industry, agriculture, and massive suburban development, scientists fear contamination to the food chain and drinking water for millions of people. A growing list of endangered species is also threatened in both estuaries. As a new president, Congress, and states set new agendas and spending priorities, FRONTLINE correspondent Hedrick Smith examines the rising hazards to human health and the ecosystem, and why it's so hard to keep our waters clean. Starts April 21st on PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/poisonedwaters/>

Friends and Fans of the Ney Nature Center

The Ney Nature Center has a lot of activities coming up: Programs, field trips, service projects and committee tasks to sum it up. Please consider helping us out in these 4 ways:

- We have an Eagle Scout who, along with fellow scouts, will begin painting buildings on the Kahlow and Ney homesteads in May. He is in need of paint brushes, scrapers and buckets. Anyone willing to donate these items please contact Becky to make arrangements before May 1st.
- Next week we have programs scheduled throughout the week "Celebrate The Earth Week".
 - Monday, April 20th, 3pm-7pm we could use extra hands to help build and fly kites with visitors
 - Wednesday April 22nd 5pm-8pm we could use volunteers to lead a few crafts, games and other activities.

- [Friday April 24th 5pm-8pm](#) we will celebrate Arbor Day by planting trees and hosting a tree id challenge. Volunteers are needed for various tasks.
- If you can aid us or would like more information on these volunteer opportunities please contact Becky ASAP.
- **Field Trips!!!**
We need individuals to help out as chaperones, assistants, organizers and leaders for our upcoming fieldtrips. We will find a role you feel comfortable with! This is your chance to get involved and share the wonders of the NNC and nature with kids! If you would like to volunteer on a more behind the scenes basis please consider attending the Programs Committee Meeting on May 5th at 4pm.
 - [May 8th, 9am-Noon](#) – Gibbon (30 students), 1-4th graders Their program consists of General Nature Activities.
 - [May 13th, 9am-2pm](#) – Sibley East 6th Graders (96 students split into 4 groups), Birding topics.
 - [May 22nd, all school day](#) – Belle Plaine - Blue Bird House Building. Extra hands with hammers are needed. Alternate Rain day May 29th.
 - [Thursday June 18th-](#) YMCA Shakopee – 60 Kindergarteners. Program on Frogs and other amphibians and reptiles.
 - These are what we have scheduled so far, watch for more field trips as spring progresses. If you can help out any of these days please contact Becky!
- [Saturday, May 23rd, 8am](#) Site Committee Work day- Let us know you are coming by contacting Becky! Tasks include various spring cleaning things, trail grooming, building maintenance, and whatever else is on the Committee's to-do list!
- [Dig It! Day Camp-](#) The NNC's summer day camp provides the opportunity to be involved throughout the summer or when it is convenient for you, one day or all days, younger kids or older kids, the choice is yours. Day Camp volunteer roles needed include chaperones, snack person/lunch person, program leaders, a craft person, program designers, first aider/nurse, and others. The program consists of anything that can be related to digging. For example, dinosaurs, archeology, soil studies, worms, rocks, ground water, roots, burrowing animals, etc... Volunteers how volunteer two or more days and commit by May 29th will receive a Dig It! Day Camp T-shirt. Those interested in behind the scenes volunteering are encouraged to attend our Programs Committee Meeting on May 5th at 4pm or contact Becky ASAP (507-248-3474).
 - Camp will be from 9am-4pm:
 - Bluebirds (Completed K-2nd graders) [June 22 and 23, July 13 and 14, August 17th and 18th.](#)
 - Eagles (Completed 3-6th graders) [June 29th and 30th, July 20th and 21st, August 24th and 25th.](#)

Paddling Report from Clean Up the River Environment (CURE)

Several CURE members have been out on the area rivers. Here is what they say:

- **Yellow Medicine and Hawk Creek** are low according to Butch Halterman & Travis Zachman. Kayakable but barely. Canoes are definitely out.
- **Chippewa River** is good according to Ralph Heidorn. There is a new strainer between Sonstegard's bridge and Lagoon Park but you can squeeze past it for now.
- Tom Cherveney and Shawn Anderson have been out on the **Minnesota** for some nice flood stage floats. In some ways, this is the best time of year to be on the Minnesota since the water is high enough to see over the banks.
- What is the word on the **Lac qui Parle** or the **Pomme de Terre**? If you know, let me know and we'll pass it along – Patrick Moore (1-877-269-2873). CURE awards a patch – Prairie River Paddler Patch – to anyone who paddles 6 rivers in the Upper Minnesota River Watershed. The rivers are the Pomme de Terre, Minnesota, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Yellow Medicine and Hawk Creek.

Composting with Worms

The Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry is hosting an upcoming workshop on **Saturday, May 2nd, 10 am, "Composting with Worms"** here at the Red Barn atop Good

Counsel Hill. Free worms to participants to start their own bins! For more information, <http://www.ssndmankato.org/whatwedo/ministries/earth.php>

Job Opportunities:

BROWN COUNTY POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Biology or a related area of study college student for an internship to assist the Brown County Water Plan Administrator from May to October of 2009 (Dates are flexible). Class D driver's license required. Salary \$10.00/hr. for 20 hrs/week. Contact Leah Crabtree, Brown County Personnel Director 507-233-6603 or online at: <http://www.co.brown.mn.us> by April 24, 2009.

Whitewater Watershed Turbidity Technician

Two year, contractual agreement. Part time/Seasonal: approximately 40 hours/week in spring, 15-30 hours/week in summer, approximately 9 hours per week in fall and winter with the Lewiston, Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation District office. Pay is \$12-\$18, based on qualifications. Responsibilities include: Assess agricultural tillage (conventional, conservation, no-till), crop residue, and cover crop practices for selected sub-watersheds; Assess sheet/rill erosion for selected sub-watersheds; Collect water samples for lab analysis from select monitoring stations and prepare water samples for transport and shipping to lab and other duties. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/whitewaterposition.pdf>

Events:

April 28th (Tuesday) – **Would Mankato Benefit from a Co-op? – A Community Conversation** at the Elk's Nature Center in Rasmussen Woods (555 Stoltzman Road) in Mankato from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Over the past couple of years, conversation around the topic at hand has happened over coffee, in the grocery store line and as people of like minds and preferences cross paths. Meetings held recently have determined that there is a strong community interest in exploring the possibilities. Join interested community members the last Tuesday of each month and assist in moving this question into action mode.

May 7 – 8 (Thursday & Friday) is the **2009 Lakes and Rivers Conference** at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester. Chose from more than 50 informational presentations on a variety of topics. For more information or to register: www.minnesotawaters.org

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

Water Quality Articles

[Quam wants roots to run green](#) (Marshall Independent). Lois Quam sees plenty of green opportunity in Minnesota and the region, and believes a connection to the roots of many Minnesotans will make those opportunities a reality.

[University report warns water consumption for corn-ethanol on the rise](#) (MinnPost). While recycling and other advancements have reduced water use in Minnesota's corn-ethanol plants by a third of the levels of just a few years ago, increased reliance on irrigated corn has pushed water consumption to alarming levels in desert Southwest and parts of California.

[PUC to decide on huge powerline project](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission decides this week whether several utilities can build nearly 600 miles of powerlines across the state. The PUC hears arguments on the case today and tomorrow. The CapX 2020 project is part of a push to upgrade the state's transmission system, and it would cost roughly \$2 billion to complete.

[Counterpoint: Clean energy will create jobs](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann argued on these pages April 8 against a cap-and-trade policy. But her argument

ignored both the real cause of energy price hikes and job loss in America today, while missing the incredible opportunity that exists in passing comprehensive climate-change legislation to create millions of jobs building the clean-energy economy.

[Prof wins prestigious award for years of climate research](#) (MN Daily). A University of Minnesota professor was one of 180 artists, scientists and scholars in the United States and Canada awarded a 2009 Guggenheim Fellowship.

[Zebra mussels force Prior Lake alert](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Zebra mussels have sneaked into every part of Prior Lake, the first major recreational lake in the metro area to be infested, state officials confirmed Tuesday.

[Trail may threaten century-old trees](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Road construction will push Pioneer Trail to within 22 feet of the hickory trees on the site of a historic Eden Prairie home.

[Arsenic kills Buffalo Lake meat plant; 200 lose jobs](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). North Star Beef closes after its owner can't afford to lower arsenic levels in the plant's water.

[Minneapolis Superfund site gets more cleanup money](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). An arsenic-tainted neighborhood in south Minneapolis will get an injection of as much as \$25 million in federal stimulus money to continue cleaning up the site.

[MinnPost introduces new weather report with Paul Douglas](#) (MinnPost). In partnership with Conservation Minnesota, MinnPost.com introduces a new weather report, featuring a daily essay by Paul Douglas.

[Study: Ethanol production more efficient in Minnesota](#) (MN Daily). The study found producing one liter of ethanol in Minnesota requires 19 liters of water, compared to 2,100 liters of water needed in California.

[Closed beef plant owes back taxes, was fined for waste dumping](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A faltering meatpacker in Buffalo Lake is blaming drinking water regulations for his shutdown. But the town's mayor says clean water is readily available for the plant to use.

[Get ready to go green for Earth Day](#) (Twin Cities Daily Planet). The snow has melted, the grass is starting to turn green and preparations are under way for Earth Day celebrations across the Twin Cities.

[Sustainability efforts moving ahead in Minneapolis](#) (MinnPost). There were no combined sewer overflows during storms last year and Minneapolis is gaining on Portland, Ore., in the quest to be the most bicycling city in the nation.

[Session enters its final month](#) (Outdoor News). Given a May 18 adjournment, state lawmakers have about a month to finalize a budget that's likely to include painful cuts in many areas.

[Audit recommends ending ethanol subsidies in Minnesota](#) (Associated Press). Ethanol: boon or bane? That debate has long raged in Minnesota, and on Friday the legislative auditor gave an official verdict: It's a bit of both.

[Get rid of ethanol subsidies, state's auditor says](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesota should get out of the business of subsidizing the state's ethanol industry, the Legislative Auditor's office said today.

[EPA finds greenhouse gases pose a danger to health; first step to climate change regulations](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Citing global warming, health danger, EPA sets stage for new pollution limits for cars, plants.

[Ecolab pledges to cut emissions 20 percent by 2012](#) (MinnPost). Ecolab says it plans to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent per dollar of sales between 2006 and 2012.

[Save green by going green](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Not so long ago, when good times were rolling and people were making money every which way, being green was trendy -- and easy.

[More boat checks planned in fight against zebra mussels](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Officials plan 30 percent more inspections and urge thorough boat-cleaning practices to try to slow the spread of ride-along invasive species on Lake Minnetonka.

[Minnesota Senate votes less money for agriculture, more for veterans](#) (Pioneer Press). With relatively little debate, the Minnesota Senate on Friday endorsed a package that cuts spending for farm programs but gives military veterans a bit more money.

[Legislative politics snag Minnesota's Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council's work](#) (Pioneer Press). In a remarkable turn of events, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources last week asked a Minnesota state lawmaker not to waste taxpayer's money.

[\\$1.7 billion power line project crisscrossing Minnesota is OK'd](#) (Pioneer Press). Minnesota regulators approved plans Thursday for a group of utilities to build three long-distance, high-voltage transmission lines — with the condition that one line carry wind energy.

[State parks: Minnesotans are out and about even more](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesota state parks attracted 8 percent more campers in 2008 than in 2007, according to the Department of Natural Resources. Is camping a recession-proof outdoor obsession among Minnesotans?

Rivers are important, essential, vital to America as we know it and to life on earth. Obviously, we need water to live. Less obvious but just as important, a vast biological community requires healthy rivers. And beyond all that, who we are relates to where we are and to what we see. – Tim Palmer

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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