

Minnesota River Watershed Alliance – October Meeting Notes - 2010 “Clean up the MN River” Focus

Audrey broke up everyone into small groups of three to come up with ideas for the 2010 focus as a way to start the discussion on what we would want to work on as the Watershed Alliance. She told everyone to think about the possibilities and use our imagination to overcome some of the financial constraints. The group will pick the 2010 focus issue at the January 19, 2010 meeting. Audrey also highlighted Jim Schafer’s comment, “I want to leave more than I take.”

The list of ideas the individual groups came up with:

- Continue with MN River Friendly Label
- Compare and study land use types for 50 feet setback along waterways and county enforcement process
- Assemble local groups on guided canoe trips.
- Mark bridge crossings with signs and identification along with other watercourses including ditches and cool spots
- Keep meeting quarterly – networking and speakers.
- Communicate Lake Pepin TMDL – a big deal – Act as a bridge between landowners and Lake Pepin folks
- Roll out the River Patches
- Participate with Minnesota River documentary and interactive web site
- Carry one another’s messages
- Promote the national heritage area status
- Drinking water – keeping it clean
- Host Governor’s Fishing Opener and highlight possibilities

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council – Green Corridor Legacy Program

The Green Corridor Legacy Program was recommended for funding by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) yesterday – December 15th – for \$1.651 million. According to Brad Cobb, Program Manager, this project received 11 of the 12 votes with anything above 7 votes received a recommendation for funding. The original proposal was for \$4.1 million with no proposal receiving a recommendation for full funding by the LSOHC. The Green Corridor Legacy Program original proposal outlined acquiring six different properties totaling 840 acres in the Minnesota River Basin and will be revised based on the lesser appropriations. All the properties will be developed as DNR Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and/or Aquatic Management Areas (AMA) to be open to the public use for various forms of outdoor recreation such as hunting, trapping, fishing, and wildlife observation.

For more information on the LSOHC: <http://www.lsohc.leg.mn/FY2011/index.html>

Clean Water Network’s new and improved website

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the Clean Water Network’s new and improved website. Thanks to the hard work of CWN’s webmaster Gordon Culver, CWN now has a much more user-friendly and attractive site. We also have an improved members only section where information can be found on workgroups, the latest legislative initiatives, regional news and much much more.

Please keep in mind that the site is new. After 17 years, CWN has accumulated hundreds of fact sheets, resource guides and toolkits. It will take us time to transfer all the Network’s materials from the old site to the new one. There may be glitches and technical snafus. We would appreciate it if you could let us know if you experience any trouble accessing the site.

If you are a CWN member organization please contact Gordon at gordonculver@cleanwaternet.org to get information on how to acquire a member username and password to access the member only portion of the site.

Many thanks to everyone who helped CWN take this giant leap forward. We owe a round of thanks to many folks for helping us develop a 21st century website including our website contractor Adam Rasmussen from UX Interactive and Ziv Gil our graphics designer at Vizualle. A big round of thanks to CWN staff Jennifer Peters and Gordon Culver for spending an unbelievable amount of time on this project to make the new site a reality.

Last but by no means least, many thanks to the C.S. Mott Foundation, The Park Foundation and the Turner Foundation for providing general support to CWN last year. Thank you for believing in the power of a national network of grassroots groups that works together to protect one of our most precious natural resources, Water! The new web site can be found at: <http://www.cleanwaternet.org/>

Events:

December 17th (Thursday) is the **Energy Conservation in Minnesota: Meeting the Challenge forum** from 12 noon to 4 p.m. at A.G. Hill Ballroom, Kaglin Commons, Macalester College (1600 Grand Ave.) St. Paul. Forum presenters will address the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP), which mandates an annual 1.5 percent annual energy savings goal. All Minnesota utilities will be expected to meet this goal beginning in 2010. The cost per person is \$30 for MEI members and \$60 for non-members. For more information <http://www.mn-ei.org/events/upcoming.html#energy>

On December 18th (Friday) the Montevideo Planeteers – a student group promoting environmental awareness in Montevideo – is sponsoring a "**Rocking the Holidays Concert**" at Carnegie Hall in Montevideo from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 to raise funds for building materials for a ground source heated home in Montevideo. For the "Rocking the Holidays Concert" details, click on: <https://sites.google.com/site/hillgroceryhouseproject/events>

January 19th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance quarterly meeting** starting at 6 p.m. with a social hour and the formal meeting at 7 p.m. at the Hutchinson Event Center (1005 15 South Plaza 15). This meeting will focus on choosing a 2010 "Clean Up the Minnesota River" issue.

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

Water Quality Articles:

[Gov. Pawlenty advocates combined efforts on ethanol research](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Gov. Pawlenty says he hopes ethanol producers in Minnesota have the chance to work with their counterparts in South America in the future.

[EU nations commit \\$3.6 billion a year to global climate fund, seek to rescue 'green' image](#) (Associated Press). EU leaders agreed Friday to commit euro2.4 billion (\$3.6 billion) a year until 2012 to help poorer countries combat global warming, as they sought to rescue their image as climate change innovators and bolster talks in Copenhagen.

[Senate aims for enviro management overhaul](#) (St. Paul Legal Ledger). Budget constraints, stringent state mandates and a changing state work force are among the natural resources management issues that senators on their chamber's Environment and Natural Resources Committee began chewing over this week.

[New farming practices in middle of global warming debate](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). America's vast stretches of farmland are a big resource in the fight against global warming because their soil traps carbon. But not all farmers believe changing their ways to help in that fight would be profitable.

[Opinion: Corn ethanol: A farmer's experience](#) (MN Daily). As a University of Minnesota alumnus, I support the open discussion of the value of biofuels in this academic setting. I'm also a farmer, and I want to contribute my thoughts about corn ethanol based on a farmer's experience.

[Opinion: Corn ethanol in growth stage](#) (MN Daily). As a University of Minnesota alum and an entrepreneur who recently raised angel capital to help consumers find alternative fuel stations (including ethanol), I am disappointed in The Minnesota Daily's skin-deep Dec. 7 editorial against ethanol.

[Mike Tidwell: Sorry, Kermit, it's too easy being Green](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). To protect the environment, changing personal behavior is nice; changing the law is better.

[From solar panels to electric trucks](#) (Finance and Commerce). Christopher Born is a self-proclaimed scrounger; is cheap to a fault; and has enough solar panels on his north Minneapolis garage to electrify his home at no cost during warm months.

[Book traces life of Walter J. Breckenridge](#) (MinnPost). A giant among Minnesota's naturalists was Walter J. Breckenridge, former director of the University of Minnesota's Bell Museum of Natural History.

[Dollars, deer down in third year of donation program](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). Hunters this year have donated fewer deer and less money to the state's venison donation program than they have during the past two years.

[World champ duck caller is Minnesota's own](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). On Nov. 28, the 29-year-old passenger elevator mechanic from Mankato became the unlikely winner of the World's Championship Duck Calling Contest in Stuttgart, Ark.

[A passion for green living and the environment](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Former Peace Corps volunteer Paul Thompson is still out to change the world.

[Editorial: It's important to shop locally](#) (Marshall Independent). Locally, in some cases, it means shopping in Marshall. It also means shopping in Tracy, Cottonwood, Minneota, Canby and other communities in our coverage area.

[New water plant inches forward](#) (Fairmont Sentinel). Fairmont City Council has authorized staff to proceed with plans for a new water plant, though one councilman and many citizens still have doubts about the best approach for the multi-million dollar project.

It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge. – Albert Einstein

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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