

Keep your eyes on Legacy dollars

In November, Minnesotans voted overwhelmingly for the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. The amendment provides new funding for clean water and our great outdoors. It also forbids the governor or Legislature to use the new funds to replace traditional conservation funding sources.

In our March 2 analysis of Gov. Pawlenty's proposed 2010-2011 budget, we've identified three cuts to existing conservation programs, totaling more than \$3 million, that appear to conflict with this constitutional requirement. We are calling on the Minnesota Legislature to reject these cuts and honor the voters' wishes.

Conservation Minnesota has created a new Web site, www.TheAmendment.org, to make it easy to track the actions of state decision-makers on conservation funding, and to find out about both threats to the funding and success stories. (Danielle Rice, Conservation Minnesota, Red Wing – Rochester Post Bulletin 3/7/2009)

Minnesota History Center Map Exhibit

This exhibit features dozens of maps, atlases and artifacts from the Society's collection, including an atlas from 1595, displayed alongside current road, city and tourist maps. The Society's extensive collection of early exploration and travel maps of North America includes document maps and atlases used by Europeans to understand the geography of the "new world" and illustrates how that understanding changed over time. Here is the link:

<http://content.mnhs.org/maps/>

U.S. EPA's Water Quality Video Contest

OWOW is sponsoring "EPA's Water Quality Video Contest" to offer engaging web content and help educate the public on protecting water resources. A \$2,500 cash prize is involved! (EPA employees, contractors, grantees, and immediate family members of those parties are not eligible for the prize but may enter the contest.) Check it out online at:

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/videocontest.html>

The City that Ended Hunger

by Frances Moore Lappé

A city in Brazil recruited local farmers to help do something U.S. cities have yet to do: end hunger.

"To search for solutions to hunger means to act within the principle that the status of a citizen surpasses that of a mere consumer." - CITY OF BELO HORIZONTE, BRAZIL

In writing *Diet for a Small Planet*, I learned one simple truth: Hunger is not caused by a scarcity of food but a scarcity of democracy. But that realization was only the beginning, for then I had to ask: What does a democracy look like that enables citizens to have a real voice in securing life's essentials? Does it exist anywhere? Is it possible or a pipe dream? With hunger on the rise here in the United States—one in 10 of us is now turning to food stamps—these questions take on new urgency.

To begin to conceive of the possibility of a culture of empowered citizens making democracy work for them, real-life stories help—not models to adopt wholesale, but examples that capture key lessons. For me, the story of Brazil's fourth largest city, Belo Horizonte, is a rich trove of such lessons. Belo, a city of 2.5 million people, once had 11 percent of its population living in absolute poverty, and almost 20 percent of its children going hungry. Then in 1993, a newly elected

administration declared food a right of citizenship. The officials said, in effect: If you are too poor to buy food in the market—you are no less a citizen. I am still accountable to you.

For the rest of the article: <http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=3330>

3rd Crop Producer Meeting on “Payments for Ecological Services” to be Held

Rural Advantage will be hosting the last of four 3rd Crop Producer Meetings on Monday, March 23, 2009. “Payments for Ecological Services” will focus on not only the monetary payments but also the environmental payments of various ecological services due to sustainable agricultural practices. Presentations begin at 10:00 am and adjourn at 3:30 pm.

The day will be led off by Rural Advantage’s own Linda Meschke, who will be discussing the concept of the Ecological Commodity Payment Package (ECoPayPack). The idea is to package the various ecological payments into one easy to use process. Following Meschke will be Gary Wertish of Minnesota Farmers Union presenting on Carbon Credit Trading. Marco Graziani, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, will then be discussing the future of Water Quality Trading. The last speaker of the morning session will be Dean Current of the Center of Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management at the University of Minnesota. Current will be presenting on the Minnesota Terrestrial Carbon Project.

Directly following the lunch break, Don Reicosky of USDA-ARS in Morris, Minnesota will present information on Carbon Cycling in our environment and agriculture. After Reicosky, attendees will be able to hear Mark Lindquist of Minnesota Department of Natural Resources discuss the habitat and hunting benefits that can arise from sustainable agricultural practices. Tim Gieseke, The Minnesota Project, will follow with his presentation on the Minnesota Project’s Conservation Commerce program. Next will be Mark Zumwinkle of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture. Zumwinkle will be sharing his knowledge and experiences on cover cropping and building carbon in soils. To end the day, Carissa Spencer of Martin County Natural Resources Conservation Services office will be bringing listeners up-to-date on the EQIP and Ecological Services programs.

Registration for the 3rd Crop Producer Meetings is free. Arrive at the Knights of Columbus Hall located at 920 E. 10th St. in Fairmont, MN at 9:30 am for registration and coffee. Or, stop by as your schedule permits. Lunch will be on your own. Any questions can be directed to Jill Sackett at 507.238.5449 or sacke032@umn.edu.

Job / Intern Opportunities:

Water Resource Technician

The Washington Conservation District out of Stillwater, MN is hiring a Water Resources Technician at the salary range of \$35,421 - \$56,670. HOURS/DAYS: Normal business hours, Monday - Friday. It may require evening meetings. Flex time and compressed work schedule available. Full-time position with benefits, two-year, limited term and extension dependent upon funding. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE (but not limited to):

- Assistance with stream, stormwater, infiltration, lake, biological and other water resource monitoring programs.
- Assistance with preparation of water resource monitoring reports.
- Assistance with site inspections, BMP implementation, and GIS mapping.
- Other duties as needed.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/washingtontech.pdf>

District Technician

Sherburne SWCD is hiring a full time District Technician. Please see the attached announcement. This position is funded for one year with the possibility of being funded beyond one year. The

position is responsible for performing a variety of tasks toward implementation of conservation practices, water resources monitoring and environmental education under the policies established by the Sherburne Soil and Water Conservation District.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/sherburnetech.pdf>

Seasonal Storm Water Utility Assistant – Erosion and Sediment Control Inspector

City of Rochester is hiring a seasonal position to complete erosion and sediment control inspections on home construction sites. As time and expertise allows, other duties will be assigned from the task list noted in the enclosed position description. This position will conduct storm water utility functions as needed by the Public Works Department to help implement the City of Rochester Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/rochesterposition.pdf>

Outreach Coordinator

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Coalition is hiring an Outreach Coordinator and its major duties include:

- Organize outreach events to increase producer awareness and understanding of water quality issues, impaired waters programs, and water quality research.
- Interact with producers one-on-one and in small group settings to assist in addressing local water issues.
- Work with the Discovery Farms Steering Committee and other Coalition staff to develop outreach and reporting plans.
- Coordinate communication among Discovery Farms partners, including participating farmers, agencies and the public audiences.
- Work with technical coordinator, executive director and others in development of educational programming and materials.
- Coordinate workshops and presentations for the Discovery Farms Program.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/outreachcoordinator.pdf>

Technical Coordinator

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Resources Coalition has a position opening for a Technical Coordinator. The major duties include:

- Provide technical analysis of water quality standards development, impaired waters programs, and water quality research to assist MAWRC member groups in dealing with water issues.
- Work with the Discovery Farms Steering Committee and other coalition staff to develop monitoring, data collection and reporting plans.
- Coordinate research activities among Discovery Farms partners, including participating farmers, monitoring contractors, agencies and steering committee.
- Provide technical support and assistance in meeting accountability requirements associated with grants.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/techcoordinator.pdf>

Grant Opportunities

LCCMR 2010 Funding Round – Deadline May 1, 2009

The Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) makes funding recommendations to the MN Legislature on an annual basis for up to 5.5 percent of the existing value of the MN Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund (Trust Fund). An estimated \$25.6 million is available from the Trust Fund for the funding cycle beginning July 1, 2010.

LCCMR is currently seeking proposals in the following seven areas, described in more detail at http://www.lccmr.leg.mn/RequestforProposals/2010/2010_RFP.pdf: A. Water Resources; B. Renewable Energy Related to Climate Change; C. Habitat Restoration, Enhancement, and Acquisition; D. Invasive Species; E. Natural Resource Conservation Planning and Implementation; F. Environmental Education; G. Creative Ideas

In particular the Environmental Education funding priority reads as such: Projects are sought that provide innovative delivery of environmental education, including professional development, to both K-12 and adult audiences and result in increased community involvement and leadership on environmental issues. Preference will be given toward efforts that develop understanding of climate change or that involve outdoor classroom settings.

LCCMR staff members are available to review and provide feedback on drafts of proposals if submitted by April 27, 2009. <http://www.lccmr.leg.mn/>

Events:

March 16th (Monday) is the Minnesota River Board Meeting at the Sibley County Service Center in Gaylord with the Executive Committee meeting at 8:00 a.m. and the Full Board from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. For more information,

http://mrbdc.mnsu.edu/org/mrbd/pdf/031609_FBMTG_AGENDA.pdf

March 18th (Wednesday) is a **Conservation Drainage Session** starting at 6:00 p.m. with free snacks and refreshments at the Joseph Brown Center in Henderson. This informational session is designed to help the public learn more about this exciting way of water management. Experts who have been working on the development of this concept along with those who have been involved with it for several years will be on hand to provide an overview and answer questions from the public. For more information,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/conservationdrainageflyer.pdf>

March 19th (Thursday) is the **Chippewa River Watershed Project Annual Meeting** at the Starbuck Community Center. The evening begins with registration and social gathering at 5 p.m., meal at 6 p.m. and program at 7 p.m. Meals are free with registration. Presentation will be given on the latest monitoring results and the upcoming Turbidity TMDL. To register call Jennifer Hoffman at 320-269-2139 ext 120. For more information,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/chippewaannualmeeting.pdf>

March 19th (Thursday) is the second of three **Conservation Drainage Sessions** starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Kilowatt Community Center in Granite Falls. For more information,

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/conservationdrainageflyer.pdf>

March 24th (Tuesday) is a presentation on **Energy Savings Landscapes** from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in Montevideo. Learn how trees and shrubs can be used to help you save energy year round. Strategically placed trees and shrubs in shelterbelts, windbreaks and in the home lawn, can enhance property value, aesthetics, wildlife habitat, and can reduce energy costs by 25 to 30%. Registration for each workshop is \$ 20. Pre-registration is requested. The public is invited to attend. To register for any of these workshops visit: <http://cfc.cfans.umn.edu/wa/> or contact Kathy Eckwright, 507-389-6972 or 888-241-3214, eckwr001@umn.edu.

March 29th (Sunday) is the **Chaska to York Factory in 49 Days presentation** at 7:00 p.m. at the Treaty Site History Center (1851 North Minnesota Avenue) just north of St. Peter on U.S. Hwy 169. Sean Bloomfield and Colton Witte will talk about their adventure last summer paddling the entire Minnesota and Red rivers all the way to the Hudson Bay. For more information call 507-934-2160 or museum@nchsmn.org

March 30th (Monday) is the **Shallow Lakes Forum VI – Development and Implementation of Shallow Lake Management Plan** at the Oak Ridge Conference Center in Chaska. For more information, <http://www.shallowlakes.info/>

April 7th (Tuesday) is the last of three **Conservation Drainage Sessions** starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Best Western Hotel in Mankato. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/conservationdrainageflyer.pdf>

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

Water Quality Articles

[Benefits For Making Your Home Energy Efficient](#) (WCCO TV). When the Minneapolis Home and Garden show opens on Wednesday morning, expect a lot of talk about the president's new stimulus plan.

[Should hunters switch to 'green' bullets?](#) (CNN). Three years ago, Phillip Loughlin made a choice he knew would brand him as an outsider with many of his fellow hunters: He decided to shoot "green" bullets.

[Rain gardens may relieve Owatonna flooding](#) (Owatonna People's Press). City officials are encouraging residents in the southeast part of Owatonna to take matters into their own hands when it comes to flooding.

[More consumers buy local produce](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Community-supported agriculture is having a growth spurt as more consumers embrace "buy local."

[Stream advocates are quiet heroes](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Clean water benefits us all, and those struggling to make it so deserve support.

[Hemp, hemp, hooray: Bill aims to aid farmers with new but controversial crop](#) (Minnesota Independent). It can be made into paper, rope, food, biodegradable plastic and even low-carbon concrete, but in Minnesota it is illegal to grow hemp.

[Outdoors notes: Make sure Legacy dollars are well-spent](#) (Rochester Post-Bulletin). A group that promoted the constitutional amendment to dedicate state sales tax money for the outdoors, clean water, parks and arts is now calling on sportsmen to contact legislators. The message: Protect the money and make sure it's used for its intended purposes.

[Xcel investing in manure power](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Green energy has become one of the hottest buzzwords of 2009, but Xcel Energy is investing in brown energy on the high plains of Colorado.

[Regional wind-energy proposal gets mixed reaction](#) (Associated Press). A proposal for a high-voltage power line that would transmit wind energy from sparsely populated areas of the gusty Midwest to some less-windy parts of the country is getting mixed reaction in Minnesota.

[Good mix: Corn plants and ethanol plants](#) (Morris Sun Tribune). Ethanol plants that use only the kernels of corn could slash their fossil fuel consumption and boost their energy efficiency by using the rest of the corn plant to generate heat and electricity, a new University of Minnesota study finds.

[Buildings kill lights to save birds' lives](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The Audubon Society's expanding "Lights Out" campaign is aimed at preventing birds from flying into buildings during spring migration.

[Feds buying up land in south metro for refuge](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Thousands of acres along the Minnesota River in and beyond the south metro are being bought to be added to a wildlife reserve to compensate for an old intrusion.

[Lawmakers fight back against critics of pet projects](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The idea of devoting \$1.8 million to research controlling the smell of pig dung stinks to high heaven to opponents of Congress' proclivity for pork-barrel projects.

[George Will: America, to its detriment, is a corn-fed country](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Tom Vilsack, Iowa's former governor, calls his "the most important department in government," noting that the Agriculture Department serves education through school nutrition programs and serves diplomacy by trying to wean Afghanistan from a poppy-based (meaning heroin-based) economy.

[Outdoor panel splits over how to spend amendment money](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The committee setting priorities for spending a portion of Minnesota's new sales tax is divided over how to spend the first round of money.

[\\$68 million conservation wish list stalls at council](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Some worries about the lack of metro projects recommended by the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council prompt changes and a vote next week.

[\\$40M urged to secure northern forest](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). A proposal to give permanent public access to more than 187,000 acres of north-central Minnesota forest received conditional approval Monday from an outdoors panel charged with picking such projects.

[Minneapolis plans energy-saving hour of darkness on March 28](#) (MinnPost). It's symbolic, to be sure, but a Minneapolis City Council committee has agreed to be part of "Earth Hour," when many uses of electricity will be stopped for an hour.

[EPA tests the 'green' value of ethanol](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). These are tough times for the corn ethanol industry. As much as one-fifth of the production capacity in the U.S. is shut down because of economic conditions. And now the Environmental Protection Agency is looking at whether ethanol is really as "green" as its supporters say it is.

[Memorial nature reserve could be sold](#) (Waseca County News). Just up the road from Barb Cliff's Waseca home is the Tom Cliff Jr. Memorial Wildlife Management Area, a permanent memorial to her husband who died of brain cancer in 1982.

[Taking out the tech trash](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Touring the plant at Materials Processing Corp. is like watching Santa's workshop in reverse.

We do need a 'new economy,' but one that is founded on thrift and care, on saving and conserving, not on excess and waste. An economy based on waste is inherently and hopelessly violent, and war is its inevitable by-product. We need a peaceable economy. – Wendell Berry

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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