

Prairie Biomass Harvest Field Days to be Held

FAIRMONT, Minn. (09/30/2009) – Save the Date! A series of four field days will be held this fall to discuss and demonstrate the harvesting of native prairie plants for renewable energy.

Field Day Dates:

- October 22 - Crookston, Minnesota - 1pm
- October 29 - Morris, Minnesota - 1pm
- November 5 - Brookings, South Dakota - 1pm
- November 12 - Windom, Minnesota - 1pm

Each of the field dates will focus on harvesting prairie species and how harvesting will affect water quality, soil quality, wildlife habitat, and other ecosystem services. Each site will begin with an informational presentation on the research and projects being done as well as time for open discussion of the benefits and tribulations of native prairie production and harvest. The discussion will be followed by a brief tour of the harvest sites and/or grass acres. Please dress accordingly for the outdoor tour.

The field days are brought to you by the following partners: University of Minnesota, Rural Advantage, South Dakota State University, EcoSun Prairie Farms, Minnesota Native Landscapes, University of Minnesota Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture through a Conservation Innovation Grant.

Forage Harvester Field Day

WASECA, Minn. (10/09/2009) – The University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center (SROC) will be hosting a New Holland FR9000 Forage Harvester with an 130FB Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) Woody Crop Header on Wednesday, October 21, 2009 (alternate date is October 22), from 12:00pm to 3:00pm. When utilizing the 130FB SRC Woody Crop Header, the New Holland FR9000 is capable of cutting and chipping woody biomass as if it was corn silage.

Questions and conversation regarding woody biomass for renewable energy and the New Holland FR9000 / 130FB Header will be conducted at 12:00pm and 2:00pm. The Woody Biomass Forage Harvester Demonstration Field Day will be held in the willow trials at SROC's Agricultural Ecology Research Farm.

Woody biomass is being proposed as a feedstock for a number of bio-industrial and renewable energy applications. The State University of New York's College of Environmental Science and Forestry has been working with Cornell University and Case New Holland to develop a harvest system for short rotation coppice woody biomass crops.

The New Holland FR9000 with a 130FB Header attachment is a harvest system using a conventional forage harvester equipped with a specialty cutting attachment for woody crop harvest. This self-propelled harvester can cut and chip standing short rotation woody biomass in the field in a single pass operation while providing wood chips of a uniform length and size.

Partners for this event include: Case New Holland; University of Minnesota Southern Research and Outreach Center; Rural Advantage; University of Minnesota Extension; Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management; University of Minnesota College of Forestry, Agriculture, and Natural Resource Sciences; and University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources.

Directions to SROC's Agricultural Ecology Research Farm: From State Hwy 14, follow signage for State Hwy 14 West. Immediately look for Co. Rd. 27. It will take you past the Waseca Airport. Follow to Co. Rd. 57 and the road construction. Travel east about 1.0 mile to Agricultural Ecology Research Farm.

Questions or concerns? Contact:

- Dr. Gregg Johnson – SROC – johns510@umn.edu 507-837-5617
- Jill Sackett – UM Extension and Rural Advantage – sacke032@umn.edu 507-238-5449

NNC's 1st Annual Fall Festival! - Saturday, October 17th – 1p.m.

Spend a wonderful autumn afternoon at the Ney Nature Center for our 1st annual Fall Festival on Saturday, October 17th from 1 pm to 6 pm. Join us in appreciation of the Ney Nature Center (NNC). There will be plenty to do for every age! Activities will include: tractor pulled wagon rides (handicapped accessible), fall and nature-themed games, crafts, refreshments, demonstrations, story time, guided hikes, Ney Homestead tours, door prizes, campfire with music, Ney family history display, Native American beading, a presentation on how leaves change color, and more. Socialize with others who love the NNC as much as you. Meet the NNC's Board of Directors, staff and interns. What a great opportunity to bring along friends, family and neighbors to experience the NNC. Use this occasion to renew your membership or join as a new member for 2010. Enter a drawing win prizes at the Membership table.

From 1-5 p.m.

- Games, crafts and Fall activities
- Scavenger Hunt
- Refreshments
- Fall Harvest Antique Equipment Demonstrations
- Tractor-pulled Wagon Rides
- Homestead Tours
- Cider Press Demonstrations
- Ney Family History Display
- Native American Beading Demonstration

Scheduled Events

- 1:30 – Guided Hike and Story Time
- 2:00 – Corn Husk Doll Making
- 2:30 – Story Time
- 3:00 – Large Group Games (20 people or more needed)
- 3:30 – “How and Why Leaves Change Colors” Presentation
- 5:00 - Supper (RSVP's Required, see info below)
- 6:00 - Campfire with Baked Apple Snack and Music

Optional Supper Details:

A 5:00 pm supper will be served. Please make Reservations by Extended date of Wednesday, October 14th. Members receive discounted price for supper. Families eat for \$20.00, Families with Membership eat for \$15.00. Individuals eat for \$7.00, 12 and under \$5.00, Members \$5.00, 12 and under \$4.00.

Call/e-mail Becky for additional info or to make reservations at 507-248-3474, neynaturecenter@frontiernet.net

Events:

October 20th (Tuesday) is the **Policy Form Series: Clean Water Legacy: Progress and Challenges in Protecting, Restoring and Preserving the Quality of Minnesota's Waters** from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Gray Freshwater Center in Excelsior, MN. For more information: <http://www.freshwater.org/index.php/contact-us>

October 20th (Tuesday) is the **Quarterly Meeting of the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance** at the Hutchinson Event Center (1005 Highway 15 South Plaza 15). The meeting starts at 6 p.m. with a social hour and food while the formal meeting begins at 7 p.m. and we strive to wrap up by 9 o'clock.

October 26th – 27th (Monday and Tuesday) is the **Water Resources Conference** at RiverCentre, St Paul. The Minnesota Water Resources Conference presents innovative and practical water resource

management techniques and highlights research about Minnesota's water resources. For more information, <http://wrc.umn.edu/waterconf/index.htm>

October 29th (Tuesday) is **Mike Lynch Minnesota Starwatch** at 7 p.m. at the Ney Nature Center outside of Henderson. Spend the night with the stars, constellations, planets, star clusters, galaxies, and nebulae. We start off with an indoor orientation followed by quality time outside under the heavens. Get to know the constellations and the great stories behind them. We'll also use large reflecting telescopes, including a giant 20" reflector, one of the biggest mobile telescopes in Minnesota for close up views of star clusters, nebulae, galaxies and other celestial treasures in our skies. You're invited to bring lawn chairs to make yourself comfy! Dress for outside weather! **Register with Community Education** <http://lesueur.registryinsight.com/>

November 7 (Saturday) is the **Crisis as Opportunity: Redesigning the Good Life Conference** from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the School Sisters of Notre Dame Mankato Provincial House Conference Center (170 Good Counsel Drive. For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/thegoodlife.pdf>

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

Water Quality Articles:

[Availability of fresh food, exercise linked to healthy living](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Efforts to bring a supermarket into an underserved St. Paul neighborhood shine a light on a often overlooked fact: where we live has a direct effect on how we eat, exercise and ultimately, how healthy we are.

[Experts call for stronger E. coli prevention](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Two Minnesota food safety experts called Tuesday for improved training for meat processing workers and better pasteurization techniques in response to heightened concern about E. coli-contaminated beef.

[How green is your school? 3 in Minnesota rank at top](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Report card measures how green colleges and universities are.

[Nobel Conference speaker focuses on climate change](#) (Mankato Free Press). Current models suggest more rain in extreme latitudes and the tropics and much less in the middle, including the southwestern United States. Droughts and hurricanes are expected to be more severe. Melting glaciers will affect the more than 600 million people who depend on the water.

[Kevin Hassett: Green is good, though not for employment](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). As a reason to address climate change, job creation is an illusion and distraction.

[Series of orders, suits haven't cleaned up N. Minnesota feedlot 'health hazard'](#) (MinnPost). Eye-watering plumes from a dairy feedlot north of Thief River Falls are a "health hazard" say authorities, and when the wind shifts nearby families and children must escape the foul air by evacuating, sometimes in the dead of night.

[Minnesota / Sewage discharge into lakes prompts petition](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). An environmental group petitioned the federal government Monday to force the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to do what it characterizes as a better job issuing permits required by the federal Clean Water Act.

[Nature shapes the course of storm drainage](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). More cities are urging residents to use rain gardens to handle street runoff and keep pollutants out of lakes and streams.

[Three west-metro lakes are targeted for cleanup to reduce their pollution](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). To meet federal clean water standards state officials are considering ways to keep runoff and the pollutants it carries out of the lakes.

[Cargill settles E. coli lawsuit with 11-year-old Minnesota girl](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The parents of an 11-year-old Minnesota girl who spent more than a month in the hospital because of an illness caused by an E. coli-contaminated hamburger have reached a settlement with Cargill, the family's attorney said.

[City temporarily shelves plans for 'green alleys'](#) (Owatonna People's Press). Instead of "going green," the city council chose to save money on Tuesday night. The city had planned to build "green alleys" in a flood-prone area of downtown, but the price was too steep and the council nixed incoming bids for the project.

[St. John's Abbey gets Upper Midwest's largest solar farm](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The largest experimental solar farm in the upper Midwest will sit on land that belongs to St. John's Abbey of Collegeville.

[Friedman says green movement for now is a party](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The three-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author and New York Times columnist wants to ignite an energy technology revolution in the United States, but he told a Twin Cities audience Thursday that America isn't undergoing a "green revolution."

[Obama directs government to lead by example on global warming, oil use](#) (Associated Press). President Barack Obama wants the federal government to set the example when it comes to global warming.

[Cleanup project getting murky](#) (Mankato Free Press). A water-diversion project aimed at cleaning up Clear Lake in Waseca has become soaked with concerns.

[Noted lecturers grapple with water, 'the uncertain resource'](#) (MinnPost). The biological holy trinity – hydrogen-oxygen-hydrogen – was the subject of this year's Nobel Conference.

['Uncertain Resource': Do we have a water crisis, or a crisis of water management?](#) (MinnPost). Day 2 of the Nobel Conference on water began with a presentation by Dr. Peter Gleick.

[John Kerry and Linsey Graham: Yes We Can \(Pass Climate Change Legislation\)](#) (New York Times). Senators Kerry and Graham propose their own blueprint for climate change legislation.

[Five Minnesota scenic byways receive funding for improvements](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Five of Minnesota's scenic byways will receive \$500,000 in federal funding for improvements and promotion, the Federal Highway Administration announced on Friday.

[MPCA will take over old Eden Prairie landfill](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The inactive Eden Prairie Flying Cloud landfill has leaks and needs a new cover -- but first it must have a new owner.

[Tests reveal nurses and doctors loaded with toxins](#) (Kare 11). Dr. George Lundgren, a family physician who lives near Lake Harriet, has long been wary of the hidden toxins people are exposed to in everyday life. Now he knows exactly how many were present in his blood and urine one day last spring.

[Drought replenishes Long Meadow Lake](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A dry summer emptied Long Meadow in the Minnesota Valley wildlife refuge, and the benefits to plants and waterfowl were almost immediate.

[Chorus of critics may help change feedlot enforcement](#) (MinnPost). Protracted sparring between the state's top environmental cop and a smelly dairy feedlot near Thief River Falls is drawing a gathering chorus criticizing what's seen as excessive timidity by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

[Changing a way of life](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The Blue Zone project in Albert Lea had many positive results but not everyone joined in.

[How did Pawlenty go from GOP's 'green edge' to charges of a flip-flop?](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). Gov. Tim Pawlenty is getting a burst of attention for seemingly altering his stance favoring a cap-and-trade approach to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

[Metro area suburbs suit these cougars](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The Twin Cities area over the past month has had at least two separate reports of cougar, or cougar-like, presence.

Water is H2O, hydrogen two parts, oxygen one, but there is also a third thing, that makes water and nobody knows what that is. – D.H. Lawrence

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

Scott Kudelka
Minnesota River Watershed Alliance
Communications Coordinator
Water Resources Center
184 Trafton Science Center S
Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-2304
scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu
<http://watershedalliance.blogspot.com>