

Lac qui Parle – Yellow Bank TMDL Public Information Meeting

A TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) study is being conducted on the impaired reaches of the Lac qui Parle and Yellow Bank Rivers and tributaries for Low dissolved oxygen, turbidity and bacteria. A Public Informational TMDL meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 24 at the Canby Community Center from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. and at the Madison VFW from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Your involvement is very important in the TMDL process and urge you to mark your calendars and make plans to attend one of these meetings.

Crisis as Opportunity: Redesigning the Good Life

I invite you to our 4th Annual Earth Conference. I know many of you have some of your own ideas about the topic. The theme begs for local input as we redesign a sustainable future.

- When: November 7th, 9 am - 3:30 pm
- Where: [Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry](#) (170 Good Counsel Drive, Mankato)
- Cost: \$20 (\$15 students) if registration is postmarked by October 21, \$30 (420 students) after that date. This includes a local, sustainably produced lunch.

We bring to Mankato for our keynote address author, yogic philosopher and theologian Deborah Adele. She will lead us in a reflective morning where we might reimagine and redesign the so-called "good life" in the US to include something other than material wealth, something that includes a sustainable future. The afternoon we screen a film festival focusing on specific areas where we might begin to redesign our lives.

Join us to share your own ideas and to connect with a growing community who want a positive, sustainable future. It's going to be a good day!

To see the conference brochure and to register, go to our website <http://www.ssndmankato.org/earth> or contact me lcoons@ssndmankato.org 507.389.4272.

WHAT'S IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

St. Paul, Minn. -- Finding environmental information about Minnesota communities is just a click away with the updated "What's in My Neighborhood" (WIMN) Web application from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

With the tools on the Web page (www.pca.state.mn.us/WIMN), visitors can search for information about local environmental permits and notifications filed with the MPCA, as well as potentially contaminated sites. Users can search using an interactive map or by a text search.

The MPCA established the original WIMN Web application in 2003, when it contained only limited information about potentially contaminated sites. The MPCA has worked during the past two and a half years to expand the system, adding environmental information such as air and water permits, registrations and notifications.

The new site includes environmental data about businesses and institutions that have permits and registrations, MPCA inspections and how businesses comply with environmental laws and rules. There are 150,000 sites in the database, up from 5,000 on the old Web application. More detail is also included about each location.

"We expanded WIMN in response to users who wanted more data," said Myrna Halbach, director of the MPCA's Operational Support Division. "The expansion of this Web application is the first phase of what will become an even more complete environmental resource for Minnesotans, eventually including links to actual documents such as permits."

Field Day to be Held at EcoSun Prairie Farm

A field day will be held November 5, 2009, near Brookings, South Dakota, to discuss the potential economic and ecological benefits of establishing grass-based farms on converted corn and soybean land. The Prairie Biomass Harvest Field Day will be held from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at EcoSun Prairie Farms.

EcoSun Prairie Farms is located between Brookings and Colman, South Dakota. The 640 acres that comprise EcoSun Prairie Farms are designed to demonstrate how to make a sustained and earned living from restored grassland and grass products while protecting and enhancing the natural environment. The Prairie Farm promotes the benefits of a working landscape by emphasizing the potential of multifunctional agriculture, defined as the joint production of standard commodities (e.g., food and/or fiber) and ecological services such as clean air and water and high biodiversity. For more information regarding EcoSun: <http://ecosunprairiefarms.org>

The field day will include: discussion of the goals and history of EcoSun Prairie Farms, the benefits of producing prairie grasses and forbs for economic return, and the potential implications for natural resources. Attendees will also have the opportunity to walk portions of the Prairie Farm and ask questions as well as visit a nearby research site looking at the potential impacts of biofuels harvest on game bird production. This is an outdoor event. Please dress accordingly.

Partners for this event include: South Dakota State University, EcoSun Prairie Farms, University of Minnesota, Rural Advantage, Minnesota Native Landscapes, University of Minnesota Extension, The Nature Conservancy, Pheasants Forever, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture through a Conservation Innovation Grant.

Directions to EcoSun Prairie Farms: From I-29, take the Flandreau exit (Exit 114). Travel west on Hwy 32 for about 1.5 miles to the intersection of Hwy 32 and Hwy 77. Continue traveling west an additional 2.0 miles. Travel south 2.0 miles. Travel west about 1.0 mile. Meeting site is near a field approach on the north (right) side of the road.

For weather related cancellations, please contact: 605-690-7036

Events:

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://mrdbc.mnsu.edu/calendar/index.html>

Water Quality Articles:

[Minnesota group joins effort to end USDA loans for hog and poultry industries](#) (MinnPost). Minnesota's Land Stewardship Project joined a group of thousands in calling on the USDA to end lending practices aimed at expanding the hog and poultry industries.

[EPA takes on arsenic contamination in south Minneapolis](#) (MN Daily). The EPA has been replacing low-level contaminated soil since 2004.

[Janesville ethanol plant to be operational](#) (Mankato Free Press). Weather permitting, the new ethanol plant in Janesville will be operational for the first time starting Monday.

[Legislative panel recommends \\$26 million in environmental projects](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A commission made up of state legislators and citizens is recommending 48 environmental projects to receive \$26 million from a state trust fund next year.

[Target begins nationwide reusable bag policy](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Target stores across the country are giving customers 5 cents for every reusable bag they use while shopping, in an effort to reduce the number of paper and plastic bags that get thrown away.

[2M pounds of toxics dumped into Minn. rivers in 2007](#) (Minnesota Star Tribune). Industries in Minnesota discharged more than 2 million pounds of toxic substances into the state's rivers and streams in 2007, according to a new report by an environmental advocacy group.

[Study finds need for coal-fired power plant in Minnesota](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). Minnesota may need a new 500-megawatt coal-fired power plant to meet growing demand, according to a Department of Commerce study that will be presented to state lawmakers today.

[States Invest More in Energy Efficiency](#) (Wall Street Journal). States are backing big energy-efficiency programs, spurred by the belief that they could hold down heating and electricity bills, as well as cut greenhouse-gas emissions.

[Some hot fishing amid cool weather](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). Wind, cold, and rain aren't really a favorable combination if you're a fall fisherman, but intermittent breaks in that pattern have enabled anglers in several parts of the state to experience some of the best fishing of the year.

[River trail proposal heard](#) (Mankato Free Press). Proponents of a bike trail between St. Peter and Mankato couldn't show visiting state lawmakers a planned route, because they don't have one.

[Officials: Our water needs help](#) (Faribault Daily News). Several advocates for improving water quality spoke to more than two dozen people Thursday at the Rice County Government Services Building.

[Golden eagle returns to Minnesota](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). This is the time of year when the skies are filled with migrating birds. There's one big bird that researchers are very interested in, and he's heading our way.

[RiverCenter going green with solar energy installation](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). St. Paul's RiverCentre is going green. City officials announced Friday they're getting \$1 million in federal stimulus money to put a 1-MW solar energy facility on the roof.

[Study finds that wolves aren't successful predators for entire lives](#) (MN Daily). A study led by a researcher at the University of Minnesota has found that wolves are at their peak predatory performance for only 25 percent of their adult lives, not 100 percent as previously thought.

[Analysis rejects 'global cooling' claims](#) (Associated Press). According to statistical analysis of temperatures, the earth isn't entering a cooling trend as some report.

[Bike trek shows rural Minnesotans, youth innovatively seek climate-change solutions](#) (MinnPost). Reed Aronow set out in the snow for a two-week bike trek across Minnesota.

[No market for recycled green glass](#) (Mankato Free Press). The state requires that green glass be collected as part of recycling programs, so it is.

Don't throw away the old bucket until you know whether the new one holds water. – Swedish proverb

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>

Thanks,

Scott

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