

# Minnesota River Weekly Update

## November 9, 2012

To include your news release in the next edition of the Minnesota River Update, please send it to [mnriverupdate@gmail.com](mailto:mnriverupdate@gmail.com).

### Events:

## Watershed Professionals Network

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

9:45-3:00 PM

Pizza Ranch, Redwood Falls, MN

Efforts to restore and protect water quality will be enhanced by greater communication on technical and operational topics among watershed organization staff.

Contact: Forrest Peterson MPCA-Willmar [320-441-6972](tel:320-441-6972)

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Please join us at one of the Minnesota River Blueway Nomination Events listed below

Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup>

(SEE BELOW)

Two portions of the Minnesota River have recently been designated as America's Great Outdoors <http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov> projects. A spin-off of this designation is the creation of the National Blueway System. The Minnesota River Watershed Alliance (MRWA) <http://watershedalliance.blogspot.com>, a non-profit group consisting of groups, individuals, communities and agencies concerned about the river, is nominating the entire Minnesota River as a National Blueway.

Strong partnerships are essential to this initiative as we work to further improve conservation of natural/cultural resources, access to recreational/educational opportunities and sustain local/regional economies in the Minnesota River Watershed. We invite you to join us at one of the Minnesota River Blueway Nomination Events listed below as we explore how we can better work together.

Rebecca Wodder, Senior Advisor to Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar, is planning to visit Minnesota and tour the Minnesota River Valley on November 14 and 15, 2012. The visit is in support of the nomination of the Minnesota River to the National Blueways System. The new National Blueways System is an initiative to recognize community-driven partnerships in watersheds and river systems that are working toward conservation and other important environmental and economic outcomes. There are several public events scheduled and we welcome your attendance to learn more about the National Blueways System and the nomination process.

### **Wednesday, November 14**

1:00 pm

What: Town Hall Meeting on National Blueway System and the nomination process

Where: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, 3815 American Blvd, Bloomington, MN

5:00-7:00 pm

What: Minnesota River Watershed Alliance (MRWA) Quarterly Meeting

Where: Flandrau State Park Beach House, New Ulm

7:00–8:30 pm

What: Partner Meeting,

Where: Flandrau State Park Beach House, New Ulm

### **Thursday, November 15**

9:00–10:00am

What: Partner Meeting

Where: KK Berge Building, 807 Prentice Street, Granite Falls, MN

12:30-2:00 pm

What: Partner Meeting

Where: Minnesota Valley History Learning Center, 208 N. Centennial Drive (Old Morton School), Morton, MN

If you are interested in attending any of these events please contact Catherine Fouchi [\(507\)359-6034](tel:5073596034) for additional details."

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## **Fall quarterly Minnesota River Watershed Alliance meeting**

### **Wednesday, November 14**

**6-8:30 PM**

**Flandrau State Park, New Ulm** (more detail about above listing)

Rebecca Wodder (Senior Asst. to the Secretary of Interior and past American Rivers President) is available for a River Partner meeting on 11/14 in New Ulm (evening). The meeting will be Wednesday, November 14 at the Beach house in Flandrau State Park, New Ulm (it has a big fire place) at 6 pm. Please note that you will need a state park sticker to get in (so carpool in if you don't have a sticker or buy a sticker to support our great State Parks). Our meeting would be for 1 hour to propose projects for next year. At 7 pm Ms. Wodder would be available to explain briefly what the National Blueway Program encompasses, and we might have a presentation or two by youth concerning the importance of the river to them and then there would be Q and A and a little time for networking. Meeting ends at 8:30 pm.

This quarterly meeting is a great chance to hear what is going on in the MN River Basin.

Agenda:

6 p.m. Formal Meeting begins (no meal this time)

7 p.m. Ms. Rebecca Wodder speaks on National Blueway Program

8:30 p.m. Meeting adjourned

Draft Agenda Items for the Wednesday, November 14 Minnesota River Watershed Alliance meeting in New Ulm include:

- Listing of potential projects for MRWA to focus on next year, to be voted on in January
- Summary of 2012 Project Accomplishments/Updates: Blueway Project and 50th anniversary paddle event next summer, Mayors' fishing opener, MN Falls dam removal, Frac sand mining, Big Stone quarry, other
- Discuss social hour process going forward

- Set tentative dates for next 4 meetings
  - Announcements and Concerns.
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## Seven Mile Creek Watershed Informational Event

**November 15**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Oshawa Townhall**

**38711 MN Highway 99**

**St. Peter, MN**

Please join Fishers & Farmers Partnership, other landowners, and local project partners to celebrate the good work of the past in this watershed and to learn about the site and the work ahead.

Fishers & Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin is a self-directed group of non-governmental agricultural and conservation organizations, tribal organization and state and federal agencies representing the five states of the Upper Mississippi River basin: Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.

The mission is two-fold: to improve life on farms and fish habitat. Local leadership, attention to unique local situations, and local solutions are key to our approach.

In the lower Seven-Mile Creek watershed, work will focus on stabilizing ravines, building water and sediment control basins, and planting native grass buffers where fields meet the bluff edge. These actions are key to minimizing soil erosion and reducing the flow of nutrients into streams and the Minnesota River.

Contact Nels Anderson, Seven Mile Coordinator [507-931-2550 ext. 117](tel:507-931-2550)  
Oshawa Townhall is about 5 miles west of St. Peter, MN on MN-99.

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## Lil' Ney Naturalist

(and their folks)

**Saturdays – November 17th & December 15<sup>th</sup>**

**9:30 -11:30 am**

**Ney Nature Center, Henderson, MN**

Join us for this extra fun program for preschoolers!!! Explore the natural world, looking at birds, animals, bugs and their signs while playing simple nature games, listening to stories, singing songs, nature hikes and completing nature crafts to take home. For children ages 2 to pre-K

Cost: \$6.00 per family w/NNC Family Membership,  
\$10.00 per family for Non-NNC Membership

Register: Required by the Thursday before the program.

Contact Becky at [507-248-3474](tel:507-248-3474).

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## Moon Hikes

**November 28<sup>th</sup> and December 28<sup>th</sup>**

**7:30 pm**

**Ney Nature Center, Henderson, Minnesota**

Join us for a mix of New Moon and Full Moon hikes at the Ney Nature Center. Your Naturalist Guide will share phenology, History, and seasonal insights into the Natural World.

NNC Cost:

Non-members – \$3.00 per individual or \$7.00 per family

Members – \$2.00 per individual or \$5.00 per family

For more information: <http://neycenter.org/coming-events/>

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## Christmas Bird Identification

**Saturday Dec. 1st**

**10am**

**Ney Nature Center, Henderson, MN**

NNC Cost: Non-members – \$3.00 per individual or \$7.00 per family

Members – \$2.00 per individual or \$5.00 per family

In preparation for the Christmas bird count or maybe just a refresher for winter bird identification this program will go over the basics of using a birding field guide, what to look for when observing birds, common birds looked for during the Christmas bird count and feeding techniques for winter birds.

[Environmental/Conservation Articles:](#)

# Minnesotans are urged to speak up about the environment at Citizen Forums

What do clean water, the economy, energy and the health of our environment all have in common?

These topics will be discussed by Minnesotans this month and next at six Citizen Forums around the state. The forums, free and open to the public, will afford Minnesotans an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns. State leaders

will consider the citizen input next March at a Minnesota Environmental Congress summit, where they will begin to plan a blueprint for Minnesota's environmental and economic future. (For more information about the Minnesota Environmental Congress, visit <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress>.)

The Minnesota Environmental Congress and the Citizens Forums leading up to it are the result of Governor Dayton's Executive Order 11-32. To assess Minnesota's progress toward clean air, water and energy, the Environmental Quality Board is convening the Citizen Forums around the state to engage citizens in constructive dialogue, identify environmental challenges, and define a vision for Minnesota's environmental future.

Here are the locations, dates and times for the six regional Citizens Forums:

- Rochester: Nov. 27, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon at Wood Lake Meeting Center
- Bloomington: Nov. 27, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. at Normandale Community College
- Duluth: Nov. 28, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. at Lake Superior College
- Worthington: Dec. 10, 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. at Worthington High School
- St. Cloud: Dec. 12, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. at Stearns County Service Center
- Moorhead: Dec. 14, 3:00 – 5:30 p.m. at Minnesota State University

For more information about the Citizens Forums and to indicate your intention to attend, visit: <http://mn.gov/EnvironmentalCongress/>. If you have questions, call Anna Sherman at [651-201-6607](tel:651-201-6607) or send a message to [anna.sherman@state.mn.us](mailto:anna.sherman@state.mn.us).

This project is a collaboration of Governor Dayton, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Minnesota Department of Commerce, Minnesota Department of Administration, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Department of Energy and Economic Development, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota Department of Transportation, and the Board of Soil and Water Resources.

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## Winona Lighting is penalized for air-quality violations

MPCA – November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012

Acuity Brands Lighting Corporation, doing business as Winona Lighting, a manufacturer of lighting products in Winona, has reached an agreement with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency resolving violations of state and federal air-quality laws.

Winona Lighting installed and operated paint booths, sandblasters and other manufacturing equipment going back to 1978 without the required air-quality permits. The company also did not submit required emissions reports for each year of operation.

Acuity Brands Lighting Corporation will pay a 99-thousand 500-dollar penalty to the M-P-C-A. It also has agreed to apply for the necessary permits and submit the required reports.

A complete list of penalties issued by the M-P-C-A is available on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency website.

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## Dead Zone: Some call for tougher fertilizer regulations

November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012

DesMoinesRegister.com

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/section/dead-zone>

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## River group has murky future

Star Tribune – October 20, 2012 – 10:30 PM

<http://www.startribune.com/local/south/175097671.html>

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## Dam fallout on Minnesota River

Star Tribune - October 15, 2012 - 12:38 PM

<http://www.startribune.com/local/blogs/174231241.html>

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## Feedlot rules help manage livestock ‘waste’ as a valuable resource

MPCA October 02, 2012

<http://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/MNPCA-55aafd>

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## Will City of Ortonville’s annexation ordinance change fast track Strata Corp’s quarry plan & trump local township government ordinance?

Bigboulder.com October 17, 2012

<http://bigstonebolder.com/2012/10/17/will-city-of-ortonvilles-annexation-ordinance-change-fast-track-strata-corps-quarry-plan-trump-local-township-government-ordinance/>

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## The Mississippi River is worth protecting: If we under-appreciate its value, we may also be neglecting its care

Star Tribune - September 28, 2012 - 8:09 PM

<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/171864901.html>

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## State of the River: Water Quality and River Health in the Metro Mississippi River

<http://stateoftheriver.com/>

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## Mississippi River at its healthiest in a generation

Star Tribune - September 27, 2012

Findings released Thursday show that decades of effort have reduced the flow of industrial pollutants, storm water runoff and human waste.

<http://www.startribune.com/local/171542141.html>

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## Peril in the Ponds: Deformed Frogs, Politics and a Biologist's Quest

Former MPCA (and retired) research scientist Judy Helgen wrote a book on deformed frogs. These were first discovered near Henderson by students from the LeSueur New Country High School.

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/09/25/environment/drought-cuts-river-pollution-levels-in-minnesota/>

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## Plowing away the prairie, at a price

Star Tribune - September 24, 2012

Farm policy and food demand are eating up a once-vast ecosystem, alarming conservationists.

<http://www.startribune.com/local/170850241.html?refer=y>

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**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 Basin.**