

Minnesota River Weekly Update

May 30, 2017

Niagara Cave



Photo Credit: [Explore Minnesota Tourism](#)

Announcements

Prescription for healthier Hawk Creek: Buffers, stormwater controls, changes in ag practices

Forrest Peterson, May 26, 2017, MPCA News Release

Local and state agencies are recommending ways to restore and protect water quality in the Hawk Creek Watershed and surrounding tributaries directly flowing into the Minnesota River.

The Hawk Creek watershed is located in major portions of Kandiyohi, Renville, and Chippewa counties, and is a major tributary of the Minnesota River, entering about eight miles southeast of Granite Falls.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Hawk Creek Watershed Project have collaborated on two reports that identify sources of water pollution and actions needed. The reports are available for public review and

comment through June 21, 2017. Copies are available on the MPCA's website, www.pca.state.mn.us, or at the MPCA's St. Paul, Marshall, and Willmar offices.

For complete information click [here](#).

Environmental bill awaits governor's signature, bonding bill awaits legislative action

MPCA, May 25, 2017, Waterfront Bulletin

The Minnesota Legislature continues its special session this week. It has yet to take action on a bonding bill and other budget proposals. The proposed \$990 million bonding bill includes funding for several critical water protection efforts, including the St. Louis River Area of Concern and wastewater infrastructure. The Legislature did pass an omnibus environmental bill before its regular session ended, and the bill now awaits the governor's signature. Among the highlights:

- Increases in hunting and fishing license fees to provide new revenue for the Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources to support these activities
- No major changes to the buffer law, though landowners would gain an additional 8 months to comply with the law if filing a plan with their SWCD by Nov. 1, 2017

Direct appropriations for MPCA includes \$202.03 million. While that appropriation will allow the MPCA to continue most of its work at current levels, the Clean Water Legacy funding bill included a 7% cut to the agency's Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS) program. Agency leaders are still deciding how to address that decrease in funding. Also this week, President Trump's administration released its fiscal year 2018 budget that includes slashing the U.S. Environmental Protecting Agency by one-third. This would severely cut EPA's work force, clean water programs, and clean air initiatives. The impact to Minnesota would include less funding for Superfund sites and for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

For complete information click [here](#).

Continue progress toward our common goal of clean water

May 24, 2017, Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

In 2015, Minnesota took an important step forward toward cleaner water with the passage of the buffer law. A year later, the legislature ironed out a bipartisan compromise that addressed concerns and laid out a path to successful implementation.

Since that time, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources has been working closely with landowners, local governments, state agencies, and other stakeholders to make sure the law works for Minnesotans. Right now, statewide compliance sits at roughly 89% thanks to both longstanding acts of stewardship as well as recent efforts. Those numbers vary county by county, but across the state it's clear that Minnesotans are hard at work implementing this common-sense approach to cleaning up water that flows into our lakes, rivers and streams. It's not a one-size-fits all approach, either.

For complete information click [here](#).

News

[Minnesota River Master Plan under review](#)

[The fight over the River Bottoms Trail nearly](#)

JP Cola, May 29, 2017, Willmarradio

The 30-day public review period for the Minnesota River Valley Recreation and Conservation Master Plan ends June 8 with an open house. County and state representatives involved with the master plan will take questions during the event. The master plan is a collaborative effort among Redwood and Renville counties and the Department of Natural Resources. It provides a roadmap for expanding outdoor recreational opportunities, promotes economic development for the area and provides opportunities to improve the quality of life for local residents. The document outlines strategies to better leverage recreational, cultural, historical and agricultural assets within 2 miles on either side of the Minnesota River.

[derailed the Minnesota Legislature](#)
Cory Zurowski, May 30, 2017, City Pages

The Minnesota River will crest soon, and the River Bottoms Trail along Bloomington's southern belly is unoccupied, save for the trillions of mosquito larvae waiting to take bloody flight. It's this stretch of verdant real estate that almost single-handedly derailed the Minnesota Legislature's special session. Last week Stephen Boyd, a member of Save the River Bottoms, a citizens group opposed to the current push in St. Paul to pave the trail, received an email from fellow anti-blacktopper Dennis Porter.

[MN's greenhouse gas goal flopped. New goal: 'electrify everything'](#)
Dan Kraker, May 25, 2017, Duluth, Minn

With great fanfare, Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty signed an audacious, bipartisan law on May 25, 2007 called the Next Generation Energy Act, which pledged to cut the state's greenhouse gas emissions a whopping 80 percent by 2050. Fast forward 10 years and the state has significantly boosted renewable energy use. But despite that success, Minnesota's fallen woefully short of its goals to tackle greenhouse gases, cutting emissions so far by only about 4 percent from 2005 levels.

[Somn History- A new collaboration](#)
SAINT PETER, MN (May 26, 2017)

SoMN History, a group of southern Minnesota history museums, announces their collaboration designed to promote weekend and mid-week travelers to take a historical drive connecting six local history museums that are just 30-60 minutes apart. As part of this new partnership, SoMN History has created a website to aid visitors in discovering more history in the region--- www.somnhistory.org.

[Blasting at Jefferson Quarry Still Suspended For Jordan Sands At This Point](#)
KEYC, May 24, 2017

Blasting by Jordan Sands at the Jefferson Quarry in Mankato is still being suspended by the city nearly a month after an explosion that was felt around the Minnesota River Valley. The Mankato Department of Public Safety has met with Jordan Sands and independent consultants performing the investigation to discuss preliminary findings. At this point there is no final answer, but the company is looking . Mankato Department of Public Safety Deputy Director Jeff Bengtson says, "Right now, nothing has changed from earlier, there still is no blasting occurring and we haven't made a decision on that. They have conferred with both public safety and city leadership about what a process would look like in order to move forward."

[Nitrates rising in Mankato's drinking wells](#)
Mark Fischenich, May 28, Mankato Free Press

Rising nitrate levels in the Minnesota and Blue Earth Rivers are forcing Mankato to adjust how it provides drinking water to residents and potentially threatens the city's attempts to limit the amount of water it takes from the region's most critical aquifer. "The fix is going to be big," City Manager Pat Hentges said of the looming cost of reacting to the rising pollution levels in the rivers. Options range from new water treatment systems or drilling another well into the Mt. Simon aquifer, which provides all or part of the drinking water for more than a million Minnesotans from southern sections of the state to the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Events

May 31- June 6

Songs on the Lawn
June 1, 11am-1pm

Location: Civic Center Plaza, Mankato
Brief Description: Songs on the Lawn now in its 14 year is truly a popular summer series featuring music, entertainment and local food. The series takes place every Thursday in June from 11 am - 1 pm at Civic Center Plaza in Mankato. 2017 Dates:

June 1 - City Mouse (Classic Rock, Americana, Blues) June 8 - The Bad Companions (Rockabilly) June 15 - Sawyers Dream (70s Style Pop Rock) June 22 - The Whiskies (Acoustic Rock) June 29 - The Gentlemen's Anti-Temperance League (Swing Jazz) Admission is always FREE and FREE parking is available throughout the downtown area. Songs on the Lawn gives co-workers, friends and families from all around the region an opportunity to gather in the City Center to enjoy live music from area bands. Attendees can also purchase lunch and snacks sold by a variety of local vendors.

For more information click [here](#).

Family Science

June 3, All Day

Location: Ney Nature Center

Brief Description: Bring the whole family as we learn about science and try different experiments! Reservations required. \$3/member or \$5/non-member, All Ages (Youth under the age of 14 must attend with a registered adult.) Saturday, June 3rd 12:30-2p: Pond Study - On June 3rd we will use different tools to search for critters in Frog Pond. Based on the species that we discover we will be able to learn more about the health of the ecosystem.

Saturday, June 24th 10-11:30a: Renewable Energy - On June 24th we will learn about renewable energy with hands-on projects focused on wind and solar power.

For more information click [here](#).

Bird ID Hike

June 3, 8-9:30am

Location: Ney Nature Center

Brief Description: Join a naturalist guide as we take a leisurely walk along some of the Nature Center trails in search of various bird species. A limited number of binoculars are available to borrow. Reservations required. Ages: 5+

For more information click [here](#).

DAIRY DAY

SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2017 1-4 PM

The Harkin Store will be honoring the dairy industry by serving dairy products for sampling. Admission to the program is included with the admission to the store. The 1870's Alexander Harkin general store would have had different cheeses for customers to sample. The store is open everyday except Mondays in June, July and August from 10 to 5 pm with programs on Sunday afternoons from 1 to 4 pm. The gift shop is open the same hours as the store and has many books, toys, unique and hand crafted items, also 10 cent candy. The store is located nine miles northwest of New Ulm on Nicollet County Road 21, or the bottom road, or nine miles east of Fort Ridgely. For more information contact the store at [1-507-354-8666](tel:1-507-354-8666), or Nicollet County Historical Society which operates the store at [1-507-934-2160](tel:1-507-934-2160).

Taste of Farm 2017

June 13, 2017, 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM CDT

Location: Farmamerica, 7367 360th Ave, Waseca

Brief Description: The 11th Annual Taste of Farm will be held on Tuesday, June 13 from 5-8 p.m. at Farmamerica. Free meal including pork sandwiches, beef burgers, cheese, milk, cookies, popcorn and root beer floats. Kids activities, meet our community first responders, live music, and face painting. Supported by Agriculture commodity groups, businesses and many more.

June 7- June 13



Job Announcements

WATER RESOURCES TECHNICIAN OR SPECIALIST

<i>Department</i>	Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
<i>Closing Date</i>	May 31, 4:30 pm
<i>Location(s)</i>	Yellow Medicine SWCD
<i>Who May Apply</i> <i>Responsibilities</i>	<p>All qualified job seekers</p> <p>Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is seeking a Water Resources Technician or Specialist. Generally, the position will support current staff with implementation of federal farm bill and state conservation programs, promote and implement conservation practices and spend time providing outreach to the priority areas of the Yellow Medicine River One Watershed One Plan. Travel around the SWCD work area, the watershed planning area and occasionally over-night, around Minnesota will be necessary.</p> <p>For more information contact SWCD office or click here.</p>

BACTERIOLOGIST 1

<i>Department</i>	Minnesota Department of Health
<i>Closing Date</i>	5/31/2017
<i>Location(s)</i>	Minnesota
<i>Who May Apply</i>	All qualified job seekers
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare media and reagents for use in the Infectious Disease Lab• Manage media inventory• Care of laboratory animals• Specimen accessioning and data entry including Saturday mornings and Holidays• Autoclaving infectious waste and disposal• Use and maintain equipment such as autoclave, dishwasher, steam box, pH meter, and automated media dispenser <p>Requires the ability to work some Saturdays and Holidays as scheduled.</p> <p>For more information click here.</p>

NR FORESTRY SPECIALIST

<i>Department</i>	Department of Natural Resources
<i>Closing Date</i>	06/05/2017
<i>Location(s)</i>	Big Falls Forestry Field Station
<i>Who May Apply</i>	All qualified job seekers
<i>Responsibilities</i>	Natural Resource Forestry Specialists perform professional level program support by implementing Division of Forestry Programs. Complete field assignments and special administrative assignments in all aspects of Department operations at the forestry Area administrative level. Division of Forestry

Programs include State Land Management, Resource Protection, Cooperative Forest Management, Forest Resource Information and Planning, Nursery and Tree Improvement, and Administrative & Technical Support.

State Land Management Program: Implement state forest management policy and procedure. Manage and develop forest resources; appraise forest resources for harvest; design harvest systems and regulations for timber sales; mark timber sale boundaries; administer state timber sales; measure cut forest products; and inspect state leases. Communicate to the public department policies, procedures and regulations.

Cooperative Forest Management Program: Implement cooperative forest management policy and procedure. Assist non-industrial forest woodland owners with the stewardship of their lands by providing forest management assistance and advice. Communicate to the public department policies, procedures and regulations.

Resource Protection Program: Implement forest resource protection policy and procedure. Collect fire weather information; extinguish wildfires; and enforce natural resource protection statutes. Communicate to the public department policies, procedures and regulations.

Forest Resource Information and Analysis Program: Implement forest resource information and analysis policy and procedure. Measure state and county administered lands following Department of Natural Resources Cooperative Stand Assessment (CSA) Program policy and procedure; collect and record forest resources information.

Formal Training: As assigned.

Operational Support: Direct the work of technicians, laborers, temporary crews, and contractors.

For more information click [here](#).

Water Resources Scientist/Engineer Intern

<i>Department</i>	Tetra Tech
<i>Closing Date</i>	Ongoing
<i>Location(s)</i>	United States-MN-US-St. Paul, MN
<i>Who May Apply</i>	All qualified job seekers
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Conduct research related to water resources studies including scientific, engineering, planning and policy topics •Compile and compute a variety of data, and help to catalog and manage databases •Analyze watershed and water quality data using GIS and statistical techniques •Support watershed and water quality model setup, calibration, validation, and application •Develop or prepare descriptive charts, figures/maps, and tables/matrices •Support water resources planning through application of quantitative and

qualitative evaluation techniques

- Perform writing assignments to contribute to project documentation and deliverables such as memos and reports

For more information and how to apply click [here](#).

"Let us learn to appreciate there will be times when the trees will be bare, and look forward to the time when we may pick the fruit."

- Anton Chekhov

Please register at the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's bulletin board at <http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa/>