

Mad City Chickens Screening

Screening of the award-winning documentary [MAD CITY CHICKENS!](#) From leading experts to suburban newbies, experience the humor and heart of what is fast becoming an international phenomenon - the return of the backyard chicken! Thursday, April 15th, 6 pm, School Sisters of Notre Dame Conference Center, 170 Good Counsel Drive. There is a second showing at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. 720 S. 2nd St, Mankato.

Saturday, April 17th - Healthy Homes and Toxic Toys presentation - 10 am - noon. Community garden Red Barn. Come learn how to make your home healthier by avoiding everyday toxins such as toxic cleaners, pesticides and avoiding bad plastics. Worried about children's toys? Bring toys and children's jewelry to be tested for safety. Testing conducted by Clean Water Action as part of the Healthy Legacy Coalition.

RE - SKILLING WORKSHOP

April's re-skilling workshop - Cheese-making (butter and yogurt, too) Workshop, Tuesday, April 27th, 6 pm, SSND Conference Center. Organic farmer Heidi Thompson of [Thompson's Painted Hill Farm](#) will lead us through all the steps to making cheese at home. As a bonus, we'll whip up a batch of butter and yogurt, too. Suggested donation \$10-\$20 (more if you can, less if you can't.)

EARTH DAY OPEN HOUSE

Redwood and Renville Counties will be sponsoring an Earth Day Open House on Thursday, April 22, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Redwood Falls National Guard Armory in Redwood Falls, MN. The event is free and open to the public and will feature over 20 exhibitors with displays and demonstrations for all ages. Topics include renewable energy, radon gas, composting, recycling, conservation, water quality, and more. Free professional sensitive document shredding will be available. Take part in the lead tackle exchange program, visit with Ron Bolduan (Nature Photographer), see "Clancy" the mercury detecting dog, and sign-up for door prizes. A free BBQ lunch will be provided from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (while supplies last). Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day! For more information, contact the Redwood County Environmental Office at (507) 637-4023 or <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/renvilleearthday.pdf>

MN DNR Mentoring Program

Spring has definitely sprung and so has the number of opportunities we can make in a youths or inexperienced adults outdoors life. Outdoor carnivals, workshops, clinics, weekend events, fishing contests and the just plain getting outside are the names of the games and opportunities about.

First, we'd like to welcome all the new volunteers and mentoring organizations to the Monthly Happenings with the Mentoring Program here at the MN DNR. In this monthly communications; you'll see volunteer information, events that might make sense to volunteer for or to participate in, opportunities for education and a plethora of miscellaneous information.

A couple of reminders might be in-order first:

- Please call or email, confirmation on any of the volunteering opportunities coming up to either myself or the coordinator of specific opportunities as soon as possible. The event coordinators for events need to know so they can plan accordingly (see Mentors Need attachment).
- If you have not done so already, please fill out the background check and agreement forms (see attachments). Would like to have both in place before the events start taking place.
- Remember, if you have an outdoors style event coming up, please drop me an email and if possible a flier for inclusion.
- If you have a use for an Outdoors Tip or destinations, please see attached. If you have a tip or tactic to share with our group, drop me a line.
- Attachments:
 - MDHA Kids Carnival at Cabela's

- MinnAqua workshop in East Grand Forks
- Fish Fair
- Events Spread Sheet
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Mentoring Outdoor Tip of the Month
- Pheasant Forever Scholarship Opportunity (see below & attachment).
 - This year the Northwest Suburban Chapter of Pheasants Forever would like to sponsor 5 KIDS at the Rice Creek Youth Camp. This 5-Day Outdoor Adventure Camp will be held from June 13- 18 in Little Falls, Minnesota. The camp is open to all children ages 11-15 and includes Live Bird Hunting, Sporting Clays Instruction/Participation, Fishing, Canoeing, GPS Training and an Overnight Campout. Children participating will also receive their DNR Firearms Safety Certificate.
We will also be sponsoring 5 KIDS at the Rice Creek ADVANCED Youth Camp on August 2-6. This 5-Day Advanced Hunter Camp is for kids that already have their Firearm Safety Certificate and will focus more on shooting activities. Children will participate in Live Bird Hunting, full rounds of Clay Shooting, Fishing, Canoeing, Bow Shooting and an Overnight Campout.
If you know of someone that would be interested in being sponsored at either camp, please have them fill-out the attached application and return to me before 4/30/10. Please call with any questions 763.550.9000. More information can be found on the Rice Creek web site at www.ricecreekhunting.com/youth.php

Thank you for your help and your commitment to Youth & Conservation. You are making a difference!
Amanda Bakken; Northwest Suburban Chapter of Pheasants Forever; Email: nwsurbanpf@gmail.com

Canoe/Kayak Live Auction

Do you need to buy or sell a canoe or kayak? If so, bring them to Midwest Mountaineering at 309 Cedar Avenue South on the west bank of the U of M for a live auction on April 24 as part of the 50th bi-annual Outdoor Adventure Expo. Drop off your canoes and kayaks beginning at 7 AM on April 24 and receive a check on the same day after your items sell. Call AAA Auction and Realty LLC for more information. 763 421-3044.

NEWLY RE-ISSUED INDUSTRIAL STORMWATER PERMIT MAY AFFECT THOUSANDS OF UNAWARE BUSINESS OWNERS

Duluth, Minn. -- A newly-re-issued permit from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has the potential to affect thousands of businesses across the state. Despite extensive public outreach and requests for comment, many business owners and operators may not be aware they are now required to apply for an Industrial Stormwater Multi-Sector General Permit that went into effect April 5, 2010.

The new permit affects 10 industrial categories organized into 29 sectors. These sectors range from timber products to chemical manufacturing, scrap recycling, landfills, air transportation and salvage yards. For a complete list, visit the agency's industrial stormwater Web site at www.pca.state.mn.us/water/stormwater/stormwater-i.html. The site also has the permit application and instructions, describes sector-specific permit application dates, offers 14 steps to permit compliance, guides permittees on how to create a related pollution-prevention plan, lists a schedule of training and outreach opportunities and includes information about how businesses may gain certification for a five-year permit exclusion called "No Exposure."

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and all states require industrial stormwater permit coverage and offer the No Exposure option. Until now, Minnesota was one of very few states that did not require industrial stormwater discharge monitoring. This new permit establishes risk-based monitoring objectives that can be reached through best management practices and site-based controls.

Stormwater generally refers to precipitation, snowmelt and surface runoff as well as drainage to groundwater. It is one of the most common sources of water flowing into Minnesota lakes and streams.

Stormwater permit regulations help businesses prevent, reduce or control potential contamination of state surface and groundwater resources by restricting contact between pollutants and industrial equipment, machinery, raw materials, products, waste-handling equipment and wastes. Even though an individual industrial facility may contribute minimal pollution to the state's water resources, the cumulative impact of thousands of facilities' stormwater discharges can account for significant water quality problems.

Since the previous industrial stormwater permit expired in 2002, agency staff have been developing permit language that is aligned with federal and state requirements, reduces pollutants in industrial stormwater discharges and provides a balance of environmental protection and facility flexibility. Key differences between the two permits include new sampling and monitoring requirements and discharge restrictions related to impaired waters.

For more information, call the MPCA industrial stormwater program staff at 651-757-2119 or 1-800-657-3864.

Additional open burning restrictions to begin April 12

Due to an increased concern about wildfires across the state, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is tightening restrictions on campfires in 37 Minnesota counties beginning at 12:01 a.m. on April 12.

Counties affected by the new restrictions are:

Aitkin, Anoka, Becker, Beltrami, Benton, Carlton, Cass, Chisago, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, Isanti, Itasca, Kanabec, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pennington, Pine, Polk (that portion east of County Highway 6 and south of State Highway 92), Pope, Roseau, Sherburne, Stearns, Stevens, St. Louis, Todd, and Wadena.

Campfires will not be allowed at non-designated campsites and other remote locations. This will impact shore lunches, dispersed campsites, day hikes, and backpacking trips.

Campfires are still permitted in designated fire receptacles at residences, dwellings, campgrounds, and resorts if they are no larger than 3 feet in diameter and 3 feet in height.

In addition, fireworks will be prohibited outside municipalities due to the volatile nature of these explosives.

Similar restrictions will be in place on national forest lands in both the Chippewa and Superior National forests including the entire Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Lack of rain after the rapid spring snowmelt has heightened fire danger across much of Minnesota. The restrictions will remain in place until sufficient precipitation is received to moderate fire danger. If normal precipitation is not received in the near future, additional restrictions may be imposed.

For the latest wildfire information, visit www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/firerating_restrictions.html

Bike Enthusiasts

The next meeting of the Greater Mankato Bike Advocates is at 7:00 -8:30 am, Friday, April 16 at the MPCA offices located in Mankato Place above BW3.

Our agenda looks like this:

1. June 12 Bike Ride: Lee Ganske
2. Liability Insurance for GMBA sponsored bike events: Tom E
3. Name and logo ideas: Tom E
4. Draft of brochure: Tom E
5. Web site: Lee G.
5. Board Members, Who and when: Group
6. Update on Greater Mankato Bike Facilities: parking, MATAPS, street routes
7. Upcoming Events (Kids On Bikes, April 17) (MN Bike Expo, April 23-24, State fairgrounds)
8. Next meeting

If I missed anything for the agenda, let me know. See you Friday, Tom Engstrom; 117 Royal Road Mankato, MN 56001; 507-387-5977-home; 507-720-2039-cell; tomengstrom@hickorytech.net

DNR to grant \$460,000 to local organizations for wildlife habitat projects

Nine conservation organizations will receive \$445,000 in heritage enhancement grants from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to improve Wildlife Management Area (WMA) habitat for ducks, pheasants, sharp-tailed grouse and other species.

The DNR's heritage enhancement grants are funded from sales tax revenue generated by state lottery ticket sales. The grant program is in its eighth year. The DNR's Division of Fish and Wildlife administers the program with input from local DNR wildlife managers.

The DNR also announced it will grant \$15,000 in turkey stamp funds to three National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) chapters for local habitat projects.

"These grants are an opportunity for the DNR to support local conservation groups who want to enhance state-owned habitat for multiple benefits, including hunting," said Dennis Simon, DNR wildlife section chief.

This year, 18 of 29 applications for heritage enhancement grants were funded. Projects include:

- Ducks Unlimited; wetland habitat improvements; \$100,000.
- Green Corridor; prairie grassland management; \$25,000.
- Minnesota Deer Hunters Association; brushland, grassland and hunter walking trails; \$13,000.
- Minnesota Pheasants-Blue Earth County; prairie management; \$8,432.
- Minnesota Prairie Chicken Society; brushland management; \$50,000.
- Minnesota Sharp-tailed Grouse Association; brushland management; \$51,568.
- Pheasants Forever; prairie/grassland management and prescribed burns; \$144,000.
- St. Paul Audubon Society, prairie/grassland management; \$23,000.
- The Nature Conservancy, prescribed burns; \$30,000.

Bill Penning, DNR farmland wildlife program leader, said the \$15,000 in grants to four NWTF chapters will be used for projects that benefit wild turkey habitat on state lands.

"Using turkey stamp funds and our conservation partners is a great way to leverage additional turkey habitat improvements," Penning said. "We're happy to be rolling this new program out and are pleased with these strong projects."

The turkey stamp grant program, funded through the sale of turkey stamps, is in its first year. Six applications from five organizations were received. Four of those applications from three groups were funded. Projects funded are:

- Park Rapids Chapter; Woody Cover and Forest Openings; \$6,395.
- Triple Gobble Chapter; Oak Savannah; \$2,750.
- Der Deutsche Longbeards; Woody Cover; \$5,855.

Poisoned Waters Presentation

This is a reminder that the Freshwater Society and the University of Minnesota are sponsoring an important lecture on water pollution on Tuesday, April 27.

Hedrick Smith, the producer of "Poisoned Waters," a powerful PBS Frontline documentary, will speak about the widespread pollution our waters still face, nearly 40 years after the passage of the Clean Water Act.

The lecture is free and open to the public, but seating is limited. Go to our web site, www.freshwater.org, to register. Thanks to those of you who have already registered; there is no need to register again.

To whet your appetite for Smith's lecture, tune in to Minnesota Public Radio at 11 a.m. on Thursday, April 15. Smith will be interviewed on MPR's Midday program.

Job Opportunities:

The University of Minnesota Extension is hiring an Agriculture Summer Intern for 12 weeks to work in McLeod and Meeker Counties. We will start reviewing applications on April 23rd. For more information check out the University of Minnesota job posting website at: <https://employment.umn.edu/applicants/Central?quickFind=86518>. Contact Nathan Winter at wint0146@umn.edu if you know of students that would like the job description. Nathan Winter; McLeod / Meeker County Extension Educator; Agricultural Production Systems; wint0146@umn.edu

Events:

April 17th (Saturday) is the **3rd Annual Fun Shoot (Clay Pigeon Shoot)** at the River Ridge Gun Club, Courtland sponsored by the Twin Valley Boy Scout Association. Check in is at 12:30 and the Shoot starts at 1:00pm. Go to www.twinvalleybsa.org to print off a registration form or for more information.

April 20th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance meeting** at the Hutchinson Events Center starting at 6:00 p.m. with a social hour and the formally meeting beginning at 9:00. For more information <http://www.watershedalliance.blogspot.com/>

April 24th (Saturday) is the **2010 Minnesota River Banquet** with the social hour starting at 5 p.m. in the lower level of Turner Hall in New Ulm. The dinner starts at 6:30 and program at 7:30 with an update on Minnesota actions, issues and advocacy opportunities for the public. It will also feature a startling snapshot look at the phenomenal fisheries in the backwater area of the river near New Ulm and Minnesota River Jeopardy will be back. For those who wish to come early and pay a visit to the Regional River History and Information Center the doors will be open starting at 2 PM until 4:30. The center is the big brick building located in Riverside Park at 1st South and Front St. This event is in its 21st year and as always is being hosted by the Coalition for a Clean Minnesota River. Pre-registration is open and can be done by email providing a name and the number attending to yasure@lycos.com or by sending a check for \$20 per person to CCMR P.O. Box 488 New Ulm MN 56073 notating banquet tickets on the check. CCMR is a basin-wide non-profit 501 c 3 federal tax exempt organization. All donations are tax deductible deducible.

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

Water Quality Articles:

[State eligible for \\$100,000 for wolf damages](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last week announced that Minnesota was among a handful of states eligible for funding meant to compensate livestock owners for losses due to wolves.

[U prof to study honey bee crisis](#) (Minnesota Daily). University of Minnesota researchers are looking to solve the mysterious and rapid decline of the U.S. honey bee population.

[Along the Mississippi, great blue herons make their nests](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Though they receive far less attention than Minnesota's state bird, the loon, herons are just as good at catching fish and they can soar like eagles.

[Suit filed to remove Minn. wolves from endangered species list](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Two Minnesota men have filed a federal lawsuit seeking to remove Minnesota wolves from the U.S. endangered species list.

[Wildlife puts the spring in Springbrook](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The Fridley nature center is an oasis for beavers, weasels, opossums and much more.

[Target Field deemed greenest ballpark in majors](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The grass at Target Field is emerald green, but it's what's underground that helps make the new home of the Minnesota Twins the greenest ballpark in America.

[Ice-out sets records in the north](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). Pete Boulay continued the normal process of tracking ice-out on some of the lakes in Minnesota's far north this week, but in many ways, ice-out this year has been anything but typical for the state's assistant state climatologist for DNR Waters.

[Source of synthetic chemical found in Mpls. lake ID'd](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A metal plating company in St. Louis Park is a likely source of [perfluorinated chemicals](#) showing up in fish in Lake Calhoun.

[Volume of wasted water in 3M cleanup operation concerns city, county officials](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The bad news is that the cleanup effort will consume more water — up to 9.2 million gallons a day — than Woodbury and Cottage Grove, combined, typically use on a winter day.

[Legislators move to divert enviro dollars](#) (Finance and Commerce). Environmental advocates expected it, and it's here: Minnesota legislators are looking to tap ostensibly protected pots of money to patch holes in the Minnesota general fund budget and find money for their priorities.

[Judge to hear Minneapolis power line dispute](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Supporters and opponents of two proposed high-voltage power lines and substations in south Minneapolis will present their cases to a judge on Monday.

[Almanac: Senators says 'war on conservation' has been declared](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The opposition brewing in the Legislature to acquisition of additional public hunting lands is disturbing, says Sen. Satveer Chaudhary, DFL-Fridley.

[Lakes fill slowly but surely](#) (Fairmont Sentinel). Think of the Laurentide Ice Sheet as a body, its limbs reaching out as the glacier expanded and contracted during the Ice Age.

[Groups say conservation buys don't boost land prices](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). As the Minnesota Legislature considers this year's round of conservation projects funded by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment, accusations are flying around the Capitol and in rural Minnesota about the purchase of public land.

[Senate votes 52-0 to repeal Legacy Amendment guidelines](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The Minnesota Senate gave preliminary approval Monday to a bill repealing controversial language guiding how hundreds of millions of dollars from the state's new Outdoor Heritage Fund should be spent.

[Norm Coleman and others to be honored as environmental stewards by St. Paul group](#) (MinnPost). Former U.S. Sen. Norm Coleman is among those to be honored for their environment stewardship by Great River Greening.

[Ruling calls for building small dam](#) (New Ulm Journal). Corn and bean farmer Tom Martens hopes the time and money spent over years of court battles ended March 30 when District Court Judge John Rodenberg ordered Nicollet County to complete an outlet control structure on Ditch 46A at 973.8 feet above sea level.

Water is life. It's the briny broth of our origins, the pounding circulatory system of the world. We stake our civilizations on the coasts and mighty rivers. Our deepest dread is the threat of having too little – or too much. – Barbara Kingsolver

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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