

### Changes for the Minnesota River Weekly Update

After working for the Water Resources Center (WRC) close to six years I will be moving onto a new position as the Minneopa State Park Naturalist with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. As a result management of the Minnesota River Weekly Update will be handled a little bit different than in the past. If you want to continue receiving the Weekly Update you will need to sign up under the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance Bulletin Board - <http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa/>

### A Message from Patrick Moore

Minnesota River lovers everywhere take their hats off to the citizens of Big Stone County who came out enmasse to speak for the river, the rocks and our quality of life at the Strata Corp's Conditional Use Permit hearing. You can read about it by clicking on: <http://www.wctrib.com/event/article/id/92553/>. You can see some of the testimony by visiting: <http://youtu.be/3G5PBhqFX9I> and at <http://bigstonebolder.com/>

It was one of the most powerful public hearings I have ever attended. I felt as if something very powerful and transformative was at work. Farmers, Native Americans, Economists, Students, Teachers, Nuns, Biologists and retiring baby boomers all presented compelling testimony in a most professional and courteous manner. It was as if the Earth herself had imbued every speaker with the gift of resonant speech. The integrity was evident, the facts and arguments unassailable.

It was a fitting way to begin Earth Week 2012. We continued last night by gathering in Granite Falls for a *Drop in Art Night* at CURE's new office along the Minnesota River in Granite Falls. You can see pictures and a video by visiting: <http://www.cureriver.org/blog/>. Again, it feels like something special is happening when people discover our shared desire to be creative and hopeful about where we live.

We will continue this Sunday, April 22 with a special 20th Anniversary Earth Day Clean Up from 12 noon to 4 p.m. by gathering in [Wegdahl Minnesota](#). We hope you can join us, for more info. call [320-841-1487](tel:320-841-1487).

May the integrity of creative grassroots citizen energy from upstream roll down throughout the river valley like the Glacial River Warren herself -- clearing a new path for enlightened relationships with the Earth and each other, Patrick J. Moore : [320-269-2984](tel:320-269-2984)

### Seven Mile Creek Park Clean-Up

We are planning a spring trail clean-up at 7 Mile Creek Park on Saturday April 28th from 1-4pm. John Gatzke, the maintenance supervisor, will provide some loppers, trimming saws, snacks and guidance about which trails need the most attention.

If you come, it would be great if you could bring work gloves and, if possible, your own lopper or saw, in case we don't have enough. We will meet at the first picnic shelter when you enter the park. Questions, call Karen at 995-8904.

### Minnesota state parks and trails geocaching program ends May 2 – new program coming in June

The Geocaching Wildlife Safari, a high-tech treasure hunt, is nearing the end of its three-year run as one of the more popular programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Trails Division.

Geocachers have until 10 p.m. Wednesday, May 2, to find any final caches hidden at parks and recreation areas. After that and while supplies last, Geocaching Wildlife Safari award cards and collectible coins will be available at the 25 designated geocaching demo parks.

Since the program began, interpretive naturalists at Minnesota state parks have offered 325 Geocaching 101 Programs that have reached more than 9,000 first-time geocachers. In 2011, free loaner GPS units were checked out from the demo parks nearly 3,000 times.

“We’re delighted that so many people have shown interest in geocaching at Minnesota state parks and recreation areas,” said Courtland Nelson, director of the DNR’s Parks and Trails Division. “Geocaching has clearly been an effective way for us to connect people with the outdoors, especially kids. We’re grateful for the support offered us by the Minnesota Geocaching Association.”

In 2008, Minnesota state parks first invited geocachers to participate in a program known as Geocaching History Challenge presented by Best Buy. More than 20,000 geocache finds were recorded by experienced and first-time geocachers alike in less than one year.

Participation has continued to grow through the Geocaching Wildlife Safari, launched in 2009. Families have poured into the parks to explore the outdoors while hunting for hidden critter caches, which contain collectible critter cards featuring facts and photos of animals native to the park.

Geocaching is a high-tech game with great popularity around the globe. Participants utilize GPS to hunt for hidden cache containers. Typically caches are old ammo boxes camouflaged in the outdoors, making them a challenge to locate. There are more than 1,711,000 active caches around the world, according to [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com).

Nelson said a new geocaching program will launch on Saturday, June 9, which is National Get Outdoors Day. For more information, including the locations of the demo parks, visit [mndnr.gov/geocaching](http://mndnr.gov/geocaching) or call the DNR Information Center at 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-646-6367 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

#### **Wildfire Prevention Week raises awareness for fire safety**

Recent rain and snow throughout the state has temporarily decreased Minnesota’s wildfire danger rating, but that could quickly change without adequate rain, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) said.

As part of Wildfire Prevention Week, April 15-21, the DNR is encouraging people to make a special effort to control their fires this week and all year long.

“Most wildfires occur in the spring, between the time when snow melts and vegetation turns green,” said Larry Himanga, DNR wildfire prevention coordinator. “This spring’s wildfire season started earlier than normal and fires have been burning with greater intensity. Severe fire conditions have put a strain on our wildland firefighters and fire departments.”

So far this year, the Minnesota DNR has recorded 533 fires that have burned 14,613 acres. Local and federal agencies also have responded to several fires in their own jurisdictions.

On average, DNR firefighters respond to more than 1,500 wildfires each year. In Minnesota, 98 percent of wildfires are caused by people, and the number one reason is escaped debris-burning fires.

Himanga encourages landowners to find alternatives to burning debris, such as chipping or composting. This is especially true for landowners affected by last July’s blowdown storms in east-central Minnesota and western Wisconsin.

Landowners who wish to burn should check burning restrictions in their area. Much of Minnesota is under burning restrictions between now and green up. In those areas where burning is allowed, be sure to obtain a burning permit, be careful with debris fires and remember that piled debris can hold hot coals for several days to several months.

Visit [mndnr.gov/forestry/fire/firerating\\_restrictions.html](http://mndnr.gov/forestry/fire/firerating_restrictions.html) for current statewide fire danger information and burning restrictions. Burning permits can be obtained from local fire wardens, forestry offices or by visiting [mndnr.gov/forestry/fire/questions.html](http://mndnr.gov/forestry/fire/questions.html)

The DNR urges everyone to be safe with fire, and to have tools and water handy before lighting a fire. Always make certain fires are completely out before leaving.

As Smokey Bear says, "Only YOU can prevent wildfires!"

### **BUSHMILLS ETHANOL PENALIZED FOR WASTEWATER VIOLATIONS AND PROVIDING INACCURATE INFORMATION**

Bushmills Ethanol, Inc. has paid an \$800,000 civil penalty for wastewater treatment violations for discharging wastewater containing unpermitted levels of dissolved minerals (salts) and other pollutants and then providing inaccurate information about the discharges at the company's ethanol production facility in Atwater (Kandiyohi County). The discharges were not authorized in its wastewater permit.

"This action shows our commitment to safeguarding Minnesota's waters," said MPCA Commissioner Paul Aasen. "There are many companies that follow the rules to protect our air, water and land and we applaud them. But when companies break the rules they not only harm our natural resources, they get an unfair competitive advantage and they must be held accountable."

The violations, occurring from 2008 to 2011, were discovered through on-site inspections by MPCA enforcement staff and through analysis of monitoring data the company is required to submit under its wastewater discharge permit.

The penalty was part of an enforcement agreement the company and the MPCA signed on March 28, 2012. Although the agreement covers a number of violations, the primary ones, and the reason the penalty was so high, related to misleading information provided by the company filed in regard to the operation of its wastewater treatment plant.

The MPCA issued the facility a wastewater discharge permit on April 3, 2007, which contained a requirement for the company to install a wastewater treatment system and have it operating in compliance with water quality standards by August 15, 2008. The company certified in several later submissions to the MPCA that system installation was on schedule and the discharges were meeting standards, when in fact the system had not been operating properly since startup and continued to be out of compliance through 2009.

The Bushmills facility discharges wastewater to Judicial Ditch number 17, which flows about 10 miles to the middle Fork of the Crow River. The potential environmental impacts of the illegal discharges could be to harm fish and other aquatic organisms, not only in the ditch but potentially in the Crow River and other waters downstream. According to an MPCA investigator involved with the case, "the receiving water that the regulated party discharges to is a very low-flow/headwaters type stream, with very little and at times no dilution; therefore, the relative sensitivity of the receiving water is relatively high."

The illegal discharges occurred from August 2008 through December 2009.

In addition to paying the civil penalty, the company agreed to a compliance schedule for completing corrective actions, including specific plans on how it will ensure compliance with the facility's environmental permit limits and prevent reoccurrence of the violations in the future.

When calculating penalties, the MPCA takes into account how seriously the violations affected the environment, whether they were first-time or repeat violations, and how promptly they were reported to appropriate authorities. Penalties also attempt to recover the calculated economic benefit gained by failure to comply with environmental laws in a timely manner. For a comprehensive list of enforcement actions by the MPCA, go to the agency's Web site at [www.pca.state.mn.us/newscenter/enforcement.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/newscenter/enforcement.html).

### **Pollinator Conservation Planning Short Course**

To be held in Duluth on June 13, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pollinators are essential to our environment. The ecological service they provide is necessary for the reproduction of more than 85 percent of the world's flowering plants and is fundamental to agriculture and natural ecosystems. More

than two-thirds of the world's crop species are dependent on pollination, with an annual estimated value of \$18 to \$27 billion in the United States alone. Beyond agriculture, pollinators are keystone species in most terrestrial ecosystems, since their activities are ultimately responsible for the seeds and fruits that feed everything from songbirds to black bears. Conservation of pollinating insects is critically important to preserving both wider biodiversity as well as agriculture.

For more information,

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e5rn4lj095f28ab9&llr=tnjebhdab>

### **DNR to lift burning restrictions in 13 Twin Cities metro and central Minnesota counties**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will lift burning restrictions in 13 Minnesota counties beginning at 8 a.m. Friday, April 27. The DNR is lifting restrictions in areas where green-up is occurring and wildfire conditions are easing.

The following counties will be removed from burning restrictions April 27: Anoka, Benton, Chisago, Dakota, Douglas, Hennepin, Isanti, Pope, Ramsey, Stearns, Sherburne, Washington and Wright counties.

Although the state burning restrictions are lifted in these counties, local areas, counties or municipalities may have specific regulations or restrictions that affect burning operations. People should check with local authorities to obtain proper permits before conducting any open burning.

DNR officials advise anyone conducting burning to keep their burn piles small, have a water supply nearby and stay with the fire until it is completely out. If the fire escapes, the homeowner is responsible for the damage and suppression costs.

Burning permits are available through state and federal forestry offices, from local fire wardens, or online for \$5 fee per calendar year at [webapps1.dnr.state.mn.us/burning\\_permits/](http://webapps1.dnr.state.mn.us/burning_permits/). Online permits need to be activated on the day of the burn.

Many counties in central and northern Minnesota will remain under burning restrictions until current wildfire conditions are lessened. These counties are: Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Carlton, Cass, Clearwater, Cook, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Itasca, Kanabec, Kittson, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Otter Tail, Pennington, Pine, Polk (part), Roseau, St. Louis, Todd and Wadena counties. That portion of Polk County south and east of County Road 6 from the Mahnomen County line to Minnesota Highway 92 east to the Clearwater County line remains under burning restrictions.

Burning restrictions for these remaining counties will be lifted when vegetation green-up occurs and safe burning conditions prevail. Additional information regarding burning restrictions can be found on the DNR's website at [www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire).

### **DNR: Celebrate Arbor Month by creating a healthy yard**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds people that May is Arbor Month in Minnesota and Arbor Day, April 27, marks the beginning of an entire month of celebrating trees.

This year, Minnesota's Arbor Month theme is "Creating a Healthy Community Forest." The idea is to encourage planting a wide variety of native trees to create a diverse community forest that is more resilient to large-scale devastation from tree pests.

A DNR 2010 Community Forest Survey showed that more than 50 percent of Minnesota's community trees are ash, maple and spruce.

"With the 2009 discovery of emerald ash borer in Minnesota and the potential arrival of other invasive species, we could stand to lose a large percentage of our community forest trees to these devastating pests," said Jennifer Teegarden, DNR forestry outreach specialist.

To celebrate Arbor Month, the DNR created "A Homeowner's Guide to Creating a Healthy Yard." The

guide provides an overview of how to transform a traditional yard to one that provides wildlife habitat, environmental benefits, increased property values and landscape diversity using native plants.

Urban and community forestry federal funds helped pay for the guide.

To obtain an Arbor Month packet that includes the guide, contact the DNR Information Center at [info.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:info.dnr@state.mn.us), or call 651-296-6157 or toll-free 888-646-6367.

Visit the DNR's Arbor Month Web page at [www.mndnr.gov/arbormonth](http://www.mndnr.gov/arbormonth) for more information about how to create a healthy yard and to locate an Arbor Day or Arbor Month celebration.

"Remember, Arbor Month and Arbor Day are great times to go outside to explore nature," Teegarden said.

### **New MN Boating Law**

Minnesota boaters have one more item on their to-do list as they prepare to head to the lakes and rivers. A new state law requires all watercraft to have a sticker listing the rules for preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species. They're now available at all Department of Motor Vehicle offices and DNR regional offices. Sporting goods stores have reportedly been having trouble getting them, however. The stickers are required on all watercraft – including boats, canoes, kayaks, paddleboats and personal watercraft. New legislation also allows officers to conduct roadside inspections of watercraft for invasive species. State officials say that anglers are expected to know the rules, and officers are more likely to issue tickets rather than warnings this summer.

### **MN DNR Stream Habitat Program - 2012 Workshop offerings**

Registration is open for the following two workshops:

#### **The Science of Healthy Waters**

This new series, The Science of Healthy Waters, is designed for anyone involved in watershed issues including water quality (rivers, lakes, wetlands), aquatic and terrestrial habitat, land use, wetlands, and flooding. This series will present: a) the science underlying integrative, system-based watershed management, b) the problems, issues, and barriers hampering our ability to protect and restore watershed health and c) alternative approaches for accomplishing goals of clean water, improved fish and wildlife habitat and reduction of flood damages and erosion. Each workshop addresses a specific topic related to stream health.

#### **The Science of Healthy Waters: The Dam Dilemma \*New workshop\***

This workshop will unpack the science and implications involving dams in terms of: 1) effects on connectivity, hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, and aquatic habitat, 2) societal and ecological implications of these structures and 3) the challenges, benefits and design approaches of dam removal, dam modification, and by-pass fishways.

*This class will be held May 21-23 in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Cost is \$300.*

#### **The Science of Healthy Waters: The Ditching Dilemma \*New in 2011\***

This workshop unpacks the science and implications of ditching in terms of: 1) effects on hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, and aquatic habitat, 2) societal and ecological implications of these practices, and 3) alternative design concepts and approaches that work towards accomplishing sustainable agricultural goals while improving water quality and restoring channel stability and ecological health.

*This class will be held July 16-18 in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Cost is \$300.*

Please see the attached flyer, which can be downloaded at [www.mndnr.gov/eco/streamhab](http://www.mndnr.gov/eco/streamhab), for course descriptions and the registration form. Please note that we are not offering workshops from our Stream Restoration series in 2012.

### **Job Opportunities:**

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Job Opportunities:**

We are currently recruiting for 2 Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) biologists in the Midwest Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; one is a permanent position in Winona, MN. The other is a term position in La Crosse, WI. Both announcements opened yesterday and close on Friday, April 27.

1) The Winona position is a permanent position open at the GS-7 level. You can find the announcement at USAJobs: <http://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/313574000>

If you have questions about the Winona position please call Mary Stefanski, 507/494-6229 (Winona District Manager, Upper Mississippi Refuge), or Sheldon Myerchin 320/253-4682 x11 (Minnesota Private Lands Coordinator), or myself.

2) The LaCrosse position is open to those who qualify at the GS-7 and/or GS-9 level.

<http://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/313102100>

If you have questions about the LaCrosse position please contact Jim Nissen at 608/783-8405 (LaCrosse District Manager, Upper Mississippi Refuge) or Kurt Waterstradt 608/221-1206x14 (Wisconsin Private Lands Coordinator) or myself.

A Partners for Fish and Wildlife biologist works with private landowners to restore fish and wildlife habitat such as wetlands, prairies, streams, and savannas, which is extremely satisfying work! Winona and LaCrosse are great towns located along the Mississippi River.

### **Job Posting: Growing Lots Farm Assistant**

Growing Lots Urban Farm is looking for a positive, collaboratively-minded, hard-working new team member to join us this season as Farm Assistant. This part-time seasonal position will consist of **20 hours/week from May 12 - October 20, 2012.**

Duties will include, but not be limited to:

- Working closely with Farm Manager and Lead Farmer on the day-to-day workings of the farm, including planting, watering, harvesting, weeding, site design/construction and general maintenance
- Engaging with farm customers by providing staff support for CSA pickup, farm newsletter, and farmer's market stand.
- Helping to supervise and instruct farm apprentices and community member volunteers.

Qualifications and experience:

- We are looking for someone with lots of energy and a strong work ethic who will help make sure the farm keeps growing productively and running smoothly from day to day. The Farm Assistant will be a quick and eager learner, adaptive and efficient, ready to buckle down and meet a deadline or develop new systems as situations demand, an all-around go-get'er! Because Growing Lots is a small team and farming is hard work, it's essential that the Farm Assistant also have a sense of humor and be capable of maintaining a positive outlook amid challenging circumstances.
- Qualified candidates will have strong references and at least one full season of organic-based farm work under their belt and a demonstrated interest in a career in sustainable agriculture and/or urban farming. While not certified organic, Growing Lots strictly adheres to the organic philosophy of food production, and seeks ways to go even deeper into healthy, nutritious food production.
- Some experience with customer service, public outreach, and/or community-building work is also desirable. Ability to lift heavy loads, do repetitive physical labor, and to happily and willingly undertake such labor are also prerequisite. Must be 18 years or older to apply.

Availability:

- The Farm assistant must be available on harvest/market stand day all season long, as almost half the weekly hours will fall on this day. This falls on Wednesdays in 2012.



- As well, there will be occasional need to work on Saturday's a couple days per month to assist with Community Work Days.
- Must be available for the full position time span.

**Benefits:**

- Lots of fun, a good farmer's tan, and good fresh veggies throughout the season!

**Compensation:**

- \$ 10/hr , for a total of \$4600 for the season of work.

Qualified applicants should submit resume, cover letter, and three references to Farmers Stefan & Mike at [growinglots@gmail.com](mailto:growinglots@gmail.com) by Thursday, May 3, 2012. Interviews will be held the week of May 7th, with a projected start date of May 12th, 2012. For more information, <http://growinglots.blogspot.com/> Come grow with us!!

**Events:**

April 28<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) is the **Ney Nature Center Spring Fling – Benefit Dinner & Silent Auction** starting at 5:30 at the Montgomery American Legion Post 79 (102 Elm Avenue SW0 in Montgomery. Featured guest speaker is Don Shelby, an environmental journalist, nature lover, one of the most decorated and honored local television journalists in the country, and recently WCCO-TV News Anchor. For more information call or email Becky at the Ney Nature Center – 507-248-3474 or [info@neycenter.org](mailto:info@neycenter.org)

May 16<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) is **Chris Domeier: “Ask an Expert” presentation** at 7:00 p.m. at the Montevideo Public Library. Come and hear Chris Domeier, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Biologist talk about the health of the fish in the Minnesota River on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the Montevideo Library at 7 pm. Chris is one of many citizen and professional experts profiled in the online “**Ask an Expert About the Minnesota River**” project. Staff from the Water Resources Center at Minnesota State University Mankato will highlight a few of the other experts chronicled in this online tour focusing on the health of the Minnesota River. Learn more about the health of the Minnesota River Basin at [www.mrbdc.mnsu.edu](http://www.mrbdc.mnsu.edu)

May 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> is the **21<sup>st</sup> Annual River & History Weekend at the Chippewa County Park** in Wegdahl along the Minnesota River. This will be an International camp out and fireside sing along on Friday May 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday May 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the park. Rain or shine, bring a tent to pitch and some food to share along with your musical instruments and join exchange students from Sweden, Germany, Norway, Italy, Denmark, Thailand, Switzerland, Taiwan and more as they prepare to paddle the Minnesota river on Saturday as part of their year-long exchange experience facilitated by the [EF \(Education First\)](#) and CURE River Keeper John White of Clara City. Note that the Wegdahl park does not have electricity or water -- so plan for that. For more information, call CURE at 1-877-269-2873. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/historyweekend.pdf>

May 21<sup>st</sup> (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Place and location to be announced. For information: 507-389-5491 or [karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu](mailto:karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu)

July 16<sup>th</sup> (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the St. Peter Community Center, Room 219 (600 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street). For information: 507-389-5491 or [karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu](mailto:karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu)

September 17<sup>th</sup> (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Health & Human Services Building Multipurpose Room (2200 23<sup>rd</sup> Street NE) in Willmar. For information: 507-389-5491 or [karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu](mailto:karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu)

November 19<sup>th</sup> (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Place and location to be announced. For information: 507-389-5491 or [karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu](mailto:karnell.johnson@mnsu.edu)

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

## **Environmental/Conservation Articles:**

[Film explores benefits and challenges of farm to school](#) (AgriNews). One in three children in the United States is overweight or obese. One in five preschool children are overweight or obese.

[Farm to school documentary makes food the star](#) (AgriNews). The premiere of the documentary, Farm to School: Growing our Future, was like a real Hollywood premiere, a Cannon Falls farmer said.

[University agriculture school grows in new areas](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). When many people picture the typical agriculture student at the University of Minnesota, chances are they'd think of a rural farm boy.

[Precision conservation: Right fix for the right acre](#) (AgriNews). Precision conservation creates an opportunity to have a large conservation impact by targeting practices to acres where they will do the most good.

[Isobutanol can't be sold in transportation fuels in Minnesota](#) (AgriNews). Nearly a year ago, ground was broken in Luverne for the world's first commercial scale isobutanol plant.

[Recovery project a part of bluebirds' solid comeback](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Three decades ago, almost no bluebirds were left in Minnesota. A 1979 count put their population at 22 birds. Now the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources estimates their population at around 25,000.

[Warm spring brings loons back to MN early](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Transmitter data confirm that the unusually warm spring is bringing loons back to Minnesota almost three weeks earlier than usual.

[Minnesota Senate: Increases for hunting and fishing licenses stumble](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). A proposal to increase hunting and fishing license fees stumbled hard when the Minnesota Senate rejected an amendment that would have tacked it onto a separate game and fish bill.

[Early fishing opener, wolf hunt and fee increases in doubt](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Chances that Minnesota's walleye season will be moved up a week stalled and perhaps died along with a hunting and fishing license increase Tuesday on the Minnesota Senate floor.

[Fridley cancer cluster recast](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The state says lung disease is likely cause for spike, which is less than first calculated. Residents are skeptical.

[Investigation of county landfill contamination should end this fall](#) (West Central Tribune). The investigation of a large plume of groundwater contamination that originated at the Kandiyohi County landfill should be wrapped up this fall.

[Land Stewardship Project promotes urban agriculture](#) (KFAIR RADIO). Earth Day marks the anniversary of what many consider to be the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

[New crop registry to help avoid pesticide damage](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has made public a registry of sensitive crops to help prevent accidental pesticide damage.

[High Gas Prices](#) (Minnesota 2020). We recently returned from a cruise in Australia and New Zealand. After returning one of the things that caught our attention was the uproar over high gasoline prices.

[Give landlords incentive to upgrade appliances, Minnesota 2020 says](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A Twin Cities non-profit is proposing ideas to improve energy efficiency in rental housing units.



[DNR programs look like 'Swiss cheese,' commissioner says](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). State Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Tom Landwehr called on lawmakers Thursday to approve an increase to hunting and fishing licenses, warning that the DNR's programs are already "beginning to look like Swiss cheese" and will face immediate cuts if lawmakers do not increase fees.

[Asian carp concern grows in southwest](#) (Outdoor News). Asian carp "very easily" could be in waters in southern Minnesota, the result of their discovery in Iowa border waters.

[Minnesota ethanol maker hit with \\$800,000 fine](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). State pollution regulators say penalties are having an effect.

[USA Today finds old Minnesota lead plant sites](#) (KARE 11). Two sites in the Twin Cities are among 400 such locations nationwide noted in a [special investigation published by USA Today](#).

[Minnesota's wolves: Dead or alive?](#) (MinnPost). The ink to delist the gray wolf from the endangered species list has barely dried on the paper.

[Dennis Anderson: Time for reason is short at Capitol](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). As is par for the course, there is much to do on outdoors issues at the Legislature as the final deadline looms.

[W Minn. ethanol co-op fined \\$800K](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). An ethanol co-op in Kandiyohi County will pay an \$800,000 fine for exceeding its wastewater permit and not telling the state about it.

[Commentary: Agriculture or water quality? Let's have both](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). With Earth Day just behind us, we're reminded that, too often, we are told we need to choose between a healthy environment and a healthy economy.

*One final piece of advice: do not burn yourselves out. Be as I am – a reluctant enthusiast . . . a part time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. – Edward Abbey*

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.

Thanks,

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Scott

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