

Blanding's turtle presentation offered in Truman

Those interested in learning more about the Blanding's turtle population in the Perch Creek area are invited to a presentation on Monday, Feb. 7, at 6:30 p.m. in the Truman Community Building. The program will be led by Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) nongame wildlife biologists Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer and Laurinda Brown. They will present information on this elusive species, describe their current research, and answer questions regarding Blanding's turtles and their habitat. They'll also discuss why conserving Blanding's turtles is good for other wildlife and for people, too. An informal question and answer session will follow the presentation.

The DNR has an ongoing study of Blanding's turtles in the greater Perch Creek area. This has been made possible through the cooperation of private landowners who have provided the DNR permission to survey as well as other area residents who have provided sighting reports.

For information, contact: Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer at 507-359-6033 or lisa.gelvin-innvaer@state.mn.us

University of Minnesota Coal Plant

Hello! As some of you may know, the University of Minnesota operates the last coal plant in Minneapolis at its Twin Cities campus. Sierra Club is working with a campus group, Campus Beyond Coal, to convince the University to move beyond coal and towards cleaner energy solutions.

The University of Minnesota recently acknowledged that moving beyond coal is key to achieving climate neutrality as part of their sustainability planning process. Despite their statement and the calls of thousands of students and community members for the University to phase out of coal within five years, the University of Minnesota still doesn't have a timeline to phase out coal at its Southeast Steam Plant.

Right now, we need to show University leadership that support is still growing for phasing coal out at the University of Minnesota. Anyone can sign the petition, but we're especially looking for University of Minnesota alumni from around the state to show their support. They will issue a final climate action plan at the end of this semester, and we want it to include a timeline to phase out coal!

Go here: <http://action.sierraclub.org/UMTCbeyondcoal>. Thanks! Jessica Tatro; Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign; 2327 E. Franklin Ave.; Minneapolis, MN 55406; office 612-659-9124 ext. 309; cell 612-963-9642; Follow the [North Star Chapter](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Mark Your Calendars to Attend the 2011 Lakes and Rivers Conference - April 28-29, 2011 in St. Cloud, MN

Minnesota Waters is gearing up for our 2011 Lakes and Rivers Conference, and we invite you to join us! The Conference is April 28 - 29, 2011 and will be at the [River's Edge Convention Center](#) in St. Cloud (formerly the St. Cloud Civic Center).

We're planning an impressive schedule of information-rich workshops, which will focus on the following topics:

- Aquatic Invasive Species
- State and Local Policy: Understanding it and how to influence it
- Best Practices and Projects for Clean Water
- Water Quality Challenges

Online registration will open in early February. Watch for workshop topics, schedule and other details at www.minnesotawaters.org/content/conference

3rd Crop Producer Meeting on 'Local Foods' – February 14th

Rural Advantage and University of Minnesota Extension will be hosting the 7th annual 3rd Crop Producer Meetings in February and March. The topic of 'Local Foods' will kick off the 2011 Third Crop Producer

Meetings on Monday, February 14, 2011 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fairmont, Minnesota. The day will include information on local foods production and market opportunities.

9:30am Registration and Coffee
10:00am Farm2Cafeteria – Martin County Network - Jeff Jensen, Rural Advantage
10:15am Value Added Panel - Janice Guldán, Guldán Family Farm (CSA); Tim Harbo, Harbo Cider; and Harris Tinklenberg, Harris Honey Company
10:45am Report on 2010 Terra Madre – Turin, Italy (international sustainable local food network) - Heidi Morlock, Seven Story Farm and Jane Rosemarin, Slow Food Minnesota
11:15am Can You Make It Pay? Financial Planning for Your Project - Chuck Schwartau, UMN Extension
11:50am NRCS EQIP Cost-Share For High Tunnels - Betsy Norland, NRCS
12:00pm Lunch (on your own)
1:00pm Improving Food Quality Through Soil Health - Jon Frank, International Ag. Labs
3:00pm Further Discussion and Question/Answer

There is no cost to attend Rural Advantage's 2011 Third Crop Producer Meetings. Pre-registration is not necessary. For those interested in attending from the metro area, carpooling is available from the University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus. If interested, contact Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture (MISA) – misamail@umn.edu 800-909-6472 or 612-625-8235.

The next 3rd Crop Producer Meeting will be held February 28, 2011 and will focus on 'Renewable Energy Today'.

Directions: Knights of Columbus Hall – 920 East 10th Street – Fairmont, MN 56031. From the South – State Hwy. 15: After the railroad tracks, take the first left at Militello Motors (East 10th Street). The Knights of Columbus Hall is one block west and is on the south side of the street. From the North – State Hwy. 15: Starting at the Interstate 90 overpass, travel south through two stoplights. Take the next right at Militello Motors (East 10th Street). The Knights of Columbus Hall is one block west and is on the south side of the street.

Contact for this event: Jill Sackett - UMN Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449
sacke032@umn.edu

**The Freshwater Society and the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences present:
Craig A. Cox**

On Thursday, Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. at the St. Paul Student Center, University of Minnesota St. Paul Campus is a presentation by Craig Cox. Agricultural runoff is a major source of pollution in U.S. rivers and lakes. Craig A. Cox, vice president of the Environmental Working Group and a longtime advocate for soil and water conservation, will deliver a lecture on agriculture and water quality. The lecture is free and open to the public, but seating is limited and [registration](#) is required. The lecture is part of the Moos Family Speaker Series on Water Quality. For information go to www.freshwater.org.

Job Announcements:

Three-quarter to full time, benefitted Position Opening

Duties to include CSA Farm Site Manager at MRCI- New Ulm, New Ulm, Minnesota. To be filled by March 1, 2011. I am looking for a qualified individual who: enjoys working with people with disabilities - has commercial experience in Organic Gardening - has supervisory skills whose primary duties will be the Farm Site Manager for the Growing Green Mini-Farm. This person will have the opportunity to help build a young CSA into a diversified work site offering many healthy job options to MRCI clients and high quality food products to the community of New Ulm.

Company Backgrounds: MRCI-New Ulm is a branch of MRCI based out of Mankato, one of the largest providers of vocational services for people with disabilities and disadvantages in Minnesota. In 2007, MRCI-New Ulm partnered with Putting Green, Inc., a non-profit environmental learning center, to create Growing Green Mini-farm, an organically grown produce CSA operation in New Ulm. MRCI-New Ulm provides workers with disabilities to do the growing/farm work.

Putting Green, Inc. has the mission to educate and inspire people to make informed choices for a healthy planet. An environmental themed Mini-golf park designed, developed, and operated by young people was their starting project. Another one of Putting Green's goals is to inspire and train our young people to be the leaders of tomorrow by giving them the opportunity to discover, create and innovate, and be the next, better stewards of our natural resources.

Growing Green Mini-Farm started growing in 2008. We served 50 CSA members in 2010 and plan to expand to 70 members in 2011. Future plans include developing value added products and animal husbandry projects along with educational projects.

MRCI-New Ulm position description: Working Crew Supervisor – This position supervises the Growing Green Mini-Farm crew of 5 to 7 workers with disabilities, who provide the labor to manage the Mini-Farm CSA operation. Duties include working with the workers to prep the soil, plant, tend, harvest and distribute the crops in the greenhouse and on the Farm. During the off-season, this position will work with Putting Green staff to plan the next season and order seed. In the event of rain days and lack of work during the winter, hours will be filled in at other MRCI crew sites. Benefits: This is a three-quarter to full time position with Vacation, Sick leave, Holiday, Retirement Plan, Health, Dental and Life insurance benefits. Contact: Georg Marti, Branch Manager 507-276-5637; gmarti@mrciworksource.org

Watershed Technician

The Benton Soil & Water Conservation District is now accepting applications for a Watershed Technician. This is a full time position currently funded for at least two years. We anticipate the position to be extended beyond the initial two years although this cannot be guaranteed. The primary purpose of the Watershed Technician is to work one on one with individuals in the Little Rock Creek and Little Rock Lake watersheds in irrigation and nutrient management, and promote, design and assist with the installation of other Best Management Practices. The watershed spans across Benton and Morrison Counties.

The deadline for applications is February 11th. Application materials can be found on the Benton SWCD website at www.soilandwater.org.

Seasonal Water Monitoring Technician

The Upper Minnesota River Watershed District is looking to hire a full time, temporary water monitoring technician from April to October 2011. The position is based out of Ortonville MN in Big Stone County and pays \$10 per hour. The desired knowledge and skills are:

- Experience in stream water quality monitoring, and data entry is desired.
- Possess or be actively pursuing a bachelor's degree in water resources, soil science, or related natural resources field.
- Exceptional organizational skills.
- Proficient with various computer software programs, including spreadsheets and databases.
- Able to walk on uneven terrain associated with natural areas, be willing to work outdoors in extreme weather conditions, be able to wade in small streams.
- Self motivated
- Commitment to high quality work
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision
- Ability to maintain relationships with co-workers, board, agencies, communities and landowners
- Must have valid driver's license and reliable vehicle.

Complete Job Announcement, Application and Position Description is available at www.umrwd.org or by calling (320)839-3411 or emailing deanna.lundberg@midconetwork.com. Please submit cover letter with

resume and completed application to the Upper Minnesota River Watershed District, 211 2nd Street SE, Ortonville, MN 56278.

CONDITIONS OF ANNOUNCEMENT – The UMRWD reserves the right to make changes to the content of this position announcement without notification and may at any time withdraw the announcement.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – Candidates will be considered without discrimination for any non-merit reason such as race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or familial status or membership or non-membership in an employee organization.

Wilderness Inquiry Trail Staff and Intern Positions for 2011

Wilderness Inquiry is currently hiring trail staff and interns for 2011. We are looking for people with outstanding leadership and decision-making skills, high energy, and a desire to work hard for the mission of WI. To learn more, see job descriptions and to apply see Wilderness Inquiry's website:

www.wildernessinquiry.org

Each year, Wilderness inquiry operates hundreds of Canoeing, Kayaking and Hiking trips to destinations in Minnesota, across the United States, and around the world for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. Trail staff leads inclusive outdoor adventures, leads single-day events and multi-day expeditions, navigates, cooks, tells stories and teaches outdoor skills along with other responsibilities.

For more information: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/internandtrailstaff.pdf>

Events:

February 2nd (Wednesday) is the **Hawk Creek Watershed Project Annual Meeting** at the Kandi Entertainment Center (500 19th Ave. SE), Willmar, MN from 8:30 to 12:00 with a free lunch to those that RSVP before Jan. 29th. Topics will be: 2010 HCWP Progress-Achieving Significant Water Quality Improvements in Farm Country by Cory Netland (HCWP Coordinator), Public Drainage Benefits & Damages “Past, Present, and Future” by Loren Engelby (Kandiyohi County Drainage Inspector), Ron Ringquist (Drainage Viewers Assoc.), Kurt Deter (Rinke-Noonan Environmental Lawyer), and Harlan Madsen (Kandiyohi County Commissioner), and The History of Environmental Expectations in Minnesota by Stephen Lee from MPCA. Soil and Water Continuing Education Credits are pending! For more information and RSVP call 320-523-3666.

February 9th (Wednesday) is the showing of “**Dirt! the Movie**” at the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. located at 170 Good Counsel Drive in Mankato. For more information 507-389-4272 or lcoons@ssndmankato.org

February 10th (Thursday) is the 10th **Year Celebration of Water Quality Work in the Lac qui Parle – Yellow Bank Watershed** with a dinner and program from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Dawson VFW. A dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. followed by a recognition program. The guest speaker for the evening will be Ashley Shelby, author of Red River Rising: The Anatomy of a Flood and the Survival of an American City. Please RSVP by Thursday, February 3rd by calling Mary Homan at 320-598-3319 or email mary.homan@lqpc.com

February 12th (Saturday) is **Meet with Sen. Sheran & Reps. Morrow and Brynaert on environmental issues** from 10:00-11:30 a.m. at the Blue Earth County Library (100 East Main Street, Mankato. Pre-meeting for constituents and MEP groups: 9:00 a.m. (same location, please RSVP). Please RSVP to Andrew Spaeth at <mailto:andrewspaeth@mepartnership.org> or 651-290-0154.

February 12th (Saturday) is the **Cure 19th Annual Meeting** from 6-10pm at the Hollywood Theater on Main Street Montevideo. **Invited Guest Speakers: John Hickman & Jon Carlson** will tell us about their past year making a documentary about the growing movement to clean up the Minnesota River. Come

hear the stories of all the fantastic people they met along the way and get a sneak preview of portions of the documentary! For more information visit <http://www.cureriver.org/events.html>

February 14th (Monday) is a **Third Crop Producer meeting on Local Foods** starting at 9:30 a.m. with registration and coffee at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fairmont, Minnesota. The presentations begin at 10:00am and continuing until 3:00pm. There will be a one hour break for lunch on your own during the 12 o'clock hour. Following the conclusion of the presentations, there will be further time for discussion and questions. Please look for information regarding speakers and presentation topics to be coming soon.

February 15th (Tuesday) is the **Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District's Kick-off event** to initiate a New Year of water protection and improvement starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Prior Lake City Hall, Council Chambers Room (4646 Dakota Street SE) in Prior Lake. The District is looking to get the word out about recent developments in lake health and clean water as well as fill positions on its Citizens Advisory Committee. The event, open to the public and free of charge, will provide an opportunity for concerned citizens to:

- Hear about what they can do to preserve and protect their lakes.
- Voice ideas and concerns about the state of lakes in the area.
- Learn more about the recent classification of Spring and Upper Prior Lakes as "impaired".
- Become familiar with the Watershed District's duties and goals for water resource management.

February 16th (Wednesday) is Make Your Own Non-toxic Cleaning Products from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 170 Good Counsel Drive in Mankato sponsored by the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry. For more information 507-389-4272 or lcoons@ssndmankato.org

February 23rd (Wednesday) is the **Green Book Club** from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 170 Good Counsel Drive in Mankato sponsored by the Center for Earth Spirituality and Rural Ministry. For more information 507-389-4272 or lcoons@ssndmankato.org

February 28th (Monday) is a **Third Crop Producer meeting on Renewable Energy Today** starting at 9:30 a.m. with registration and coffee at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fairmont, Minnesota. The presentations begin at 10:00am and continuing until 3:00pm. There will be a one hour break for lunch on your own during the 12 o'clock hour. Following the conclusion of the presentations, there will be further time for discussion and questions. Please look for information regarding speakers and presentation topics to be coming soon.

March 10th (Thursday) is **Turf Maintenance for Reduced Environmental Impacts**. This workshop is for professional turf maintenance contractors, public works and parks departments, school district grounds staff and property managers. Learn new techniques on how to protect our water resources while saving money and time spent on the job! Other topics covered will be: equipment calibration, how turfgrass management effects our lakes and rivers and associated best practices for managing turfgrass. An optional test will be given at the end of the workshop for those professionals interested in becoming **certified** in "Turf Maintenance Best Practices" from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Cost for attending the workshop is \$25 which includes a light breakfast, lunch and a workshop manual. The workshop starts at 8 am and runs until 2:30 pm at the McColl Pond Environmental Learning Center in Savage. The address for the McColl Pond ELC is: 13550 Dakota Ave South Savage MN 55372. To register contact: Theresa Sowards, University of Minnesota Extension Service, 651-480-7715 or sowar006@umn.edu.

March 10th (Thursday) is the **Hidden History of the Minnesota River Valley presentation** at the Montevideo Chippewa County Public Library. Contact the CURE office at 1-877-269-2873 for time. Wabasso native Beth Johanneck has written a book of stories about the characters who have lived in the Minnesota River Valley from Fort Snelling to Mankato, New Ulm, Redwood and Granite Falls and all

points in between. Come and meet the author, hear a few stories and compare notes with fellow history lovers of the region.

March 14th (Monday) is a **Third Crop Producer meeting on Importance of Ecological Services** starting at 9:30 a.m. with registration and coffee at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fairmont, Minnesota. The presentations begin at 10:00am and continuing until 3:00pm. There will be a one hour break for lunch on your own during the 12 o'clock hour. Following the conclusion of the presentations, there will be further time for discussion and questions. Please look for information regarding speakers and presentation topics to be coming soon.

March 28th (Monday) is a **Third Crop Producer meeting on Practices for Reducing Nutrient Loss** starting at 9:30 a.m. with registration and coffee at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Fairmont, Minnesota. The presentations begin at 10:00am and continuing until 3:00pm. There will be a one hour break for lunch on your own during the 12 o'clock hour. Following the conclusion of the presentations, there will be further time for discussion and questions. Please look for information regarding speakers and presentation topics to be coming soon.

April 16th (Saturday) is the presentation **“Waterfalls and the River Warren”** by Professor Bob Douglas starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Linnaeus Arboretum at Gustavus Adolphus College. Professor Bob Douglas will talk about waterfalls in the Minnesota River including many discovered by him. A tour of the waterfalls will follow the presentation.

May 7th (Saturday) is **Twin Valley Council 4th annual fun shoot** at the River Ridge Gun Club in Courtland, MN starting at 8am. For more information call (507) 359-5770.

May 21st (Saturday) is the **“Caring for God’s Creation”** with Jim Gilbert, Minnesota’s most well-known naturalist and former director of the Linnaeus Arboretum starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Arboretum at Gustavus Adolphus College. Bring your walking shoes.

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

Environmental/Conservational Articles:

[Minn. wind energy capacity rises 22 percent](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Minnesota moved up a notch in U.S. wind power rankings last year, increasing its wind energy production capacity 22 percent.

[Upstaging the ash borer](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Eagan has turned downed trees into flooring and paneling at the new fire station, making lemonade, so to speak, from wood that would have been burned or chipped into mulch.

[Legislators seek repeal of Mississippi River Critical Area program](#) (Minnesota Independent). Legislators in the Minnesota House and Senate are proposing a repeal of a decades-old program to protect the Mississippi River.

[China's \\$6 billion soybean buy benefits Minnesota](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). China's recent purchases of more than \$6.6 billion in U.S. soybeans is being called good for Minnesota, one of the largest soybean producing states.

[Minn. lawmakers propose legalizing raw milk sales](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Three Republican state senators are proposing legislation to legalize most sales of raw milk in Minnesota.

[Area Legacy projects run the gamut](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Alex Watson is taller than he looks. It might be the boots. He’s the new naturalist at Lake Carlos State Park.

[Wasting disease confirmed in Minn. deer](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). DNR may kill more deer to see if chronic wasting disease, which affects deer, elk and moose, has spread.

[Dayton and legislators agree on simplifying permitting](#) (Outdoor News). Gov. Mark Dayton signed an executive order early this week ordering the DNR and Pollution Control Agency to accelerate and simplify processes for environmental review and permitting.

[Public lands are our lifeblood](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The Legislature says we shouldn't add to them. That's folly if you want to keep Minnesota looking like Minnesota.

[3M wastewater under scrutiny](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Cottage Grove residents ask for more time for study before a new treatment program is put in place.

[Editorial: Fresh study may help; new plant remains must](#) (Fairmont Sentinel). Fairmont's water supply and the city's proposed construction of a \$30 million water treatment plant have become (heated) points of contention around the community.

[Officials say spring flooding could be serious in Minnesota](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). State officials and meteorologists from the National Weather Service say the wet fall and dense winter snow could mean widespread flooding throughout the state this spring.

[Count on widespread flooding](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Heavy snow atop frozen ground is expected to cause spring flooding along all of the state's rivers.

[Officials study options for Minnesota Falls Dam](#) (Marshall Independent). Ideas were free-flowing during a meeting of business owners and government officials to look at options for the future of the Minnesota Falls Dam.

[Pipeline plan spurs water warfare](#) (Mankato Free Press). A Fairmont ethanol plant's plan to build a 20-mile pipeline that would daily discharge 500,000 gallons of treated water into the Blue Earth River is bringing opposition from those who say it is a step backward in attempts to clean up the river.

[Foodmakers at work on healthier fare](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The food industry says it already has been trimming saturated fat, sodium and calories and adding fiber to many of its products.

[Minnesota winter white goes green with red worm composting](#) (Twin Cities Daily Planet). Here in the great white north, gardeners are dreaming of warmer days, when they can dig into damp spring earth.

[Gravel pit plan stirs up a dust storm in Jordan](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The city and Sand Creek Township are against a project they say would cause air, water and street problems.

[Health department lists nine toxic chemicals in children's products](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). The Minnesota Department of Health published [a list](#) Monday of nine toxic chemicals that are present in children's products.

On every stem, on every leaf . . . and at the root of everything that grew, was a professional specialist in the shape of grub, caterpillar, aphid, or other expert, whose business it was to devour that particular part.
– Oliver Wendell Holmes

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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