

Minnesota River Watershed Alliance Partner Forum on July 19th at Gilfillan Estates

You are cordially invited to attend the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance "River Partner Forum" on July 19th, 2011 from 5PM – 8PM at the Gilfillan Estates east of Redwood Falls MN (agenda attached). *This is an invitation only event due to space limitations. RSVP's are requested – follow RSVP instructions below.*

See the attached agenda for more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/julyannouncement.pdf>

The purpose of this meeting is to hear presentations and ask questions from groups, partners, stakeholders, and agencies doing work and/or activities that are having a positive effect on the Minnesota River Watershed. Presentations will be limited to 5 minutes and 5 minutes for questions and answers.

The following is a possible list of presentations – pending confirmation of attendee's:

- Minnesota River Watershed Alliance
- Green Corridor Legacy Program
- Tatanka Bluffs Corridor
- Minnesota Valley History Learning Center
- CURE
- Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway Alliance
- Fresh Water Society
- Friends of the MN Valley
- Hawk Creek Watershed
- Minnesota River Board
- Minnesota River Film Documentary – River Revival: Working Together to Save the Minnesota River
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- Renville SWCD
- MN River Rangers / New Ulm History Center
- Minnesota Department of Agriculture
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources
- Dakota Wicohan
- Others (Please let us know)

This list is not confirmed and will be finalized by the day of the event – some presentations may be affected by the pending state government shut down. If your group is not listed above but you wish to make a presentation – please contact: Brad Cobb at: 1231TLC@charter.net

Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota (CMM) Annual Meeting

The 2011 Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 27, 2011, from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. at the City Center Hotel, 101 East Main Street, Mankato, Minnesota. The day will feature a morning tour of the Greater Blue Earth River Watershed, followed by speakers and discussions about ecosystem services and environmental markets. We have invited many professionals with local to national experiences and with private to public sector perspectives to participate in the meeting.

Please join Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota collaborators on July 27. To RSVP, please contact Brooke Hacker, Ecosystem Services Specialist for the Greater Blue Earth River Basin Alliance (brooke.hacker@mnsu.edu or 507-389-5338). We'd greatly appreciate your response by July 15. [CMM Annual Meeting Agenda, Mankato – July 27](#)

DNR seeks comments on environmental assessment worksheet for the Minnesota Falls Dam Removal Project

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is accepting public comments until July 27 on an environmental assessment worksheet that was prepared for a project to remove the Minnesota Falls Dam located on the Minnesota River in Yellow Medicine and Chippewa counties.

The worksheet evaluates the environmental effects from a Northern States Power Company proposal to remove the Minnesota Falls Dam located on the Minnesota River downstream from the city of Granite Falls. The dam is classified as a high hazard dam that no longer serves its original purpose. The dam has several potential structural deficiencies that would need to be repaired if the dam is not removed.

Public comments will be accepted during the 30-day public review period from June 27 to July 27.

A copy of the environmental assessment worksheet is available online. Additional copies may be requested by calling 651-259-5156.

A copy of the document also is available for public review at:

- DNR Library, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155
- DNR Southern Regional Headquarters, 261 Highway 15 South, New Ulm, MN 56073
- Minneapolis Public Library, Government Documents, 300 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55401
- Montevideo/Chippewa County Library, 224 South First St., Montevideo, MN 56265
- Granite Falls Public Library, 155 Seventh Ave., Granite Falls, MN 56241-1505.

The environmental assessment worksheet was published in the June 27 EQB Monitor. Written comments must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. July 27 to Randall Doneen, DNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4025.

E-mail comments may be sent to environmentalrev.dnr@state.mn.us with "Minnesota Falls Dam Removal EAW" in the subject line.

If submitting comments electronically, include name and mailing address. Written comments may also be sent by fax to 651-297-1500.

Field Day on Elm Creek Riparian Perennial Plantings

The last few years have brought flooding to southern Minnesota as well as high energy prices to the nation. Researchers have been busy looking at crops able to successfully be planted in floodplain areas that will help mitigate soil erosion and chemical runoff. Many of these same crops have the potential to be excellent bioenergy feedstocks. Join Rural Advantage, University of Minnesota Extension, and

partners on July 21, 2011, to learn about this research being conducted along Elm Creek in Martin County. The field day will be from 1pm – 4pm at the Roberts research site north of Granada, Minnesota.

Attendees will hear explanations on the multiple research projects being conducted. These include: alley cropping with hybrid willow and hybrid poplar rows separated by herbaceous plant species, cover crops in hybrid willow and hybrid poplar rows, nurse crops for establishment of diversified biofuel grassland agroecosystems, and the water quality issues driving the research. A discussion on soil erosion due to periodic flooding will also be included. Weather permitting, attendees will be able to walk among the research plots and get an up-close look at the species being used.

Speakers include: Dr. Dean Current, University of Minnesota; Chris Lenhart, University of Minnesota; Dr. Craig Sheaffer, University of Minnesota; Josh Gamble, University of Minnesota; Dr. Gregg Johnson, Southern Research and Outreach Center; Kristine Moncada, University of Minnesota; and Doug Miller, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

This is an outdoor event and the site is located in an area that is intermittently flooded. Please dress accordingly.

Directions:

1838 260th Avenue - Granada, MN 56039

From the Granada Exit off of Interstate 90: Travel North on 260th Avenue / County Road 53 for 6.2 miles (through the city of Granada). The field day site will be north of the farm driveway and south of 190th Street about ¼ mile. The site is on the east side of the road. Carpooling is encouraged as parking will be along the highway.

Field day partners include: Center for Integrated Natural Resources and Agricultural Management, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Rural Advantage, Southern Research and Outreach Center, University of Minnesota, University of Minnesota Extension, and landowner Darwin Roberts.

Contacts for this event:

Jill Sackett, UMN Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449 sacke032@umn.edu

Minnesota Farm Energy Data Collector Training - Rescheduled

Due to a few minor conflicts in scheduling the Minnesota Farm Energy Data Collector Training, the event has been pushed back one week and will now be held on July 26th, 27th, and 28th. The classroom training will still be held at the USDA Service Center located in Waite Park, MN, and will include a mix of classroom and on-site dairy farm energy data collection. **Please note that registration is required for anyone interested in attending. For those that are interested and would like more information, please get in touch with Corey Conant at 800-732-1399 or coreyc@ensave.com.

The following summary will tell you about the MN Farm Energy Data Collector Training course, the partners involved, and the opportunity for those interested in learning more about working with EnSave to generate Ag Energy Management Plans (Ag EMP's) for farmers in MN.

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy has partnered with EnSave, Inc, the national leader in agricultural energy efficiency programs and a registered Technical Service Provider (TSP) in Minnesota, to provide farm energy data collector trainings in 10 states through an awarded NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG). Minnesota was one of the 10 states chosen as a location for these trainings due to the large amount of dairy farms in the state. This CIG is in support of the Farm Energy Efficiency Project, one of several projects that are part of the Innovation Center for US Dairy's sustainability initiative. For more information on the initiative, please visit www.usdairy/sustainability.

The purpose of these trainings is to build infrastructure to support utilizing local people in Minnesota to perform the on-site data collection component of EnSave's Agricultural Energy Management Plans (Ag EMP) for dairy farms. However, trainees will also have the ability to work with EnSave to perform on-site data collector for other agricultural operations that might be interested in participating in an Ag EMP (i.e. poultry, swine, greenhouses, grain, etc). The data will be analyzed and compiled into a customized Energy Management Plan for each farm, which can be used as a guide for reducing the energy consumption of their operation. This will in turn provide support for NRCS Headquarter Agricultural Energy Management Plans through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant and loan applications, as well as other energy efficiency programs for farmers throughout the country.

The Farm Energy Data Collector Training in Minnesota is scheduled for July 26th-28th and will be held in the Saint Cloud, MN area. There is no cost for attending the training, but trainees will be responsible for their own transportation, accommodation, and meals. In addition to possessing a basic understanding of Ag operations and farming equipment, interested applicants should be those who have an interest in and the ability to promote farm energy efficiency, and encourage farms to participate in an Ag Energy Management Plan. We will also be looking to provide licenses to two of our trained energy data collectors from this session that are interested in being trained on how to utilize EnSave's Farm Energy Auditing Tool (FEAT) in order to generate extra revenue through having the ability to perform Ag EMP's on their own with the support of EnSave, a local TSP.

You Have Time to Help Solve Water Issues in Minnesota

We know how many distractions there are when summer hits its stride. To make sure you have plenty of time for fun in the sun *and* to share your idea for how to solve water issues in Minnesota, you can enter the Minnesota Idea Open [Challenge II: Ideas for Addressing Water Issues in Minnesota](#) through **Tuesday, July 19.**

We have been so inspired by the great ideas already entered into The Open that we want to be sure we see yours! So burn some brain rubber and let's see smoke coming out of those ears, Minnesota! Don't miss the Tuesday, July 19 entry deadline or you might miss a chance to receive \$500 cash for your effort *and* receive \$15,000 to help your community become aware of and address water issues in Minnesota. Enter today at www.MNIdeaOpen.org/challenge2.

Ignite Some Idea Sparks at Our "Idea Zone" Events

The Idea Open is hosting two "Idea Zone" events free to the public. Join us and other community members to think together on ideas for solving water issues in Minnesota. Bring your jottings or notes or thoughts in your head, and we will help you turn them into ideas to enter into The Open that evening.

We will provide FREE snacks, pizza, drinks - and a drawing for one lucky person to win a Flip video camera! Email us at info@mnideaopen.org to let us know if you will attend so we have plenty of food for everyone!

Choose from one of these locations and dates:

Wednesday, July 13 at 7:00 p.m.
Rondo Community Outreach Library Large Conference Room
461 North Dale Street, Saint Paul 55103

Thursday, July 14 at 7:00 p.m.
Grassroots Solutions
2828 University Avenue Southeast, Suite 150, Minneapolis 55414

If you can't make either event, you still have time to enter online at www.MNideaOpen.org/challenge2

Job Announcements:

Academic Specialist – Healthy Living

The C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University is seeking an experienced professional for this position, focused on healthy living, who will help to implement Michigan's Good Food Charter and to enhance healthy eating and living in regional and local food systems. The appointee will be a member of the C.S. Mott Group for Sustainable Food Systems at Michigan State University, which engages communities in applied research and outreach to promote sustainable food systems. The group's goal is to improve access and availability of locally produced food. Planning is currently underway for the Mott Group to become integrated with others at MSU to develop a Center for Regional/Sustainable Food Systems that will continue and broaden the work of the Mott Group. When that occurs, the appointee will become one of two Senior Associate Directors.

MSU is committed to attracting and retaining top quality faculty and staff. This goal is supported by offering a wide array of options, including health and dental coverage, retirement programs, and continuing educational benefits. The [beauty of the MSU campus](#) and surrounding areas including the Red Cedar River, Beal Botanical Gardens, Beaumont Tower and the entire [City of East Lansing](#) make Michigan State a wonderful place to work. And not only is MSU a great place to work, but the surrounding East Lansing Community is a great place to live with many [housing resources](#). MSU was named among the nation's top 29 most "family friendly colleges and universities." Diversity in the faculty, students and staff is a major source of Michigan State University's intellectual vitality and innovative spirit. MSU strives to be a community where people of different cultures, intellectual positions, and lifestyles can reach their potential.

For the full job application materials: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/academicspecialist.pdf>

Events:

July 16th (Saturday) is the **Norwegian American Women presentation** at 2: 00 p.m. in the Fort Ridgely Historic Commissary. Lori Ann Lahlum, associate professor of history at Minnesota State University, Mankato, will speak about the vital role of the women of the Norwegian American communities in the United States. The program is based on stories from her new book, *Norwegian American Women: Migration, Communities, and Identities* by Betty A. Bergland and Lori Lahlum. A fee is charged. Sponsored by Nicollet County Historical Society. For more info call (507) 426-7888, (507) 934-2160 or visit <http://www.nchsmn.org/>

July 19th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance "River Partner Forum"** from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Gilfillan Estates east of Redwood Falls. This is an invitation only event due to space and dinner restrictions. If you are receiving this invitation – you are invited but we are asking you to RSVP (to help plan the steak fry meal preparations) to: Brad Cobb @ 1231TLC@charter.net by July 14, 2011 or sooner!

July 23rd (Saturday) is the **Fort Ridgely 1862 Battlefield Tours** starting at 1:00 and 2:30 p.m. in the Fort Ridgely Historic Commissary. Join historian John LaBatte for a walking tour of the Fort Ridgely Battlefield. First view the video in the Fort Ridgely Historic Commissary and then join John as he walks the parade ground to share his research on the Battles of Fort Ridgely. A fee is charged. Sponsored by Nicollet County Historical Society. For more info call (507) 426-7888, (507) 934-2160 or visit <http://www.nchsmn.org/>

July 27th (Wednesday) is the **Conservation Marketplace of Minnesota (CMM) Annual Meeting** from 8:30 am – 5 pm. The meeting will be in Mankato at the City Center Hotel, 101 East Main Street. A morning tour of the Greater Blue Earth River Watershed is planned along with afternoon presentations on ecosystem services and environmental markets with local to national speakers. RSVP is required to reserve a spot on the bus and lunch. Register by July 15 by contacting Brooke Hacker at 507-389-5338 or brooke.hacker@mnsu.edu. CMM Annual Meeting Agenda: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cmmannualmeetingagenda.pdf>

July 30th (Saturday) is **B is for Battle Cry presentation** at 2: 00 p.m. in the Fort Ridgely Historic Commissary. David and Pat Geister speak about the Civil War and the process of writing and illustrating their book: *B is for Battle Cry*. The program is interactive with the audience. *B is for Battle Cry* brings to life the battles, leaders and inventions of the time period of the Civil War. *B is for Battle Cry* and other books by Dave and Pat will be for sale. . A fee is charged. Sponsored by Nicollet County Historical Society. For more info call (507) 426-7888, (507) 934-2160 or visit <http://www.nchsmn.org/>

I am not a lover of lawns. Rather would I see daisies in their thousands, ground ivy, hawkweed, and even the hated plantain with tall stems, and dandelions with splendid flowers and fairy down, than the too-well-tended lawn. – W.H. Hudson, *The Book of a Naturalist*, 1919

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

Environmental/Conservational Articles:

[Klobuchar, Thune propose immediate end to ethanol credit](#) (Associated Press). The ethanol industry would lose two major subsidies - a lucrative tax break and a tariff on imported ethanol - under a deal reached Thursday in the U.S. Senate.

[Park board stalls hydroelectric deal](#) (Minnesota Daily). After a fruitless trip to the Legislature and failed negotiations, plans to build a hydroelectric plant near the St. Anthony Falls have stalled.

[Students try to figure out our role in warming](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Wanda Shelton, 51, of Ham Lake, is highly skeptical when it comes to climate change. Even if the climate is changing, she said, it's not because of human behavior.

[Zebra mussels spread rapidly in Lake Minnetonka](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). In recent [surveys](#), the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District found that zebra mussels are rapidly spreading throughout Lake Minnetonka.

[Dennis Anderson: Lake group seeing red over Green](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Some local groups in west-central Minnesota want urgency from the DNR to keep invasive species from gaining a hold on Green Lake. For now, the concerned parties are reacting to the threat themselves.

[Concern rising over pollutants in waters](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesotans are pretty confident about their water. After all, we have the source of the Mighty Mississippi and more than 14,000 lakes. Why should we worry about water?

[Riveted by the Mississippi River](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Nonprofits and government agencies are working to get locals acquainted with the Mississippi, the great river in our midst.

[Dennis Anderson: Shutdown adjusts DNR officers' priorities](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Unlicensed anglers are being warned and not ticketed, and public safety is at the forefront.

['Closed' doesn't deter park visitors](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The DNR discourage it, but many people walked into closed state parks.

[Park closures sting state on holiday weekend](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The shutdown means campers and others won't have access to state parks and campgrounds.

[Vandals trash closed state parks](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The most serious damage was at Afton State Park, east of the Twin Cities, where 12 people were taken into custody after a burglary and vandalism spree at three buildings.

[Festival to offer look at organic ag](#) (Fairmont Sentinel). Some say organic farms can't feed the world. Jim Tjepkema, spokesman for the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota, disagrees.

[Senate deal would end ethanol tax credit](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Some of the money allocated for the credit will instead go toward renewable energy efforts. The measure now goes to the house.

[Local historic sites losing prime time to shutdown](#)(Mankato Free Press). For the folks running the region's historic sites, the timing of Minnesota's state government shutdown could not be worse.

[In Minn. Government Shutdown, State Parks Suffer](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). In Minnesota, the state government shutdown is in its second week, with no end in sight.

If all mankind were to disappear, the world would regenerate back to the rich state of equilibrium that existed ten thousand years ago. If insects were to vanish, the environment would collapse into chaos. – Edward O. Wilson

[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.](#)

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>

[Thanks,](#)

[Scott](#)

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