

Friends of the Minnesota Valley 2010 Annual Dinner

Come out on November 17th (Wednesday) for the Friends of the Minnesota Valley's 2010 Annual Dinner at the Minnesota Valley County Club (6300 Auto Club Road) in Bloomington. This year's dinner will focus on "Fishing the Minnesota River: The Link Between Water Quality and Fish Populations" by the Keynote Speaker: Dirk Peterson, Chief of Fisheries, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

As Minnesota's leading agency expert on state fisheries, Dirk Peterson is responsible for managing efforts to maximize the health of aquatic habitat and fish populations. Mr. Peterson has career experience in the Minnesota River Basin, previously serving in the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Southern Regional Office in New Ulm. He will share his insights and perspectives on the current status of fishing in the Minnesota River, including the welcome return of native fish such as paddlefish and river sturgeon.

The event begins at 6 p.m. with a cash bar and social along with Music of the Minnesota River and Wildlife Slide Presentation. From 6:30 to 8:45 is the Dinner and Program including the Keynote Speech by Dirk Peterson and supplemental comments by Scott Sparlin. For more information:

<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/friendsannualdinner.pdf>

Community Cleanups by Scott Sparlin

In the words of Bruce Springsteen "Big things baby from small things one day come"!!!! Scroll down to read about a very successful Community Clean Up for Water Quality project that was just completed in and around Como Lake in St. Paul. This is exactly what the creators of the program's vision of what could happen in communities all over the Minnesota River Watershed and then to all of Minnesota when we started this program with our partners 7 years ago. It is starting to get traction all over the place, so tell your friends and pass it along to all who will listen. Urban areas have an extremely important role to play in changing our culture and actions as they pertain to the quality of our surface water. Encourage participation!!! Community Clean Ups for WATER QUALITY program can be found by clicking here

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sG7sOIOySE>

For more information on the Lake Como Cleanup: <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/lakecomocleanup.pdf>

Plant's coal plan burns some New Ulm residents by Tim Krohn, Mankato Free Press

NEW ULM — Randall Kroening remembers the trains passing near his house in the 1960s delivering coal to the New Ulm power plant.

But after stricter regulations were created with the 1970 enactment of the Clean Air Act, the municipal power plant was converted to natural gas, which provided cleaner and eventually cheaper fuel.

Now, facing high natural gas costs, the city is seeking state and federal approval for a \$23 million project to convert a boiler at the plant back to coal use — coal that would come from Wyoming via train and then truck.

For the entire article: [Plant's coal plan burns some New Ulm residents](#)

GOVERNOR PAWLENTY announces special session to address flood relief

Governor's request for disaster declaration granted for 21 counties ~ Governor Tim Pawlenty announced today that a Special Session of the legislature will convene on October 18, 2010 at 1:00 p.m. in order to address the state's share of flood relief now that a federal disaster has been declared for 21 counties that were affected by flooding that began on September 22.

The federal declaration included FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program for debris removal, and the repair or replacement of disaster-damaged, publicly owned facilities. It also includes federal Hazard Mitigation Grants.

However, the presidential declaration does not include Individual Assistance. FEMA is continuing its evaluation and may add assistance for individuals after they complete their review. FEMA's Individuals and Households Program (IHP) helps homeowners and renters affected by a disaster with housing needs and necessary expenses.

"We thank the federal government for providing assistance that will help Minnesota communities in their rebuilding efforts, and we look forward to their decision on help for individuals who were affected by flooding last month," Governor Pawlenty said. "While we're hopeful that the decision on individual assistance will be made soon, the state will not delay in its response."

Public assistance was granted for Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Dodge, Faribault, Freeborn, Goodhue, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Mower, Murray, Olmsted, Pipestone, Rice, Rock, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Watonwan, and Winona Counties.

The preliminary damage estimate was \$64.1 million, though that figure will increase as more counties are added to the federal declaration and the damage assessment process continues.

During the Special Session, a bill will be presented that includes the state's share of assistance for the counties affected by flooding last month. The legislation will also include assistance for areas of the state that were designated a federal disaster area in July as a result of tornados and severe storms that caused more than \$35 million in damage.

The bill is paid for with \$32.5 million from the General Fund, \$26.7 million in General Obligation Bonds, \$10 million from the state transportation fund, and \$5 million from the Trunk Highway fund.

The flood relief provisions of the bill include:

- \$15 million for damaged state highway infrastructure and local roads and bridges. \$14 million to the Department of Natural Resources for flood hazard mitigation grants, clean-up of public waterways, and repair of river gauges, and the repair or relocation of the Ononoco dam. \$12 million for the non-federal cost share. Under the terms of a disaster declaration, the federal government covers 75 percent of eligible costs and the state covers the remaining non-federal share. \$10 million for the Minnesota Investment Fund, administered by the Department of Employment and Economic Development, to provide locally administered grants or loan programs to eligible organizations, including businesses, directly affected by the disaster. To increase accountability, DEED is required to report to the legislature before making any grants.
- \$10 million for the Reinvest in Minnesota program to acquire easements from landowners on marginal lands in the disaster area to protect soil and water quality and to support fish and wildlife habitat. \$4 million for the Quick Start program administered by Minnesota Housing. Quick Start helps homeowners who are unable to repair or rebuild their homes due to flood damage expenses that exceed private insurance and federal assistance. The program provides forgivable, no-interest loans for home repair, new construction or a comparable replacement home, mobile homes, or single-family rental repair. \$4 million to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture for livestock investment grants, organic certification assistance, forage production loss offsets for livestock producers, and no-interest disaster recovery loans. \$3 million to help communities with erosion and sediment control.
- \$523,000 for school districts that lost per-pupil funding or incurred increased transportation costs. \$500,000 for the Public Finance Authority. The PFA makes low-interest loans and grants available to finance infrastructure that might otherwise be unaffordable to communities if they had to borrow money for the projects at market rates. \$250,000 for clean-up of historical buildings.

Provisions of the bill pertaining to areas declared a federal disaster (FEMA-1921-DR) in July include: \$5.2 million for the non-federal cost share for eligible expenses from the July storms. Counties named in that federal declaration are Blue Earth, Brown, Houston, Kittson, Nicollet, Sibley, Faribault, Freeborn, Olmsted, Otter Tail, Polk, Steele and Wadena. \$750,000 to update Wadena's existing pre-design and design plans for public facilities. \$693,000 for school districts that incurred uninsured losses to buildings and equipment.

Prairie Biomass Harvest Field Day to be Held Crookston

University of Minnesota, Rural Advantage, and University of Minnesota Extension will be hosting a field day October 26, 2010, near Starbuck, Minnesota, to discuss the potential benefits of harvesting grassland plants for bioenergy. The Prairie Biomass Harvest Field Day will begin at 3:00pm at a research plot being utilized by Dr. Clarence Lehman, University of Minnesota, and project partners.

Minnesota is capable of producing many different types of biomass for the renewable energy sector; possible biomass feedstocks include the grasses and forbs that make up our restored prairies and conservation grasslands. But how does biomass harvest affect the health of the native plants and animals that call the grasslands home? Dr. Clarence Lehman and partners are conducting research in different areas of Minnesota to try to answer that question.

Dr. Clarence Lehman will open the field day with his thoughts on the importance of using bioenergy and how we might be able to improve wildlife habitat in doing so. Research team member Jake Jungers will report results and observations from the fall 2009 sampling and harvest. Jill Sackett, Extension Educator with University of Minnesota Extension and Rural Advantage, will give a brief overview of third generation biofuel production processes. The field day will end with a group discussion of the local biomass feedstock market. Dr. Joel Tallaksen with University of Minnesota West Central Research and Outreach Center and Gasification Project Coordinator for UM - Morris and Chad Friese with Chippewa Valley Ethanol Company will both assist in leading this discussion. Minnesota Native Landscapes will also be present and attendees will be able to view their harvest equipment and the harvesting process, weather permitting. This is an outdoor event and will be held rain or shine. Please dress accordingly.

This demonstration is funded by USDA-NRCS through a Conservation Innovation Grant. The research is supported by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Legislative Citizen Commission for Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). Further partners include Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

DIRECTIONS: The field day will occur on the east side of Glacial Lakes State Park near the intersection of Co. Rd. 13 (270th Ave.) and 255th St. **From Starbuck**, travel South on MN Hwy 29 for approximately 3.0 miles. Continue South on Co. Rd. 41 about 1.0 mile. Turn left (East) onto Co. Rd. 16, travel 2.5 miles. Turn right (South) at Co. Rd. 13 (270th Ave.), travel 1.5 miles to the intersection with 255th St (gravel). 255th St. only goes East at this intersection. The research plot will be across from the intersection towards the West. Contact: Jill Sackett, Extension Educator – sacke032@umn.edu 507-238-5449

October edition of WaterFront Bulletin

The October edition is now posted at: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/waterfront>. **In this issue**

- Funding Updates
 - Section 319 grants awarded
 - Outdoors council to recommend \$86 million in projects
- Project Updates
 - MPCA seeking comments on TMDLs for Minnehaha lakes, Lake Sarah and Medicine Lake
 - TMDL approved for several lakes
- Worth Noting
 - Lake Pepin, Minnesota River tour continues
 - 'Milestones' monitoring ending
 - Common Ground: Think beyond traditional meetings

Job Opportunities:

Watershed Coordinator

The Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD) has a full-time, temporary opening for a West Fork Des Moines River (WFDNR) Watershed Coordinator in the HLWD office, located in Heron Lake, MN. The main responsibilities for this position will be the pursuit of funding for continued efforts and staffing, as well as education, implementation, and water quality monitoring efforts for the WFDNR watershed TMDL Implementation Plan in southwest Minnesota.

Specific tasks include grant and technical writing, financial management, designing educational materials, organizing and hosting meetings, and collaborating with local governments, environmental groups and the general public. The position would also be responsible for conducting lake and stream monitoring, increasing interstate communication, and coordinating efforts for the improvement of the WFDNR watershed. The applicant must have strong technical writing and public speaking skills and the ability to work with little supervision. Starting salary of \$18.50 per hour is dependent upon qualifications. This is a temporary, full-time position working 40 hours per week from November 2010 through December 2014. A full job description and application form can be obtained from Jan Voit at the HLWD office, PO Box 345, Heron Lake, MN 56137, telephone 507-793-2462, email hlwd@roundlk.net or found on HLWD's website: www.hlwdonline.org Interested parties must submit an application, cover letter, resume, references, and a writing sample written within the last five years. Applications must be delivered to the HLWD office or postmarked by 4:30 pm on Thursday, October 28, 2010.

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

County Program Technician

A Program Technician is responsible for carrying out office activities and functions pertaining to the technical assistance and program support related to FSA programs at the field office level. Utilizes various types of computer systems to maintain producer data and process automated program forms and processes. Uses a high degree of initiative and judgment in planning and carrying out assigned tasks and resolving problems encountered. Applications are due by October 28th. Contact Sid Jarvis at 218-720-5353 or sid.jarvis@mn.usda.gov or contact the agency at Farm Service Agency; 4850 Miller Trunk Hwy, Suite 1A; Duluth, MN 55811; South St. Louis

For more information visit <http://jobview.usajobs.gov/GetJob.aspx?JobID=91466350>

Research Microbiologist/Plant Pathologist/Geneticist

The applicant will be a member of a team investigating the genetics, population biology, and host-pathogen interactions of cereal rust diseases. The project involves the application of molecular markers to the study of cereal rust diseases.

The applicant will use of virulence analysis, SSR, and other PCR based markers to study variation and gene flow in populations of *Puccinia graminis* f.sp. *avenae* and *P. coronata*; develop new genetic markers suitable for population genetic studies of *P. graminis* f.sp. *avenae* and *P. coronata*; identify QTLs for partial resistance to *P. coronata* in oat and suitable molecular markers for marker-assisted selection; and develop methodologies to identify and select for partial resistance to *P. graminis* f.sp. *avenae*. Applications are due December 31st, 2010. For more information visit <http://jobview.usajobs.gov/GetJob.aspx?JobID=88144344>

UWCA Education Outreach Coordinator

The Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures (UWCA) Education Outreach Coordinator, in conjunction with staff from the National Park Service and other partner agencies, will serve as the primary liaison with school teachers and administrators to ensure successful implementation of the UWCA program and curricula - including coordinating and conducting training sessions for teachers and staff, facilitating use of curricula, coordinating field trips with teachers, facilitating follow-up and evaluation, and disseminating project findings. The Coordinator will also be responsible for expanding the program to additional school

districts throughout the Twin Cities metro area. This position is funded by a two-year grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The applicant will serve as the primary liaison between UWCA program partner agencies and school district and building staff, coordinate refinement and enhancement of the draft UWCA curricula, including alignment with the specific science, math, and literacy goals of each participating school district, facilitate integration of the UWCA curricula into the standard curriculum and teacher training programs of participating schools, develop and implement teacher training, including workshops and canoe events, develop and implement student recruitment strategies, assist teachers in developing and executing service-learning projects, coordinate pre and post data collection for evaluation phase implemented by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI), and facilitate outreach and expansion, such as presentations at professional conferences and information dissemination through on-line networks. To apply, visit http://fmp.wildernessinquiry.org/jobinator/jobform_short1.php

For more information visit http://fmp.wildernessinquiry.org/jobinator/jobdesc_detail.php?JobID=31

Events:

October 21st (Thursday) is Geography of Montenegro from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. Montenegro, a tiny country in the Balkans with jaw-dropping scenery—from harsh mountains to Mediterranean beaches—has an equally jaw-dropping history at the crossroads of contending East-West armies for the last several centuries. English Professor and Fulbright Scholar Dr. Gregory Mason will talk about Montenegro's unique geography and how it drives the country's history, a history full of old hatreds and hopefully brighter futures in this fascinating part of the world. This event is free and open to the public. For more information contact Bob Dunlap at 507-933-7199.

October 21st & 22nd (Thursday & Friday) is the Sustainable Water Resources Roundtable Meeting at the Gray Freshwater Center in Excelsior. It is free to attend, but seating is limited so registration is necessary. To register, visit <http://freshwater.org/2010SWRR/>
For more information, visit <http://acwi.gov/swrr>

October 23rd & 24th (Saturday & Sunday) is the 5th Annual Northland Bioneers Conference at Macalaster College in St. Paul, MN. The conference includes: keynote lectures and panels given by local and regional experts, workshops on relocalizing our food, solar and wind energy and many other topics, neighborhood networking, facilitated by the [Alliance for Sustainability, exhibits](#) by local businesses and non-profit groups and presentations of national speakers pre-recorded at the 2010 San Rafael, CA, National Bioneers Conference. To learn more visit www.nbconference.org

October 26th (Tuesday) is Prairie Mass Harvest Field Day at 3:00 pm near Benson, MN. The harvest and field day will occur at Glacial Lakes State Park (located between the cities of Benson and Starbuck). For more information contact Jill Sackett, UM Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449
sacke032@umn.edu

October 26th (Tuesday) is Water Sustainability: Identifying Drivers and Opportunities from 8:30am to 1:30 pm in the FC Andersen Conference Room at the Andersen Corporation on 100 Fourth Avenue North in Bayport, MN 55003. Registration is \$45 for MEI members; \$75 for non-members. Contact [Georgia Rubenstein](#) for more information, to check on membership status or to inquire about need-based scholarships. [Click here](#) for more information about the event. [Click here](#) to submit your registration.

November 6th (Saturday) is the 5th **Annual Earth Conference with the theme “Home-Land: New Lens for a New Moment on Earth.”** It's a day to refocus our personal lens, to recommit to living sustainably with new ideas to fuel this work. You will be inspired. You will be encouraged. You will be emboldened. I hope you can join us! The conference is at SSND Provincial House Conference Center (170 Good Counsel Drive) in Mankato. Fee: \$25 before October 21st, \$35 after that date (\$15 early bird fee for students). As always, this fee includes morning coffee and homemade muffins as well as a simple, local,

sustainable lunch. To register for the conference, contact Lisa Coons at 507-389-4272 or lcoons@ssndmankato.org For more information:
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/fifthannualearthconference.pdf>

November 8th-10th (Monday-Wednesday) is the **2010 Minnesota/Wisconsin Invasive Species Conference** at the Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront Hotel in downtown St. Paul, MN. The first collaborative Minnesota-Wisconsin conference on invasive species will be held for the purpose of exchanging information on invasive species topics. This is an all-taxa conference covering invasive aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, pests, and pathogens. The focus is to strengthen awareness of invasive species issues, prevention, and management. Expected audiences include researchers, land managers, natural resource professionals, university personnel, landscapers, nursery, agricultural or forestry employees, environmental specialists, lake association members, and agency and non-governmental organizations. For more information go to http://www.minnesotaswcs.org/2010_mn_wi_invasive_species_conference.htm

November 10th (Wednesday) are the **Prairie Harvest Field Days**. 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Waseca, Morris and Windom, MN. Learn about research being done by Dr. Clarence Lehman and colleagues, discuss benefits of using prairie plants for renewable fuels, view the harvest plots, hear about fall 2009 results and observation. For more information contact Jill Sackett at 507-238-5449 or at sacke032@umn.edu

November 15th (Monday) is a **Minnesota River Board Meeting** in Gaylord, MN. Executive Committee meeting at 8:00 a.m. and Full Board meeting at 9:00 a.m.

November 16th (Tuesday) is **Prairie Mass Harvest Field Day** at 2:00 pm near Windom, MN. The harvest will occur at Talcot Lake Wildlife Management Area (located between the cities of Fulda and Windom). For more information contact Jill Sackett, UM Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449 sacke032@umn.edu

November 18th (Thursday) is **Get to Know the Birds of MN, Part 3** from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. In part three of this three-part series, learn about our state's rare and local species that are found only in small areas or in very specific habitats. Arboretum Naturalist and lifelong birder Bob Dunlap will give reliable locations and times in which to see some of these birds, some of which are within the St. Peter/Mankato area, along with tips on identification. This event is free and open to the public. For more information contact Bob Dunlap at 507-933-7199.

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 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:

Citizens Dump on septic inventory Rice County property owners with septic systems deemed to be failing made it clear Thursday that they thought the state and county should back off.

<http://faribault.com/news.php?viewStory=101868>

County flushes septic inventory Rice County will not try to renew funding for its septic system inventory next year. Commissioners decided Tuesday to apply for additional money under a Clean Water Fund Subsurface Sewage Treatment System grant program, but the grant application will explicitly state that the county has put the septic system inventory on hold.

<http://www.faribault.com/news.php?viewStory=101611>

[Upcoming science-related events on 'sustainable' topics](#) (Minn Post) Many, many years ago, I took pains to avoid using the word “sustainable” in my stories about science, agriculture and urban development — for the same reason I didn’t use the jargon teachers and professors fling around in education-speak. Too arcane. Too far into the weeds of environmental techno-speak.

[1969: A pheasant season that wasn't](#) (Star Tribune) Forty-one years ago, following a brutal winter that pummeled Minnesota’s pheasant population, the state canceled the pheasant hunting season.

[Noted U ecologist pushes for climate change legislation](#) (MPR) A University of Minnesota scientist says Minnesota is already suffering from the impacts of climate change.

[Don't repair the Lake Shady dam](#) (Rochester Post-Bulletin) After the recent flooding, many things will never be the same. One example of this is Lake Shady.

[EPA approves boosting ethanol limit in gas to 15 pct.](#) (MPR) The Environmental Protection Agency on Wednesday gave the ethanol industry a long awaited boost, approving 15 percent ethanol blends in gasoline, up from the current limit of 10 percent. But the decision was roundly criticized.

[Keep streams clean, rake your yard](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin) You may not realize it, but everyone in Rochester has waterfront property.

[Minn. man wins Duck Stamp art contest for 4th time](#) (AP) A Minnesota artist has won the 2010 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest for the fourth time.

[Bill Marchel: It's October and we're in a fishing state of mind](#) (Star Tribune) What to do on a balmy October afternoon? It wasn't a good day for hunting ducks. The sky was blue, and barely a leaf wiggled in the nearly calm summer-like air.

[Environmental efforts could hinge on election](#) (St. Cloud Times) To environmental advocates, the record-setting heat that recently plunged a St. Cloud autumn back into summer could be yet another consequence of global warming.

[An apology at the U, and a visit from the president](#) (Minn Post) Monday begins with an apology. The apologizer is the University's vice president for university relations, Karen Himle, and as the Associated Press reports, the subject of the apology is Himle's recent attempt to block the broadcast of "Troubled Waters: A Mississippi River Story."

[National Park Service says 'no' to St. Croix River bridge](#) (MPR) The National Park Service on Friday said a proposed bridge over the St. Croix River near Stillwater can't be built.

“High quality water is more than the dream of the conservationists, more than a political slogan; high quality water, in the right quantity at the right place at the right time, is essential to health, recreation, and economic growth.” ~Edmund S. Muskie, U.S. Senator, speech, 1 March 1966

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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