

Group aims at farm-environment gap: 'We organize around passion'

By Jennifer Vogel, Minnesota Public Radio

Morris, Minn. — The rain stopped just as 30 or so mostly amateur paddlers gathered in a parking lot here to canoe a stretch of the Pomme de Terre River, which flows for more than 100 miles past towns, farms, meadows and a cluster of University of Minnesota wind turbines before emptying into the Minnesota River.

The trip was arranged by Clean Up the River Environment (CURE), a group based in Montevideo that fosters conversations between traditionally at-odds groups like farmers and environmental advocates, in order to encourage practices that improve water quality. Part of the Pomme de Terre has been designated as "impaired" by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, due to high turbidity and excessive fecal coliform bacteria. On this day, the water had a brownish hue, but was clear enough to see weeds at the bottom in the shallower spots.

For the entire article: [Group aims at farm-environment gap: 'We organize around passion'](#)

Innovative plan uses natural materials to prevent erosion, save homes.

By Dan Linehan, Mankato Free Press

A plan to shore up eroding riverbanks along the Le Sueur River — and save the houses that might otherwise eventually fall in — is starting up, but workers are searching for an unusual commodity.

"We'll take them anywhere we can get 'em," resident and part-time logger David Johnson said. "If it's a tree service with piles of logs, if it's a homeowner we'll cut them down as long as they're not so close to the home."

The project requires 30,000 feet of trees, and Johnson said they've collected about a third of that total so far. They're looking for trees with a diameter of a foot or two.

For the entire article, [Innovative plan uses natural materials to prevent erosion, save homes](#)

5 ideas that could make water cleaner

By Jennifer Vogel, Minnesota Public Radio

There is no shortage of scientists, environmentalists, entrepreneurs and regular citizens working to solve problems related to water quality in Minnesota. Researchers sample pollutants flowing down the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers to determine their origins. Farmers install conservation measures to try to slow the water leaving their land. Lakeshore residents install rain gardens and barrels and nurture wetlands in order to protect their favorite swimming holes.

Along the way, people are discovering innovative solutions. Some are already in use and others remain on the drawing board.

ALTERNATIVE SEPTIC SYSTEMS

In Minnesota, there are an estimated 500,000 septic systems, many of them poorly maintained and even leaking. Since they can be a source of nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen, which in excess are harmful to lakes and rivers, it's important that they work properly. Yet not all types are suited for all situations.

For the entire article, [5 ideas that could make water cleaner](#)

Environmental review of proposed Kandiyohi County Landfill expansion is open for public comment

Willmar, Minn. -- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has prepared an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for a proposed expansion of the Kandiyohi County Landfill. The EAW, which describes potential impacts on land use, water quality, and air quality, is open for public review and comment through Oct. 5, 2011.

Kandiyohi County proposes to add two cells to the landfill, increasing capacity for approximately 20 additional years of operation. Development of these cells would include a synthetic liner, leachate collection, landfill gas collection, access roads, and stormwater-control structures. The landfill currently accepts about 35,000 tons per year of mixed municipal solid waste.

In 2010 Kandiyohi County initiated an investigation to delineate the nature and extent of soil and groundwater contamination associated with the landfill's first cell dating back to 1969. The investigation is on schedule to be completed in 2011 so that effective corrective action measures may be developed to reduce and eliminate further impacts to human health and the environment.

The EAW provides basic information on how the proposed project could potentially affect the environment. During the 30-day period, it is open to public review and comment. Comments on the Kandiyohi County Landfill EAW must be submitted in writing by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 5, to Debra Moynihan, MPCA, 520 Lafayette Road N., Saint Paul, MN 55155-4194, or by fax to 651-297-2343.

The MPCA will use these comments to evaluate the potential for significant environmental effects from the project, and to decide whether an Environmental Impact Statement (a more comprehensive environmental review) is needed.

In addition to the EAW, this public notice includes the county's application for a solid waste disposal facility construction and operating permit. Questions about the permit should be directed to Tony Bello at 651-757-2219.

Copies of the Kandiyohi County Landfill EAW are available for review at the MPCA's St. Paul office, 520 Lafayette Road N.; the MPCA Willmar office, 1601 E. Highway 12; and on the [MPCA website](#).

A copy of the EAW may be obtained by calling the MPCA at 651-757-2587. Questions about the project should be directed to Debra Moynihan at 651-757-2587 or 800-657-3864 (toll free/TTY).

Minnesota Idea Open – Minnesota FarmWise is Crowned the Challenge II Champion

Minnesota FarmWise, an innovative program to encourage conservation and protect clean water in the Minnesota River Valley, has won a \$15,000 challenge grant in the Minnesota Idea Open. This program will identify the most vulnerable areas in the Minnesota River Valley, and work through existing community relationships to mentor, advise and implement farmer-proven and farmer-approved water-friendly practices that protect these critical, high-priority areas. The Freshwater-National Park Service proposal won the grant through a public vote, conducted on-line and in person at the Minnesota State Fair and the Science Museum of Minnesota.

The Freshwater Society and the National Park Service will use the grant to form a farmer-to-farmer mentoring program to encourage practices aimed at reducing soil erosion and the runoff of fertilizers and pesticides into the streams and rivers that lead to the Mississippi River. View a [video](#) about the mentoring program. Read the Minnesota Idea Open [announcement](#) of the grant.

Submitted by Peggy Knapp and Lark Weller, Minnesota FarmWise recruits experienced and retired farmers to work with other farmers and implement proven conservation farming techniques that are farmer-proven and farmer-approved. [Read](#) Peggy and Lark's idea or [watch the video](#).

"There are many effective conservation farming practices out there that protect rivers and lakes. Lots of farmers are using them. More should," said Peggy Knapp of the Freshwater Society. "With the FarmWise

program, farmers will get good information about what will work for them, on their farms, protect and preserve their soil, while protecting Minnesota's lakes and rivers."

Minnesota FarmWise creates a public/private partnership between the Mississippi National River Recreation Area, a division of the National Park Service, and the Freshwater Society.

Fall Fest at the Linnaeus Arboretum

Come explore the Linnaeus Arboretum for Fall Fest! Newcomers welcomed. The day's activities include: Hayrides, guided tours, artisans & artists, music, book signing (Herb Chilstrom, Bob Douglas), pumpkin painting, scavenger hunts, face painting. Alpacas are returning for another visit! Also, Flood Plain Four (10:15 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.), Theater in the Arb (11a.m., 12 p.m., 1 p.m.), and last but not least, border collies agility & herding demonstration (3 p.m.). A concession stand will be operated by the Saint Peter High School Marching Band. The Linnaeus Arboretum is located on the Gustavus Adolphus College campus in Saint Peter, MN. The Fall Fest is part of Gustavus' Celebrate Saint Peter Day, to honor and thank the community that has served as a wonderful home for the College since 1876.

Chippewa River Watershed Project Photo Contest

The Chippewa River Watershed Project is sponsoring its 5th annual photo contest and is seeking entries that feature the Chippewa River Watershed. The winning photos will be published in a 2012 calendar and featured on the Chippewa River Watershed Project website and other publications. The "Best in Show" winner will have their winning photo professionally matted and framed. Photo submissions are due to the Chippewa River Watershed Project by October 1, 2011.

Anyone is eligible to enter the contest; you do not need to live in the watershed to submit a photo. The photo must be taken in the Chippewa River Watershed which includes many tributaries and lakes. Entries should include a river or lake feature or have a water quality theme. Photos from all seasons are encouraged. Submissions are limited to a maximum of three photos per person. Photos can be submitted digitally or as paper photos. All photo entries must include a submitted Registration Form to be eligible for the contest.

For more complete contest rules and registration forms, visit the Chippewa River Watershed Project's website www.chippewariver.com or call 320-269-2139 ext 120. Maps of the watershed are also available on the website.

2011 Hazelnut Walk-n-Talk in Lake City

Rural Advantage, the Minnesota Hazelnut Foundation, and partners invite you to Lake City for the annual Hazelnut Walk-n-Talk Field Day on Saturday Oct. 1st from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Experienced growers, new growers, and those interested in what hazelnuts are all about will have the opportunity to network and learn about a range of topics.

"We will be focusing on processing again this year since it is such a crucial bottleneck to further development," explains Norm Erickson, host of the field day. Processing equipment at different scales will be showcased; from the larger commercial equipment Erickson has designed and built to the small batch type process that grower Don Price uses. There will be something for everyone.

Presentations in the morning include University of Minnesota Hazelnut Researcher Lois Braun discussing a multi-year collaborative research project aimed at identifying superior plants to be used as the basis for a breeding program for commercial production, propagation methods to quickly ramp up production of superior plants, and development of best management practices. Jason Fischbach with the University of Wisconsin Extension will update participants on hazelnuts in Wisconsin and report on a recently completed project involving processing capabilities for individuals or a group of growers. A weed identification and management discussion will complete the morning agenda.

Afternoon sessions will include a 'Hazelnuts 101' refresher for new and prospective growers, a guided field tour of the hazelnut planting with weed identification and management, and processing demonstrations with various pieces of equipment.

The Minnesota Hazelnut Foundation will be hosting a contest for the best baked hazelnut treat. There will be a potluck lunch; bring your favorite dish to pass and your own tableware. Beverages will be provided.

For more information or to RSVP please contact Jeff Jensen with Rural Advantage at 507-238-5449 or Norm Erickson with the MN Hazelnut Foundation at 507-319-4085

Directions: MN Hwy 63 from Rochester: When entering Lake City, look for St. Johns Cemetery. Directly after cemetery turn right on S. Cross St. At T-intersection, turn right onto W. Lakewood Ave/Co Rd 9. Hazel field will be on right after elementary school.

MN Hwy 61 from Winona: When entering Lake City, look for marina. Turn left onto W. Lakewood Ave/Co Rd 9. Travel about 1.0 mile. Look for hazel field on right after elementary school.

Rural Advantage is a nonprofit corporation based in Fairmont, Minnesota. Their mission is to promote the connections between agriculture, the environment and rural communities in order to improve ecological health, economic viability and rural vitality. Their work centers around efforts to reduce agricultural nonpoint source pollution with major programming focused on the 3rd Crop Initiative, ECoPayPack development, Martin County Farm2Cafeteria Network and building the Madelia Model concept. Contact them at 507.238.5449 or visit their website at www.ruraladvantage.org for more information.

Grant Opportunities:

Environmental and Outdoor Education (EOE) Integration Grant

Minnesota has been allocated state funding from the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 362, Section 2, Subd.8(g). This funding is for the purpose of designing and implementing innovative environmental and outdoor education programs that bolster student achievement in middle school or high school science, physical education, social studies and/or mathematics. Funds may also be used to support limited expenses for teachers to attend EOE training that extends beyond the training MDE coordinates for grantees.

Selected grantees will be required to work with an outside evaluator retained by MDE and must attend EOE training. The Minnesota Department of Education anticipates selecting six grantees with grant amounts up to \$5,000 each. Contact Jeff Ledermann at 651-582-8602 or jeff.ledermann@state.mn.us for further information on this funding opportunity.

The application packet is available by accessing the site:

<https://education.state.mn.us/EGMS/searchAllActiveGrants.do>

Applications must be received by September 30, 2011, Midnight, Central Time.

MPCA plans Clean Water Partnership funding round

Although the Minnesota Legislature significantly reduced the [Clean Water Partnership](#) (CWP) grant funding for the next biennium, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) plans to open a funding round sometime this fall for \$1.2 million in grant funding and \$5 million in loan funding. Priority will be given to proposals which protect state water bodies that are currently meeting state water quality standards. The complete request for proposals and other documents will be developed soon. Please see the [State Register](#) or future editions of WaterFront for further information.

During the 2011 Legislative Session the Legislature made several revisions to the CWP statute as outlined in the last [WaterFront](#). In order to align CWP with the legislative intent and future nonpoint source water quality needs, the MPCA will soon undertake a revision of the CWP rule 7076, which hasn't been revised since 1995. This process will occur for several months. If you have any comments or questions about the rule revision please contact Pete Fastner of the MPCA at peter.fastner@state.mn.us or 651-757-2349.

BWSR accepting Clean Water Legacy grant proposals

The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) is accepting proposals for \$16.6 million in competitive grants for projects that will protect and restore Minnesota's streams, rivers, lakes and groundwater. Funding for the competitive grants is provided by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.

Eligible projects include those that:

- Control stormwater runoff in urban and agricultural areas; or
- Improve water quality by replacing problem septic systems, upgrading feedlots, or establishing native vegetation along shorelines in environmentally sensitive areas

Eligible applicants include Minnesota:

- Cities;
- Counties;
- Soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs);
- Watershed districts;
- Watershed management organizations; and
- Joint powers organizations of these local government units.

The [application](#) deadline is Sept. 20. In addition to the competitive grants, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has \$4.5 million available through its AgBMP Loan program, and interested landowners should apply for a loan during this same application period by contacting their SWCD.

Events:

September 15th (Thursday) is a **Farm Fuel Seminar** at Central Lakes College in Staples from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The objective of this seminar is to illuminate some successful German farm fuel practices and to share the Ag Center's experiences working with Camelina. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/energydayseminar.pdf>

September 15th (Thursday) is the **Natural Resource Enterprise Workshop** from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at North Central Research & Outreach Center (1861 East Hwy. 169) in Grand Rapids, MN. A workshop for people interested in income opportunities from the northwoods. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/northwoodsworkshop.pdf>

September 19th (Monday) is the **Minnesota River Board Meeting** in Windom starting at 9:00 a.m. For more information contact Karnell Johnson at 507-389-5491 or <http://www.minnesotariver.org/> under the 'info & research' tab.

September 24th (Saturday) is a fun-filled **Fund-raising Event** for the Joseph R. Brown Heritage Society starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Minnesota New Country School located in Henderson, Minnesota. The event will feature the unveiling of the newly commissioned bronze bust of Joe Brown followed by dinner and an evening with renowned soprano Alison England performing "Songs I Love to Sing and Stories I Love to Tell". Visit <http://www.joebrownrivercenter.org/> now for information about Ms. England and ticket availability. This is a limited seating event so get your tickets now!

September 24th (Saturday) is the **6th Wood Lake Battlefield Symposium** at Kilowatt Community Center (600 Kilowatt Drive) in Granite Falls from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The mission behind this symposium is to better understand the Minnesota/Dakota history of 1862, to promote public awareness of the need to preserve the Wood Lake Battlefield site and to protect the battle fallen. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/woodlakesymposium.pdf>

September 30th (Friday) is the **Meander Kickoff Event** from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in downtown Granite Falls to feature Music, Food, History and Art. This brand new event will showcase picturesque downtown Granite Falls as a gateway to the Upper Minnesota River Valley and all the art, culture and natural beauty

it has to offer. For more information on this event,
<http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/meanderkickoffevent.pdf>

October 6th (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Truck Farm*** at 7:00 p.m. at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. Filmmakers Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis transformed granddad's '86 Dodge into a traveling 20-member CSA. They planted between the wheel wells with arugula and tomatoes, parked the truck on a Brooklyn street, and waited for the sun and rain to work their charms. Admission is free. Sponsored by St. Peter Public Schools, Nicollet County Historical Society, River Rock Coffee and St. Peter Food Co-op. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/documentaryfilmseries.pdf>. Please contact 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org for details.

October 9th (Sunday) is the **Mankato River Ramble Bike Tour** with different routes of 12 to 54 miles. The ALL NEW Mankato River Ramble will embrace the best of both bicycling worlds – off-road paved trails and quiet country roads. The 12-mile Minneopa Falls Loop will visit the beautiful state park. Riders seeking a greater challenge will love the Lake Crystal Loop that visits the handsome hamlets of Rapidan, Lake Crystal and Judson. For more information, <https://www.bikeriverramble.org/>

October 15th (Saturday) and 16th (Sunday) is the **Make-and-take snowshoe workshop** at Lac qui Parle State Park. On Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. workshop presenters will teach attendees how to string the laces on pre-built wooden snowshoe frames, then demonstrate how to use them. The \$75 registration fee includes the snowshoe kit and materials. Lunch will not be provided, so attendees should bring a sack lunch. Class size is limited to 12 people and advance registration is required so that the appropriate quantities and sizes of snowshoe kits may be ordered. Registration deadline is Oct. 3. To register, contact the park office at (320) 734-4450 ext 225 or e-mail cara.greger@state.mn.us .

November 4th (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Rain in a Dry Land*** at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. How do you measure the distance from an African village to an American city? What does it mean to be a refugee in today's "global village"? *Rain in a Dry Land* provides eye-opening answers as it chronicles the fortunes of two Somali Bantu families moved to the U.S. Admission is free. Sponsored by St. Peter Public Schools, Nicollet County Historical Society, River Rock Coffee and St. Peter Food Co-op. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/documentaryfilmseries.pdf>. Please contact 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org for details.

December 1st (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Reel Injun*** at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. Hollywood has made over 4000 films about Native people; over 100 years of movies defining how Indians are seen by the world. *Reel Injun* takes an entertaining and insightful look at the Hollywood Indian, exploring the portrayal of North American Natives through the history of cinema. Admission is free. Sponsored by St. Peter Public Schools, Nicollet County Historical Society, River Rock Coffee and St. Peter Food Co-op. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/documentaryfilmseries.pdf>. Please contact 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org for details.

January 5th (Thursday) is the **Showing of the documentary: *Okie Noodling*** at the Treaty Site History Center in St. Peter. For centuries, a unique breed of fishermen has been catching monster catfish with their bare hands in the rivers and lakes of Oklahoma. Today, the tradition of "noodling" still has Okie anglers hooked. Admission is free. Sponsored by St. Peter Public Schools, Nicollet County Historical Society, River Rock Coffee and St. Peter Food Co-op. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/documentaryfilmseries.pdf>. Please contact 507-934-2160 or jessica@nchsmn.org for details.

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

[Environmental/Conservation Articles:](#)

[Lettuce, fresh from the Minnesota Zoo](#) (St. Paul Pioneer Press). The Minnesota Zoo's food service has joined the "farm to table" movement in restaurants across the basin."

[Zebra mussel research project a long shot for Legacy funds](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Zebra mussels have already invaded dozens of Minnesota lakes and rivers, and there's interest in using a certain type of bacteria to kill the invaders without hurting native plants and animals.

[Edina takes lead in state to find savings in sun](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The city, which is installing solar panels at City Hall, wants to make it easier for businesses to do the same.

[State pheasant numbers plummet](#) (Minnesota Outdoor News). This year's pheasant index is 64 percent below last year; 71 percent below the 10-year average; 77 percent below the long-term average; and 79 percent below the Soil Bank years of 1955-64.

[Dayton calls a carp summit](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Governor Mark Dayton has called a summit meeting on how to stop the Asian Carp.

[Clean river advocate Norman Senjum to retire](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A major figure in efforts to clean Lake Pepin and the Mississippi River of sediment is leaving the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, frustrated with the state's process for the cleanup.

[Editorial: Farm runoff study benefits everyone](#) (Rochester Post-Bulletin). Funds from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy fund are flowing, not merely trickling, into southeastern Minnesota in an effort to help farmers keep more of their topsoil and fertilizer on their land and out of the watershed.

[Legacy zebra mussel research proposal meets turbulence](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Members of the council charged with distributing Legacy Amendment funds for the outdoors disagreed on Thursday whether a proposal to research bacteria that can kill zebra mussels should be considered for funding.

[Cleaning Minnesota's water: Places to watch](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Track Minnesota's performance at maintaining and improving its water quality by watching these key locations.

[Farm runoff -- 'If you won't swim in it, you can do better'](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Bruce Tiffany, a corn and soybean farmer just southwest of town, stands on a line that separates a cultivated field from a patch of wildflowers and grass.

[Lake stewards band together for impact](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). In the 1960s, the water in Lake Volney in Le Sueur County was clear all summer long, says Steve Pany. In fact, he took swimming lessons here as a kid and still has the American National Red Cross certificate to prove it.

[People taking action to make a difference](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). Cleaning up Minnesota's waters is a big, complicated task that involves state and national governments, huge industries, big science and big organizations.

[Measuring farm pollution: By the river or by the farm?](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). In a square white hut next to a lush cornfield, a web of hoses, wires, water samplers and meters is examining the runoff from Kim Gorans' farm.

[Water study landed quietly, but helps shape debate](#) (Minnesota Public Radio). A year-and-a-half-long effort to create a way to maintain and improve Minnesota's beleaguered waters for decades to come landed without much of a splash when it was presented to the Legislature in January.

The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards. – Anatole France

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,](#)

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