



WaterFront Bulletin



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

April 2009

Working with Minnesotans to protect, conserve and improve our environment and enhance our quality of life.

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WaterFront is a web-based bulletin featuring updates on impaired waters, watershed project funding and water restoration and protection activities underway throughout the state. *WaterFront* is published to share information with internal MPCA staff and external watershed partners.

No word yet on final Section 319 funding for Minnesota projects

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has received the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) comments on Minnesota Section 319 project work plans selected for funding last fall. MPCA project managers are working with the applicants to address the comments by early April to keep the funding process moving. The MPCA has not yet received word on the final Congressional appropriation for Minnesota projects. Contact Sara Johnson at the MPCA for more information: 651-757-2473 or sara.johnson@state.mn.us.

Clean Water funding still pending on legislative action

With the 2009 Legislative Session in full swing, decisions are on hold for Clean Water Partnership and Clean Water Legacy pass-through funding rounds, and related use of federal Clean Water Act Section 319 funds for Fiscal Year 2010. Clean Water Partnership (CWP) faces a potential cut of about one-third of its annual funding in the governor's budget recommendations, as a part of addressing state budget issues. The MPCA still hopes to hold a second annual CWP funding round focused on protection diagnostic study projects this year, as well as provide at least partial funding to CWP implementation continuation projects, but this funding depends on what the Legislature ultimately appropriates.

Likewise, use of federal Section 319 project funds are also undecided until the Legislature determines how to allocate the new constitutional amendment clean water funds. In the past, some Section 319 funds have been allocated along with state clean water funds to projects to help implement the Clean Water Legacy Act, and other Section 319 funds have been allocated in a separate funding round for nonpoint source demonstration, education, and research projects. A similar use of the funds is intended this year for FY 2010, contingent on Congressional and Legislative actions. Contact Glenn Skuta at the MPCA for more information: 651-757-2730 or glenn.skuta@state.mn.us.



Lights! Camera! \$2,500 prize!

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is looking for educational videos that inspire people to help protect streams, lakes, wetlands, and coasts. The agency is looking for video submissions in the following two categories:

- 30- or 60-second video to use as a TV public service announcement
- 1-3 minute instructional video

It will award a \$2,500 prize in each category and feature the videos on the EPA's web site. Entries must be received by Earth Day, April 22, 2009. The contest winners will be notified in May via e-mail. Check it out online at: www.epa.gov/owow/videocontest.html.

Events

April 9: Impact of climate change on water resources

Dr. Lucinda Johnson, National Resources Research Institute, University of Minnesota – Duluth, will present “Minnesota’s Water Resources: Impacts of Climate Change” from 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 9, at the Science Museum of Minnesota in St. Paul.

Tickets are \$12 per person (\$8 per Science Museum member). Space is limited. For more information or to reserve tickets, call 651-221-9444 or go to www.smm.org/water/lectures.

April 22: Kickoff for Watershed Network

Mark your calendars for the Watershed Communication Network kick-off, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, at the Pizza Ranch in Redwood Falls.

While open to anyone interested, this meeting is primarily for watershed projects and districts in the Minnesota and Crow River watersheds.

For more information, contact MPCA Public Information Officer Forrest Peterson at 320-441-6972 or forrest.peterson@mca.state.mn.us.

Worth Noting

EPA launches new website called “Watershed Central”

EPA recently posted a new Web site called “Watershed Central” to help watershed organizations and others find key information they need to implement watershed approaches. Check it out at www.epa.gov/watershedcentral/.

A Watershed Approach to Water Management: Working Toward Subwatershed TMDLs in the Twin Cities Metro Area

The MPCA continues to work to better integrate its water activities, and to perform its water work in cooperation with local water resource managers on a watershed basis. The major watershed (8-digit HUC) level is the primary scale it intends to operate at for activities such as water monitoring, TMDL development, and implementation planning. Read more about this at: www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/wq-s1-26.pdf.

However, in the Twin Cities Metro Area, water management typically occurs at a smaller, subwatershed level, by dozens of Watershed Districts and Watershed Management Organizations in cooperation with other local units of government. The MPCA has begun working with Twin Cities watershed organizations to integrate water monitoring activities, local water planning efforts, and TMDL development and implementation planning requirements.

In addition to working directly with individual organizations, the MPCA has also held larger joint meetings. One meeting was held for all the Twin Cities watershed organizations in December, with a follow-up meeting in February for those organizations in the Mississippi River-Twin Cities watershed. A meeting on monitoring efforts for 2009 was held with the watershed organizations in the Lower St. Croix Watershed in February, and a watershed planning/TMDL approach meeting is being planned for May. A meeting for the Lower Minnesota River watershed organizations will follow this spring.

For more information, contact Glenn Skuta at the MPCA: 651-757-2730 or glenn.skuta@state.mn.us.

MPCA needs your help to monitor lakes and rivers in your area

Did you know that there are 12,200 lakes and more than 105,000 miles of streams and rivers in Minnesota? Did you know that the MPCA has citizen volunteer programs to help monitor those lakes and rivers? The Citizen Lake Monitoring Program and the Citizen Stream Monitoring Program are a great way for residents to get involved with their nearby lakes and rivers. Beginning in the spring of 2009, the MPCA will be looking for more lake and stream volunteers in specific watersheds to supplement the data that the agency and other local partners will be collecting. Those watersheds include: Big Fork River, Bois de Sioux River, Buffalo River, Cedar River, Chippewa River, Crow Wing River, Grand Marais Creek, Mississippi River (St. Cloud and Winona), Minnesota River (Granite Falls), Shell Rock River, St. Croix River (Stillwater), and the St. Louis River. More information about the volunteer monitoring programs is available on the MPCA’s Web site at: www.pca.state.mn.us/cmp or call 1-800-657-3864.



Dip into volunteering

Events

May 7-8: Lakes and Rivers Conference

Minnesota Waters will hold its 2009 Lakes and Rivers Conference at the Mayo Civic Center in Rochester May 7-8. Choose from more than 50 informational presentations on a variety of topics. For more information or to register: www.minnesotawaters.org.

Summer 2009: DNR stream workshops

The Minnesota DNR has scheduled its 2009 Stream Health and Restoration Workshops:

- Natural Channel Design in Dam Removal and Fish Passage, June 8-12, Fergus Falls
- Fluvial Geomorphology and Stream Classification, July 13-17, Redwood Falls
- Stream Restoration, Aug. 17-21, Fergus Falls

For more information, go to www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/streamhab.

In addition, the DNR's "Healthy Rivers: A Water Course" program is now available online at www.dnr.state.mn.us/healthyivers.

The Minnesota DNR Stream Habitat Program now posts a series of brochures and resource sheets on stream health, channel stability, resulting bank erosion, and streambank restoration techniques at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/eco/streamhab.

West Fork Des Moines River TMDL intense, interactive and informative

In December 2008, the Environmental Protection Agency approved a TMDL study encompassing 32 impairments in the West Fork Des Moines River Watershed. This project is unique in that it addressed several impairments on a basin-wide scale, worked with local partners and developed an advisory stakeholder committee early in the process.

A local partner, the Heron Lake Watershed District (HLWD), is leading efforts to develop an implementation plan that addresses issues outlined in the approved TMDL report. The HLWD could not lead this effort without the generous support and involvement from the advisory stakeholder committee and technical committee. Both committees have been meeting together to learn about the impairments, potential efforts to clean up the impairment, and activities currently taking place in the watershed. The meetings are intense, interactive and informative. The end result of each meeting is to develop a list of actions that will improve the water quality, be accepted and implemented by watershed residents, and be cost-effective.



South Heron Lake

In addition to the meetings, the HLWD and MPCA will be working with the communities of Worthington, Okabena, Lakefield, and Brewster and an industrial plant in Worthington to discuss potential avenues for inclusion in this massive implementation effort. These five entities have permits that specify limits and discharge to Heron Lake. Heron Lake is listed for excess nutrients and is addressed in the TMDL report. Another meeting is planned for landowners adjacent to Heron Lake to gather input on incorporating in-lake measures into the implementation plan.

As noted by the HLWD during one of the first meetings, "The decisions we will be making will be a guide for cleaning up the watershed in the next 10 years. This is a big deal, we are asking you to represent yourself, your work, your interests and most importantly to represent the WFDNR watershed residents. This is not an easy feat. The TMDL report compiled the information to guide our decisions, but the actions selected need to be activities that will be implemented and successful. To make it even more difficult, the actions selected need to be ones that will clean up the water."

The goal is to have an MPCA-approved implementation plan this fall. A public meeting is planned for August to present the details of the plan. For more information, contact:

- Jan Voit, HLWD Administrator 507-793-2462 or hlwd@roundlk.net
- Kelli Daberkow, MPCA Hydrologist at 507-476-4251 or kelli.daberkow@state.mn.us.

Submissions

Readers encouraged to send submissions

Please email submissions for WaterFront to catherine.rofshus@pca.state.mn.us. You can reach Cat at 507-206-2608.