

**Keynotes for Conservation**  
**April 2010**  
*Issue #103*



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**Workshops & Conferences**

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**Minnesota Master Naturalist Training**

*April 22 – May 27, 2010*

*Tues. /Thurs. 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.*

*Northland Arboretum, Brainerd*

Do you enjoy learning about the natural world? If so, consider becoming a Minnesota Master Naturalist volunteer! This program will offer classes focused on one of the three major MN ecosystems "North Woods/Great Lakes" training to be held at Northland Arboretum in Brainerd Starting April 22<sup>nd</sup> through May 27<sup>th</sup>. Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., two Saturday field trips will be required. Cost for the course is \$200 including materials. Some partial scholarships are available. Register online at [www.MinnesotaMasterNaturalist.org](http://www.MinnesotaMasterNaturalist.org), call 1-888-241-4532 or email [info@minnesotamasternaturalist.org](mailto:info@minnesotamasternaturalist.org).

**Women's Wellness & Adventure Weekend**

*April 23-25, 2010 and October 1-3, 2010*

*Offered every spring and fall at the Audubon Center of the North Woods, Sandstone, MN*

All-inclusive, complete holistic retreat - comfy lodging, wonderful food, and a variety of classes and activities ranging from:

- Adventure & Challenge (examples include high ropes course, low ropes course, canoeing)
- Wellness & Nature (examples include yoga, massage, reiki, shamanic healing, meditation, hikes, bird banding)
- Creative Expressions (examples include art classes, crafts classes, gardening courses, ethical wills, nature journaling, etc.)

Lodging, meals, all programming and 10 minutes of massage or reiki are included in the weekend fee (additional massage or reiki are available for an additional fee). All-inclusive weekend package rates \$230-\$260. For more information call 888-404-7743 or visit [www.audubon-center.org](http://www.audubon-center.org).

**Habitat for Humanity ReStore Earth Day Event**

*April 24, 2010*

*9 a.m. to 2 p.m.*

*Brainerd*

Do your spring cleaning now because for *ONE DAY ONLY* – the ReStore will be accepting donations of clothing, household goods, books, games furniture and more! In addition, the Brainerd High School

Band/Choir will be hosting an Electronic Waste collection/fundraiser (sponsored by Hughes Technology) to dispose of your used tech products, including computers, monitors, cell phones, iPods, electronic toothbrushes, digital cameras and more.

For more information, visit <http://www.lakesareahabitat.org>.

### **What's going on with Purple Martins?**

*April 28, 2010*

*7:00 p.m.*

*Northland Arboretum, Brainerd*

2009 was not a good year for nesting Purple Martins. Cold weather and lack of insects resulted in poor survival of nestlings. Want to learn more about Purple Martins and what they need to thrive? What has been learned about martins in the past couple years regarding pre-migratory roosts and martin behavior? How has banding of martins expanded our knowledge of their movements and survival? Join us for an interesting presentation by two martin experts; Kelly Applegate and Mike North.

Kelly Applegate is the Wildlife Biologist for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Indians, and the Director of the Minnesota Purple Martin Working Group. His work focuses heavily on conservation of habitats and species through partnership building, education, and active restoration of ecosystems. Special focus projects include Purple Martins, Common Terns, and Chimney Swifts.

Mike North is an avid ornithologist and Master bird bander, and is a lead bander for the Purple Martin Working Group. He also works for the DNR and is Treasurer and past-President of the Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society.

This program is sponsored by the Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society and the Northland Arboretum. The program is free and open to everyone. Refreshments will be available. For more information contact Pam Perry at [pkperry@brainerd.net](mailto:pkperry@brainerd.net) or the Northland Arboretum at [arboretum@brainerd.net](mailto:arboretum@brainerd.net).

### **Citizen Stream and Lake Monitoring Workshops**

Sponsored by the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District

*May 3, 2010*

*5:00-8:30 p.m.*

*Northland Arboretum, 14250 Conservation Drive, Baxter, MN -- RSVP by April 29, 2010*

This year the SWCD is taking an integrated approach to healthy streams by incorporating Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) into the citizen monitoring training. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Dan Swanson, Aquatic Invasive Specialist will provide information on what citizens should be looking for and who to call if they come across unknown aquatic life or plants while they are monitoring.

For more information on water monitoring and to register for the workshop contact Melissa Barrick via e-mail [melissa.barrick@brainerd.net](mailto:melissa.barrick@brainerd.net) or call 218-828-6197. For more information, visit <http://www.co.crow-wing.mn.us>. The Minnesota Legislature, through the MPCA has provided state funds through the Clean Water Legacy Act for the Surface Water Assessment Grant to provide this training.

## **Parks & Trails Legacy Project Public Input Workshop**

*May 6, 2010*

*7:00 – 9:00 p.m.*

*St. Cloud Library, Mississippi Room*

This is an essential meeting for making the case that regional park & trail funds are needed in Greater Minnesota. The Citizen League is the consultant in charge of coordinating public input and will run the workshop. The workshop will involve discussion about several key questions and allow each participant to vote on their own answer to the questions. Greater Minnesota Regional Parks & Trails are embedded throughout the planning process, but we need YOU to come to the workshop.

In addition to coming to the workshop, you can also register your input on the website for the Citizen League: [www.citizing.org](http://www.citizing.org). (You can [download and preview the survey questions](#) or [sign in on the website](#) to fill out the survey of questions online.) Please pass this online input information on to everyone you know who is interested!

The final product will be used by the Minnesota Legislature for its allocation of Park & Trails Legacy funds in the future. Please circulate the Public Input Workshop information to your park commissions, city councils, friends of the parks groups, any group which supports receiving Parks & Trails Legacy sales tax funds for parks & trails of regional significance in Greater Minnesota.

The DNR also has information about the project on their website at: [www.patl.intergov.mn.gov](http://www.patl.intergov.mn.gov).

## **Pine River Neighborhood Energy Workshops**

*May 6, 2010*

*6:00 – 8:00 p.m.*

*Hunt Utilities Group Campus, Pine River – RSVP Required!*

The Clean Energy Resource Team Central Region and the Central Minnesota Alternative Energy Regional Collaborative, a Region Five Development Commission program, have teamed up with the Pine River Area Healthy Green Communities Partnership to provide free Neighborhood Energy Workshops or NEWs.

These workshops will assist homeowners in reducing their energy consumption by presenting valuable efficiency and conservation tips and techniques. Save Energy, Save Money! The first NEWs will be from 6-8 p.m. May 6 at Hunt Utilities Group Campus in Pine River. RSVP required due to limited seating and free energy reduction gifts. If interested in participating in this no cost workshop, contact Angela Headlee at [aheadlee@regionfive.org](mailto:aheadlee@regionfive.org) or (218) 894-3233. NEWs are made possible through a partnership with local utilities including Minnesota Power and Xcel Energy.

## **Birding Big Day at the Arb**

*May 9, 2010*

*7:45 a.m.-Noon Birding followed by a potluck lunch*

*Northland Arboretum, Brainerd.*

Join others who enjoy watching birds for a morning on the Arboretum trails searching for birds. Participants will arrive before 8 AM and be assigned to groups for the morning. All groups will have an expert leader. Novice birdwatchers are welcome and will be divided among the groups. This mildly competitive event will focus on the goal of each group trying to find the most bird species while searching the variety of habitats within the Arboretum boundaries. A potluck lunch will begin at noon in the lower level of the Arboretum building. The Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society will provide grilled items (brats, burgers and veggie alternatives) and drinks. Anyone with an interest in birds is welcome. For more information contact Pam Perry at [pkperry@brainerd.net](mailto:pkperry@brainerd.net) or the Northland Arboretum at [arboretum@brainerd.net](mailto:arboretum@brainerd.net).

### **Greening Transportation – Northstar Rail** (presented by BAELN)

May 20, 2010

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Brainerd

This season's theme **Greening the Economy** gives us insight into the jobs, skills and opportunities that the "green jobs" direction offers. If you have questions or would like some general information on BAELN, please contact Steve Mikkelson at 1-218-316-3887 or [stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us](mailto:stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us). The events are free and all are invited to participate.

*BAELN is a collaborative effort of the following organizations: 1000 Friends of Minnesota, Central Lakes College, Crow Wing County Soil and Water Conservation District, Initiative Foundation, MN Department of Natural Resources, MN Department of Transportation, MN Pollution Control Agency, Minnesota Waters, The Nature Conservancy, community member and University of Minnesota Extension.*

### **Government Training Services Workshops / Spring Schedule**

Government Training Services, an organization that offers workshops for staff and appointed officials from all levels of government, is offering educational workshops to share information on trends, tools, and processes that help local units of government. Participants learn about using planning and zoning tools to deal with a wide variety of development issues and obtain an in-depth review of the planning process.

Registration is now open, go to <http://www.mngts.org> and click on the "Land Use Planning" icon for detailed class descriptions.

### **The Why & How of Working Nature into Land Use Decisions**

May 6, 2010

9:00 AM – 4:00 PM (check-in 8:30 AM)

Initiative Foundation, Little Falls

Special Registration Fee: \$75/person

Faculty: Jean Coleman, Jenna Fletcher, Sharon Pfeifer, Kristin Raab, Jeff Schoenbauer, and local government officials

For elected officials, appointed planning commissioners and members of boards of adjustment, as well as planners and zoning administrators. Survey after survey indicates that Minnesota communities highly value their lakes and wetlands, rivers and woods. This day-long workshop highlights 1) practical economic, social, and ecological reasons to conserve natural areas locally, and 2) a collaborative way of working that allows local governments and developers to optimize public and private values to enhance local and regional quality of life. Participants will gain the latest information on:

- Real social, economic, and ecological benefits provided by natural habitats
- Sustainable natural resources ordinances
- Local case studies illustrating Why and How to protect natural resources
- Funding options to help communities conserve natural resources as they develop

This workshop builds on the Growing Green and Redefining Development workshops first offered in 2008 as part of GTS' Natural Resources Series, with additional emphasis on implementation through actual practice.

For additional information contact Carol Schoeneck at [cschoeneck@mngts.org](mailto:cschoeneck@mngts.org) or (800) 569-6880.

### **Basics of Planning and Zoning**

*May 26, 2010*

*9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (check-in 8:30 a.m.)*

*Initiative Foundation, Little Falls*

*Registration Fee: \$125*

Faculty: Richard Thompson and Eric Hedtke

Designed for those new to land use planning or interested in a review of the fundamentals. This workshop covers the nuts and bolts of planning, zoning and subdivision regulation. Participants learn how planning and zoning is developed and where they fit into the process. How do the different "players" maximize their impact? Among topics to be addressed are:

- The history, how the system has gotten to where it is today, the authority and limits to planning and zoning
- The basic land use and zoning tools: comprehensive plans, zoning and subdivision ordinances, amendments, permits, enforcement
- Legal basics: avoiding litigation, what is "due process," what is a taking, conducting public hearings, making findings of fact, and understanding the 60-day rule
- Who participates in the planning & zoning process; YOUR role, responsibilities and opportunities
- Hands-on simulations of actual planning and zoning dilemmas
- Hot issues, answers to your questions

For additional information contact Carol Schoeneck at [cschoeneck@mngts.org](mailto:cschoeneck@mngts.org) or (800) 569-6880.

## **Beyond the Basics of Planning & Zoning**

*June 16, 2010*

*9:00 AM - 4:30 PM (check-in 8:30 AM)*

*Initiative Foundation, Little Falls*

*Registration Fee: \$125/person*

Faculty: Phil Carlson and Desyl Peterson

For those who have a solid general knowledge of the planning process (1-2 years on Council, Board or Zoning/Planning commission) or who have attended "The Basics." Participants learn how planning and zoning tools are used to deal with a wide variety of development issues, and obtain an in-depth review of the planning process. This workshop covers:

- A quick review of planning history, comprehensive planning, and zoning tools;
- Innovative ways to guide land use and development, from PUDs and performance zoning to design guidelines and "cutting edge" applications
- Sustainability – what it is and how to apply sustainable principles to planning and zoning
- The environmental review process – EAWs, EISs, and AUARs: tools to expedite careful review of complex projects
- Detailed discussion of zoning tools to handle various development issues
- The planning process in depth—from proper legal notice to development of findings of fact
- Legal issues in more depth: How to implement the comprehensive plan in zoning and subdivision ordinances? What to require for variances? When to grant conditional uses? When to use interim use permits? How to treat nonconforming uses? When to require easements?
- Case studies—actual urban, suburban and rural situations!
- Answers to your questions on community zoning issues

For additional information contact Carol Schoeneck at [cschoeneck@mngts.org](mailto:cschoeneck@mngts.org) or (800) 569-6880.

## **6th Annual Small Wind Conference: A Gathering of Installers, Manufacturers, Dealers, & Distributors**

*June 15 and 16, 2010*

*9 a.m. – 6 p.m.*

*Stevens Point, Wisconsin*

The 6th annual Small Wind Conference is the premier event for small wind-electric system designers and installers, and for those involved in sales, specification, management, funding, and permitting of small wind systems.

More than 300 small wind professionals and industry representatives from across the United States and nine countries attended the 2009 conference, a key opportunity for open and honest dialogue, networking and education within the industry.

"This conference is the only conference that I am aware of that addresses the entire gamut of issues pertinent to the small wind community," said Trudy Forsyth, Small Wind Coordinator for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

## Topics to be covered will include:

- Updates from wind turbine manufacturers and importers
- Test results and updates on new wind turbines and equipment
- Wind-electric system cost and design
- Zoning and permitting processes
- Advancements in resource and site assessments
- Problems encountered in the field and how they were solved
- Input from dealers and installers-what works and what needs work
- Updates on installer and turbine certification as well as new NEC code for small wind

## Who should attend?

Wind system installers, site assessors, equipment dealers and distributors, manufacturers, renewable energy program implementers, state funding agencies, educators, zoning officials, policy makers, and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend. Those considering entering the small wind industry are also invited. This conference is not intended for homeowners or end users.

For more information on the event, including sponsorship opportunities, please contact: Samantha Smart Merritt, Windustry at 612-870-3474, [Samantha@windustry.org](mailto:Samantha@windustry.org), [www.windustry.org](http://www.windustry.org).

Small Wind Conference Coordinating Committee includes, Roy Butler, Trudy Forsyth, Jenny Heinzen, Mick Sagrillo, Brent Summerville, Ian Woofenden. Contact: [info@smallwindconference.com](mailto:info@smallwindconference.com)  
[www.smallwindconference.com](http://www.smallwindconference.com).

## Training the Next Generation of Green Workers (and a Few Old Dogs Too)

(Presented by BAELN)

June 17, 2010

3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

This season's theme **Greening the Economy** gives us insight into the jobs, skills and opportunities that the "green jobs" direction offers. If you have questions or would like some general information on BAELN, please contact Steve Mikkelson at 1-218-316-3887 or [stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us](mailto:stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us). The events are free and all are invited to participate.

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## Things to Know

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**VISTA National Service Members Needed!**

From local foods and solar energy to refugee services and youth mentoring, the projects that VISTA organizations are offering are just as varied as the organizations themselves. The Initiative Foundation is currently seeking 25 VISTA members to serve in a wide variety of poverty-fighting projects across central Minnesota.

Organizations looking for VISTAs are located in: Bemidji, Brainerd, Cambridge, Deerwood, Foley, Little Falls, Milaca, Pine River, St. Cloud and Staples. Their projects focus on:

- Local foods
- Child Care Training
- Youth Development / Youth Mentoring
- Job Training
- Support for homeless families
- Work with the Elderly
- Solar Energy
- Volunteer Development
- Mentoring of low income
- Free tax clinics
- Refugee & Immigrant Services

The VISTA program can be a great opportunity for young people who desire more professional experiences, casualties of downsizing who want to “try on” a new career path, retirees seeking to “give back” or just about any other adult with the desire to make a difference.

VISTAs receive a variety of benefits to help them serve fulltime for one year including: a monthly living allowance, basic medical coverage, child care assistance (if eligible), and their choice between an Education Award or an end-of-service Cash Stipend. For more information visit [www.ifound.org](http://www.ifound.org) or contact Chris Fastner, VISTA Program Manager at (320) 631-2002.

### **DNR Shoreline Restoration Grant**

Crow Wing County and SWCD, with assistance from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, are now taking applications for shoreline restoration projects. This is a cost-share grant opportunity to help landowners restore their shorelines with native plants. The grant will help fund plants, materials, and labor, as well as provide technical expertise on all approved projects. Interested parties should contact Beth Hippert ([beth.hippert@co.crow-wing.mn.us](mailto:beth.hippert@co.crow-wing.mn.us)) for applications and/or more information.

### **Calling All Women Interested in Renewable Energy and Sustainability!**

The Clean Energy Resource Team Central Region and The Central Minnesota Alternative Energy Regional Collaborative, a Region Five Development Commission program, have created a new opportunity for women to social network.

This group will enhance awareness of renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation in a fun and engaging atmosphere. Learn about local initiatives, players and businesses in the sustainability realm. The first gathering will be from 5:30-6:30 p.m. April 29 at Iven's on the Bay, Brainerd. RSVP required due to limited seating. All women interested in participating contact Angela Headlee at [aheadlee@regionfive.org](mailto:aheadlee@regionfive.org) or (218) 894-3233.

## **Tools for Rural Communities for Active Living**

Active Living can be defined as a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines, like walking to the store or biking to work (according to Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org>). The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has been supporting research in this area over a period of several years, and has supported the development of Rural Active Living Assessment (RALA) Tools to help assess the physical environment features and amenities, town characteristics, community programs, and policies that could potentially influence levels of physical activity among residents in rural communities.

The RALA web site, <http://www.activelivingresearch.org> describes these tools, which are each available for download.

Interestingly, according to a policy brief at the site (*Active Living for Rural Youth* - <http://www.activelivingresearch.org>), childhood obesity and inactivity are significant and growing problems in many rural areas where the prevalence of obesity and overweight has been shown to be 25 percent higher than urban rates, even after controlling for income, race, physical activity and other known risk factors. This points to the relevance of active living efforts in rural areas, which have not received the focus that urban and suburban areas have.

## **Two Minnesota Programs Putting Green Practices into Action:**

**Minnesota GreenCorps** is a new environment-focused AmeriCorps program. As a statewide initiative, MN GreenCorps has the goal to preserve and protect Minnesota's environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals. The program was launched in September of 2009 with 18 full time, and four half-time members, placed with host sites around the state including school districts, cities, counties, and non-profits.

Current MN GreenCorps members serve with their host sites for almost one year in one of five project areas: energy conservation, living green outreach, school waste prevention, local food systems, or urban forestry. Member activities include collecting and analyzing data, surveying community members and host site employees, implementing projects, conducting education and outreach on their topic areas, and much more.

**Conservation Corps Minnesota and Iowa** (formerly Minnesota Conservation Corps) provides hands-on environmental stewardship and service-learning opportunities to youth and young adults while accomplishing conservation, natural resource management and emergency response work. Our goals are to help young people from diverse backgrounds become more connected to the environment, engaged in conservation, involved in the community and prepared for future employment. We realize our mission and accomplish our goals through initiatives for youth and young adults.

All Conservation Corps programs devote 20 percent of program time to technical-skills training, career-building skills such as resume writing and interviewing, and educational activities focused on environmental science and technology. Using scientific inquiry and experiential learning, the Conservation Corps helps young people learn more about the world around them and think critically about the impact of their personal choices on the environment.

If you have questions concerning this presentation, or would like some general information on BAELN, please contact Steve Mikkelson at 1-218-316-3887 or [stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us](mailto:stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us).

**Help Minnesota Waters Reward the Leaders in Lake and River Conservation!**

Do you know a citizen, group or volunteer who has done amazing things for their lake or river? Minnesota Waters' annual awards celebrate individuals and groups who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to improving and protecting Minnesota's lakes and rivers. With the gracious support of our sponsors, Minnesota Waters is proud to honor these water heroes with a plaque, a cash award, and publicity in our statewide publications.

We are currently soliciting nominations for the following 2010 Awards: Lake Association of the Year; River-Friendly Community/Group of the Year, Outstanding Volunteer Monitoring Program of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year. *Nominations are due by May 14, 2010.* Winners will be announced mid-June, 2010. Visit [www.minnesotawaters.org](http://www.minnesotawaters.org) for more information.

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*This newsletter is designed to share funding opportunities, resources, and conferences or training events of common interest for program participants and supporters of the Initiative Foundation. For more information about these and other training opportunities, contact Don Hickman, [dhickman@ifound.org](mailto:dhickman@ifound.org).*

*If you wish to be removed from this mailing list or if you have other names/e-mails to add please contact Jolene Howard, [jhoward@ifound.org](mailto:jhoward@ifound.org).*