

Keynotes for Conservation March 2009



INITIATIVE
FOUNDATION

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Workshops & Conferences

Foundations to Host Wind Energy Forum

Thursday, March 12, 2009

3:00 - 5:00 PM

Long Prairie City Hall

Landowners and community leaders who want to learn more about navigating the wind energy arena are invited to a special forum. The seminar will help participants understand general wind information and opportunities, wind rights and development choices, and land leases and agreements.

"The market for renewable energy is so strong now," said Kathy Gaalswyk, Initiative Foundation president. "We believe it represents a real economic opportunity for many of our rural communities."

The Initiative Foundation, in partnership with the Southwest Initiative Foundation, Windustry, and the Rural Energy Development Initiative (REDI) is hosting this free event. For more information, contact Don Hickman, program manager with the Initiative Foundation at 320-631-2043, dhickman@ifound.org.

Attendees will also hear about the Rural Energy Development Initiative (REDI), a rural wind energy program offering technical assistance, training and loans to businesses, governments and landowners. This program is administered by the Southwest Initiative Foundation and sponsored by the State of Minnesota and the Center for Rural Policy and Development. REDI is being implemented through partnerships with the Initiative Foundation, Southern MN Initiative Foundation, Northwest MN Foundation, Northwest RDC, Headwaters RDC, and others. For more information, contact REDI at redi@swifoundation.org or 1-866-966-6749.

Upcoming Brainerd Area Audubon Society Seminars:

"Birds in Flight: the art and science of how birds fly" by Carrol Henderson, MnDNR
Nongame Wildlife Supervisor, author and nature photographer

Thursday, March 12, 2009

7:00 PM

Northland Arboretum, Brainerd

Carrol Henderson is well known to many Minnesotans as an author of nature books and leader of the DNR's successful Nongame Wildlife Program, also known as the "Chickadee Checkoff". Carrol's presentation will feature his latest book entitled "Birds in Flight: the art and science of how birds fly". The presentation will feature the story of how he became interested in the physics of bird flight and over a hundred photographs of birds in flight that he has taken that illustrate the principles of how birds flap, glide, soar, and hover. The presentation includes Minnesota birds as well as hummingbirds from Costa Rica, condors from Peru, albatrosses from New Zealand, and raptors and storks from Africa.

Carrol Henderson has been supervisor of the MnDNR's Nongame Wildlife Program since 1977. He has a B.S. in zoology from Iowa State University (1968), and a Master of Forest Resources degree in ecology from the University of Georgia (1970). During the past 32 years he has developed a statewide program for the conservation of nongame wildlife that has received both national and international recognition. He has helped plan and carry out restoration of peregrine falcons, bald eagles, eastern bluebirds, river otters and trumpeter swans in Minnesota. He is involved in promoting wildlife tourism and he has provided leadership in promoting nature tourism projects in Minnesota, Manitoba, Costa Rica, and the Amur region of eastern Russia. He and his wife Ethelle have led 48 birding trips during the last 20 years throughout Latin America, New Zealand, Kenya, and Tanzania.

Henderson is the author of eight books including Woodworking for Wildlife, Landscaping for Wildlife, Wild About Birds: the DNR Bird Feeding Guide, and the Field Guide to the Wildlife of Costa Rica. He is co-author of The Traveler's Guide to Wildlife in Minnesota and Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality.

This program is sponsored by the Bee Nay She Council Bird Club, and is free and open to the public. For more information about this program or about the Bird Club, contact Jo Blanich at blanich@embarqmail.com

"Mercury in Northern Minnesota Watersheds" by Dr. Randy Kokal, U.S. Forest Service
Northern Research Station, Grand Rapids
Wednesday, March 25, 2009
7:00 PM
Northland Arboretum, Brainerd

Mercury (HG) is of great concern in the environment because it biomagnifies up the food chain in aquatic ecosystems. All fish-bearing surface waters in Minnesota have recommendations for fish consumption as a result of mercury contamination. Over the past 15 years, Dr. Randy Kolka and colleagues have conducted research to understand the mercury cycle in northern Minnesota. Randy will discuss these studies and summarize the current state of knowledge on mercury pollution in our northern Minnesota waters.

Dr. Randy Kokal has a B.S. degree in Soil Science from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and M.S. and PhD degrees in Soil Science from the University of Minnesota with minors in water Resources and Forest Resources. Currently, Dr. Kokal leads a team of scientists to address the ecology and management of riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystems. He is an adjunct faculty member with five universities and associate editor for the journal "Wetlands".

This program is sponsored by the Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society, and is free and open to the public. For more information about this program, contact Pam Perry, Program Chair, at pkperry@brainerd.net

Government Training Services releases 2009 training schedule:

New to the planning commission or board of adjustment? Long time member eager to keep up with new laws and regulations? Want to gain insight on how to most constructive prepare comments on proposals pending before your city or county's Planning and Zoning departments?

Government Training Services (GTS) is the state's premier training organization in P&Z issues. Their "faculty" includes current and past local officials, attorneys, developers, and advocates to provide fact based, court tested, field implemented examples of how to encourage the type of growth you want and learn from others past mistakes.

This year's schedule includes:

- Basic Traffic Impacts of Land Use (Andover, April 1 and Little Falls, May 14)
- Redefining the Development Process: Choosing Collaboration over Contention to protect natural resources and maximize the public value of private development (Hastings, April 2 and Collegeville, May 6)
- Basics of Planning and Zoning (Little Falls, April 8)
- Beyond the Basics of Planning and Zoning (St. Paul, April 8 and April 30, Little Falls)
- A Fresh Look: Rethinking Local Land Use Planning (Collegeville, April 16)
- Your Comprehensive Plan is Done – Now What? (St. Paul, May 20)
- Your role as Planning Commission Member Videoconference (broadcast to Fergus Falls, Mankato and Duluth, June 4)

For detailed descriptions or registration information visit:

http://www.mngts.org/LandUse/Land_Use_Workshops_2009.pdf

The BAELN 2008-2009 Season *The Path Less Traveled* is pleased to offer...

The New Frontiers of Socially Responsible Investing: Where We Started, Where We Are, and Current Trends

Thursday, March 19, 2009

3:00 - 5:00 PM

MN Pollution Control Agency office located at 7678 College Road in Baxter/Brainerd

The event is free. Refreshments will be provided. All are invited.

These days, many of us are questioning the worth of our investments. We all want to see our investments perform well and reward us with income. But for some investors, monetary return isn't enough. They seek to invest their money in successful companies whose values match up with their own. This investment strategy, which seeks to maximize financial return and social good, is known as socially responsible investing (SRI). Jess Eynck is an independent financial advisor with Progressive Asset Management. He will provide an overview of socially responsible investing (SRI) including its history, how it is implemented, and current developments in the landscape. Jess' presentation will also incorporate tools and resources that anyone can use to evaluate their own financial portfolio based on their values.

If you have questions concerning this presentation, please contact Phil Hunsicker at 218-824-5095 or phunsicker@1000fom.org.

The Brainerd Area Environmental Learning Network (BAELN) works to create opportunities for people in the environmental field, and the community, to receive timely information on environmental and sustainability issues, along with the chance to network with others. This season's theme "The Path Less Traveled" offers topics that can help us improve our communities and the environment in which we live. Each gathering held the third Thursday of the month from 3:00-5:00 p.m., will include an hour-long presentation with time for questions, networking and refreshments. The events are free and all are invited to come explore the path less traveled.

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, The Nature Conservancy, Paul Bunyan Trail Association, and University of Minnesota Extension.

Upcoming events:

April 16: Treating Stormwater as an Asset: Three Things You Can Do

Rain gardens, rain barrels and shoreland buffers are cropping up in the area. Find out more about these practices, why they are important and what would work for you.

May 21: Making Solar Power Accessible to People of All Income Levels

Discover more about solar energy, what's happening with solar in our region and how you can take advantage of its benefits.

June 18: Taking Charge: One Family's Journey toward Energy Self-Sufficiency

Living off the grid, without reliance on public utilities for things like electricity and water, is becoming a more common practice. Hear how people are doing it and glean lessons that you can apply to your own way of life.

Shallow Lakes Forum VI: Development and Implementation of Shallow Lake Management Plans

Monday, March 30, 2009

Oak Ridge Conference and Hotel Center, Chaska, MN

Reality Check: Shallow lakes create difficult and often contentious management scenarios! Shallow Lakes Forum VI is designed to provide participants an opportunity to visit with professional planners, learn about planning processes that impact shallow lakes systems (including the technical, socioeconomic, **and** regulatory criteria critical to success), and participate in presentations and panel discussions that highlight shallow lakes management in action. We anticipate the 2009 forum to be the most useful to local government units, lake associations, conservation organizations, planning and zoning officials, and agency staff responsible for developing and implementing management plans for shallow systems.

Pre-registration by March 18 is \$50; after that \$75. For more information visit:

www.shallowlakes.info.

Garden Expo 2009

Saturday, April 4, 2009

8:30 AM - 4 PM

Lakewood Evangelical Free Church (6284 Fairview Road in Baxter)

Sponsored by the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardeners and ISD 181 Community Education

Vendors Exhibits Lunch Door Prizes Silent Auction

Registration \$25.00 Deadline for registration is March 27!

To register, call (218) 454-6924 with a Visa or MasterCard only.

Initiative Awards: Join 500 VIPs for a Starry Night

Friday, April 17 | St. Cloud Civic Center

Let the foundation be your celestial guide as we unlock the mystery of the stars at our 2009 Initiative Awards: *A Constellation of Community Service*. Join us as we honor six of central Minnesota's most brilliant leaders and organizations. (HINT: One of those is an "Outstanding Green Venture" from Pine River!) Who is it? [Click here](#) to find out and sign up.

Alternative Energy Sessions for Regional Businesses

May 5, Morrison County, Initiative Foundation (space limited to 60)

May 12, Benton County, Immaculate Conception Church in Rice

May 19, Cass County, Pine River Backus School, Pine River

May 26, Aitkin/Mille Lacs Counties, 40 Club, Aitkin

June 2, Todd/Wadena Counties, Central Lakes College, Staples

June 9, Crow Wing County, The Lodge, Baxter

Are you a business owner looking for ways to stretch your operations dollar? Are you interested in learning more about alternative energy technologies? Want to know the Return on Investment of alternative energy technologies? Looking for alternative energy resource information?

Join us and your peers to learn about these opportunities and to discuss how we can work together to move our region's alternative energy industry forward!

Six locations/dates; all sessions are free, run from 9 a.m. to noon, and include lunch, but pre-registration is required. To register contact registrations@regionfive.org.

Sponsored by Central Minnesota Alternative Energy Regional Collaborative and the Region Five Development Commission.

2009 Minnesota Waters Lakes & Rivers Conference

May 7-8, 2009

Mayo Civic Center, Rochester, MN

This year's event features a fascinating, inspiring program of workshops, exhibits, networking events, and field trips. The program offers more than 50 workshop sessions on topics that river and lake groups across the state told us were important to them. Workshop tracks include:

- Citizens Focus on Water Quality
- Addressing Aquatic Invasive Species
- Global Climate Change: Effects on MN Surface Waters
- Clean Water Funding
- Shoreland Management and Land Use
- Building Healthy, Effective Citizen Organizations
- Lake and River Issues in Southeast Minnesota

We're also offering a few new features at the conference.

- A general membership meeting, during which Minnesota Waters members can offer ideas and ask questions of MN Waters staff and board.
- The "Wednesday Welcome" happy hour, where guests can meet, mingle and make early connections with fellow attendees to enhance the learning experience.
- "Meet the experts" consulting sessions, in which attendees can schedule one-on-one meetings with experts in Strategic Communications, Aquatic Invasive Species, Engineering Projects, Land Use Lawsuits, and other topics.

This conference will kick-off with field trips on Wednesday afternoon to allow guests to get out and enjoy the Rochester area. Wednesday evening will feature the "Wednesday Welcome" Happy Hour which gives guests a chance to get to know each other, and get their registration materials early. The conference will then run for two full days, Thursday and Friday, ending at 5:30 pm on Friday. Can't wait to see you there!

For more information visit:

http://www.rahrahrochester.com/events/2009_Lakes_and_Waters_Conference/index.aspx

Upcoming Happy Dancing Turtle Community Education Classes

Rain Barrel DIY

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Hunt Utilities Group Campus, Hwy. 2 West of Pine River, \$30

OR

Tuesday, April 14, 2009

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Longville Elementary Gym, \$3

Backyard Birding for Kids

Thursday, April 9, 2009

3:00 to 4:00 pm

Grades 3-6, Pine River-Backus School Commons, \$5

OR

Tuesday, April 15, 2009

2:50 to 4:00 pm
Grades 3-5, Eagle View Elementary Art Room, \$5

Tree Detectives for Kids

Tuesday, May 12, 2009
3:00 - 4:00 PM
Grades 3-6, Pine River-Backus School Commons, \$5

OR

Thursday, May 14, 2009
2:50 - 4:00 PM,
Grades 3-5, Eagle View Elementary Art Room, \$5

*For Community Education Classes: in Pine River call Barb Mann, 218.587.2080 / in Pequot Lakes call Jodi Williams, 218.568.9200.

HDT Beekeeping Classes

March 17, April 7, April 21, May 5, May 19, 2009
6:00 - 7:30 PM
Hunt Utilities Group Campus, Hwy. 2 West of Pine River, \$5 per class
Contact: Jim Etzel, jime@hugllc.com, or 218.587.5001

New Staff at HDT

We welcome Kara DeVriendt as our new Education & Logistics Assistant. Kara will be helping to teach classes, lead activities, and host our big events. Kara worked formerly as a Humane Educator at the Minnesota Valley Humane Society, as well as a teacher/naturalist at Dodge Nature Pre-School in W. St. Paul.

New HDT Board Members

We're delighted to welcome new HDT board members Chip Borkenhagen and Ruth Gmeinder, who joined us in September. We're excited to add Chip & Ruth's fresh perspective, intelligence, energy, and connections to our broader community as we continue to grow and develop. Many thanks go to outgoing board members Kathy Gaalswyk and Jerry Walseth for their years of service, and help getting HDT up and running.

Back to Basics

We enjoyed our 3rd successful Back to Basics on January 31st. Attendance was up from last year, and everyone seemed to have a great day, filled with learning, networking, and fun. We're already planning for next year's event, and always welcome your input! To those of you who were able to join us, thank you for participating! We hope even more of you can come next year!

As always, we welcome your ideas and comments. If you have questions, or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at 218.587.2303. Be sure to visit our website - www.happydancingturtle.org - to keep current on happenings at HDT.

Funding/Internship Opportunities

Student Interns Available for Community-Based Research Programs

The University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) considers applications for applied research assistance three times a year. Proposals are due by the following dates for assistance

during the time periods indicated:

March 15 (for Summer Semester assistance—early June through August)

June 30 (for Fall Semester assistance—early September to mid-January)

October 30 (for Spring Semester assistance—mid-January through May)

The available programs provide graduate or undergraduate student assistance for applied research projects, program planning and development, program evaluation, and other short-term projects. Student assistantships are generally 10–20 hours per week for three to four months. Please review the application information at <http://www.cura.umn.edu/Programs/ApplicationProcess.php> for more information and online application.

Things to Know

National Award for Smart Growth Achievement 2009 Call for Entries

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for the eighth annual National Award for Smart Growth Achievement. This competition is open to public-sector or private sector applicants that have used the principles of smart growth to create better places. Private-sector applicants are encouraged to submit applications for projects that demonstrate a significant public-private partnership.

Smart growth development serves the economy, the community, and the environment. Smart growth approaches to development create clear environmental benefits, including improved air and water quality, preservation of critical habitat and open space, and more cleanup and re-use of brownfield sites.

This year, applications will be accepted in five categories:

- Built Projects
- Policies and Regulations
- Smart Growth and Green Building
- Smart Growth Streets
- Overall Excellence in Smart Growth

Interested parties are encouraged to submit applications for smart growth activities that have shown significant activity between April 23, 2004, and April 23, 2009. Successful applicants will have incorporated the principles of smart growth to create places that respect community culture and the environment, foster economic development, and enhance quality of life and public health.

This year, the public sector winners will receive support for further implementing smart growth strategies in their communities. In addition, public sector winners will receive one complementary registration to the New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in 2010.

Applications are due on April 23, 2009. Up to five winners will be recognized at a ceremony in Washington, DC in December 2009.

For more details about the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement, including an application packet, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/awards.htm>.

"Smart growth requires having the vision to build great places for us and our children after us." -
- Carlton C. Eley

MPCA Seeks Technical Information and data on proposed changes to state water-quality standards

St. Paul, Minn. -- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is seeking technical information and data submissions on the proposed changes to the state's water quality standards. A second public comment period for the 2011 triennial water quality rules revision process appears in the March 2, 2009 State Register. Information and data must be submitted to the MPCA by 4:00 p.m. on Apr.17, 2009.

The federal Clean Water Act requires states to review their water quality standards every three years and to amend and update them if necessary. Minnesota's water quality standards are the basis for assessing the condition of surface and ground waters, setting effluent limits for wastewater dischargers and designating and protecting the multiple uses assigned to waters of the state.

Minnesota's water quality standards are found in Minn. R. chs. 7050 and 7052. Chapter 7050 applies state-wide. Chapter 7052 provides standards specific to surface waters of the Lake Superior Basin.

The MPCA initiated this triennial review by seeking comments as published in the July 28, 2008 State Register. In that request, the MPCA identified six specific areas for potential amendments and sought comment on these areas and also on whether additional aspects of the rules should be considered for amendment.

After considering the available data and comments received in response to the original request, the MPCA has developed a list of proposed items being considered for amendment. With this second request, the MPCA is specifically seeking technical information and data relating to these items, examples of which include:

- Addition of eutrophication standards for river systems;
- Modification of the existing turbidity standards; and
- Examining data on new or revised standards for pollutants based on toxicity to aquatic organisms.

A complete list of all areas where the MPCA is seeking comments, data and technical information can be found on the agency's Web site at www.pca.state.mn.us/water/standards/rulechange.html.

(All e-mails and written comments will become part of the rulemaking record.)

Brainerd lakes area a hot spot for watercraft inspector interns

By [BRIAN S. PETERSON](#), Outdoors Editor, Brainerd Daily Dispatch

Some summer, the Brainerd lakes area is where it's at for watercraft fun. And watercraft inspector interns.

The DNR is seeking watercraft inspector interns for the upcoming boating season. And of the 75 interns the DNR will hire across the state this year, 17 - about a fourth of all the interns - will be needed for the Brainerd lakes area.

"We have a six-county area that we call Brainerd - Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Aitkin, Mille Lacs and Kanabec. It's a very popular area," said Heidi Wolf, DNR watercraft inspection program coordinator.

The inspectors will be stationed at public accesses on lakes and rivers infested with invasive species such as Eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels.

"There are a lot of water bodies (in the Brainerd lakes area) and Mille Lacs is already infested with zebra mussels," Wolf said

To be eligible, applicants must be high school graduates and enrolled in a natural resources or related program that will give them credit for the internship, according to Wolf. Deadline to apply is March 13.

The full-time, temporary internships start in late April and run through the middle of October, with flexibility for students still in school. Besides credit, internships pay \$7.50 an hour plus bonuses.

"Most people enjoy it," Wolf said of the internships. "There are some who return multiple years. They can use it on their resume. And for the most part, people are happy to see us out there.

"We're looking for enthusiastic young adults interested in doing important environmental conservation work."

Watercraft inspectors inform and educate the public about aquatic invasive species and the threat they pose to Minnesota waters, assist with access posting and conduct invasive species plant removal and other natural resource projects.

Positions also are available in the seven-county metro area; Wright and Chisago counties; Cook County; Hubbard, Itasca, and Beltrami counties; Wabasha and Winona counties; Otter Tail and Becker counties; locations along the Mississippi River; Duluth, Rainy Lake, Lake of the Woods; and the Spicer/Willmar area.

To view a complete job description or apply online, go to www.dnr.state.mn.us/jobs/watercraft/index.html or contact Wolf at (651) 259-5152 or heidi.wolf@dnr.state.mn.us with questions.

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.

If you wish to be removed from this mailing list or if you have other names/e-mails to add please contact Leah Posterick, lposterick@ifound.org.