

Workshops & Conferences

Development and Financing County Energy Initiatives

*Wednesday, September 16, 2009 (Day before AMC fall policy committee meetings)
Cragun's Resort, 11000 Craguns Drive, Brainerd*

Seminar Topic: The topic for the inaugural round of County Energy Innovation Seminars will address the development and financing of county energy initiatives. Whether your county is just beginning to explore energy issues, is planning to conduct an energy audit to assess inefficiencies, or is a county that has already placed an emphasis on energy initiatives, these seminars will provide resources and information to help you develop or refine your county's long-term energy strategy. Current constraints on county budgets necessitate that energy initiatives must be carefully prioritized and creatively financed, and public financial advisors from Ehlers & Associates will team with representatives from the Center for Energy and the Environment (CEE) and AMC to provide county officials and staff with the information that counties need to make these challenging decisions.

Who should attend? County commissioners, administrators, coordinators, and staff that are already involved or want to be involved in the county's energy projects. Attendees will examine how to prioritize, finance, and implement energy efficiency and/or renewable energy projects so that the county can stabilize and ultimately reduce its energy expenditures.

Per person seminar cost: \$25 (includes refreshments and lunch). For more information visit: http://www.mncounties.org/Meetings/energy_innovation/seminar1_fall09.htm or contact Ryan O'Connor, occonnor@mncounties.org or 651-789-4339.

The Association of Minnesota Counties will periodically facilitate a series of identical half-day seminars throughout the state to equip county officials and staff with the necessary information and skills to transform innovative energy ideas into implementable, programmatic actions.

Growing the Resources, the Land, the Economy, and the Community – For the Good of Us All

*Thursday, September 17, 2009
3:00-5:00 p.m.*

MN Pollution Control Agency, 7678 College Road, Suite 105, Baxter/Brainerd. Free. All are invited.

This workshop is presented by the BAELN 2009-2010 Season *Greening the Economy*. Start the BAELN season off right by learning about environmental and economical responsibility through the business and community efforts of Snowy Pines Restoration. Greg Nolan and Marcia Rapatz's efforts range from providing their own energy to planting over 4 million trees to processing valuable wood products to growing organic crops to offering workshops for interested communities.

After living off the grid for over two decades, Greg and his family are working to manage their family forestry business off greener energies also. They power their warm room kiln and milling operation with a 3.5 kilowatt solar electric array (28 solar electric panels on 3 trackers) that is tied to the electrical grid. They have 3 hot water solar panels (soon to be 8) to provide heat to the warm room kiln and a wood boiler burning slab waste wood from the milling operation provides back up.

Their long range goal is to create an atmospheric carbon mining operation through the careful harvesting of well managed forests in favor of long lived high value species, the planting of native trees on retired ag lands using agro-forestry principals such as windbreaks and riparian plantings when feasible and the processing of wood products via a solar powered milling operation into long lived high value wood products that create high paying jobs for their family and friends. They would like to set an example for innovative young people in their economically depressed rural area.

As Greg puts it, "A portion of my knowledge comes from workshops and reading, but most of what I know I learned by doing and from conversation with people on the land. I seek wisdom in the folklore offered by those around me that share my passion for trees and forests."

Hope you can join us for this inspiring, informative afternoon.

If you have questions concerning this presentation, please contact Jim Chamberlin at 218-828-6197 or harvey.chamberlin@mn.nacdnet.net.

The Brainerd Area Environmental Learning Network (BAELN), now in its seventh season, offers people in the environmental field and the community timely information on environmental and sustainability issues, along with the chance to network with others. This season's theme **Greening the Economy** gives us insight into the jobs, skills and opportunities that the "green jobs" direction offers. BAELN events are held most third Thursdays of the month from 3:00-5:00 p.m. and include an hour-long presentation with time for questions, networking and refreshments. 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.

If you would like to be on the BAELN email list or for general information on BAELN, please contact Stephen Mikkelson at (218) 316-3887, or toll free at 1-800-657-3864.

Upcoming events:

- **October 8: Green Business is Good Business Tour** - Utilizing green business practices for conserving and improving your resources and your bottom line
- **November 19: Legislative Panel on Green Jobs**

Minnesota's Lake Improvement Districts

September 24, 2009

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ideal Township Hall, Ideal Corners

The number of functioning Lake Improvement Districts (LIDs) in Minnesota is small compared to the number of lake associations. This workshop will feature the research of Kaitlin Steiger-Meister,

University of Minnesota Natural Resource Science & Management, Ph.D. Candidate, examining the various LID activities and accomplishments throughout the state and their potential to help achieve water quality goals. In addition to building a portrait of LID activities in the state, this presentation will illuminate the benefits and challenges citizens have encountered in the process of creating a LID and implementing management plans.

In August, the Crow Wing County Board voted (3-2) against the proposed Serpent Lake LID. The Serpent Lake Association LID organizers worked with the County Board for almost a year to organize their proposal and the LID petition included support from 62% of surveyed property owners. Later in August, the same County Board voted to approve Round Lake LID's request for their 5-year extension. All existing Crow Wing County LIDs, as well as those associations considering pursuing LID status, could be impacted by these decisions.

The workshop will include speakers from some of Crow Wing County's existing LIDs to discuss strategies for organizing a LID petition, gaining community support, working with the local government unit and effectively managing a LID. The on-the-ground experience of these citizen leaders will provide helpful strategies for organizing community members and establishing a sustainable infrastructure.

Following all presentations, there will be time for Q&A with all of the speakers. People interested in forming a LID or in sharing their experiences with LIDs are encouraged to attend. For more information and to RSVP (by September 21) please contact Molly Zins, Minnesota Waters, at mollyz@minnesotawaters.org. (*Space is limited!!*)

This workshop is co-sponsored by the Crow Wing Lakes and Rivers Alliance, Minnesota Waters, the Pine River Watershed Alliance and the Whitefish Area Property Owners Association

Wind Energy Forum

*September 24, 2009
Rice City Hall, Rice*

Responding to an increasing number of wind development proposals to area landowners, the Initiative Foundation, Southwest Initiative Foundation and Benton County Economic Development will offer a Wind Development Forum on September 24.

The interactive forum is designed to help landowners carefully consider their options for land leases, self development, and other investments in large-scale wind turbine projects. Topics will include:

- Risks and rewards
- Considerations for land leases and agreements
- Best practices for wind energy development

Presenters include leaders from Windustry, Geronimo Wind Energy, Project Resources Corporation, WindLogics, and Pinnacle Engineering.

The free event is scheduled from 5 to 8 p.m., Thursday, September 24 at the Rice City Hall, 205 Main St. No advance registration is required, and a light meal will be provided.

The Initiative Foundation and Southwest Initiative Foundation have hosted several wind forums as part of the [Rural Energy Development Initiative](#), a statewide rural wind energy program sponsored by the State of Minnesota and the Center for Rural Policy and Development.

To learn more, contact Don Hickman: dhickman@ifound.org, (507) 455-3215 or Nancy Hoffman: nhoffman@co.benton.mn.us, (320) 968-5071. For more information, download the [flyer](#) and/or [agenda](#).

Land Conservation and Clean Water Summit

Thursday, September 24 – 25, 2009

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chaska

9/24/09 - Maximizing New Opportunities: Building Capacity and Forging New Partnerships for Land Conservation

9/25/09 - [Green Infrastructure for Clean Water: Tools for Planning, Design, and Maintenance](#)

Summit Objective

The goal of the Land Conservation & Clean Water Summit 2009 is to help communities and natural resource professionals better manage our land and water resources and maximize new funding and technical opportunities.

Fee - Early Registration

\$50/day Members of the Arboretum and participating organizations

\$60/day Non-members

<http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/landconservationcleanwater.aspx>

Presented by the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in collaboration with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and the Minnesota Land Trust

Upcoming Events at the Audubon Center of the North Woods in Sandstone

Renewable Trail Run/Walk

September 26, 2009

Race starts at 9 a.m., awards ceremony is at 10:30 a.m.

Enjoy the beautiful fall foliage in a gorgeous lakeside refuge. 5K run is over trails on the 535-acre Audubon Center property - 10 K run is part trail and part around Grindstone Lake. All proceeds go towards the development and improvement of energy education curriculum at the Audubon Center of the North Woods. Registered racers receive long-sleeve t-shirt, goodie bag, post-race refreshments. Free camping is available the night before and day of the race – inside lodging is also available; reservations required. For more information and to register visit www.audubon-center.org/trailrun.htm or call 888-404-7743.

All Open House

September 26, 2009 – 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Enjoy a free, activity-filled day of family fun while enjoying the beautiful fall colors on the shores of Grindstone Lake near Sandstone, MN! Wildlife programs, apple cider pressing, climbing wall, zip line, face painting, art & craft fair, scavenger hunt, and much more. Lunch is available for purchase.

Women's Wellness & Adventure Weekend

October 2-4, 2009

All-inclusive, complete holistic retreat - comfy lodging, wonderful food, and a variety of classes and activities to choose from, such as:

- Adventure & Challenge (examples include high ropes course, low ropes course, canoeing, climbing wall)
- Wellness & Nature (examples include yoga, massage, reiki, meditation, guided hikes, bird banding, Nordic walking), and
- Creative Expressions (examples include art classes, crafts classes, gardening courses, nature journaling, etc.).

Lodging, meals, all programming and 10 minutes of massage or reiki are included in the cost of the weekend (additional massage or reiki are available for a reasonable fee).

For more info, contact Laurie Fenner, Marketing & Groups/Conference Coordinator, Audubon Center of the North Woods, PO Box 530, Sandstone, MN 55072, 320-245-2648, website: www.audubon-center.org or email: fenner@audubon-center.org.

Cultural Heritage Tourism Workshops

October 1 – November 9, 2009
Various Locations

Research shows that cultural heritage travelers make up a significant number of the travelers to Minnesota, and historically, this segment of the travel market has been on the rise. We also know that throughout Minnesota, there is a great deal to offer these travelers. Workshops are being planned this fall to bring together the many types of organizations that make up "Cultural Heritage Tourism" and help capitalize on this growing market. Included in the workshops will be presentations of partnership success stories already working in other communities.

- North Shore - Thursday, October 1, 2009, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- Metro - Monday, October 5, 2009, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- New Ulm - Wednesday, October 14, 2009, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- Central - Monday, November 9, 2009, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

For details visit <http://industry.exploreminnesota.com>.

Funding Opportunities

Lessard – Sams Conservation Partners Legacy Grants (Deadline 11/3/09)
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/habitat/lessard-sams.html>

The Request for Proposal (RFP) and Program Manual for FY 2010 Lessard-Sams Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) are posted below. Additional documents and information about the CPL grant program can be found in the Links section, below.

Applications will be accepted year-round; however applications must be received by November 3, 2009 to be considered for the first round of funding. The first round of grants will be selected by December 15, 2009. Grantees will have until June 30, 2012, to complete their work.

Additional information will be posted as it is developed. Sign up to receive [email updates](#) about this program!

Eligible Projects: Restoration and Enhancement projects will consist of activities that restore or enhance habitat for fish, game, or wildlife on lands permanently protected by conservation easement or public ownership.

Protection projects maintain the ability of habitat and related natural systems to sustain fish, game or wildlife through acquisition of fee title or conservation easements. Land acquired in fee must be open to public hunting and fishing during open seasons. Land protection also includes preserving ecological systems and preventing future degradation of those systems.

Level of Assistance: Up to 90% of total eligible costs. A 10% non-state cash or in-kind match is required from all grantees, and must be identified at the time of application.

- A 10% match of nonstate funds is required for each grant.
 - These matching funds can be in the form of documented cash, volunteer labor, and in-kind contributions of materials, equipment, and services.
 - Matching funds must be identified when the grant application is submitted.

General Information:

- A total of \$4,000,000 was appropriated for this program. There is \$3,740,000 available to organizations for grant projects, and \$260,000 is available to DNR for administering the program.
- The maximum grant available is \$400,000.
- For the first round of grants, \$1,870,000 is available to fund grant applications requesting up to \$125,000. The remaining \$1,870,000 is for grant applications requesting \$125,001 to \$400,000. Up to \$500,000 of this will be available for grants between \$5,000 and \$10,000.
- Payment for all or part of the grant may be made to the grantee after work has been performed or materials purchased, but before vendors are paid by the grantee. Proof that the work has been completed or a purchase made must be provided in order to receive payment.
- Organizations that want to work on *public lands* must discuss their project with the appropriate public land manager and receive that land manager's approval prior to submitting an application.
- Organizations who want to work on *private lands under permanent conservation easement* must have their project approved by the landowner and easement holder.
- Protection projects must also be reviewed by a public land manager.
- Proof of the public land manager's review or approval must be submitted with the grant application.
- The Commissioner of Natural Resources must approve all funded projects.

How to Apply: Applications will be accepted via an online, electronic system starting in mid-September, 2009.

Information for Grant Applicants: Many of the requirements for this grant program are based on recommendations by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) to and approved by the 2009 Minnesota Legislature. These requirements were incorporated into the DNR's Conservation Partners Grant Program Accomplishment Plan as approved by the LSOHC.

For more information contact: Leslie Tannahill, Conservation Grant Program Manager, Box 20, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4020. Phone: 651-259-5242 (St. Paul) or 507-206-2861 (Rochester). Email: LSCPLGrants.DNR@state.mn.us

Student Research Assistance (Deadline: 10/30/09)

The Community Assistantship Program is pleased to announce a spring 2010 grant program. The grant will allow rural communities to hire a student to work on a project defined by those communities. The deadline for project proposals is October 30th, 2009. Approved projects will run from January 14th, 2010 to May 30th, 2010.

Winning communities will review job applications and select the student who best meets their needs. For details on how to apply see the attachment or apply on line: <http://www.cura.umn.edu/Programs/ApplicationProcess.php>

Eligible organizations include community groups, organizations, and local governments outside the seven county metro.

What is CAP?

The Community Assistantship Program (CAP) provides applied research assistance to community-based groups outside the Twin Cities Metro Area. The research and technical needs of community organizations are matched with the support of talented students. The idea is simple: get the resources of a great University working with communities to address the significant issues facing the people of Minnesota. CAP projects typically place students in a community defined and directed part time research assistantship for one semester or over the summer. Students are selected by and report to the community organization. Throughout the project students are supported by a community supervisor, faculty and community mentors.

Grants for Environmentally Friendly Projects (Deadline: 12/31/09)

[Nickelodeon's Big Green Grants Program](#)

Nickelodeon's Big Green Grants Program provides support to schools and community-based organizations throughout the U.S. for environmentally friendly projects. Green Grants of \$2,500 and \$5,000 encourage projects that inspire kids to take care of the environment, be active and live healthier, and engage in community service. Applicants must participate in [Worldwide Day of Play](#) (September 26, 2009) or host a [Big Green Help](#) environmental project. Public and private elementary and middle schools as well as nonprofit community-based after-school organizations are eligible to apply. Applications from urban and rural/suburban areas as well as small and large community-based organizations serving all ethnicities are encouraged to apply. Requests must be submitted by December 31, 2009. Visit the program's website for application guidelines and forms.

Things to Know

Happy Dancing Turtle Fall Class Offerings

Fall Bird Feeder for Kids

Tues. 9/15 - Pine River

Wed. 9/16 - Pequot Lakes

*Preserve Your Bounty: Food
Preservation for Today's Families*
Tues. 9/22 - Pine River
Thurs. 10/1 - Longville

Papermaking
Tues. 10/6 - Pine River
Wed. 10/7 - Pequot Lakes
Thurs. 11/5 - Longville

Rain Barrel DIY
Tues. 10/13 - Pine River

Worm Wrassling 101
Thurs. 10/15 - Longville

For more information visit <http://www.happydancingturtle.org> or contact Barb Hines at 218-587-2303, barbhines@happydancingturtle.org.

Happy Dancing Turtle's mission is to promote awareness and understanding of sustainable living by fostering ecological stewardship and related economic development. Projects to further these purposes include, but are not limited to the support of education, demonstrations, literary works, training, workshops, research, and business incubation.

Resource Available for Private Vacation Home Rentals

The rental of privately-owned vacation homes is common throughout the world and is a growing practice in Minnesota. Vacation home rentals are offered through companies that specialize in this business, or directly by the home owners. The number of vacation homes offered for rent in Minnesota is unknown, but hundreds of Minnesota homes are promoted on various vacation home rental Web sites. There are more than 100,000 seasonal, recreational or occasional use homes in Minnesota.

Vacation home owners now have a valuable resource as they sort through the rules and regulations that affect their properties. Explore Minnesota Tourism (EMT) has created a [website](#) with information from regulatory and enforcement agencies across the state.

The vacation home rental [website](#) is the result of a task force headed by EMT. During the 2008 legislative session, EMT was asked to study vacation home rental lodging in Minnesota, and propose how the state should handle these properties. This task force submitted a report to the legislature this year.

For more information visit <http://industry.exploreminnesota.com/side1/vacationhome/> or contact Colleen Tollefson, Explore Minnesota Tourism, 651-757-1872.

Apply Now for the Governor's Award for Pollution Prevention

The State of Minnesota is seeking nominations/applications for the 2009-2010 Governor's Awards Program. Application are being accepted for projects that reduce waste and pollution at the source, conserve natural resources, protect groundwater, save energy, and practice sustainability.

The Governor's Awards for Pollution Prevention has three categories that hone businesses/nonprofits, government, and partnerships for superior environmental achievement.

For more information including online applications, examples of past winners and assistance, go to www.pca.state.mn.us/oea/p2/govaward.cfm or call (800) 657-3864 or e-mail govawards.pca@state.mn.us.

Working on Sustainable Agriculture or Community Gardens?

Here are some interesting grant opportunities that you list might want to check out. <http://www.pasafarming.org/resources/grants>.

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 Jolene Howard, jhoward@ifound.org.