

This is the seventy-first edition of what is a “twice-monthly or so” News You Can Use newsletter for participants in one of the Initiative Foundation’s Planning and Preservation programs. This newsletter is sent to everyone that has provided an e-mail at one of our Conservation-based training events. If you wish to be removed or if you have other names/e-mails to add please contact Don Hickman (dhickman@ifound.org) or Leah Posterick (lposterick@ifound.org). The goal of this publication is to share funding opportunities, new resources, and pending hearing or training events of common interest.

Please note that this newsletter is also now regularly posted on our website (www.ifound.org) on the Natural Resources page, under "news and notes."

News You Can Use for Conservation, Issue #71

December 11, 2006

Campaign for Conservation –

A 50-Year Plan to Preserve Minnesota's Natural Resources

Thursday, December 14, 2006, from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m., speaker from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. with refreshments and networking to follow. Held at the MN Pollution Control Agency, 7678 College Road, Suite 105, Baxter/Brainerd. **Free. All are invited.**

Speaker: John Curry, www.campaignforconservation.org

Despite the fact that the Great Outdoors is vital to Minnesota's high quality of life and economic well being, state conservation budgets have slipped alarmingly in recent years. The share of the state budget that goes to conservation is at the lowest level in three decades. By 2007, only 1.1% of the state general fund will go to the four agencies that monitor and manage our outdoors -- a drop of more than one-third in just five years. On top of this lack of adequate funding for conservation, Minnesota is the fastest growing state in the Midwest and over the next 25 years will add another 1.2 million citizens.

How will this growth and development impact our Great Outdoors? The way in which we respond to those challenges will define the quality of life for future generations of Minnesotans. The state must embrace a vision of conservation for the future. The vision, a 50-year plan with adequate funding to make it happen, is at the core of the Campaign for Conservation. Here’s your chance to see and hear the plan that will allow state and local leaders along with citizens to preserve what matters most even as our population booms.

John Curry began his current role as Campaign Coordinator for the MN Campaign for Conservation in the summer of 2005. He previously lobbied for the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy and the Hennepin County Attorney's Office. From 1988 to 1996 he served as staff in the Minnesota House of Representatives with primary responsibilities as Committee Administrator for the Committees on Economic Development and on Judiciary Finance. He has a B.A. from St. John's University and M.A. from Hamline University. John lives in St. Paul with his wife Sue, daughter Maura (9 years old) and dog Fida.

You may direct your questions concerning this presentation to Philip Hunsicker at (218) 824-5095.

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 is *Healthy Communities: What you can do*. As we learn what is happening in our communities, what can we do to make a difference?

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 the U of MN Extension Service.

For more information on BAELN, please contact Stephen Mikkelson at (218) 855-5001, or toll free at 1-800-657-3864.

Serving in Public Office

The Initiative Foundation is holding a special "**Serving in Public Office**" workshop on **Friday, January 5th** here at the Initiative Foundation in Little Falls. This workshop will help all kinds of elected officials do a better job of representing the people who have elected them to office. This workshop is for City Council Members, Mayors, Township Supervisors, County Commissioners, School Board Members and those elected to State Office. Please pass this information on to all of these folks in your community and encourage them to attend.

The focus of this workshop will be as follows;

- **Straight Talk about Finances** (John Gunyou, former State Director of Finance, Current City Manager, Minnetonka)
- **Speak your Peace, Managing Disagreements through Civil Discourse** (Brenda Sproat, Duluth-Superior Area Foundation)
- **Working with the Public, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly** (Tim Houle, County Administrator, Morrison County)
- **Effective Listening , Communication and Conflict Management Techniques** (Initiative Foundation Staff)

For more information visit our website at www.ifound.org, contact Leah Posterick at lposterick@ifound.org or call toll free at 877-632-9255 for registration or more information.

Grant Writing Workshop

A valuable opportunity to hear professional writers and reviewers present techniques for researching funders and creating effective grant proposals. This is a half-day session, **Tuesday, January 9, 2007** from 8:30 a.m. until noon.

Workshop topics include: types of funding; funders and funding research; developing the grant proposal; goals, objectives and evaluation; the budget; sustainability, and submitting the proposal.

The cost for registering is \$40 which includes refreshments and program materials. Confirmation will be sent by e-mail; checks will be returned if the workshop is sold-out. Cancellation requests must be made at least three business days prior to the workshop to ensure a refund. For further information contact Jolene Howard, jhoward@ifound.org, or (877) 632-9255.

Third “semi-annual” Parks & Trails Networking Seminar

Tuesday, January 30th, 1-4:30 p.m., Initiative Foundation conference room

Please join us to gain the wisdom and experience of four speakers, as well as for the opportunity to compare notes with as many as forty other communities in Central Minnesota working on developing parks or trail networks.

This year’s speakers include:

* **Jill Chamberlain of BlueCross Blue Shield/Prevention Minnesota**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota created Prevention Minnesota to utilize a comprehensive strategy to increase Minnesotan's physical activity through awareness, social support and access, and connecting with planning and policy through community partners.

* **Chuck Wooten, Director, Stearns County Parks Department**

Stearns County has been uncommonly successful at developing both passive and active recreational opportunities over the past decade, at the very time when several other counties efforts have lost momentum between the “planning” and “implementation” phases.

* **Chris Etzler, Transportation Coordinator, Region Five Development Commission and Jim Povich , MN/DOT--District 3 (Central MN), Assistant District Engineer, Planning, Programming, and Project Development**

Mr. Povich will talk about local implementation of the recently passed reauthorization of the nation’s surface transportation program, “The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, efficient,

Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU). SEGETEA-LU, contains significant new funding for many park and recreational related programs. One program in particular, the Safe Routes to School Program (SR2S), may offer exceptional potential for park and recreation agencies nationwide. Mr. Etzler will provide suggestions on how local communities can prepare strong applications to gain support from this program.

This event requires pre-registration and costs \$10 per participant to cover refreshments and program materials, including copies of requests for proposals (RFPs), a directory of participants, and a summary of program notes that will be distributed after the event. Please send check and full contact information for each registrant to Leah Posterick, The Initiative Foundation, 405 First Street SE, Little Falls, MN 56345. The deadline for registration is Friday, January 26, 2007

Is there a Water and/or Wastewater System in Your Future?

You are invited to take part in information training sessions designed to help your community prepare for upcoming or recently completed water and/or wastewater projects. Presented by the Minnesota Rural Water Association in collaboration with the University of Minnesota Extension Service and USDA Rural Development.

These training sessions feature two three-hour sessions offered on consecutive days, and include: “Technological Options You May Consider,” “How to Hire a Design Consultant or Engineer,” “Sources of Funding and Technical Assistance,” and “Budgeting and Setting Rates.” The only sessions scheduled within central Minnesota will be in Mora on January 9, 6-9 p.m., and January 10, 9 a.m.-noon. For the complete schedule or to register for this or other training opportunities visit www.mrwa.com or call (800) 367-6792.

After completing appropriate training, some rural low-income communities may qualify for small grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development which are administered by the Initiative Foundation. To learn more about this opportunity contact Don Hickman at dhickman@ifound.org or (320) 631-2043.

A second opportunity for training will be the “**Innovative Approaches to Wastewater Operational Problems**” conference, Tuesday, February 20, 2007 at the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud. Hosted by the Central States Water Environment Association and the Minnesota Wastewater Operators Association in collaboration with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, this event is intended to provide cost-effective ideas for improving performance and reducing operating costs. Watch this space for further details and registration information!

Helping Minnesota’s Communities Determine Their Energy Future

Local Energy/Local Opportunities Conference, January 16-17, St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Come and learn about successful projects and get connected to the ideas, resources, and expertise you need to bring clean energy to your community. Early registration price now through Dec. 15th.

\$31.50 Early Conference Registration--includes \$1.50 carbon offset through Native Energy. (Registration rate will increase to \$41.50 after December 15th.) For more information visit: <http://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/conference-home.html>

Audubon Center of the North Woods: Dinners at the Lake

Located just 90 miles from Duluth, Twin Cities and St. Cloud at 54165 Audubon Dr. Sandstone, MN 55072

January 20 - "Ending the Oil Addiction-Your Next Car Could Run on Wind Power, and Grassoline" Michael Noble, Director of Fresh Energy.

February 17 - "A Summer with the Peregrines", Julie O'Connor

March 17 - "The Wildcat Sanctuary"

April 14- "Wolves in our Midst" Peggy Callahan

May 13 - Mother's Day Brunch-Musicians [Douglas Wood](#) and [Bryan Wood](#)

Reservations Required; Dinner Begins at 6:30 (appetizers at 6:00); Presentations follow. *Call ahead and reserve a spot for your family:* Cost: \$18.00 for adults; children under 12 - \$10.00. Toll free: (888) 404.7743 or (320) 245.2648, email: audubon1@audubon-center.org

10th Annual Minnesota Rural Summit, "THRIVING BY DESIGN!"

May 10 & 11, 2007, Cragun's Resort – Brainerd, MN

Come for a great conference and stay for the fishing opener!

REGISTER TODAY and SAVE, "Holiday Season -Year End Special"

Register before January 1, 2007 and receive the special rate of \$175 per person.

Register online: <http://www.regonline.com/Checkin.asp?EventId=109597>

Join Minnesota's community leaders from around the state to learn how design has figured into our past, present, and future: how in the emerging design economy, design principles can be used to integrate complex economic, demographic, physical and social

issues into clear strategies that position communities, regions and our state to thrive well into the 21st century.

As Minnesota begins preparation for its 150th anniversary of statehood (May 11, 2008), we'll get a head start with the Summit, which will seek answers to this question:

After 150 years of statehood, if you could start over from scratch, knowing what we know now and the tools we have, combined with the ingenuity of our people, and facing the global pressures around us, how would you "design" Minnesota today to be economically and environmentally sustainable, to carry on with our high quality of life well in the 21st century?

Detailed Summit Agenda

http://www.minnesotaruralpartners.org/2007_summit/agenda.htm

And if you are feeling generous at year-end, please support the ongoing work of Minnesota Rural Partners with a donation:

<http://www.minnesotaruralpartners.org/donations.htm>.

For more information on the Summit, and on the other work of MRP, go to www.minnesotaruralpartners.org or call 651-645-9403.