

*This is the ninetieth 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](mailto:dhickman@ifound.org)) or Leah Posterick ([lposterick@ifound.org](mailto:lposterick@ifound.org)). The goal of this publication is to share funding opportunities, new resources, and pending hearing or training events of common interest.*



**INITIATIVE  
FOUNDATION**

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**News You Can Use for Conservation, Issue #90**

**October 2, 2008**

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**Public Policy/Advocacy Workshop  
November 20, 2008 - 9:30-12:00 at the Initiative Foundation**

Training will be conducted by Marcia Avenner, public policy director at MN Council of Nonprofits and R4K Exec Director and former state representative, Todd Otis. Participants will learn about process that state funding undergoes including funding targets, committee assignments, governors budgeting process and passing legislation. Will include legal issues on advocacy and lobbying, and good chunk of time dedicated to the most effective ways to communicate with state policy makers/elected officials and affect desired legislation.

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**Safe Routes to Schools**

Safe Routes to School is a new program in the federal transportation bill, SAFETEA –LU, designed to improve the conditions and quality of bicycling and walking to school. The goal of the program is to reverse the 30 year decline in the numbers of children walking to school and reintroduce opportunities for regular physical activity.

At present fewer than 15% of children K-8 walk or bike to school and nearly 50% of school aged children are regularly driven to school by their parents. Coinciding with the declining numbers of children walking and biking to school is an increase in childhood obesity and Type II diabetes. Using a multidisciplinary approach Safe Routes programs works with schools, students, and parents, at a grass roots level, to identify improvements that will make biking and walking to and from school a routine part of Minnesota’s students’ experience.

You can find more information about the SRTS grant application process at Mn/DOT’s SRTS web site:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/index.html>

Below is the Safe Routes to School 2008 workshop schedule. If you are interested in applying for a SRTS grant it is advisable to attend one of the following workshops. Please RSVP to [Kristie Billiar](#) with the subject line **SRTS Workshop** to attend. Include your name and indicate which workshop you would like to attend. Please note that if the workshop does not have at least 7 participants two days before the workshop, it will be cancelled.

Workshops will be held from 10:00-2:00 and lunch is included.

**October 3: St. Cloud**

Mn/DOT District 3 Training Center  
Louis North room  
3725 12th Street North  
St. Cloud, Mn 56303

**October 8: St. Paul**

Hiway Federal Credit Union Administration Building  
Hiway Community Room  
840 Westminister St.  
St. Paul, MN 55130

**October 14: Crookston**

1320 Sunflower St.  
Crookston, MN 56716

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**Eat Local: A Community Minnesota-Grown Food Fest**

Eating locally-grown food is becoming increasingly important. Fuel consumption and shipping costs, food-borne diseases and supporting local growers are just a few reasons to eat food produced close to where we live. With these things in mind, a community "Eat Local, a Minnesota-grown Food Fest," will be held Tuesday, October 7, at 6 p.m. at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Nisswa. As much as possible, all foods will be made from locally grown products.

In addition to a tasty meal there will be environmental displays and a special presentation by Jim Urinak, a wildlife ecologist, restorationist, lay minister and forestry consultant, entitled "Tending and Keeping: Stewarding our Lakes' Natural Resources."

There will be no charge for this event, but a freewill offering will be taken. Several local churches are cooperating in promoting this event with care for creation as a guiding principal.

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**Crosslake Chautauqua focuses on green building**

CROSSLAKE - "Building Tomorrow's House Today" is the topic of a Crosslake Chautauqua planned 1:30-3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 8 at the Crosslake Community Center.

Steve Northway, chief executive officer of Northway Construction and past CEO of Building Knowledge Inc., is a recognized expert on energy-efficient housing and on green construction. He will share his knowledge of how to build high performance houses that are long lasting and environmentally friendly.

Admission is free.

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### **Association of Cass County Lakes Meeting**

10:30 A.M., Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, Hackensack Senior Center

We are pleased to have a two-part program that will address two very current and relevant topics that will potentially impact all shoreland property owners.

- Kristin Thompson, a lead DNR biologist and John Sumption, ESD, will give an update and answer questions on the Cass County/DNR Sensitive Lakeshore Project;
- Paul Radomski, DNR Research Scientist, will give a presentation on the Shoreland Development Rules Project. Paul is the DNR's lead person on this extensive statewide rules update project.

At the completion of the meeting the ladies of the Senior Center will serve us a great lunch. This being our last meeting for 2008 we would certainly hope that you will plan to attend. We really encourage, not only representatives from our member associations, but all our partners and stakeholders who received this announcement and who share in the awesome responsibility of preserving and protecting our great treasures - our lakes.

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### **JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District**

**Title:** Mississippi River Coordinator  
**Location:** Waite Park, MN  
**Duration:** Two year grant funded position  
**Salary:** Anticipated starting salary range \$38,000 to \$48,000/year (commensurate with qualifications and experience), plus benefits.

**Position Description:** A central Minnesota consortium of resource agencies, non-profit groups and consultants has an immediate opening for a community vision-builder. This employee would be responsible to collecting input, and building support, for a shared vision of responsible land use along the Mississippi River in central Minnesota. This unique and exciting opportunity requires an outgoing, results-driven employee to bring together members of the river community

in a different, collaborative way. The ideal employee will possess a relevant four-year degree, proven skills in community organizing and relationship building, strong self-management skills, and a passion for protecting natural resources.

For further details, please see the position description at <http://www.stearnscountyswcd.net/>

**Application Procedures:** Applicants need to send in the **four** following items:

- A completed Stearns County SWCD Application for Employment form (contact Stearns SWCD at 320-251-7800 ext. 3 or the website at <http://www.stearnscountyswcd.net/> for a copy of form)
- resume
- letter of introduction
- writing sample

To: District Administrator, Stearns County Soil and Water Conservation District, 110

Second Street South, Suite 128, Waite Park MN 56387.

**Closing Date: Friday, October 10, 2008**

Interview Date: Thursday, October 30, 2008 (Successful candidates will be notified)

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### **Family forest certification class to be offered in Brainerd**

A class on family forest certification will be offered in Brainerd from 8:30 a.m. to noon Oct. 18 at the Brainerd Pubic Library, 416 S. Fifth St., Brainerd.

Minnesota has more certified forestland than any other state in the nation. Forest certification is a way to sustainably manage a forest, using a system of practices that is independently verified by a credible third-party organization.

This class offers continuing education credits for Woodland Advisors. The cost of attending this class is \$20.

Woodland Advisor is a program of the Minnesota Forestry Association, the University of Minnesota Extension and the Minnesota DNR Division of Forestry. Partial funding support is provided by the Forest Stewardship Program.

For more information on this workshop, contact Diomy Zamora at 828-2332 or [zamor015@umn.edu](mailto:zamor015@umn.edu) or visit <http://cfc.cfans.umn.edu/wa/>.

To register for the class, contact Sue Crotty at (888) 241-0720 or [crott012@umn.edu](mailto:crott012@umn.edu). Pre-registration is required.

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### **Growing Green for Growing Cities**

St. John's Arboretum, October 20-21

Learn how city growth can include low-impact development, conservation-design and preserved green space:

- How can your city achieve growth that is both economically and environmentally sustainable?
- What must comprehensive plans and ordinances include to achieve economic viability and effective land conservation?
- How can cities promote, plan for, and implement green infrastructure?
- What emerging conservation or development issues do you want the experts to discuss?

Featuring Kris Larson (Minnesota Land Trust), Jean Coleman and Brian Ross (CR Planning), and Jay Michels (Emmons & Olivier). Registration is \$15/person (includes lunch) on Monday, October 20 if postmarked by Oct. 11<sup>th</sup>; otherwise \$20. For more information visit [www.csbsju.edu/arboretum](http://www.csbsju.edu/arboretum) or call (320) 363-3163.

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**Minnesota Invasive Species Conference 2008:**  
*Acting Locally to Protect Our Legendary Lands and Waters*  
**October 26-28, 2008 in Duluth**

The first annual statewide conference on invasive species will be held for the purpose of exchanging information on aquatic and terrestrial invasive species topics. The focus is to strengthen awareness of invasive species issues at the local level, as well as act locally on prevention and management activities. Expected audiences include researchers, land managers, natural resource professionals, university personnel, landscapers, nursery, agricultural or forestry employees, environmental specialists, lake association members, and agency and non-governmental organizations.

The Minnesota Invasive Species Council ([www.mda.state.mn.us/misac](http://www.mda.state.mn.us/misac)) who is hosting the conference, along with the conference co-chairs, Minnesota Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and University of Minnesota Sea Grant Program, are announcing a CALL FOR ABSTRACTS for this Minnesota-focused invasive species conference. Those wishing to make an oral presentation or display a poster must e-mail the title and abstract to [robert.koch@state.mn.us](mailto:robert.koch@state.mn.us).

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**Student interns available through University of Minnesota/MnSCU system**

The Community Assistantship Program is pleased to announce a spring 2009 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 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008.**

Approved projects will run from January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 to May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

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 (preferred): <http://www.cura.umn.edu/Programs/ApplicationProcess.php>

Eligible organizations include community groups, organizations, and local governments outside the seven county metro-area. Many different types of projects can be funded, but current priority is projects related to economic development.

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.

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

### ***The Sixth Annual Lake-Friendly Development Awards***

**Thursday, October 16, 2008 from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.** This event will be held at the MN Pollution Control Agency located at 7678 College Road in Baxter. The event is free. Refreshments will be provided. All are invited to come celebrate those who are ahead of the curve when it comes to lakeshore and riverfront development.

For the sixth year in a row, homeowners, contractors and local units of government will be recognized, patted on the back, and awarded with prizes for choosing to develop or redevelop their lakeshore or riverfront properties in eco-friendly ways. In addition to handing out awards for lakescaping, lake-friendly home construction, lake stewardship, and lake-friendly protection strategies, John Hiebert, who is the coordinator of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Shoreland Habitat Program, will talk about how the DNR can assist you if you are inspired to follow the examples of our winners.

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

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

### **Upcoming events:**

#### **November 20: A Sustainable Planet: Dematerializing the World**

Co-founder and editor of WorldChanging.com, Alex Steffen offers challenges, ideas, products and services to help dematerialize the world. His presentation comes to us through a video pod cast with discussion to follow.

#### **December 18: Birding 101**

Birding 101 is perfect for those of you who want to know more about birds. From identifying to biorhythms to habitat selection to feeding, there's always something new to discover.

#### **January 15: Wildlife and Climate Change**

As the climate changes, so do our animal numbers. Find out what's happening here in Minnesota and elsewhere to our valuable wildlife populations.

#### **February 19: Balancing Development and Conservation: Baxter's Conservation Overlay District**

A conservation overlay district looks at development alternatives in environmentally sensitive areas. Hear city officials and citizens share how this new concept is being applied right here in Baxter.

#### **March 19: Socially Responsible Investing**

Socially responsible investing describes an investment strategy which seeks to maximize both financial return and social good. Come learn if this strategy is for you and your community.

#### **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.

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**What's Happening These Days at Happy Dancing Turtle?**

**Farmers' Markets** - Remember...area farmers' markets are open throughout the early Fall...be sure to keep enjoying fresh produce as long as you can! Saturdays @ Pequot Lakes 10am-6pm, Tuesdays @ Hackensack 9am-Noon, Thursdays @ Nisswa 9am-1pm, Tuesdays @ Brainerd 9am-1pm, Fridays @ Baxter 9am-1pm.

**Rain Barrels** - Cass County Environmental Services has rain barrels available for sale for \$56 plus tax. You can see pictures, and get more information on our website: [www.happydancingturtle.org](http://www.happydancingturtle.org). The HUG Campus is a pick-up location for the barrels.

**HDT Happenings Calendars** - The NEW 2008-2009 Happenings Calendars will be available in September. They will again be distributed to all students in the Pine River-Backus schools. If you do not have a child in school in Pine River, and would like a calendar, call us at 218.587.2303 and reserve a copy to be mailed to you when they arrive.

**Community Education Classes** - We will be offering several classes through community education this Fall in both Pine River and Pequot Lakes:

**Pine River-Backus:**

Fun Foods for Kids And Parents - 9/25, 6:30-7:30PM, PRBHS Rm. 49, \$8  
Color Your Own Tote for Kids - 10/7, 3:00-4:00PM, PRBHS Commons, \$7  
Papermaking for Kids - 11/18, 3:00-4:30PM, PRBHS Rm. #53, \$7

**Pequot Lakes:**

Color Your Own Tote for Kids - 10/9, 2:50-4:00PM, Eagle View Art Room, \$7  
Papermaking for Kids - 11/20, Gr. 4&5 2:50-4:15PM, Gr. 6-8 3:30-4:30PM, Eagle View Art Room, \$7

\*For more information about these classes, see listings in the combined Community Education bulletin, or visit our website: [www.happydancingturtle.org](http://www.happydancingturtle.org)

**Crosslake Community School Partnership** - HDT is working closely with the Crosslake Community School to develop curriculum that focuses on sustainable living, meets state educational standards, and helps the school satisfy its environmental education requirements, according to its charter. HDT is also assisting with some school-wide, and classroom projects, such as recycling and composting.

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## **Reducing Energy Costs in Minnesota Local Governments**

This summer two compilations of Minnesota case studies were published that showcase the cost-saving benefits of local government efforts to cut energy use and to use energy more efficiently. Both are based on surveys of actions being taken by cities across Minnesota:

- *Best Practices Review: Reducing Energy Costs in Local Government* (Office of the State Auditor - [www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx](http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx) look under: Reports & Data)
- *2008 State of the Cities* report, chapter 3 (League of Minnesota Cities - <http://www.lmnc.org/page/1/sustainability-resources.jsp>)

The 126-page State Auditor's report includes recommended steps to guide local governments in reducing energy costs, and cost/benefit analyses of different types of energy-reducing technologies and services. Designed to be easy to use, the online version has live links to financial resources and cost calculators. The review features nine case studies:

- Lighting retrofit projects - City of Minnetonka, St. Louis County and Washington County
- Geothermal heating and cooling - Watertown-Mayer School District
- Passive and active solar energy systems - City of Minneapolis
- Wind energy system - Pipestone-Jasper School District
- Displacement ventilation system - Anoka-Hennepin School District
- LEED certification - Blue Earth County & Watertown-Mayer School District
- Energy performance contracts - Scott County

Chapter 3 (pages 29-52) of the League of Minnesota Cities' (LMC's) annual report highlights examples of cities' energy efficiency efforts, and reports on survey results of efforts across the state. Common goals for many cities making these efforts, based on the latest LMC survey, include achieving the long-term cost savings associated with many energy-efficient technologies, combating pollution, meeting environmental regulations, creating healthier work environments, and reducing a city's impact on the environment. Cities profiled and samples of their many accomplishments are:

- Anoka - building improvements at a public golf course
  - Apple Valley - building and stormwater design
  - Elk River - multiple "Energy City" efforts
  - Minneapolis - sustainability efforts including fleet reductions
  - Northfield - street lighting, building renovations
  - Rushford Village - green and energy-efficient technologies encouraged when evaluating building permits
  - Wells - community center and rain garden upgrades
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## **Sustainable Trail Development Guidelines**

[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/publications/trails\\_waterways/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/publications/trails_waterways/index.html)

In 2007 the MN Dept. of Natural Resources produced a first-ever comprehensive 'how-to guidebook' for developing all types of recreational trails. These 'best practices' for professional trail builders are intended to aid Minnesota land managers in applying new, innovative and environmentally sustainable approaches to trail planning, design and construction.

*Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines* is a 300-page spiral-bound publication useful for trail clubs and volunteers, local government sponsors, educators, and both public and private land managers. The guidelines address both new and existing trail corridors, summer and winter-use trails, and multi-use trails in the American Midwest.

Practical, low-cost and 'low-tech' solutions to the unique challenges faced by Minnesota trail builders are highlighted, recognizing the state's wide range of soil and site conditions, riparian area concerns and climatic extremes. Trail project planning, funding, permitting and environmental review steps are also discussed and references are provided. With extensive diagrams and photos, the publication includes these chapters:

- Framework for Planning Sustainable Trails
- Principles of Designing Quality Recreational Trails
- Principles of Ecological Sustainability
- Trail Classifications and General Characteristics
- Shared-Use Paved Trails
- Sustainable Natural Surfaced Trails

Free downloads of the Guidelines are available at no cost for non-commercial or educational purposes. For details and to order a hard copy at \$19.95 each, see the web page above.