



## NOTES

### October 12, 2005

#### ATTENDEES

Angela Hammers, MCWD  
Anne Weber, City of St. Paul  
April Rust, MN Project Wet-DNR  
Brenda Erickson, CGEE at Hamline  
Dan McLean, MPCA  
Deb Anderson, Capitol Region WD  
Jen Collova, Farmington

Jerry Spetzman, MN Dept. of Agriculture  
John Bilotta, U of M Extension  
Louise Watson, Ramsey-Washington WD  
Randy Thoreson, NPS  
Sharon Doucette, Woodbury  
Teri Heyer, USDA Forest Service  
Tracy Fredin, CGEE

#### MEETING LOCATION REMINDER!!

MWSP now meet at the offices of:

**Capitol Region Watershed District**  
**1410 Energy Park Drive, Suite 4**  
**St. Paul, MN 55108**

Find a map at <http://www.capitolregionwd.org> or phone 651-644-8888 for directions.

#### PARTNER UPDATES

The City of **Farmington** hosted **Pollution Prevention Day** for 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Environmental learning stations and events and a "least-waste lunch."

**Friends of the Mississippi River and REI** sponsored a **Vermillion River clean up** in Farmington, Hastings and Lakeville. A ton of garbage was collected in Farmington alone.

Tune in to **Channel 17** (PBS's Minnesota channel) on Sunday, October 30 at 7:30pm for the debut of *Minnesota's Lakes at Risk*, a program about the impacts of development on lakes and the importance of long-term investment for protection. The program discusses how increasing watershed and shoreline development impacts habitat and water quality and what citizens and officials can do to restore and protect lakes. The program was produced by Twin Cities Public Television, in partnership with the Minnesota Lakes Association. Other partners are Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, Minnesota DNR and Minnesota PCA. The program will air twice more on TPT this winter.

**Ramsey-Washington Watershed District** is presenting **winter maintenance training for parking lot managers and contractors** on two dates, October 14 and Tuesday, November 15 at **Capitol Region WD**. Participants receive certificates; lunch is included. Sign-up is light. Numbers will increase with cities' involvement. A new brochure and outreach to small operators and other markets should also boost participation. Fortin consulting expects to expand the program statewide.

**RWWD** continues to see progress toward the opening of its **new education center** on the edge of Jordan Pond in Little Canada. The complex features a classroom, a boardroom, a pervious parking lot and four different rain gardens. Moving day is December 9, 2005.

The **Project Wet** national office has a new publication of storm water activities targeted to 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Available for purchase at \$1 retail. Discounts may be available for limited numbers of copies. Contact April Rust [april.rust@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:april.rust@dnr.state.mn.us) for more.

April will attend the NAAEE conference in Albuquerque the last week of October. The program shows much focus on water. For more go to <http://naaee.org>.

The **Nonpoint and Stormwater Pollution Education Conference** is October 17 – 20 in **Chicago**. Minnesota is well represented with six presenters. Those attending will be reporting their observations back at the November Partner's meeting. For information, go to <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/aquatics/nonpoint/>.

**Teri Heyer** attended the **Mississippi River Basin Nutrient Science** conference focused on what's driving hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico. It's a complex problem with each nutrient limiting at different points in time. Phosphorous is most often attached to soil and deserves serious attention. Farm and tile-drain heavy Minnesota contributes nitrogen. There is talk of breaking up the drains to allow water to undergo de-nitrification. It appears most effective to work in higher level streams to gain optimum result in the Gulf.

**Capitol Region WD and Eco Education** hosted about 42 teachers at **City Trek**. The program aims to adjust curricula to include water issues. Eco Ed provided sub sandwiches for lunch.

CGEE is working with the Minnesota division of the **Water Works Association** to visualize a **clean drinking water Web site** as a stand-alone or part of Waters to the Sea. Capitol Region will get a kiosk.

MWSP will set up and staff exhibits at **Art on the Town** on Saturday, October 15 at the Northrup King Building. Report in November.

**Reminder: October is Invasive Species Month** in Minnesota. There are many eradication projects for volunteers, especially for Buckthorn.

#### **UPDATES ON METRO WATERSHED PARTNER PROJECTS**

The Steering Committee is collecting information on all proposals submitted for **Met Council MEP grants**. Please respond to the listserv request.

Request to WSPs for **photos of fall season best management practices** in action. Listserv notice with a needs-list will go out before considering hiring a photographer.

**Discussion: Should MWSPs be involved in an educational campaign on litter?** Introduction: Louise Watson has heard from public works forum participants that floatable plastic bottles clog drains and sewers, takes up space in sweepers and are increasingly obvious in lakes and ponds. Plastic bags, Styrofoam and cigarette butts are other key pollutants. Covered recycling bins help contain trash and are showing up in many communities. The national litter campaign has been greatly diminished. "Stormwater education" may be more interesting and hip than litter.

Who cares about litter? Riddance of trash is important for watershed restoration. How does litter affect our waters? What litter-control efforts are out there now? Why did previous programs cease? What has been a model campaign? Research and data needed for consideration.

MWSP could collaborate with the DNR on its Adopt-a-River program or with MnDOT and promote activities like the ever-popular Big River Crime Scene refuse sort. MWSP might invite MnDOT to report on current litter activities. The Metro Solid Waste Coordinating Board is a potential partner. MWSP

should meet with organizations we've not met or met long ago. A litter campaign is a tangible, easy-to-understand and empowering step to improve the environment. Littering is also illegal; we should look at the law. Supporting enforcement is another possible tack.

**The watershed exhibit at the Minnesota State Fair** drew an estimated 52,040 visitors. Estimates are not scientific and do not account for walk-bys. Evaluations by volunteers cite these repeated comments among others:

- Bring back live water, a.k.a. Table One.
- People seem to be getting the message.
- Parents and children interact at the computer kiosks.
- Many comments about the need for better maintained computers, better directions for restarting, closing and opening programs, troubleshooting, etc. Mice are getting sticky.
- Add mouse pads. Possible hand-out?
- Place volunteer post at the center of the exhibit for more interaction with visitors.
- Folding chairs instead of stools that have people learning over. Little folks can stand.
- Bring the new kiosk to the fair?

Thanks to volunteers for good participation and a great crop of evaluations and to CGEE for paying workers to staff the exhibit when volunteers were not available.

Additional points from the meeting:

- Table One attracts and excites people. How can we redesign? Man goes to the moon.
- Better training for managing and trouble-shooting computers is called for. Various problem scenarios described.
- Include Street to Stream exhibit.
- Handouts...?
- Drive more folks with a walking sandwich-board advert.
- Vary exhibits so people visit yearly for new element

Sharon Doucette reported for the **Metro Media campaign**. WCCO ads, 112 in four weeks in October, are on air. We listened to one during the meeting. Money for the campaign is exhausted except for \$6,000 for evaluation from the PCA. Ron will report the number of hits on [www.cleanwatermn.org](http://www.cleanwatermn.org). The drive is on to find new supporters and renew those who already participated. Additionally, the Water Resources Center at UM will pay \$800 for fair stuffers. Go to the site for yard care information including a quick to produce flyer.

Question to WSP: Who is using bill stuffers and press releases? A press release appeared in Capitol Region and Chaska newsletters. Anyone else? The campaign team will solicit help from HECUA and others about how to evaluate the efforts. All WaterShed Partners will be surveyed about the campaign's effectiveness.

## PRESENTATION

### **Water For Life – Kare 11 Partnership Report - Teri Heyer**

**Teri Heyer** reported that the National **Environmental Education & Training Foundation (NEETF)** is addressing the low level of environmental literacy among Americans. More than 65 percent don't have basic knowledge. To help bridge the gap, NEETF has formed a committee for and is promoting the "**station scientist**" concept of training local weather people. Station Scientist uses multiple formats: local broadcasts, Earth Gauge ([www.earthgauge.net](http://www.earthgauge.net)) and the **StormCenter** Web site with its satellite imagery and stories ([www.stormcenter.com](http://www.stormcenter.com)). Program courses are offered through the University of Minnesota and satisfy meteorologist CEU requirements.

StormCenter support has been heavily federal. It wants \$25,000 to maintain the program. The KARE-11 Water for Life site had a national feel. (It is available now only if you've bookmarked the old link.) The Weather Channel is already covering forest fires. KARE is always open to story ideas and is willing to have a going relationship with Metro WaterShed Partners. Contact Jane Helmke at [jhelmke@kare11.com](mailto:jhelmke@kare11.com) with your clean water story ideas.

NEETF actions are guided by NEETF/Roper research and report on environmental literacy. MWSP can refer to the First and Second Minnesota Report Cards on Environmental Literacy [http://www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn\\_b.cfm](http://www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn_b.cfm). Minnesotans score 50 percent higher than the national sample on understanding water issues.

**Lori Gunderson** of the Office of Environmental Assistance is a potential **future speaker** at MWSP. She is working on an outreach program with Channel 5. Other media activity: Channel 11 was at Fiver Hawks Elementary, Belinda Jensen continues to support of Volunteer Stream Monitoring, Paul Douglas presents at the Metro Children's Water Festival. Channel 9 has an hour-long newscast at 9 p.m. and provides more opportunity for coverage.

#### NOTES

- **Next Steering Committee meeting: Monday, November 28, 2-4 p.m.** at the Center for Global Environmental Education (CGEE), Hamline University, 1467 Hewitt Avenue, St. Paul. Steering Committee meetings are open to all WaterShed Partners.
- **Next WaterShed Partners meeting: Wednesday, November 9, 9 a.m.** at Capitol Region Watershed District. Contact any Steering Committee member with an agenda item to include. WaterShed Partners meet regularly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month, 9 to 11 a.m.
- **E-mail Metro WaterShed Partners at [watershedpartners@listproc.hamline.edu](mailto:watershedpartners@listproc.hamline.edu).**
- **Find contacts** referred to in the text in the partner directory at <http://cgee.hamline.edu/watershed>.
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- **PLEASE update your listings** for Metro WaterShed Partners by emailing [cgee@hamline.edu](mailto:cgee@hamline.edu).

#### 2005 STEERING COMMITTEE

Sharon Doucette, 651-714-3538  
Jerry Spetzman, 651-297-7269  
John Bilotta, 952-361-1814  
Tracy Fredin, 651-523-3105

Louise Watson, 651-704-2089  
Margie Vigoren 763-509-5506  
Michele Hanson, 651-766-4192  
Ron Struss, 651-480-7708

FFI: Contact a Steering Committee member or John Bilotta at 952-361-1814.