

Over 100 local officials take to the water to learn about issues facing the St. Croix River

A view from the river: A guided tour of the St. Croix Valley's land and water resources, was organized by a group of local and state agencies, including the Minnesota and Wisconsin DNR's, Project NEMO, East Metro Water Resource Education Program, Middle St. Croix WMO, Washington Conservation District and the National Park Service to bring attention to issues facing the St. Croix and to educate local decision makers about how they can help to protect the river. Far from being a pleasure cruise, this workshop was packed with content and intentionally designed to engage participants as active learners throughout the evening.

During the 4.5 hour workshop, participants listened to opening remarks from St. Croix River Association director Dan McGuinness and WCD district manager Jay Riggs before rotating through three activities. In one activity called the Watershed Game, participants used a large game board to role play how to decrease water pollution in the watershed using best management practices. At the same time the Watershed Game was going on downstairs, staff from local and state agencies were upstairs, highlighting points of interest along the river. For each learning station along the route from Hudson to the Kinnikinic, they provided background information and made suggestions for what local decision makers can do. Along with the Watershed

Game and the guided view of the river, staff and researchers from the Minnesota DNR, National Park Service and St. Croix Watershed Research Station presented information about fisheries, mussels and aquatic bugs in the St. Croix Basin.

This was the fourth in a series of workshops about the St. Croix River targeted at local decision makers that EMWREP has helped to plan. We are submitting a 319 grant proposal this week to expand outreach and assistance to local communities throughout the Minnesota side of the St. Croix Basin over the next three years.



Angie Hong leads a group of elected and appointed officials in playing the Watershed Game.



Workshop participants networked and discussed local community issues during break times.

Next Stormwater U workshop to focus on bioinfiltration maintenance

The next Stormwater U workshop, scheduled for Friday, October 16, 7am-1pm at the Washington County South Service Center, will focus on maintenance of bioinfiltration systems. The workshop will include an outdoor field component, as well as the most recent research from the University of Minnesota. Look for more information soon!

You are invited to join the WaterShed Partners aboard the Magnolia Blossom

The WaterShed Partners is a coalition of over 50 public, private and non-profit organizations in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area that, through collaborative educational outreach, teaches residents how to care for area waters. The purpose of the WaterShed Partners is to promote a public understanding that inspires people to act to protect water quality in their watershed.

On Wednesday, Aug. 12, WSP members

EMWREP calendar of events for July-Aug 2009:

July 16, 6:30pm, Pine Hollow HOA presentation
Stillwater, BCWD

July 28, 4-8pm, Summer Tuesdays
Lowell Park, Stillwater

July 29-Aug. 2, Washington County Fair
County Fairgrounds, Lake Elmo

Aug. 4, 6-7:30pm, Prairie Hike
Lake Elmo Regional Park

Aug. 10, Aug. 24 and Sept. 14, Blue Thumb workshops
LSCB City Hall

Aug. 12, 9am-noon, Magnolia Blossom WSP Tour
Watergate Marina, St. Paul - Mississippi River

Aug. 21, 7:30-9:30am, Mississippi Forum MS4 Toolkit presentation: St. Cloud

Aug. 26 - Sept. 7, Blue Thumb and WSP at State Fair
DNR and Eco Experience buildings, MN State Fair

Aug. 27, 6-7pm, Valley Branch CAC meeting
Lake Elmo City Hall

and friends will board the Magnolia Blossom for a tour of the Mississippi River. Departing from the Watergate Marina in St. Paul's Crosby Park, we will travel downstream around Pike Island, then up the Minnesota River past Fort Snelling State Park and into the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. During the cruise, refreshments will be served and we'll hear from special guest speakers: Jeanne Holler, Deputy Manager of MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge; Louis Smith, Minnesota Clean Water Council; and Senator Ellen Anderson.

If you would like to join us on the water, please RSVP to Jana Larson - jl Larson25@hamline.edu - by July 31.

The Magnolia Blossom boards at the Watergate Marina, 2500 Crosby Farm Road, St. Paul, MN 55116

Members of the East Metro Water Resource Education Program:

Brown's Creek Watershed • Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed • Cottage Grove • Dellwood • Forest Lake • Lake Elmo • Middle St. Croix Watershed • Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed • Rice Creek Watershed • Stillwater • South Washington Watershed • Valley Branch Watershed • Willernie • West Lakeland • Washington Conservation District • Washington County

