

Cleanup Review

Fall Issue 2012

Vol. 21, NO. 1

NOTE TO READERS

By the next issue, the Cleanup Review will be provided only in an electronic format. Please help us transition by going to our home page website and clicking on the red envelope icon as shown on the left. Clicking



on this icon will bring you to a separate page where you can choose to subscribe to the Cleanup Review electronically. Along with this newsletter, you can also choose to get updates for state water trails, fishing, boating, hunting, and more. Thank you for helping us make this shift, resulting in a tremendous cost savings. If you have any question please contact either the Adopt-a-River Program Coordinator at 651-259-5630 or the Water Recreation Specialist at 651-259-5620.

A moment to appreciate how fortunate Minnesotans are

Kirsten Barta, Water Recreation Specialist

Minnesota is known as the Land of 10,000 Lakes, and with 22,000 lakes that are 2+ acres in size and 92,000 miles of streams and rivers, it's not hard to see why. One of the best things about all of that water is how well we take care of and enjoy it. Let us all take a minute to remember what it is that we do have and appreciate how that all came to be.

Minnesota has some of the best public water protections in the nation, and some of the highest water recreation use. Minnesota water laws are much more stringent than federal laws, and the state offers great recreational opportunities. All of this is because citizens have demanded protection for their waters and access to these resources.

The DNR not only enforces strict water and wetland laws; it also promotes recreation. We have opportunities for people of all skill levels, from I Can Paddle! programs for those who have never paddled, to 33 designated water trails for paddlers of all skill levels to explore, and whitewater and rapids for expert paddlers. For boaters and those wanting to fish, we have safe harbors on Lake Superior and over 1,600 public water accesses scattered around the state that are free to use. Even if you don't have a boat, there are 360 shore fishing sites and fishing piers that provide shore access. The Adopt-a-River program provides the public with a tool that enables people to become stewards of the rivers and lakes they enjoy.

The DNR can't offer all this opportunity without help from others. The federal government provides protections and recreational resources, as well as providing some funding for state and local government programs. Counties provide parks, water access, and clean-up programs, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts help keep waters clean and

work with communities to take care of waters at a local level.

Some of the most important stewards of our public waters are at the grassroots, where local organizations band together and rally around their favorite water bodies.

Local paddlers, fishing clubs, 4H organizations, church groups, neighborhood groups, and individual families and citizens are a few of the many examples of folks who help keep our waters clean. Federal, state, and local agencies can't be everywhere, so local people are very important to help fill in the gaps. They not only are the ones who use the resources, but they fund programs through user fees, taxes, and consumer demand. They protect and care for what is important to them, and pass that on to the next generation.

Thanks to everyone who has helped make this great tradition of care for our waters possible. Please pass that thank you along to your friends, neighbors, children, and communities as we continue to enjoy this incredible resource. What we have is already amazing, but with the help of everyone working together in their own way, we can make it even better.



Crane Lake, Voyageurs National Park

21st Riverboat Cleanup

This year's riverboat cleanup took place on June 13th and was a great success. The rising river and rains threatened to force rescheduling, but the waters receded just a few days before. We had 95 volunteers from the Conservation Corps of Minnesota (CCM), the National Park Service, and volunteers from all over. The county sheriff's water patrol also participated. Over a four-hour period, we removed 5,000 pounds of trash from the Mississippi River, including 116 tires that were hauled away by the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District. Tennis Sanitation generously donated a 30-yard dumpster, and the National Park Service and Living Lands and Waters brought small watercraft to help in addition to the riverboat piloted by Padelford Packet Boat Company.



CCM provided supervision for the cleanup

The highlight of the cleanup was undoubtedly the very mucky retrieval of a fiberglass boat that someone had scuttled in the river, only to have it resurface later during a flood surge. The boat was later retrieved by Upper River Services after it was removed from the mud by volunteers. As it turns out, the previous owner had tried to sink it by punching holes in the bottom of the boat, making it very heavy to haul out of the woods. A very big thank you to everyone who helped, and we look forward to seeing you next year!



Boat retrieved from the river by CCM crews

Thank you Padelford!

One of the biggest "thank yous" goes to the Padelford Packet Boat Company of St. Paul. They have been wonderful in providing the Jonathan Padelford riverboat for the annual cleanup, even though we made it very muddy. They also graciously co-sponsor Big River Journey in the spring and fall, using another of their riverboats. This on-board classroom is a river ecology education program run by the National Park Service. The captains and crew work very hard to help us out, and we greatly appreciate all that they do!



Happy volunteers in front of the Padelford boat at the cleanup

Mobile Meth Lab Alert: A Call for Vigilance

Minnesota drug agents have reported a new form of mobile meth lab showing up as plastic bottles containing a highly toxic, explosive white chemical sludge. The bottles appear similar to what is seen in this picture below. Do not attempt to pick them up. Mark the location and call 911 to notify authorities of their location.



How to choose an adoption site

Adopt-a-River is patterned much like the Adopt-a-Highway program run by each state's Department of Transportation. While the program is named Adopt-a-River, you can adopt any body of water that is meaningful to you! We encourage potential adopters to consider what water body they live near, use, or even just drive by every day. We welcome adoptions of rivers and streams, but also adoptions of lakes, public water accesses, ditches, storm water channels, creeks, ponds, or any other body of water you would like to keep clean.

Adopters can adopt multiple sites, change sites, or hold one-time clean ups, but please let us know so that we can track activity and avoid duplication. If you don't have time to commit to an adopt project, consider a one-time cleanup, or volunteering with other cleanups or DNR events! One-time cleanups can be especially nice for those who live near or have visited a body of water that they'd like to see cleaned up.

For more information, we have set up a guide to choosing a site here:

<http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteering/adoptriver/kit/choosingriver.pdf> or you can send an email or call us and we would be happy to help you choose an area to adopt.

Adopt-a-River Sculpture at the State Fair

"Your sculpture gives me the perfect idea of how to conduct a beach clean-up with my classroom students"

This was only one of nearly 150 comments received about the Adopt-a-River sculpture at the Minnesota State Fair. This year, more than any previous year, people said it was their all-time favorite of all sculptures in the 19-year history of the exhibit. It was the first time the sculpture has found a final resting place even before it had arrived at the fair. This year the work was sponsored through the generous support of one of our long-time adopt groups, Boston Scientific Corporation. Their service club has conducted 17 cleanups over the years, removing over 50,000 pounds of trash. In recent years they have focused upon DNR's Pig's Eye Scientific and Natural Area in Saint Paul.

After artist Andrew Vomhof was brought on board, his ideas of what kind of sculpture to build began to change. In his cleanup this past June, 5,000 pounds of trash were removed, including 116 tires and a boat that had been mischievously sunk. These findings began to prey upon Andrew's creative mind, and an amazing result was obtained. After his work got to the fair, people were captivated by Andrew's use of discarded tires at the base of the sculpture. He had very convincingly made them appear as turbulent waves rocking a tattered boat.



"Scuttled" by Andrew Vomhof

The 2012 sculpture is now joining the ranks of other publicly displayed Adopt-a-River sculptures, all heralding the great work of 87,000 volunteers who have conducted 3,100 cleanups across the state, removing 6 million pounds of trash from our public waters. This sculpture will be at Central Regional Headquarters of the DNR, on 1200 Warner Road in Saint Paul.

Other publicly-displayed Adopt-a-River sculptures are 2002 *Red Alert*, displayed at Fairview and University Avenue in Saint Paul; 2007 *Morph the Transforming Frog*, at Tamarack Nature Center in Lino Lakes; 2008 *The Industrious, Cooperative Ant*, on a bike trail along the river in South Saint Paul; 2010 *Nature's Engineer – The Beaver*, at Fort Snelling State Park; and 2011 *Union: a Deer and Two Herons*, at Great River Road Visitor and Learning Center, at the confluence of the Saint Croix and Mississippi rivers in Prescott, Wisconsin.

Celebrating the Importance of Water

HISTORICAL MOMENT: Founding of Fort Snelling, 1819

Kirsten Barta, Water Recreation Specialist, MN DNR

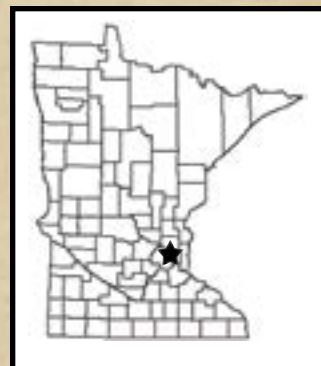
Many of us know Fort Snelling from our 4th grade history books, but a great number of people don't dig much deeper than that. While the fort is currently a great place to see the river and watch period actors fire a cannon, it is also what allowed the Twin Cities to mature into the economic center of the entire region. The significance to the region of this complex perched high above the confluence of two major rivers is greater than nearly any other structures in the area.

In 1805, Lieutenant Zebulon Pike acquired 100,000 acres of land in the area from the Dakota tribes. After the War of 1812, the U.S. Army began to secure their investment with a series of forts and posts to protect against Canadian (British) encroachment on U.S. territory. In 1819, the area that would become the main fort complex was settled on the recommendation of Lieutenant Pike as a key place to control and easy to fortify. His choice proved correct, as the fort was never taken.

The main purpose of the post was to provide protection for fur traders and other commercial traffic on the river, as well as to serve as a liaison and peacekeeping force between the U.S. government and the Dakota and Ojibwe tribes. The confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers had long been an important area for trade and commerce, and river transportation was especially important before the railroads were expanded into Minnesota Territory, as overland travel was arduous and expensive.

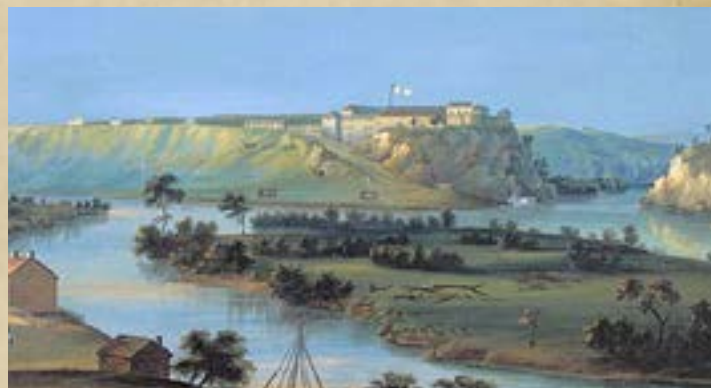
After the Civil War, conflicts between tribes began to decrease in frequency as European settlement increased and the tribes were relocated. As Minneapolis and St. Paul began to develop, the fort was no longer serving its intended purposes. The government sold the fort and surrounding lands in 1858 to Franklin Steele for \$90,000 (2.4 million dollars in today's money). Steele later leased several thousand of the acres surrounding the fort to the growing city of Minneapolis (now south Minneapolis).

After the Civil War, the fort was only periodically used for training and mustering of troops, predominantly during the First and Second World Wars. After that, the area was mainly used militarily to inter soldiers at Fort Snelling National Cemetery and as a National Guard base.



In 1960, Fort Snelling was listed as a National Historic Landmark and is now managed by the Minnesota Historical Society as an educational facility. In addition, the DNR maintains 3,000 acres surrounding the fort as a State Park, the most visited in Minnesota.

Today, the area still continues to be a major hub for transportation with the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, I-494 and a number of other major bridges crossing the river, in addition to some barge and other traffic that still ply the river. Next time you use any of those modes of transportation, stop and consider how far we've come from an outpost on a cliff high above the confluence of two of the most significant rivers in the state.



Fort Snelling in 1844

Image courtesy of the MN Historical Society

Creature Feature

North American River Otter: *Lontra Canadensis*

Kirsten Barta, Water Recreation Specialist

Common names

River otter, northern river otter, common otter, American otter, Canadian otter, fish otter, land otter, near-arctic river otter, and Prince of Wales otter. In the scientific name, the genus *Lontra* is used to classify all western hemisphere otters, while the species name *Canadensis* means "of Canada".



Photo Credit: MN DNR

Identification

River otters have dense, dark brown fur on their back and sides, and lighter fur on the underside. They are generally 4 to 5 ½ feet long

with a long, tapered tail. Their back feet are webbed. Adult otters may weigh up to 30 pounds, but generally are between 15 and 20 pounds.

Habitat

Otters are semi-aquatic and prefer habitats near a water body with suitable den sites. Otters are opportunistic den builders, and sites can include: logs, under tree roots, in the river bank, groundhog burrows, or other structures constructed from available materials. River otters are not specific about the type of water body they are near, but they are very sensitive to pollution and habitat disruption. In Minnesota otters are common in the northern part of the state, and are beginning to return in the southern areas as wetlands are restored and water sources are cleaned up.

Behavior

River otters typically live in family groups consisting of a mother and her young, though males may start their own groups as well. Female otters typically have 1-5 cubs in a litter every 1-2 years. Hunting either socially or alone, otters eat fish, crayfish, mussels, and small land mammals. Young otters typically display playful antics they use to practice skills needed for survival. They can travel up to 25 miles in a week searching for food or habitat. Otters typically live approximately 10 years in the wild, but have been known to live up to 25.

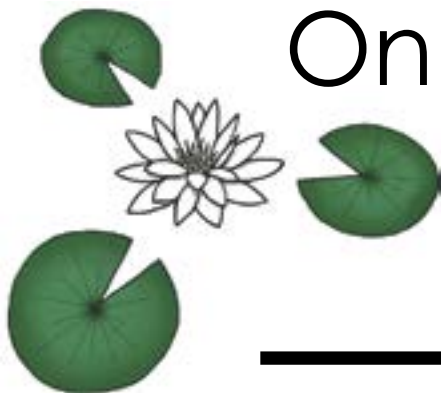
Fun facts

Adult river otters have 36 teeth

River otters can stay under water for approximately 4 minutes, swim up to 7 mph, and dive 66 feet deep.



Photo Credit: Mike McDowell



On the Water

Spring and Summer 2012

Featuring:

Crow Wing County 4H
NE Riverkeepers
MN SUP
St. Mary's U Bio Club
Itasca SWCD
Renegade Bassers
River Rangers Program
City of Robbinsdale



St. Mary's University Bio Club



Crow Wing County 4H Shooting Sports/Wildlife Club



Itasca SWCD



MN Stand Up Paddleboarders Association



NE Riverkeepers



Renegade Bassers




City of Robbinsdale



River Rangers Program

Thank you to everyone who has done
a cleanup this season!



Adopt -a- River

Welcome New 2012 Adopt Groups!

NE Riverkeepers
Crow Wing County 4H Shooting Sports
St. Mary's University Biology Club
Minnesota Wilderness Association
Sam's Club White Bear Lake
River Ranger Program
Renegade Bassers
Bethel University Creation Restoration
Mower County Habitat/Pheasants Forever

Send in your digital photos!

Have you taken digital photos at your events? Do you have any graphic images of trash on a riverbank? If so, e-mail us your photos and they could be used in a future edition of the Cleanup Review or posted on the Adopt-a-River website! Send them to: kirsten.barta@state.mn.us

Keep in touch!

We want to hear from you! If you have pictures of your clean up, or comments or ideas for the Cleanup Review, questions about the program, or just want to get involved, feel free to contact us! We'd love to hear your suggestions or help you get started on a project. You may be the only person to know where certain trash has most recently accumulated.

Cleanup reports

Don't forget to send in your cleanup reports! It helps us to track active adopt groups, keep our records up to date, and compile data that shows how much good work people like yourselves are doing for the public waters. Online reporting can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/adoptarivercleanup> or you can send us your address and we will send you some reporting cards.

Cleanup Review is published by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for the Adopt-a-River Program in the Division of Parks and Trails.

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Paul Nordell, Adopt-a-River Program Coordinator;
Courtland Nelson, Director of the Division of Parks and Trails;
Luke Skinner, Deputy Director of the Division of Parks and Trails

Please direct your comments, questions, and suggestions for the Cleanup Review newsletter to:
MN DNR Adopt-a-River, Division of Parks and Trails, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4039

Fall cleanups

Fall is a great time to organize a cleanup, as a summer of activity has built up a layer of trash that has gotten deeper each time it has rained and flushed the streets. For help organizing or to find cleanups in your area, check the DNR's Adopt-A-River website www.mndnr.gov/adoptriver or contact us.

Website: mndnr.gov/adoptriver

Email: adoptriver.dnr@state.mn.us

Coordinator: 651-259-5630, Specialist: 651-259-5620

Toll-Free: 1-888-646-6367, Fax: 651-297-5475

651-296-6157 in the Twin Cities area, TTY: 800-657-3929





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Conservation Corpsmember at the riverboat cleanup

Cleanup statistics: September 2012

3,192 cleanups 87,888 volunteers 6,065,695 pounds collected 11,268 miles cleaned
(Since the program began in 1989)