



# Cleanup Review

Spring Issue 2008

Vol. 17, NO. 1

## Tribute to the Small Cleanup

Megan Godbold, MCC Adopt-a-River Assistant

One would intuitively think that Adopt-a-River and Adopt-a-Highway have a lot in common. To a certain extent that is true, but they are quite different when you look at who the volunteers are. When you pass by an Adopt-a-Highway sign you see the names of companies, community organizations, or schools. If Adopt-a-River still had signs, you would find a significant portion bearing the names of individuals and families.

According to the cleanup reports received so far for 2007, 33% of the cleanups were conducted by groups of five or fewer volunteers. The small groups also cleaned up roughly 16% of all trash collected (16% of 80,685 lbs), and covered about 20% of the shoreline cleaned (78 of 410 miles). These smaller cleanups were done by a total of 181 individuals, whereas 2,771 individuals participated in cleanups that involved six or more volunteers. To add more perspective, **on average an individual participating in a small effort spent 4 hours cleaning 1.81 miles of shoreline while the individual in a large cleanup spent 3 hours cleaning one tenth of a mile.**

These small Adopt groups all have their own story. Several are families who own shoreline or have a stretch of shoreline nearby that they care about. Many are individuals who visit their site throughout the summer months, picking up what they see floating about. Bit by bit, hour by hour, their efforts add up. Take for example Matt and Angie Maida; in 1992 they adopted a portion of the Snake River and have cleaned it every summer while canoeing and snorkeling. Since joining, they have spent 2,100 hours picking up 1,100 pounds of trash. Another adopt is that of Robert Schleicher. He became involved with the program in 2001 and since has started a non-profit organization, Minnesota Rivers Revitalization, which focuses on cleaning shoreline and removing abandoned boats. Thanks to Schleicher's determination



Angie and Matt Maida's 2007 Cleanup. Photo by Matt Maida.

and passion, 70,155 pounds of waste have been removed from Minnesota waterways.

Often people overlook small efforts and choose to focus on the larger events with media attention. But as the statistics demonstrate, it is the individual in a small-scale adopt that spends the most time and covers the most shoreline. Therefore, we would like to thank all of the families, individuals, and friends who have made an effort to visit and care for their favorite shoreline every year. You are the lifeblood of the program. We can count on you to be out every year and put your heart into what you are doing. Never forget that the saying "You can make a difference." is true; we have the proof.

	1-5 Vol.	6+ Vol.	Total
Number Vol.	181	2,771	2,952
Pounds	16%	84%	80,685
Hours	809	8,712	9,521
Miles	19%	81%	410.65

2007 cleanup data as of February 2008

# Adopt-an-Access!

Megan Godbold, MCC Adopt-a-River Assistant



Did you know that there are 1,590 public water access sites in Minnesota? Maybe there is one near your home or cabin. Since many public accesses are hidden away from the public eye, they have unfortunately become a place for people to leave unwanted garbage such as deer carcasses, bags of trash, yard waste, and appliances. Once one person litters, others

also feel more inclined to do so, and soon what was once a scenic public access is an unsightly place.

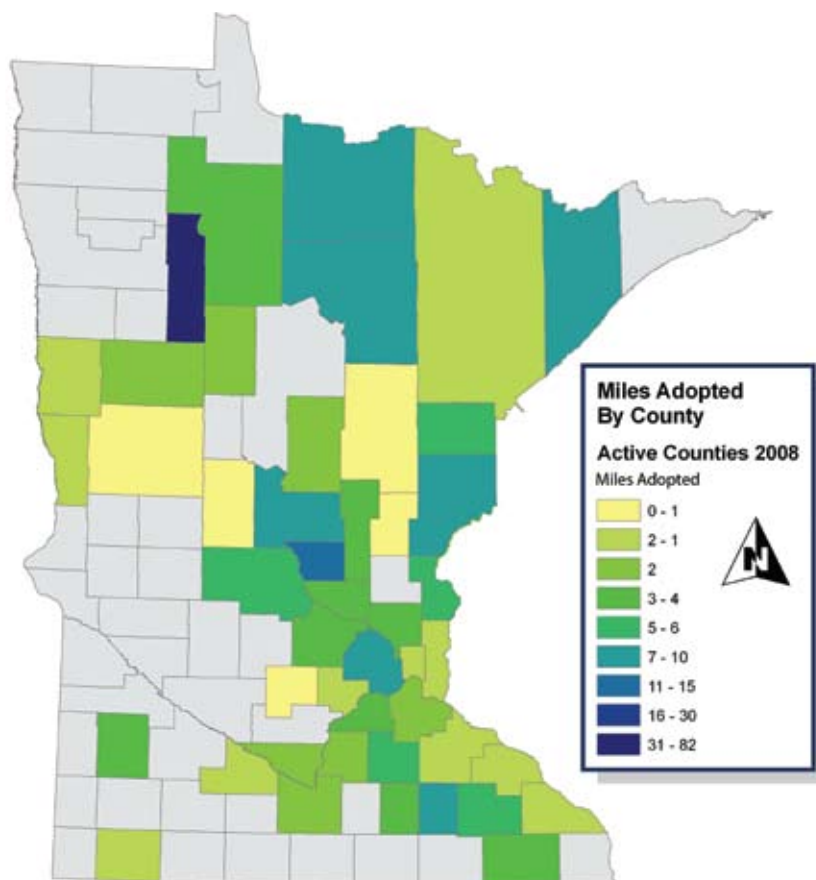
We could use your help in assisting us to keep our public water access sites clean and maintained,

especially during the spring and summer months. If you are interested in adopting an access, please contact us. We will provide you with work gloves, bags and safety information. You will also be provided with contact information for local DNR staff who can assist in clearing out heavy appliances and large dumps.



We have a few individuals who have already taken the initiative to help care for access sites. They carry a trash bag as they walk around the lake or make a special trip to the access once a week. For more information about one of these individuals, see Dan Wolf in the "On the Water" article on page 6.

If you have the means, passion, and time, consider adopting an access site!



## Adopt-a-River Update

### Totals Through Feb 2008

# Groups	207
# Cleanups	2,549
# Pounds	4,989,459
# Miles	8,543
#Volunteers	73,585

### Totals for 2007 vs. 2006

	2007*	2006
# Cleanups	153	174
# Pounds	80,735	128,205
# Miles	411	535
#Volunteers	2,889	3,987

\* Reporting for 2007 not complete





# Water Trails Program Page

## *Forces of Nature: Record Flooding in Southeastern Minnesota*

*Daniel Kent, Water Trails Program Intern*

For most of us, the mere thought of our personal belongings floating down a mud-swelled meandering river on its way to the mighty Mississippi is heartwrenching. But this is what it was like for hundreds of people living in southeastern Minnesota last summer as three days of intense rain bombarded towns along the Root and Whitewater rivers, causing millions of dollars of property damage, weakening city infrastructures and leaving state officials scrambling for federal assistance. For the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC) crews that were involved in the relief efforts, removing debris was a surreal experience.

The rain began on Saturday August 18, 2007 and by late evening, water levels on the Root and Whitewater Rivers were already surpassing all-time National Weather Service flood records for the state and were continuing to increase at alarming rates. The rising river levels were threatening the nearby towns of Elba, Rushford, Stockton, Houston, and Minnesota City. By Sunday morning, a series of thunderstorms rolled in and ravaged lowland ravines flanked by rugged valley slopes. The continuing storms resulted in yet one more day of chaos. When the weather cleared, parts of southeastern Minnesota had received a record of 20 inches of rain. This destroyed flood control structures and inundated hundreds of acres of cropland, prompting federal disaster designation for all of this portion of Minnesota.

The MCC was heavily involved in the flood relief efforts. "Part of MCC's mission is to provide the state with a skilled workforce that is trained for just about anything that Mother Nature can throw at us," says Tim Johnson-Grass, MCC Operations Manager. "The damaged flood-control structures left many farmers and landowners caught between trying to supply basic life needs and wondering about the survival of their crops as winter fast approached."

People were very anxious to see how much damage was done, which put a lot of pressure on DNR and MCC crews. As local residents desperately waited for good news from Washington, MCC was already in place with

crews equipped and eager to mobilize for such emergencies. "We had 16 corps members that responded quickly to this emergency. They ranged in age from 19 to 29...many of them still in college trying to figure out a career path," says Chris Severson, MCC Crew Leader. On August 21st, MCC crews were already helping to remove mud and debris from homes, repair livestock fencing, reopen river accesses and retrieve personal items lost during the storm. "Some of these areas were pretty devastated, especially along the river banks where debris was scattered everywhere," explains Severson, "at one of the towns, some flood victims

asked us to look for their possessions... one victim had a bunch of canoes that had been lost to the river...another had lost rope needed for their cattle." Following the flood, MCC crews spent a total of 3,560 hours doing debris removal and general relief work.

Small towns that were severely affected by the weekend storms, such as Elba and Rushford, were also seeing an outpouring of support from the DNR and volunteers from surrounding communities. People came from all over the region to help out with the cleanup. As a resource manager, Craig Blommer (DNR Area Supervisor) said, "Going down there and seeing the devastation was really sad. You'd see homes with water up to the first floor and people scraping off mud two feet deep." Facilities in Whitewater State Park were severely damaged, and several of the state trails were heavily eroded by high water from the Root and Whitewater Rivers, leaving mud, silt and debris piled high in some areas and entirely destroying other sections of trail. The DNR, in cooperation with other agencies, is continuing to rebuild and restore infrastructure and natural resources that were affected in southeast Minnesota.

In the midst of calamity, we are reminded of how small we are and how much control weather has over our lives and our worldly possessions. The flooding in southeastern Minnesota is a daily reminder of the constant struggle for balance between the human desire to overcome the destructive forces of nature and nature's insistence on doing what it wants. Geographer Gilbert F. White said it best, "Floods are 'acts of God.' But flood losses are largely ACTS OF MAN."

Top Photo: Tyler Carlson, Henry Stroud, Chad Knudson, Ashley Phoenix.  
Bottom Photo: Jeremy Bloomberg, Paul Goodmanson, Matt Kohn, Tyler Carlson, Chris Severson, Chad Knudson, Ashley Phoenix



MCC Crews cleaning up debris

# Celebrating the Importance of Water

## HISTORICAL MOMENT: April 20, 1974 in Silver Bay

### Judge Miles Lord orders Reserve Mining to stop discharges into Lake Superior

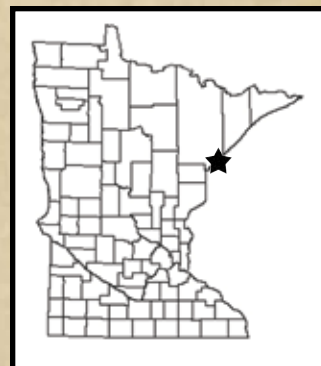
Paul E. Nordell, Coordinator, DNR Adopt-a-River

*Background: Between 1955 and 1980, Reserve Mining Company legally dumped 67,000 tons of sand into Lake Superior daily. On February 17, 1972, the U.S. Department of Justice filed suit against Reserve Mining for violating the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, which prohibited the dumping of harmful materials into interstate waters (United States vs. Reserve Mining Company). In June 1972, U.S. District Judge Miles Lord granted a motion of all applicants for intervention status in this case. The trial began in Minneapolis in August 1973, two months after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency announced high concentrations of asbestos-like fibers in both the tailings and in North Shore municipal drinking water. The suit was expanding from concerns of water clarity to concerns of public health.*

On April 20, 1974, federal District Court Judge Miles Lord ordered Reserve Mining Company of Silver Bay to halt discharge of taconite tailings into Lake Superior. Although the order was quickly reversed, the appeals court in March 1975 upheld Lord in nearly all respects, but required that Reserve be given time to stop the dumping. After Lord was removed from the case, federal District Judge Edward Devitt ordered Reserve to stop the discharge in one year. Later, Judge Devitt extended the deadline to 1980, with on-land disposal of tailings at a place called Mile Post 7. The dumping stopped on March 16, 1980, nearly six years after Judge Miles Lord's initial order. In 1980, on-land deposit of the sand began at Mile Post 7, and it continued until Reserve went bankrupt and closed the plant July 31, 1986. The plant was then downsized and re-opened in 1990 as the North Shore Mining Company, owned by Cleveland Cliffs.

What made this a controversial decision? The mining company had been issued an air and water discharge permit by the Army Corps back in 1948 and began discharging tailings in 1955. The case expanded to include health concerns when asbestos-like fibers were discovered in the sand,

and in Duluth city water. In regards to economic concerns, the taconite plant, which was the first taconite processing plant in North America, was producing 15% of all the iron ore in the United States and the company employed 3,100 people. Balancing the economy with public health was a formidable task.



In evaluating this case, Robert V. Bartlett of Indiana University said, "...the values of many Americans were changing from unequivocal commitment to economic growth and technological imperatives to a new regard for the quality of life and environment. To be understood, the case must be seen in historical perspective..."

Sources: Facts on File Yearbook 1974, p. 326; Facts on File Yearbook 1980, p. 227; Robert V. Bartlett, *The Reserve Mining Controversy: Science, Technology and Environmental Quality*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1980; *The History of Silver Bay*, Bay Area Historical Society (found on web at [www.silverbay.com/history](http://www.silverbay.com/history), 2-25-2008).; Tony Greiner, compiler, *The Minnesota Book of Days*, Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2001; [www.clevelandcliffs.com](http://www.clevelandcliffs.com) (as of 2-28-2008).



Aerial view of Reserve Mining Company's taconite processing plant, Silver Bay. 1956. Minnesota Historical Society Collection.



# Creature Feature

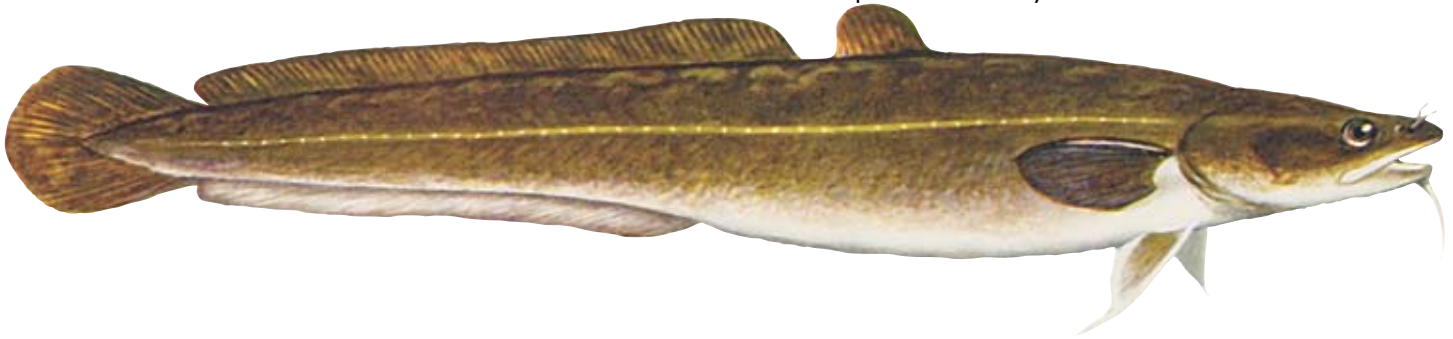
## Burbot (Eelpout): *Lota lota*

Megan Godbold, Minnesota Conservation Corps/ DNR Adopt-a-River Assistant

Many who are unfamiliar with the burbot (or eelpout) may assume that somebody took a catfish and an eel and artfully put them together to create this mysterious beast. But others may have gotten to know this unique individual while ice fishing, or perhaps the enthusiast may have been to the annual International Eelpout Festival at Leech Lake near Walker Minnesota. Whatever your relationship with the burbot, we should take a moment to learn more about it.

The burbot is the only freshwater fish in the cod family. Cod are unique in their mild taste and the high content of vitamin A and D in their livers. This, oddly enough, was discovered in the 1920's after a fox breeder who was feeding the fish to their animals, noticed the fox had superior coats and skin.

One may also wonder how a member of the cod family ended up in so many freshwater lakes in northern



Fish by Maynard R.

The International Eelpout Festival is typically in mid-February. Many fishing events are during the spring and summer, which makes the Eelpout Festival stand out. This is because the burbot fishing is the best during the winter. Burbot live in cold and deep lakes, and have been found as deep as 1,000 feet below the surface (oxygen permitting). They only come to the shallows for breeding in the winter. After breeding they return to the depths and remain almost dormant, making them difficult to catch during the summer.

Minnesota. Some scientists believe that some cod were left in lakes after an area of inland sea retreated and left them behind. They remained and continued to evolve apart from their oceanic cod relatives and became the cod-like freshwater fish they are today. Once common in the Great Lakes, their population has declined following the introduction of the sea lamprey.

Larger burbot are also found in Europe but are believed to be locally extinct in Britain. They are considered to be one of the most threatened freshwater species in Europe due in part to habitat disturbance and over-fishing. Hopefully we will take note of Europe's mistakes and safeguard our beloved burbot from a similar fate.



DNR Photo

### How to Clean the Burbot

Cut through the skin behind the head as though you were going to cut around the fish. Then cut through the skin along the dorsal side of the body toward the tail. Pliers can then be used to pull skin off the flesh. With the skin removed, use your fillet knife to remove the flesh above the rib cage as well as the flesh "tailward" of the rib cage.

- Scott Gustafson, DNR Fisheries Specialist



# On the Water

## *Adopt-a-River*

## *Volunteers Up Close*

## Featuring:

Dan Wolf  
Roger Petry  
Larry Furo  
Bill Barrett

Let us take a moment to recognize some of the individuals who are involved with the Adopt-a-River program and learn a little bit more about who they are and why they do what they do.

**Dan Wolf** of New Ulm has been participating in Adopt-a-River since 2006. He saw a great need to clean up various water access points on the Minnesota and Cottonwood Rivers, including boat ramps, parks, canoe launches, and popular fishing spots. After years of seeing these precious areas being treated like dumps, he and his friend John Knisley took action and joined Adopt-a-River. He feels that by spending his time cleaning up, he is doing more than just using the resources he enjoys so much.

Dan has seen changes over the last couple years in how people are treating the sites he cares for. He thinks if people see the resource is clean, they are more apt to keep it that way. When the area is dirty he feels that people are more inclined to add to the problem without really thinking that what they are doing is unacceptable.

Dan feels really good after he goes out to do this dirty job. What keeps him going is knowing people appreciate what he does, even if they do not recognize him for it. Dan is simply happy that people are able to get enjoyment from the resource and not feel as though they are in a dump site. One time a man actually got out of his truck and walked over to Dan to shake his hand and thank him for what he was doing. This is just one example of the selfless spirit that is within many individual participants in this program. These people are not out for recognition, just the satisfaction of making a difference.

**Roger Petry** of Duluth has been participating in the program since 1992. Since then he has been on the river all season long. To date he has reported 15 cleanups, sometimes with help, sometimes without. Petry joined the program after hearing about it on Minnesota Public Radio. Since he lived on the Cloquet River and hated the sight of litter, it seemed to be a perfect fit for him.

Petry not only picks up the trash he sees in the river, he also picks up trash he sees on cross-country ski trails. He

states, "Most people have a better experience in these settings when they don't have litter to spoil the view."

When asked if he thinks what he does makes a difference, he said, "Sure, it makes a difference but we aren't going to get everyone to stop littering. New 'litterers' are born every day, but so are those who will volunteer their time to pick up litter in whatever setting they can".



Larry Furo's section of the Little Knife River

**Larry Furo**, also of Duluth, became a member in 2007. He has noticed how litter finds its way to the river by either wind or runoff, and cites carelessness upstream as the source. Larry is a lover of natural beauty. Cleaning up the litter helps him and his family enjoy the river more.

**Bill Barrett** of Maplewood has been involved with the program since 2001. Not only does he clean up trash around Tanners Lake, he also participates in our Annual Riverboat Cleanup and volunteers at our booth during the State

Fair. That is where he found out about the program. Bill feels that he cannot clean all of the lakes in the world by himself and he needs to make sure that someone will be there to replace him.

Bill loves the way he feels after going out to clean up his lake. He purposely chooses sunny days so he can get some exercise and enjoy the outdoors. The fun does not stop for him there, he also enjoys the challenge of figuring out what to do with the junk he has collected once he gets back to shore.

There is no doubt in Bill's mind that what he is doing is making a difference. He has been cleaning up the lake for more than 10 years (longer than he has been in the program) and finds that these days he has to work harder and dig deeper in the mud to find junk to fill his boat.

These individuals, as diverse as they may be, have one thing in common: they all feel a need to get outdoors and clean up Minnesota's waters. To say that they are not out there for personal gain would be incorrect. Though they are not benefiting financially, or making it on the six o'clock news, they gain great satisfaction from what they do, and that is what keeps them coming back every year.



# Adopt -a- River

Bulletin

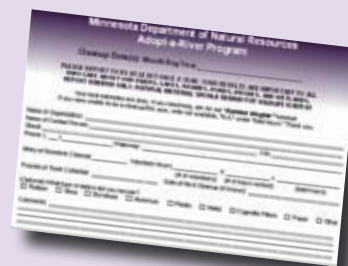
## Send in your digital photos!

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 [Adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:Adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us)!

## Purple Cards

Thank you to all the groups that have sent in their purple cleanup report cards for their 2007 cleanups. As of February 15th, 2008, volunteers have reported (for 2007) 153 cleanups, cleaning up 80,735 pounds of trash from 411 miles of Minnesota shoreline. Adopt-a-River volunteers have now removed **5 million pounds** of trash from Minnesota's public waters. This is a major milestone for the program!

Please remember that if you have completed a cleanup and not reported it, **SEND IN YOUR PURPLE CARD**. Results can also be emailed to [Adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:Adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us) or called in to 651-259-5620.



## New online resources!

You can now complete your order forms, registration forms, and cleanup reports online from our How-to-Kit page at [www.mndnr.gov/adoptriver/howtokit](http://www.mndnr.gov/adoptriver/howtokit). We also have a new multimedia page where you can download our brochure and various PowerPoint presentations.

Don't forget that you can also find an up-to-date event listing of cleanups on our calendar of events. If you would like your cleanup to be listed, please contact us and provide the date, event details, location, and contact information!

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Please direct your comments, questions, and suggestions to the editor of Cleanup Review at 651-259-5620 or to the Adopt-a-River Coordinator, Paul Nordell at 651-259-5630; FAX 651-297-5475; MN Toll Free: 1-888-646-6367;  
e-mail: [adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us); or write to:  
MN DNR, Trails and Waterways Division,  
500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul MN 55115-4052

## The Minnesota Conservation Corps has great jobs for youth!



MCC offers summer jobs for male and female teenagers, ages 15-18, who are hearing, deaf, and hard-of-hearing, doing outdoor service projects. As a corpsmember, you'll complete 8 weeks of residential camp. You'll receive a weekly living allowance for working 35 hours a week. You'll also participate in five hours of educational and environmental activities each week. This isn't the typical classroom setting, but instead offers hands-on learning that is exciting and rewarding!

**Fee:** None. You will receive a weekly living allowance for working 35 hours a week, June 15-August 9, 2008.

### Registration Information:

Alyson Johnson - Minnesota Conservation Corps - 2715 Upper Afton Road Suite 100 - Maplewood, MN 55119 - 651/209-9900 ext. 27  
E-mail: [alysen.johnson@conservationcorps.org](mailto:alysen.johnson@conservationcorps.org)

Deadline: April 25, 2008

**Website: [www.conservationcorps.org](http://www.conservationcorps.org)**



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Please let us know. Your consideration saves both our time and postage.

**April 19th:** The Great Shingle Creek Watershed Cleanup. Brooklyn Center and four other cities that make up the Shingle Creek Watershed will celebrate Earth Day with the 7th Annual Great Shingle Creek Watershed Clean Up. Beginning Saturday, April 19 through Saturday, April 26, hundreds of volunteers from Plymouth to the Mississippi River will line the banks of Shingle Creek, picking up everything from pop cans to abandoned vehicles.

Contact Jenny Whiting at (763) 569-3380 or [jwhiting@ci.brooklyn-center.mn.us](mailto:jwhiting@ci.brooklyn-center.mn.us) for more information. Trash bags and cotton gloves will be provided the day of the event at the Community Center, 6301 Shingle Creek Parkway. The official clean up will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 19, to commemorate Earth Day 2008.

**May 10th:** SCSU Outdoor Endeavors Mississippi River Cleanup. Join St. Cloud State University Outdoor Endeavors for their cleanup of the west bank of the Mississippi along side the SCSU campus. Lunch and supplies will be provided. Contact Ivan Bartha at 320-308-6691 or by email at [ibarth@stcloudstate.edu](mailto:ibarth@stcloudstate.edu).

**June 12th:** 17th Annual Great Mississippi Riverboat Cleanup. Join the DNR, Minnesota Conservation Corps, and Padelford Packet Boat Company for their cleanup on the Mississippi. Lunch and supplies will be provided. We will also have live music and a prize raffle. Pre-registration is required. Contact Megan Godbold at 651-259-5620 or by email at [adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:adoptariver@dnr.state.mn.us).



By 2007 Big River Journey Art Contest Winner Kip Hathaway

For a  
complete  
listing of  
cleanup  
events  
please visit  
our website.

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adoptariver](http://www.mndnr.gov/adoptariver)