

Renville Soil & Water Conservation District

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RECEIVED
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**TO: CLEAN WATER COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE-CITIZEN COMMISSION ON MINNESOTA RESOURCES
LESSARD-SAMS OUTDOOR HERITAGE COUNCIL**

FROM: REDWOOD & RENVILLE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

DATE: FEBRUARY 11, 2010

RE: INVITATION

The Redwood and Renville Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors and Staff invite you to join them for a look at a small portion of the Minnesota River Watershed and to spend some time exploring the Minnesota River. July 21, 2010 is the tentative date for this entertaining and informative event.

We will board a bus about 8:30 am in Olivia. Our final destination is the Minnesota River which is the border between our two counties. On the way, we will pass through some of the most intensively agricultural areas of Minnesota. Renville County traditionally ranks #1 or #2 in the production of corn and soybeans and also is a significant producer of sugar beets and sweet corn. Our extensive drainage system has contributed to the productivity of the area but has also had an impact on water quality/quantity and wildlife issues facing the watershed and ultimately the Minnesota River. This area of the state is economically dependent on agriculture and most industry is ag related. We will be driving past Southern Minnesota Beet Sugar Coop (SMBSC) on our way to the River. The factory processes sugar beets produced in 19 counties. In addition to several corn and soybean research facilities, Renville County industries include Golden Oval (egg production), Christensen Farms (hogs), Minaqua (fish) and an ethanol plant.

During this first part of the day, you will see how land-use practices in the upper watershed contribute to the issues you face when setting priorities and reviewing funding requests. We will also view some completed projects (CWC) and hear from professionals who have charted the improvements to one stream in particular.

We will arrive at the Minnesota River around 10:00 am. At that point you will have the opportunity to take a short trip down the River in a canoe or kayak. We will stop at a large sandbar where there will be an opportunity to learn about past, present & future fisheries issues and to fish for catfish, sturgeon or other varieties of fish.

When we reach our destination, lunch will be provided and you will have the opportunity to relax and eat lunch. After lunch there will be a walking tour of a Granite Rock Outcrop Easement (LCCMR) and DNR Wildlife Management Area (LSOHC).

Participants will board the bus for the return trip to Olivia about 2:30 pm and will be able to depart for home by 3:00 pm.

If you choose not to canoe or kayak, you will be transported directly to the end point of the river trip and will have the opportunity to fish, relax or network until the others reach that area.

Joining us that day will be BWSR, MPCA and DNR professionals in addition to SWCD Staff from both Redwood and Renville Counties. These folks will be available to answer your questions about water quality and wildlife habitat and share how past and present programs are affecting both. They will be able to give you insight into the local delivery system and what works and what doesn't work with the agricultural community.

We want this to be a fun learning experience for everyone involved. We are looking forward to an opportunity to meet with you collectively and to provide you with an experience where you will be able to see, touch and experience one of the most compromised watersheds but also one of the most beautiful.

Please respond to your council chair or lead staff person if interested in attending this event. We will then work on a more detailed agenda.

Cc: Mike Hewitt, Chair
Redwood SWCD Board of Supervisors
Marc Iverson, Chair,
Renville SWCD Board of Supervisors