Become a Master Water Steward

Polluted stormwater runoff is one of the greatest threats to the health of our surface waters. Because urban runoff comes from everywhere, reducing urban runoff will require a whole-community effort. To combat urban runoff, the Freshwater Society has partnered with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD), to develop a new clean water educational resource for local communities: The Master Water Stewards program. Applications are now being accepted for the three-year pilot program, which will recruit and train volunteers to work with individuals and organizations in their communities to protect and clean up local lakes, streams and wetlands.

Master Water Stewards will educate neighbors about reducing runoff, work on runoff prevention projects, such as rain gardens and water-permeable driveways, and coordinate community activities such as leaf and grass clean-ups to reduce runoff.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, March 6
6:30 pm
The Rundown on Runoff

Thursday, April 11
6:00–9:00 pm
Ice OUT/Loon IN FUNraiser

Wednesday, May 1
7:00 pm
The Connection Between Groundwater and Lakes, Streams and Wetlands

In this issue

From the Desk of Joan Nephew ..............2
12th Annual Road Salt Symposium ...........2
Sandra Postel Inspires Crowd ..............3
3rd Annual Ice OUT/Loon IN ..............3
What Can I Do? ..........................4
Weatherguide Calendars ..............4

The Rundown on Runoff

On March 6, 2013 the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District in partnership with the Freshwater Society will host The Rundown on Runoff, a forum for citizens interested in learning more about the history of rainwater runoff management and what it means for the health of local surface waters. This free public event will be held at 6:30 pm at the Eisenhower Community Center, 1001 Highway 7, Hopkins. Participants will learn how the current infrastructure that manages runoff (e.g. storm sewers and ponds) came to be, how it is managed and the implications for local lakes, streams and wetlands. Visit www.freshwater.org to learn more and register.
From the desk of Joan Nephew
Freshwater Society Executive Director

The glass is way more than half-full.

We have had a wonderful run of Freshwater Society activities over the last month, and we have much more coming up this year and next.

• We are very proud to partner with the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District on a new program – Master Water Stewards – that will train volunteers to protect lakes and streams.

• Our 12th annual Road Salt Symposium was a great success.

• Sandra Postel wowed the biggest crowd we have had for our Moos lecture series. Go to our website to view archived video and register for our next lecture on May 1.

• Be sure to attend our April 11 Ice OUT/Loon IN party and FUNraiser. It will be fun!

Sincerely,

Joan Nephew

The Freshwater Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and inspiring people to value, conserve and protect water resources.

Board of Directors
Tom Skramstad, Chair
Stuart E. Grubb, Vice Chair
Barbara Luikens, MD, Secretary
Rick Bateson, Treasurer
Todd Bolin
Blyth Berg Brookman
Richard S. Caldecott, PhD, Emeritus Director
Robert Eide, PhD, Emeritus Director
Richard G. Gray, Sr., D.Sc.
JoEllen L. Hurr, Emeritus Director
David Knoblauch
Jim Manolis, PhD
Lii Tod McMillan
Darby Nelson, PhD
Corrine Ricard
Lisa Whalen

Staff
Gene Merriam, President
Joan Nephew, Executive Director
Scott Branch, Operations Assistant
Deirdre Coleman, Administrative Assistant
Peggy Knapp, Director of Programs
Diane Lynch, Development Director/Sr. Mgr.
Chris Prok, Operations Manager
Jeanne Prok, Program Manager
Patrick Sweeney, Comm./Research Director

Facets of Freshwater is published by the Freshwater Society.

For permission to reprint, contact us at:
2500 Shadywood Road, Excelsior, MN 55331, 952-471-9773 or at freshwater@freshwater.org.

Visit the Freshwater Society web site at www.freshwater.org.

12th Annual Road Salt Symposium

A diverse group of people convened for the 2013 symposium. With careers ranging from plow truck driver to water managers to research scientists, all were focused on the same issue: keeping chloride from road salt out of MN waters. Presentations provided information on the current state of chloride in our waters, the latest research on the effectiveness of road salt and methods to mitigate road salt’s impacts. 2013 Environmental Leadership Awards were also presented to people that have shown exemplary progress in decreasing the use of chloride.

You may view the following presentations at www.freshwater.com:

• Keynote: Future of MN Waters, Doug Wetzstein, MPCA

• TCMA Chloride Project: Management Plan Development Overview, Brooke Asleson, Project Manager, MPCA

• TCMA Chloride Project: Preliminary Data Results, Jeremy Walgrave, P.E., LimnoTech

• Slower Speeds Save Salt - Michigan Study, Tim Croze, Michigan Department of Transportation

• Snow Fence Calculator, Gary Wyatt, University of Minnesota Extension, Mankato

• Effectiveness of Deicers and Anti-icers, Stephen J. Druschel, PhD, PE Assistant Professor, Minnesota State Mankato

• TCMA Chloride Project: Implementation Strategies Overview, Brooke Asleson, MPCA

• Winter Maintenance Assessment Tool Development Connie Fortin, President, Fortin Consulting

2013 Environmental Leadership Awards were presented to:

• Bloomington Schools

• City of Waconia

• Prescription Landscape

• MPCA: The Salt Dilemma Display

Freshwater Society’s Joan Nephew and Gene Merriam present a leadership award to MPCA’s Brooke Asleson
Sandra Postel Inspires Crowd

About 300 people crowded into a University of Minnesota theater Tuesday, Feb. 12, 2013, to hear a stimulating, informative — and, ultimately, inspiring — lecture by Sandra Postel, an author and advocate for protecting and conserving the world’s water.

Postel talked about declining rivers across the globe and the over-pumping of groundwater for irrigation, primarily in the United States, India, Pakistan and China. And then she connected that over-use of water to the world’s food supply.

“About 10 percent of our food supply today depends on the over-pumping of groundwater,” she said.

If you missed Postel, view video of her lecture at www.freshwater.org or read a q-and-a interview with Postel about her life and work. The interview was conducted by the Freshwater Society before the lecture. Learn more about the next lecture, to be delivered May 1, 2013, by Don Rosenberry, a U.S. Geological Survey hydrologist, and register to attend it. Learn more about the lecture series, which honors the late Malcolm Moos, a former university president.

Is there a lecturer you would like to hear, or a subject you would like addressed? Send us your suggestions.

Postel, the author of three books on water, is a National Geographic Freshwater Fellow. Her lecture, titled Will We Have Enough Water? Adapting to a Warming Water-Stressed World, was sponsored by the Freshwater Society and the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences. The Mosaic Company Foundation provided special support for the talk.

Using a military term, she called climate change a “threat multiplier” that will intensify virtually all existing water problems.

Postel called for big and small changes in individual lifestyles and in national and international policy to increase “water productivity,” getting the most food and other benefits from each gallon of water that is used. She also called for more drip irrigation in place of ditch or spray irrigation, and the strategic reconstruction of damaged flood plains and wetlands to protect ecosystems.

She advocated eating less grain-fed beef and cutting back on consumption.

Citing the Water Footprint technique of measuring all the water embedded in products, she said a hamburger from a grain-fed steer requires an average of 630 gallons of water to produce. A burger from grass-fed beef takes 10 to 50 gallons, she said.

Most Americans already have enough cotton T-shirts, she said. Deciding not to buy that next one could save 700 gallons of water required to grow the cotton and produce the garment, she said.

She also offered a hopeful message about some initiatives across the world that are conserving and protecting water. The City of Boston, for example, has cut its water usage by 47 percent from its peak in 1987, she said.

A panel of three Minnesota experts on water and climate joined Postel in taking questions from the audience. Panelists were: Paul Bolstad, a University of Minnesota forestry professor who was one of the contributors to a recent National Climate Assessment; Kate Brauman, a research scholar in the university’s Institute on the Environment; and Deborah Swackhamer, a professor of science, technology and public policy and co-director of the University’s Water Resources Center.

Join us for our Third Annual Ice OUT/Loon IN FUNraising

Does the call of the loon inspire you? If so, then you do not want to miss our third annual Ice OUT/Loon IN event on Thursday, April 11 from 6:00–9:00 p.m. at the Lafayette Club, Lake Minnetonka located at 2800 Northview Road in Minnetonka Beach.

Once again, Paul Huttner, Minnesota Public Radio’s all-around great guy and meteorologist, will be our emcee. Highlights of the program include: Loon Calling Contest, Live and Silent Auctions, Raffles, Bluegrass band: Rhubarb Vaselino, excellent Food and Drinks, including our specialty – The Loontini!

Featured auction items include:
• Kayaking around the Split Rock Lighthouse donated by Wolf Ridge ELC
• One skiing week for four near Steamboat Springs in the Rockies
• Dinner for 10 with Chef and Author, Beth Dooley
• Golf outing at Woodhill Country Club
• Private Brewery Tour and Brews for 8 donated by Excelsior Brewing
• Four Tickets to Minnesota’s Mariucci Classic Hockey Tournament

The entire list of auction items will be available soon on our website www.freshwater.org

Tickets are just $50 per person or $85 for two. To reserve a table for eight, the cost is $400. To register and buy tickets, go to our website.

For more information, please contact Diane Lynch, Senior Manager, at 952-314-8134 or dlynch@freshwater.org.
Let's Get Ready for Spring

Salt and sand used for our safety throughout the winter months can have deadly consequences on grass and plants. But it’s what we can’t see that is really alarming. Chloride from deicing salt has lasting impacts to our surface and groundwaters and their ecosystems. Sand causes an increase in turbidity in waters that leads to unhealthy aquatic environments. Be sure to clean up any salt or sand on your property and in your street before the warm temperatures come and the snowmelt carries them to your nearest body of water.

On a larger scale, plan a Community Clean-Up for Water Quality with your neighborhood or organization to keep last year’s leaves, salt, sand and other debris from polluting the water this spring. The work you do in a short amount of time has lasting impacts on our environment. Find the tools you need for your Clean-Up at www.freshwater.org/community-clean-ups-for-water-quality.

Now is a great time to plan your water-efficient landscape! As the snow melts, take a look at how your landscape uses water and also how it loses water. Incorporate ways to use or store the water you have. A rain garden not only brings beauty to your property, it is a great tool to use and filter water. Rain barrels and composting bins are widely available to help you conserve water and get the most out of your gardens. Including native plants in your garden is a great way to add beauty, increase water efficiency and lower your gardening maintenance.

Members of a confirmation class from Christ Lutheran Church in Blaine taking part in a Community Clean-Up for Water Quality.

Weatherguide Calendars still available.

To order: Call 952-471-9773, go online to www.freshwater.org or order from the FREE Minnesota Weatherguide mobile app!

All calendar proceeds help us continue our programs as we WORK FOR WATER!