



# Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals

The Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals is dedicated to providing an alliance of natural resource professionals to protect professionalism, support employees, and advocate for environmentally sound science-based decisions concerning natural resource conservation issues including air, water, land, native plants, fish, & wildlife.

**News and Notes**  
Volume 1 February 2009

**ANNUAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT**  
**“Collaboration in Conservation”**  
10:00 am Friday, March 6, 2009  
Initiative Foundation  
405 First Street SE  
Little Falls, Minnesota 56345

Please join us at the Initiative Foundation in Little Falls for the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals. Confirmed and invited speakers include Dave Zentner, well-known Minnesota conservationist and co-chair of the Duck Rally group that was instrumental in passing the Habitat and Clean Water constitutional amendment, Mark Holsten, DNR Commissioner, Paul Eger, MPCA Commissioner, John Jaschke, Executive Director of the Board of Water and Soil Resources, and Jim Cox of the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting will run from 9:45 to 4:00 p.m. The meeting is open to all conservation professionals in Minnesota (including retired). Pre-register by sending an email to: [lee\\_kelly\\_sundmark@hotmail.com](mailto:lee_kelly_sundmark@hotmail.com) by March 1. The registration fee, which will be collected at the door, is \$20, which includes a \$15 annual membership in the MACP and lunch during the meeting.

## **ABOUT US –**

At the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting the Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association voted to reorganize and expand membership. The association adopted the new name of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) and expanded membership eligibility to all current and retired conservation professionals in Minnesota. The MACP is a nonprofit association of professional conservation workers from all disciplines. Wildlife, fisheries, forestry, native plants, water and soil all represent specific disciplines that are represented by conservation programs in Minnesota. The MACP promotes communication, training and policy coordination among these disciplines, but outside of the federal, state, and local agencies and organizations where its members are employed.

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **1. The agencies that employ these conservation workers presumably offer training and coordination. Why is a separate nonprofit organization necessary?**

Each conservation agency or organization has its own scope of responsibility, chain of command and political culture. As employees, the conservation workers are appropriately expected conform to agency or organization policies. Communication is typically directed through a chain of command that can significantly filter employee communication.

## **2. Does this mean that agencies and organizations aren't doing their job?**

Not at all. However, everyone needs to recognize that agencies and organizations are led by political appointees. These leaders are typically chosen by either elected officials or self-sustaining boards of directors. Employees either conform to the policies and priorities of the organization or are asked to find other employment. We recognize that agencies and organizations must maintain some conformity, but we also believe that conservation workers ought to have an avenue for safely expressing opinions or advocating for policies based on their professional expertise.

## **3. Don't professional organizations like The Wildlife Society, American Fisheries Society, and the Society of American Foresters already provide this forum?**

Minnesota is blessed with very active professional organizations that do serve this role at times. However, the membership of these organizations is comprised almost solely of professionals of each respective discipline. In addition to the opportunities these professional societies offer, MACP believes in the importance of interdisciplinary communication and discussion. This is particularly true as Minnesota embarks on a new era in conservation with constitutionally dedicated funding. There is a real need for open discussion between conservation disciplines that are not constrained by agency or organization policies and priorities. We hope that the MACP can provide that forum.

We are a very new organization with a small core group of members. We will be holding our first annual membership meeting March 6, 2009 in Little Falls.

**Roger Holmes** retired Director of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Fish and Wildlife and life-long conservationist died in mid-December. The Minnesota Fish and Wildlife Employees Association, the precursor to the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals, lost a great friend with his passing. Mr. Holmes began his career with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in 1958 and was a long-time supporter of the Association. In his leadership roles as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Section Chief and later as Director for the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife he always maintained open lines of communication and a dialogue with the Association through his retirement in 2000. He always remained passionate about natural resources and dedicated to management of Minnesota's natural heritage using a foundation based in ecological principals and science. Many members of this organization served with Mr. Holmes. At many turns he expressed support and appreciation for the role the organization played as a voice for the practitioners that carry out the responsibility of stewardship of our living public trust resources and the habitats upon which they depend. There will be some time reserved at the annual meeting for a tribute to Mr. Holmes. Please join us and share some memories and stories about Roger Holmes.

## **MACP Position Statement on the Constitutional Amendment**

The members of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals come from the ranks of professionals in the management of Minnesota's natural resources. Our members are part of the front line of conservation policy and project implementation in our state.

Throughout our careers we have witnessed first hand the degradation of our lands and waters and the impact it has had on fish, wildlife and native plants. We have seen the decline of outdoor recreation opportunities and the loss of a healthy Minnesota.

To be fair, we have also been part of conservation successes. Our state and federal agencies, conservation organizations, and landowners are national leaders in building partnerships, applying sound science, seeking innovation, and completing great individual projects. Minnesotans can be proud of these examples of sound conservation.

But successful conservation cannot be accomplished piecemeal. The challenges facing Minnesota are huge, the timeframes long, and the complexity daunting. A success story here and there just doesn't get the job done.

As professionals we are faced daily with the realities of funding. As outgoing state representative Dennis Ozment (Republican-Rosemount) has pointed out, the biennial budgeting chore completed by the Governor and legislature is not conducive to funding the long-term comprehensive approach required for sound conservation of water, soils and wildlife.

Past promises of long-term commitments have been broken. Resource 2000, for example, was a product of the early 1970's that set lofty conservation goals to be accomplished by the year 2000. Funding fizzled before 1980.

The Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM) initiative was passed in 1986, supported by a coalition that ranged from The Nature Conservancy to the Minnesota Corn Growers Association. Focused on an ambitious program of soil, forest, fish and wildlife conservation, the coalition sought a long-term commitment of \$60 million a year. RIM received \$16 million the first year as a "down payment," but appropriations soon dwindled. RIM remains a mere shadow of its original vision.

Even stable sources of funding such as hunting and angling licenses fail to keep up with the erosive effect of inflation. For example, the state waterfowl stamp successfully sought by the Minnesota Waterfowl Association was first issued in 1977 for \$3. Despite two increases since then, the cost of the stamp has never regained the full value of its original issue price.

We are very fortunate in Minnesota to have the expertise, tools, and partnerships to restore and protect Minnesota's natural heritage. It's as if the train is loaded and idling at the station. All that is needed is the fuel to accelerate forward down the track. That fuel is consistent, long-term funding. Without it, our conservation efforts are largely stalled. The Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment offers an opportunity to address these long-term funding needs and we urge Minnesotans to vote yes.

- *MACP Board of Directors, October 2008*

## HAVE A TALENT TO SHARE?

### LOGO CONTEST - Win fame and a fabulous prize!

As a new organization, we need a new logo. If you are interested in sharing your flair for art please consider submitting a drawing the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals can adapt and use for a logo and letterhead. The new logo should reflect the mission of the organization. Please bring your artwork to the annual meeting or send it to a board member on or prior to 15 April. The board of directors will select a new logo from submissions.

### PRIZES, PRIZES, PRIZES

The Association is asking all members for any and all prize donations they can bring to the Annual Meeting on March 6<sup>th</sup>. Homemade and handmade items are especially welcome!

### ELECTIONS

The Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals is seeking nominations for officers for the board of directors. The MN Association of Conservation Professionals needs your help in finding candidates for our upcoming election. Elections will be held at the annual meeting in March.

Make as many nominations as you like and you can nominate more than one person for the same office. Nominees will be contacted as to whether they accept or decline the nomination.

Offices to be elected at the 2009 annual meeting:

- President/President Elect (3-year term)
- Secretary (2-year term)
- Treasurer (2-year term)
- 6 Board Members

### NOMINATION FORM

Name of nominee: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominating for which office: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I have contacted this individual about running

\_\_\_\_ I **have not** contacted this individual about running

Notify one of the board members listed at the end of the newsletter with any nominations

# OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD NOMINATION

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT or SPECIAL PROJECT AWARD NOMINATION FORM

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Nominee

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Work Station/Address:

\_\_\_\_ Organization    \_\_\_\_ Agency

Description of nomination: (please attach separate sheet)

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Person(s) making nomination

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Notify one of the board members listed at the end of the newsletter with any nominations **by MARCH 3, 2009**

### RESOLUTIONS

A resolution establishing a Fiscal Year for the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) tax, budget an accounting purposes

Whereas, a fiscal year for Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals (MACP) is not clearly defined in organization by-laws; and

Whereas, a fiscal year is needed for tax, budget, and accounting purposes; and

Whereas, the calendar year seems to fit both MACP and IRS schedules.

Now therefore be it resolved, that MACP by-laws set forth a fiscal year that begins January 1 and ends December 31 each year.

### MINUTES – Fall Board Meeting

The fall board of directors meeting was held October 15, 2008, Monticello, Minnesota. Board Members Present: Leroy Dahlke, Ray Norrgard, Doug Norris, Nick Reindl, Lee Sundmark, and Jeanine Vorland. Absent: Mike Larson, Jim Lilienthal, Dave Pauly, and Konrad Schmidt

Paul Stolen submitted his resignation as President. There is no President-elect. Discussed function of the governing board in the absence of these positions. The governing board will share duties of the president until next elections. Discussed the importance of filling candidate positions for all openings on the board. Awards were approved for Jack Enblom, Mike Loss, and Paul Munsterteiger & Larry Pulchaski. Lee will prepare certificates for distribution at next annual meeting or other appropriate time.

Membership – 45 current members

Treasurer's Report    Checking - \$1522.18    Share Account - \$502.11    Outstanding Expenses – \$111.26

Approved payment of outstanding expenses. Approved a budget of \$200 for website expenses and \$250 for acquisition of items for fund raisers at the annual meeting.

The status and future of the organization was discussed. The organization is registered with the Internal Revenue Service. Need to follow up with status and filing needs.

Means to maintain and grow the organization was discussed. The up-coming annual meeting will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the formation of the Fish and Wildlife Employees' Association. Meeting date needs to be between 10 February and 10 March.

Plan for 2 newsletters before the annual meeting – one for late fall and one in early winter. Fall newsletter should solicit artwork for a new logo will be solicited from the membership. Fame and a prize will be the reward.

The board approved a position in favor of the constitutional amendment for dedicating funding. The board will be preparing a commentary to communicate this position.

The board also discussed the need to communicate concerns about the status of funding for Department of Natural Resources Fisheries and Wildlife programs. No license fee increases are currently proposed and serious budget shortfalls are predicted.

Next Board Meeting Date – December

## ISSUES FORUM

If you have issues that you believe may warrant attention by the collective professional voice of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals, please bring them to the attention of members of the Board and the membership. There are plenty of challenges in front of us and the Association offers one forum where your colleagues can help lend a measure of support. The Association may be one of the best forums addressing issues that are common across agencies. The annual meeting promises to provide another excellent forum for open discussion. For new resolutions and more information visit our website.

<http://www.mfwea.org>

## TO THE EDITOR

As you know, the DNR in compliance with 2005/2007 Minnesota legislation is in the process of reviewing state lands for possible sale. The law (see attached) requires that \$6.44 million worth of state lands be sold and the monies deposited in the general fund. To comply with this legislation about \$4 million worth of state lands will need to be sold by June 30, 2009. **Rescinding this legislation is the only way to prevent the sale of these public lands.** Presently St. Paul DNR is reviewing the parcels submitted by field and regional staff in an attempt to come up with the land needed to comply with the legislation.

The lists of parcels along with data that were submitted to St. Paul DNR for review have been obtained under the Minnesota Data Practices Act. A quick review of the data indicates that there are about 140 parcels presently being reviewed by St. Paul DNR. These 140 parcels break down into about 60 wildlife management area, 10 aquatic management areas, 27 state forests, 10 state parks, and 30 various trust fund parcels.

If these 140 or so parcels are sold, what if any of the monies from these sales would actually end up in the general fund? Almost all the parcels are listed as “acquired” were purchased with dedicated funds (Federal aid, small game license surcharge, etc.). The trust fund lands were granted to the State by the Federal government. Almost all of the wildlife management and aquatic management areas would have been purchased with some federal aid monies. By law the State of Minnesota would have to return these federal aid monies to the federal aid program. Those monies from our small game hunting license surcharge for habitat acquisition surely would have to be returned to the surcharge fund and used for its intended purpose??? Also the Trust Fund sale monies would go to the “trust” rather than the general fund. **It would appear that the general fund will get “zip” if these natural resource lands are sold.**

It is extremely disturbing that most of these parcels proposed for sale contain wetlands and/or are part of a larger wetland complex. We spent years supporting the establishment of the Wetlands Conservation Act and now see attempts to privatize some of our valuable wetland resource lands. It is also disturbing to see that this 2005 legislation permits the sale of lakeshore and/or riparian tracts even though earlier laws prevents such sales.

Field resource manager comments ranged from “none of it fits the distressed merchandise land sale criteria” to we could subdivide the Sandshore Lake property by Bethel and sell lakeshore lots. We should sell public lakeshore in this day and age? The parcels included in the sale list should be of little natural resource value, yet we see notables such as Richard J Dorer, David B. Vesall, and Roger Holmes signing off on these projects. How now are they of little value?

**The big question is: Why would we sell any natural resource lands six months after Minnesota passed a constitutional amendment to provide sales tax dollars for habitat acquisition and natural resource management? Yes! The bill did pass in 2005 but we have several months to rescind this law.**

As DNR Wildlife Chief Shad is quoted in the media "The advocates for public land need to recognize this as a real threat and get engaged in this issue." Obviously we have a choice – sit back and let George do it or join in to save our resource lands. It is up to you!

Gerald H Maertens  
885 Bootleg Lake Road SW  
Bemidji MN 56601

P.S. Note that bills have been introduced to prohibit the sale of certain lands - HF638 and SF353.

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# ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

## “Collaboration in Conservation”

10:00 am Friday, March 6, 2009

Initiative Foundation

405 First Street SE

Little Falls, Minnesota 56345

Please join us at the Initiative Foundation in Little Falls for the annual meeting of the Minnesota Association of Conservation Professionals. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting will run from 9:45 to 4:00 p.m. The meeting is open to all conservation professionals in Minnesota (including retired).

**9:00 Registration, Coffee, Refreshments and Fellowship**

**9:45 Welcome**

**10:00 Jim Cox, Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council**

**11:00 Dave Zentner, Co-Chair, Minnesota Duck Rally**

**12:00 Lunch & Tribute to Roger Holmes**

**12:45 Mark Holsten, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources**

**1:30 John Jaschke, Executive Director of the Board of Water and Soil Resources**

**2:00 Tim Scherkenbach, Acting Deputy Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

**2:30 Break**

**2:45 Issues Forum**

**3:00 Business Meeting**

**- Prizes – Prizes – Prizes -**

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### Membership and Meeting Registration

\_\_\_\_\_ Membership Dues and Meeting Registration \$20.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Membership Dues Only \$15.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Registration Only \$5.00

Send remittance to: Lee Sundmark, 59251 208<sup>th</sup> Street, Litchfield, Minnesota 55355

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

All Registrations received prior to the meeting will be entered into a drawing for an early-bird prize! Pre-register by sending an email to: "lee\_kelly\_sundmark@hotmail.com" by March 4, fees will be collected at the door.