



The River Voice
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Work Begins on Radio Tower Bay Restoration Project

After more than 100 years, work is beginning to remove tons of wood waste in a bay important for fish habitat on the St. Louis River. On

February 15th, Marine Tech, a local contractor, began removing 120-year-old pilings from the bay using an excavator parked on the ice. This first phase of the habitat restoration effort will improve access to the site for the next phase of the project. The bay was home to two sawmills in the late 1800s that dumped wood waste into the water. The pilings remain from a railroad trestle that once crossed the bay. The pilings from the bay are perfectly preserved - the photo below shows the original ax marks where they were whittled to a point.



Upcoming Events

March 8 & 9, 2012

St. Louis River Estuary Science Summit
2012

Yellowjacket Union University of
Wisconsin-Superior
1605 Catlin Ave, Superior WI
Website: <http://lsnerr.uwex/slrss/main.html>
Thursday, March 15 & 22 - 7:00 pm
LSMMA Evening Entertainment Series
programs

Canal Park Lodge, 250 Canal Park Drive
in Duluth, Minnesota
Call LSMMA at 218 727-2497 or visit
www.LSMMA.com

April 10, 2012 -7:00 pm

St. Louis River Alliance Environmental
Stewardship Awards Ceremony
Spirit Mountain Area Moosehead Lounge
For more information call: 218-733-9520

River Ruminations

The St. Louis River is the largest U.S.
tributary to Lake Superior and drains 3,634
square miles.

Contributors

Contributing Writers

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Ruth Oppedahl, Univ of WI Extension
Sarah Lerohl, WLSSD
Gina Temple-Rhodes, Cedar Story
Services



This work to restore habitat was been made possible through a regional partnership between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) with funding from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and the State of Minnesota Legacy Amendment. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is coordinating the project with support from the Minnesota Land Trust and the St. Louis River Alliance. Other cooperators include the City of Duluth, the Duluth Economic Development Authority and Minnesota Power.



At a news conference held February 15, Mayor Don Ness applauded this project saying, "Restoring the St. Louis River is an important part of our vision for Duluth as a premier outdoor city." Ness stated, "The health of the river is important to residents and the city is an active participant in these clean-up efforts."

Northeast Regional Director of the MN Department of Natural

Resources Craig Engwall said, "Restoration of the St. Louis River is a significant project within DNR, and we are pleased with the coordination between the partnering agencies." Engwall added, "This project at Radio Tower Bay has the potential to restore important fish nursery habitat for a number of fish species, including walleye and lake sturgeon."

Phase two will involve removing tons of slab wood that covers the bottom of the bay and organic material that has built up over time. A trail and boardwalk will be constructed along with a wildlife observation deck and interpretive signs. Funding for phase two is currently being sought.

Stowe Fifth Graders Explore Radio Tower Bay

On February 15, sixty fifth grade students from Stowe Elementary hiked from 96th Avenue West in New Duluth to see first-hand the clean-up project at Radio Tower Bay.

John Lindgren of the MN DNR led students to the site of one of the two sawmills which operated in the bay in the late 1800's. Only the foundation of the sawmill remains, but students could still see the legacy of nearly ten years of long-ago sawmill operations. Lumber yard waste covers the bottom of the bay and even in winter, piles of slab wood are visible.



Students also walked across the ice to watch as 35-foot-long pilings were pulled from the frozen bay with an excavator. The pilings are the remnants of a railroad trestle built in 1891 by the Duluth Winnipeg logging railroad.



Students learned how the cleanup project will restore healthy shallow water habitat for fish and waterfowl

to return to the bay. Ms. Fran Weber and Mr. Bob Berg, fifth grade teachers at Stowe, valiantly supported the expedition and the St. Louis River Alliance thanks them for the extra efforts to take their classrooms out of doors.

River History

"The Original Bridge to Nowhere." In 1891, a railroad bridge was built over the St. Louis River from New Duluth to the village of St. Louis, WI. It cost \$100,000 to build and was opened and closed for ship traffic using ropes. In 1914, this bridge structure was removed and hauled down the river to be scrapped. This bridge was never used as it was intended because the railroad was never built on the Wisconsin side of the river.

St. Louis River Alliance elects new board members

Five people have joined the board of the St. Louis River Alliance. New to the board are Brandon Kohlts, Western Lake Superior Sanitary District; Bob Maas, retired; and Ted Smith, Marine Tech. Elected to a second term are Jean Brozic, Brozic Management Company and Gail Gilliland, retired. The board members were elected to three-year terms at the St. Louis River Alliance annual meeting in January.

SLRA Honors Outgoing Board Members



At its annual meeting the Alliance thanked outgoing board members Will Munger, Jr. and Bill Majewski for their long time service to the organization and for their contributions to protecting, restoring and enhancing the St. Louis River. Bill has served on the board since the organization became a nonprofit in 1996. He served as Board Chair for 2008-2010 and has been an active member of the Stewardship Committee, Habitat Work Group and the

Membership Committee.

Will Munger has served on the board since 2005 and has been an active member of the Stewardship Workgroup and Membership Committee. Fortunately, both Bill and Will have said they will continue to be involved with the Alliance.



The 2nd Annual St Louis River Science Summit to be held March 8-9

The 2nd annual St Louis River Estuary Science Summit will be held at the University of Wisconsin-Superior Yellowjacket Union on March 8-9. Exciting research, restoration and management projects that are going on in and around the St Louis River will be discussed. The goal of the conference is to provide a venue for sharing information on the St Louis River among the community, students, scientists, and natural resource managers. This year's theme is the St Louis River Estuary "Area of Concern to Area of

Recovery". You can see the program at <http://lsnerr.uwex.edu/slrss/main.html>.

Staying in touch with Wisconsin's AOCs

Did you know that besides the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC), Wisconsin has four other AOCs? Learn what's happening about clean-up projects and habitat restorations at other sites by checking out our state-wide website, [Wisconsin's Great Lakes Areas of Concern](#). You will find information on meetings, events and projects in these river and estuaries that are affected by legacy contaminants. Recent uploads include [webinar presentations](#) on the tree swallow study, dredging projects in the Sheboygan River, and other subjects related to AOC meetings or public events. Please consider sending your meeting dates and minutes, project stories or other information you would like to see on the St. Louis River pages on this website.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources also has uploaded a new [Areas of Concern website](#) which hold the official records like Remedial Action Plans, official maps, and other studies and materials in the AOC archive.

Other ways of staying in touch with AOC staff, CAC members and stakeholders include:

- Joining the [WI AOC listserv](#)
- "Like" the [WI AOC Facebook Page](#)
- View AOC photos on our [WI AOC Picasa Web Album](#)

For more information contact [Ruth Oppedahl](#), Natural Resources Educator, UW Extension 715-685-2676

"Return to the River": WLSSD's Historical Display and Traveling Exhibit

The Western Lake Superior Sanitary District cordially invites everyone to visit its lobby at 2626 Courtland Street to take in the display "Return to the River: the History of the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District." Funded in part by the Minnesota Historical Society through the Minnesota Historical & Cultural Grants program, the display was installed in the summer of 2011 and chronicles the modern history of the St. Louis River and formation of the district.



A separate traveling exhibit project based on the lobby display was funded in part by the Coastal Zone Management Act, by

NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource management, in cooperation with Minnesota's Lake Superior Coastal Program. It features six freestanding panels with graphics, text, and three-dimensional elements that echo and expand on the themes of the original lobby display. The traveling exhibit will be completed in the spring of 2012, and available in 2013 for any organization to display through the St. Louis County Historical Society's Traveling Exhibit Program. For more information about the Traveling Exhibit Program, visit <http://www.thehistorypeople.org/handouts.asp>

The Lake Superior Marine Museum Association presents Evening Entertainment Series Programs

These public events are free and held at the Canal Park Lodge, 250 Canal Park Drive in Duluth, MN. Programs for March 2012 are as follows:

Thursday, March 15, 7:00 pm - "*Antarctica in Black and White: Snow, Ice and Penguins*"

Duluthians Jill and Koresh Lakhani will share information and incredible photos of a recent international trip to Antarctica, which is home to 90 percent of all the world's ice and 70 percent of all the world's fresh water. Come learn fascinating details about the highest, driest, windiest, emptiest and coldest place on earth.

Thursday, March 22, 7:00 pm - "*For the Love of Lakes*" Presentation and Book Signing

Minnesota aquatic ecologist, professor emeritus, Anoka-Ramsey Community College and conversation activist, Darby Nelson, weaves a delightful tapestry of history, science, and emotion in his book "For the Love of Lakes". Learn more about this thoughtful publication, which addresses the stewardship void while providing improved understanding of Minnesota's most treasured natural features. There will be an opportunity to meet the author and purchase a signed book.

LSMMA Evening Entertainment Series programs are always free and open to the general public. **For More Information:** Call LSMMA at 218-727-2497 or visit www.LSMMA.com

River People News



Connie Moeller has joined the St. Louis River Alliance staff as Grant Administrator. Connie watched from her backyard the cleanup activities and restoration work of Strykker Bay. Her enjoyment of the St. Louis River led to an interest in the work of the Alliance. Connie has a master's degree in Information Science from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor's degree in

English from the University of Minnesota, Duluth. She has been a classroom English teacher and librarian and will be assisting the Alliance in grant writing, project research, and public education. She can be reached at cmoeller@stlouisriver.org

About Us

The St. Louis River Alliance is a nonprofit organization of citizens and groups working together to protect, restore and enhance the St. Louis River.