



*The River Voice*  
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2011

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Upcoming Events

November 3-4

[Wisconsin's Areas of Concern  
Statewide Meeting](#)

Heritage Hill State Historical Park  
2640 S. Webster Ave..

Green Bay, WI

November 11-12

The geese are flocking on the St. Louis River and flying overhead in Vs. The trees are beginning to turn. It seems like summer went awfully fast. I hope you had time to enjoy it properly. The river has been a hopping place these past few months. Read on for a sampling of what happened.

Also, this newsletter has been in existence long enough to warrant a user survey. Please share your opinions or suggestions for it by taking this 5-10 minute online [survey](#). Your input is needed by **October 12**. Thank you!

If you have a story or image for the next issue, send it to Marie Zhuikov at the St. Louis River Alliance: [mariez@stlouisriver.org](mailto:mariez@stlouisriver.org). The next deadline is **Nov. 22**.

## Real Science, Real Learning

Teacher Workshop Kicks Off Lake Superior  
NERR Education Program

Although the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR) education coordinator, Deanna Erickson,

[Freshwater Future's Climate Symposium](#)

Milwaukee, WI

## River Ruminations

The St. Louis River is the largest U.S. tributary into Lake Superior. The Nipigon River is the largest Canadian tributary.

*Lake Superior Magazine*

## Contributors

Deanna Erickson, Lake Superior NERR  
Chris Kleist, City of Duluth  
Julie O'Leary, Freshwater Future  
Dave Warburton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



had only been on the job two days, the six teachers who attended the LSNERR Estuarine Science workshop on July 25-27 successfully immersed themselves in the St. Louis River Estuary, gaining fresh ideas and technology to take back to their classrooms.



Lake Superior NERR Coastal Training Program Coordinator Sue O'Halloran (center) helps teachers Dave Johnson (left - Duluth, MN), Keith Lilquist (background - Prior Lake, MN) and Leigh Brown (right - Antigo, WI). Image courtesy of the Lake Superior NERR.

Designed to be an inquiry-based experience, teachers from Minnesota and Wisconsin delved into developing a research question, learning to use water sampling equipment and piecing together a picture of the estuary. All of this was in preparation for a public

presentation to other teachers who had spent a week aboard the U.S. EPA Research Vessel *Lake Guardian* on Lake Superior in a companion workshop. Both programs provided teachers an opportunity to practice science alongside working scientists, and were a collaboration between the [Centers for Ocean Education Excellence Great Lakes](#), the EPA, Minnesota Sea Grant and the LSNERR.

In just two days, the teachers collected water quality data, traveled through the harbor and into Lake Superior on the *Lake Guardian*, met with researchers from Superior, Duluth and across the Great Lakes region, and carried the story of the estuary into their presentations. Though short and action-packed, the experience helped increase the teachers' comfort levels in explaining scientific concepts and interacting with scientists, as shown by their post-workshop evaluations. It was, according to one teacher, an "awesome experience on the boat and shore."

Keep an eye out for upcoming [events](#) as the LSNERR gets

rolling.

## A Star-Studded *Vista* Tour

More than 125 people toured the St. Louis River Estuary aboard the *Vista Star* on August 16. Those on board included members of Minnesota's Clean Water Council, many local business and community leaders, state legislators as well as staff members of congress representing both states. In addition, the Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Paul Aasen, and MN Dept. of Natural Resources Assistant Commissioner, Mary McConnell, attended.

The purpose of the river tour was to bring local leaders together with key state agency and funding decision-makers from both Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Stories were shared to demonstrate

how significant investments have led to much progress in restoring and protecting the St. Louis River since it was designated as an Area of Concern of the Great Lakes.

The tour also impressed upon these leaders that there is an unprecedented opportunity for leveraging state and federal funds to finish the job of cleaning up the river, which will lead to sustainable economic development and increased recreational opportunities. And if this weren't enough, another separate tour aboard the *Vista* took place a week later, and featured a tour of Clough Island.

The [tour](#) was organized by a several local environmental groups and was hosted by the St. Louis River Alliance. The Alliance is appreciative of the support provided by the following partners and sponsors who help put this tour together and/or provided financial support:



Nancy Larson with the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources describes Wisconsin habitat project success stories along the St. Louis River Estuary.

**Minnesota Environmental Partners  
Minnesota Land Trust  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
University of Wisconsin Extension Services  
Duluth Seaway Port Authority  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Barr Engineering  
SEH (Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc.)**

## Lake Superior Day Event Draws Crowds



Marte Kitson with MN Sea Grant informs Lake Superior Day-goers about the perils of aquatic invasive species. Image courtesy of the Duluth Seaway Port Authority.

Events honoring Lake Superior and the river were held in mid-August this year and touched thousands of people. An event planning committee headed by *Lake Superior Magazine* editor, Konnie LeMay, met regularly for several months and coordinated local activities. Here are some of the impressive statistics:

30,000 Lake Superior Day placemats were distributed to area restaurants

6,000 event calendar rack cards were distributed

2,000 bookmarks were distributed

2,000 postcards were distributed

1,650 people stopped by booths at the Marine Museum in Canal Park

120 people visited Sugarloaf Cove

100 people viewed the documentary film "Grandmothers Gathering for Gitchigaaming"  
34 people toured the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District facility

Way to get the word out!

## River Life in the Slow Lane



About 50 canoeists and kayakers joined the St. Louis River Alliance's annual canoe tour and picnic on a gorgeously sunny August 20. The group met at Munger Landing in West Duluth and paddled past the Tallas Island project out to Clough Island, which was recently purchased for conservation purposes. The picnic was held on Clough Island, where participants learned about the island's history from Jerome Blazevec. The more adventurous explored the old homestead, with some getting cases of poison ivy as take-home souvenirs. The event raised money for river stewardship efforts performed by the Alliance.

## Duluth Stream Corps Project Receives State Innovation Award



A Duluth Stream Corps worker adjusts deer fencing around a planted tree. Image courtesy of Rolf Hagberg.

Community Action Duluth was recognized by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits for two projects that employ innovative strategies designed to mobilize low-income people and communities. Community Action Duluth's Stream Corps Project works to restore the 42 streams that pass through Duluth on the way to Lake Superior. Through Stream Corps, Community Action Duluth is working to plant 20,000 trees that will stabilize 20 miles of stream bank over the next two years. Stream Corps employees and volunteers have also learned how to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software to integrate marketing, public outreach and forestry. The other program that received recognition was Seeds of Success, which hires individuals to grow vegetables in distressed lot locations throughout Duluth. Award-winners receive a professional video shoot about their projects and a small cash prize.

## St. Louis River Alliance Receives Capacity Building Grant

The Healing Our Waters Coalition awarded the St. Louis River Alliance \$11,500 to support local Great Lakes Restoration Initiative-related projects. The Alliance will receive support for administrative staff and outreach activities for projects that include restoring fish and wildlife habitat and increasing fish and wildlife populations within the St. Louis River Estuary. The

Alliance's work will include providing public outreach, engaging stewardship efforts and promoting the benefits of these restoration projects to community leaders and key decision-makers.

## River People News

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has hired **Zachary (Zach)**



**Jorgenson** as part of its Environmental Contaminants (EC) Program in the Minnesota Ecological Services Field Office (Bloomington, MN). Zach is taking the USFWS lead on Great Lakes Restoration Initiative projects funded through the EC Program (e.g., the Contaminants of Emerging Concern investigation, 40th Ave West and 21st Ave West "R-to-R" Ecological Designs, Fish Tumors and Deformities investigation) as well as assisting with other related EC projects on the Lower St. Louis River.

Zach recently completed his graduate studies at the Aquatic Toxicology Laboratory at St. Cloud State University, where he researched response differences to 17 $\beta$ -estradiol exposure between an endangered species and two model species; and between different life stages of a model species. Prior to that, Zach earned his B.S. in marine biology from California State University, Long Beach. He can be reached at [Zachary.Jorgenson@fws.gov](mailto:Zachary.Jorgenson@fws.gov) and his phone is (612) 725-3548 (x2247).



In August, **Julie O'Leary**, northeast Minnesota programs coordinator for the Minnesota Environmental Partnership, took a job as associate director for policy with Freshwater Future. She said, "I'm looking forward to the opportunity to work regionally on some of the issues we have worked on together here in Minnesota and I know I will continue to cross paths

with many of you." Julie is staying in the same building, however. Her office is 405 in the DeWitt-Seitz Building in Duluth and her contact info is: [Julie@freshwaterfuture.org](mailto:Julie@freshwaterfuture.org) or (231) 838-9934.

## In Other News(letters)

**Minnesota Public Radio** did a [story](#) about the Regional Stormwater Protection Team and the Weber Stream Restoration Initiative and how they are working to protect local water quality.

## 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.

[Find us on Facebook](#) 