

Environment

Lake Drainage

04-28-15

The public comment period on a plan to create outlets on Little McDonald, Paul and Kerbs lakes has ended, with 107 comments as part of an Environmental Assessment Worksheet.

The three lakes are landlocked, and recent year's excess moisture has caused those lakes to flood property. Residents on those lakes would like to see outlets that would drain their lakes to an acceptable level into the Otter Tail River.

Otter Tail County Land and Resources Director Bill Kalar says the county board has to decide now whether a more comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement should be completed. They'll do that by researching the public comments to see if there are legitimate environmental concerns.

Kalar says two themes seem to be emerging in the public comments he's seen, relating to the downstream impact of sending that extra water to the Otter Tail River...

... "Rush Lakes." :26

Kalar was instructed by the county board to write up a summary of the public concerns and deliver those to commissioners to discuss in May.

Funding for the lake drainage system, if approved, could come from the legislature. Local legislators are trying to get that funding included in the bonding bill.

NewsC
800
News 7

Gordy Nielsen Memorial Tract dedication slated at the Rothsay Wildlife Management Area

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, in partnership with the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club, and friends and family of Gordy Nielsen, will host a ceremony at the Rothsay State Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on May 16 to dedicate the Gordy Nielsen Memorial Tract.

In November 2014, the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club donated the 160-acre tract adjacent to the Rothsay WMA to the DNR in Nielsen's name.

Nielsen, who died in 2012, was an area wildlife manager in western Minnesota from 1955 until he retired in 1988. During his years with the DNR, Nielsen acquired, developed and managed many state WMAs and other state lands in the area.

"Gordy's most cherished assignments included acquiring and managing the Rothsay and Orwell WMAs," said Don Schultz, Fergus Falls area wildlife supervisor. "He was a lifetime member of the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club and enjoyed working closely with them on the Canada goose restoration project, among other projects."

The Rothsay WMA is located about 20 miles northwest of Fergus Falls, and 5 miles northwest of Rothsay.

The dedication ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. and include introductions and brief remarks from the DNR, Nielsen family members, the Fergus Falls Fish and Game Club, and other partners. Speakers will give a brief narrative of Nielsen's career and information about the Rothsay WMA. Refreshments and a tour will follow the ceremony.

newsB
700

FF Burning Ban

05-01-15

The Fergus Falls Fire Chief has issued a burning ban within the city limits until further notice.

Chief Mark Hovland says dry conditions, high winds and low humidity have combined to create a dangerous situation.

The no-burning order includes open burning of any kind, including recreational campfires. The order includes any residents who have received a burning permit from the fire department.

The order will be evaluated on a day by day basis. Until the order is lifted, there will be no open burning of any kind allowed within the city limits.

The National Weather Service says there's a chance of receiving less than a 10th ^{an inch} of a percent of rain both Saturday night and Sunday with more possible in thunderstorms.

6A
News B
7A
News C
7:30
8A

Biggest Fishing Opener In 20 Years Projected

05-08-2015

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources says about 500,000 people are expected to fish on opening day of the walleye and northern pike season Saturday morning. The Northwest will also offer great Sturgeon fishing according to DNR Fisheries Chief Don Pereira (puh-RAIR-uh):

STURGEON FISHING 15 SEC

OUTCUE: "...you'll have catch and release opportunities as well."

There are areas in Otter Tail County that will not be open during fishing opener. Those waters are closed to the taking of all fish during the periods specified to protect fish spawning areas. They include: the southwest shore of Jewett Lake until June 30th, the Otter Tail River below the Highway 10 culvert near Frazee until May 31st, and the Toad River inlet to Big Pine Lake and upstream to Co. Rd. 13 until further notice. If you are unsure if you are in one of the designated spawning areas always check with a conservation officer and plan ahead.

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Enviromental Citizens Board Likely To Be Abolished

06-03-2015

The Citizens Board at The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency may be getting the ax. Republicans in the State Legislature feel that the Citizens' Board has outlived its purpose, essentially because they have rarely challenged or reversed any of the agency's decisions. Former board member and local Fergus Falls Attorney Van Ellig says legislators are extremely misguided about dis-banding the board...

VAN ELLIG 33 SEC

OUTCUE: "I don't know if they know what they are doing."

A re-tooled environment budget previously vetoed by Gov. Dayton will most likely abolish the nine member board which according to Ellig, include legal and business professionals, as well as members from the medical community. Van Ellig served as Chairman of the Citizens Board for 4 years, and two additional years as a regular member.

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7A
800
NewsC
8A
NNews
NewsN

Poison Algae

06-05-15

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office is warning people who plan to use Red Rock Lake east of Hoffman that the lake is currently dangerous for animals and children to use.

The county's water patrol received a report Thursday of a dog becoming very ill and a second dog becoming ill and later dying after swimming in the lake.

The symptoms described were consistent with Blue Algae poisoning. In discussions with the local DNR Conservation Officer, it appears that due to recent weather conditions, heavy rainfall runoff and warm humid temperatures, Red Rock Lake has supported an early bloom of Blue Algae. There are visible areas of floating mold and blue-green colored algae on areas of the lake.

Property owners and other persons using Red Rock Lake are strongly encouraged to take any measures to prevent animals and children from having any exposure with, inhalation, or ingesting water suspected of being contaminated with the algae.

Property owners are also being asked to talk with seasonal residents and visitors to the lake about the conditions.

80

ATV riders can explore Minnesota trails for free June 5-7

6-4-2015

This weekend, June 5-7, ATV riders will have free access to more than 3,000 miles of state forest and grant-in-aid trails during "No Registration Weekend." According to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesotans with an all-terrain vehicle registered for private or agricultural use won't need to pay the additional three year registration fee of \$53.50 in order to ride the state's public ATV trails. Out-of-state riders can explore Minnesota ATV trails that weekend as well, without the need for a nonresident trail pass which is \$21 annually. This is the second year that Minnesota is providing ATV riders with the opportunity to try the public trails for free. These and other riding destinations are featured in an Off Highway Vehicle Trail Atlas available for free from the DNR. ~~More information available online at mndnr dot gov slash ohv.~~ (www.mndnr.gov/ohv)

7A

Westrom Session Reax

06-18-15

State Senator Torrey Westrom of Elbow Lake says Minnesota's recent special session of the legislature was mostly unneeded, because the vetoed bills didn't change much with the special session.

He says Senate Democrats did not uphold their part of the bargain and the agreement that was made between the Governor, House and Senate leadership.

Westrom says the environment bill had very good reforms to benefit cities and rural communities. He says the bill now reigns in the PCA and directs that there be more science-based testing rather than just new regulation without sound science behind them...

..."our small towns." :17

Westrom says the education bill gave more foundation aid for school districts in the special session, something that will also aid rural communities.

News B
7A
12PM

Recreational Permit For Fire Pits Required In Fergus Falls

06-12-2015

A lot of homeowners are starting to set up for fire pit burning this time of year. However, most are not aware that you need a recreational permit if you reside inside the city limits of Fergus Falls. Fergus Falls Fire Department Information Officer Dean Anderson:

FFFD DEAN ANDERSON

OUTCUE: "Leaves are one thing not allowed to be burned."

In addition to leaves, Anderson also says to stay as far as you can away from decks, and a good distance from your home. Also, do not burn any treated wood or lumber. If you have any questions regarding the permit process or what you can burn, contact the Fergus Falls Fire Department.

News N

Industrial Hemp

06-29-15

A local legislator is hoping farmers will embrace the idea of a new cash crop...industrial hemp.

Mary Franson of Alexandria was the author of a bill that allows licensed growers to plant hemp seeds, and sell the mature crop. Seed costs about \$110 per acre. The selling price is \$5.00 per pound.

Franson says there are detractors who worry pot growers will hide their marijuana plants amongst hemp plants. She says pot growers are smarter than that...

... "for drug use." :18

The Minnesota Ag Department says only pilot research projects will be allowed at first.

Franson says industrial hemp is showing success in states like Kentucky, which is in its second year of allowing the crop. She says farmers there can't keep up with demand.

Interestingly, Minnesota used to grow hemp during World War II in Hutchinson. Hemp was used to make rope for the war.

NewsA
600
6A
newsC
800
7:30

TORNADO NUMBERS

06-29-15

THE FINAL NUMBERS ARE NOT YET IN BUT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE METEOROLOGIST GREG GUST SAYS STORMS THAT ROARED THROUGH EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA AND WESTERN MINNESOTA PRODUCED A LOT OF TORNADO'S:

... "SHORT ORDER." :22

NO INJURIES OR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE WAS REPORTED BUT ONE BRIEF TOUCHDOWN TRACKED ON THE GROUND FOR NEARLY A MILE NEAR MILTON IN CAVALIER COUNTY, TIPPING OVER 8 EMPTY GRAIN CARS. A TORNADO THAT TOOK OUT SHELTER BELTS NORTHEAST OF HATTON IS RATED AN EF-2, WITH ESTIMATED PEAK WINDS OF 120 MPH. A EF-1 TORNADO WITH WINDS OVER 100 MPH DAMAGED TREES AND DOWNED POWER LINES NEAR HOPE. TORNADO'S ALSO TOUCHED DOWN WEST OF FAIRMOUNT, IN RICHLAND COUNTY, AND IN SOUTHEAST CLAY COUNTY, EAST OF DOWNER. GUST SAYS SATURDAY'S SEVERE WEATHER OUTBREAK IS THE WORST SINCE JUNE, 2010 WHEN 48 TORNADO'S TOUCHED DOWN IN MINNESOTA, THE SINGLE MOST ACTIVE DAY IN THE STATE'S HISTORY, KILLING FOUR PEOPLE. THAT STORM SYSTEM ALSO PRODUCED SEVERAL TORNADO'S IN NORTH DAKOTA.

NewsN
5pm

Sturgeon Comeback

06-30-2015

For over a hundred years Sturgeon nearly vanished due to unregulated commercial fishing during the 1890's. In Otter Tail County and Statewide, you can now fish for Sturgeon, although it's just catch and release, this is the first time in many, many years that anglers in Otter Tail County can fish for Sturgeon, according to Jim Wolter, Area Fisheries Supervisor with MN DNR...

Wolter 32 SEC

Outline: "Lake Sturgeon Population!"

Lake Sturgeon almost disappeared from Minnesota in the early 1900's. During the 1800's sturgeon were considered a nuisance fish because they easily broke through commercial fishing nets. They were taken out of the rivers and lakes they inhabited and stacked on the shorelines like logs. Sturgeon were also used to power steam boats because their meat has a high oil content. They were harvested by the 1000's for their caviar until the population crashed in the early 1900's.

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*News 2 (5pm)
6A
700
NewsB*