NADO Conference

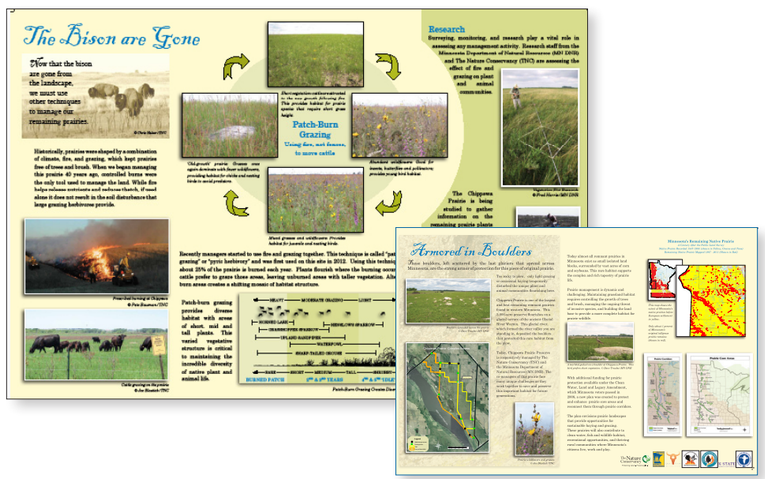
UMVRDC Executive Director, Dawn Hegland, joined over 300 regional development practitioners, policy makers, and other stakeholders participated in the 2014 Washington Policy Conference: NADO on the Hill from March 23 – 26. Hegland was elected to serve on the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Board in August 2013 and participated in the NADO Board meeting held during the annual policy conference.

Over the course of the four-day event, they heard from senior staff of the House Appropriations Committee, Senate Budget Committee, House and Senate Agriculture Committees, and House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on the legislative outlook for the rest of 2014 and the prevailing political climate in Washington. The conference also provided opportunities for attendees to meet one-on-one with federal partners during the Federal Agency Networking Reception.

Minnesota RDC staff and board members met together with staff from Sen. Franken and Klobuchar, and visited in person with Congressmen Nolan, Walz, and Peterson. They collectively developed some information packets about RDCs in MN and spoke to them about key issues in transportation, CDBG, USDA Rural Development, EDA, housing and energy funding and policy.

TNC Interpretive Panels 2014

UMVRDC Senior Planner, Kristi Fernholz, worked with The Nature Conservancy to design and fabricate seven interpretive panels. Four panels will go to the Chippewa Prairie near Appleton and Milan, two panels will go at Hole-in-the-Mountain Prairie near Lake Benton, and one panel will be placed at the 7-Mile Fen near Clear Lake, South Dakota.



For more information about the interpretive panels contact Kristi Fernholz, UMVRDC Senior Planner at kristi.fernholz@umvrdc.org or 320-289-1981 x106.

Mark Your Calendar!

July 4, 2014
UMVRDC office will be closed for Independence Day

July 22, 2014
UMVRDC Annual Board Meeting
www.umvrdc.org
Location TBD

August 23-26
NADO Annual Training Conference
www.nado.org
Denver, CO

August 26, 2014
UMVRDC monthly Board Meeting
www.umvrdc.org
Appleton Civic Center
Appleton, MN

September 1, 2014
UMVRDC office will be closed for Labor Day.

September 23,2014
UMVRDC monthly Board Meeting
Appleton Civic Center
Appleton, MN

Visit our website for ongoing event information, including links and registration! *www.umvrdc.org/category/events/*

www.umvrdc.org
phone: 320-289-1981

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Regional Outlook

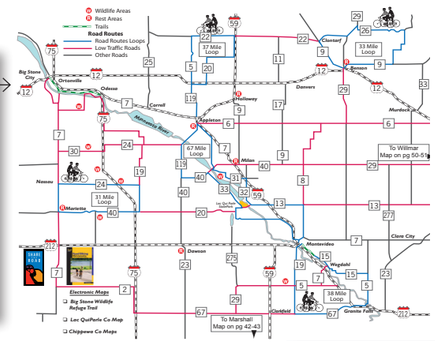
Quarterly Newsletter | June 2014 Vol. 34 No. 3
323 W. Schlieman Ave. Appleton, MN 56208 phone: 320-289-1981 www.umvrdc.org

Summer Travel in the Region

While we Minnesotans have to bear one of the country's toughest winters, it's worth it for the beautiful weather we receive all summer long. Summer is by far the busiest time of the year for traveling, especially in our Region. Students are done with school, and parents are seeking a summer vacaction spot for the entire family. Our region has so many unique, natural, cultural, and historic assets that are being heavily visited throughout these next few months, and the UMVRDC offers a full listing of information on upcoming summer events and activities.

Minnesota is considered to be the bike-friendly capital of the Midwest, and throughout the summer months many travelers come explore our region on bike. Bicyling the scenic bike trails are just one of the many outdoor recreational opportunities offered within the region. *(continued inside)*

Prairie Waters offers a bike map of the beautiful scenic trails in Region 6W



UMVRDC Writes a Successful Small Cities Development Program Grant

The UMVRDC successfully helped the community of Clara City secure $613,295 in Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) funds that will leverage other local funds provided by project participants to rehabilitate commercial properties, and owner-occupied, rental, and multi-unit housing projects. Clara City will work over the course of the summer to set up the program and process applications for the program. It is estimated that 32 units will be improved with these funds. Projects are anticipated to begin this fall.

More information about participation in the program and eligibility requirements will be made available this summer. Minnesota's DEED funded only 35 projects across the state, spending $17.5 million in available funding. Clara City contracted with the UMVRDC to author the grant applications on their behalf.

For more information on the UMVRDC's grant writing services, contact Kristi Fernholz, UMVRDC Senior Planner, at 320-289-1981 x 106 or kristi.fernholz@umvrdc.org.

Inside

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- New Staff
- Safe Routes to School
- Summer Travel in the Region
- Hazard Mitigation Process
- Public Art

UMVRDC Welcomes New Staff

Erin Smith
Community Development Planner

Erin joined the UMVRDC staff in June 2014. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Urban and Regional Studies from the University of MN- Duluth and a Master of Arts in Urban Planning from Minnesota State University-Mankato. Erin is working as the West Central Regional Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERT) Coordinator and will be working on a variety of other projects for the RDC. She is LEED accredited and has previous experience working in the non-profit realm. In her free time Erin enjoys reading and being outdoors. Erin is new to the area and excited to explore the region and be part of the RDC team!

You can reach Erin by calling 320-289-1981 x 108, or by emailing erin.smith@umvrdc.org

SRTS Walk/Bike to School Day

In 2012, the UMVRDC led the elementary schools in Appleton, Benson, Dawson, Granite Falls and Madison through a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning process to develop plans with the goal of encouraging students to walk and bike to school. Members of the SRTS teams consisted of local law enforcement, parents, city officials, school principals, teachers, city and/or county engineers and other interested community members.

To assist these schools with SRTS implementation, the UMVRDC, with the help of the schools, wrote a Safe Routes to School non-infrastructure implementation grant to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) for Federal Highway (FHWA) SRTS funding. This grant allowed the UMVRDC to help the schools organize one SRTS event and develop one SRTS program.

The UMVRDC has been working with the schools since the fall of 2013 to plan SRTS educational and encouragement events and programs with the goal of ultimately increasing the number of students walking and biking to school safely.

In May, all five of the schools particpated in the National Walk/Bike to School Day. Moving forward, the UMVRDC will continue to assist the schools with the implementation of a SRTS program. Some of the programs include tracking mileage, the redesign of a school parking lot, and a sidewalk survey. We are looking forward to assist in implementing these programs and encouraging all of the schools to continue celebrating and encouraging walking and biking to school.

Above: Benson students participating in the National walk/bike to school day.

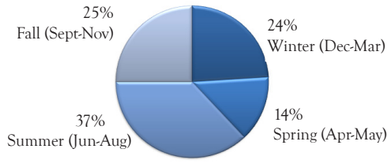
Left: Appleton students and parents participating in the National walk/bike to school day.

For more information contact Lindsey Knutson, UMVRDC Transportation/Community Development Planner at lindsey.knutson@umvrdc.org or call 320-289-1981 x 107.

Summer Travel in the Region! *(continued from front page)*

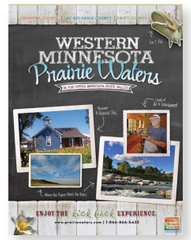
From exploring the region on bike, by kayak, or car, there is so much to do and see within these next few summer months. With the Minnesota River Valley National Scenic Byway running right through our region, there are some of the byway's most exciting assets are right in our own backyard!

Minnesota's Traveler expenditures
www.exploreminnesotatourism.com



Meander Art Crawl, LTD Motorcycle Memorial Ride, street dances, fireworks, festivals, threshing shows, historic museums, and county fairs are just a few of the many exciting events coming up this summer. For more information and details on these upcoming events, be sure to visit the Prairie Waters or UMVRDC website for the full calendar of events: www.prairiewaters.com, www.umvrdc.org or call the toll free number 866-866-5432.

Make sure your city's local gas stations, hotels, chambers, and other various businesses are fully stocked with regional information and events for the summer visitors. Contact Prairie Waters for free Visitor Guides, our Antiques, Local Shops, Dining & Lodging Guides, Have Fun Biking Map, calendar of events, and information on other topics!



Call for a free Visitors Guide!

The 2014 Prairie Waters Annual Gathering

Prairie Waters staff and board are busy planning the 2014 Annual Gathering, and it looks like it's going to be a fun and unique event!

We hold each of our annual events in a different member county, and this year it's Yellow Medicine's turn. We decided it would be fun to hold the event down by the Minnesota River near Granite Falls. It's a great opportunity to show off the beautiful river and educate people from around the region about one of the many unique assets we have within our region.

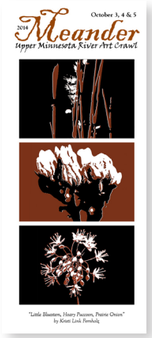
There will be a speaker from the DNR discussing the fishing success within the river, and guests will even have an opportunity to fish for themselves. There will be free food and beverages available, along with door prizes!

More details will be available soon on the Western Minnesota Prairie Waters facebook page or call 866-866-5432. www.prairiewaters.com

2014 Meander Brochures Now Available!

Brochures are now available for the 2014 Meander Art Crawl. This year's brochure features artwork by local photographer and RDC staff, Kristi Link Fernholz of Appleton, MN.

Meander
Friday, October 3
12 pm - 6 pm
Saturday, October 4
9 am - 6 pm
Sunday, October 5
9 am - 4 pm



The Meander is a regional self-guided tour of artist studios, galleries and shops from all over the region. You can find paintings, photography, sculpture, fiber arts, jewelry, pottery, mixed media, and more. Come to Granite Falls Friday night for a riverside celebration for all ages featuring music, food, walking theater and historic tours centered around downtown. Saturday evening head on over to Dawson for an American jazz performance from the 20s and 30s! To request a brochure, call 1-866-866-5432 or visit www.artsmeander.com.

Region 6W Public Art Planning

One of Appleton's mosaic benches, a public art project created with the community

Top City/County needs:

- Downtown beautification
- Playground equipment
- Place to display art in public
- Internet in public
- Work with students & artists in residence
- Community bikes
- Picnic tables
- Garbage cans/recycling
- Use art to identify additional trails

Through a planning grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council (SMAC), the UMVRDC is working to gather ideas and start conversations to facilitate public art projects in our region. This spring, a survey was sent out to city, county, and school officials, and community and economic development professionals to find out the need and interest in our communities for public art. We had a great response to the survey from all over the region and from a variety of cities, counties and schools. The next part of this process is to solicit project ideas from artists to address these needs. A request for qualifications was sent out in mid-May and can be found at the UMVRDC website www.umvrdc.org. A region-wide committee will review these proposals in late June and choose three artists to contract with to develop their idea further. By the fall, we hope to start to pursue funding from SMAC and other sources for a dynamic region-wide public art project.

If you are interested in learning more about this project or would like to be involved, contact Kristi Fernholz, UMVRDC Senior Planner at kristi.fernholz@umvrdc.org or call 320-289-1981 x106.

**This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Hazard Mitigation Process

Chippewa County
All-Hazard
Mitigation Planning
MINNESOTA

Hazard Mitigation Planning is in full swing! As a result of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires that local units of government have a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan in place to be eligible for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds. In order to continue to be eligible for the HMGP funds, plans must be updated every five years. All five counties in Region 6W completed the necessary plan updates between 2009 and 2010, and it is now time to update the plans again.

Starting this spring, Chippewa, Big Stone, and Yellow Medicine counties began the plan update process with the assistance of the UMVRDC. The process to update, write, review, and submit each plan will take approximately 18 months from start to finish. It is the goal of each county to involve a great variety of people to ensure that key interests and issues are not left out and to increase the chance for lasting solutions. The first round of task force meetings for these three counties started in May and will continue into the summer months.

For more information, or to see a copy of the 2010 All-Hazard Mitigation Plans, visit www.umvrdc.org or contact emily.zeug-robertson@umvrdc.org or call 320.289.1981 x 104