



# Edge of the Knife



Winter 2008-9 The Knife River Watershed Newsletter

## The Knife River Under the Microscope

The Knife River has been “under the microscope” for many years, due to its fish population, its scenic beauty, and its notoriously muddy water. There have been many federal, state, and local agencies active in this watershed trying to protect and understand it for years. There have also been many concerned groups and individuals lending a hand.

Here is a brief summary of those involved with research and implementation in the watershed:

- USGS streamflow monitoring since 1974
- DNR Fishtrap partially operational in 1996, fully operational in 1997. Annual population assessments at 3 different sites. One as far back as 1973. One comprehensive survey of the entire stream in 1992

- Knife River Forest Stewardship Committee (1996-2005) has lead tree plantings, educated landowners, put out newsletters and more.
- South St. Louis SWCD off and on since mid-nineties (TMDL monitoring 2004-2006)
- MPCA contracted the TMDL study and sediment monitoring started in Summer 2008
- NRRI has completed various studies regarding macroinvertebrates (bugs) mostly in the early and mid-1990’s
- University of Minnesota has worked in the watershed on many occasions. (Geology, woody debris, hydrology,

and macroinvertebrates)

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 1997-2001 (Geomorphology, macroinvertebrates, hydrology, fisheries, and water quality)

All of this research has led to a good understanding of the problems in the Knife River. With continued support and work from dedicated resource managers the Knife River will continue to be a productive fishery and scenic beauty, and hopefully improve as projects are implemented.

## Total Maximum Daily Load Study Coming to an End

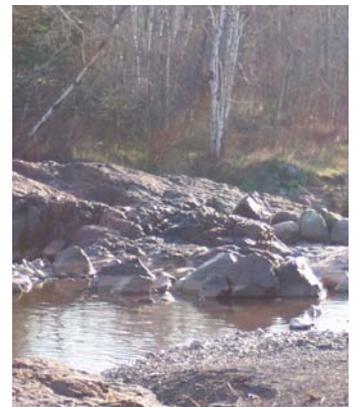
In 2004 a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study was commenced to determine how much sediment the Knife River was carrying, where it was coming from, what impacts it was having, and what we could do to lessen the impacts (if any). This

study has nearly come to a close with the TMDL document currently in the review phase. Once this document is submitted and approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) an Implementation Plan will be completed and used to prioritize

actions to reduce sediment loads. Since there are no point-sources (waste water treatment plant, papermill, etc) in the watershed there are no immediate implications against any one party.

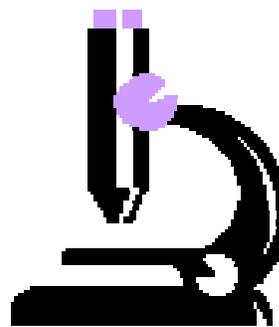
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## Winter Update January 2008



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## (continued from pg. 1) Total Maximum Daily Load Study Coming to an End

The main result of an approved TMDL, in this case, will be increased funding of conservation/water quality related projects in the watershed.

There are a variety of potential projects and many of these projects could be on your property (if you were willing). Please bring your ideas to our watershed meetings (TBA).



For more information about TMDLs and specifically the Knife TMDL visit the following links:

- [www.southstlouisswcd.org/tmdl.html](http://www.southstlouisswcd.org/tmdl.html)
- <http://www.epa.gov/owow/tmdl/>
- <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/tmdl/index.html>

## Technical Assistance and Cost-share

The South St. Louis SWCD provides Technical Assistance to landowners as an incentive to install Best Management Practices(BMPs) that protect water quality. In some instances the SWCD is in the position to provide financial assistance to priority projects like:

- Critical area stabilization (erosion control)
- Animal waste management
- Riparian Buffer Strips
- Streambank and Shoreland Restoration

technical and financial assistance are not limited to these projects, but these are several examples. We can provide technical assistance to anyone who has a prospective project that could improve or protect water quality, but financial assistance is limited and is based on certain priorities.

*“In some instances the SWCD is in the position to provide financial assistance to priority projects like. . .”*

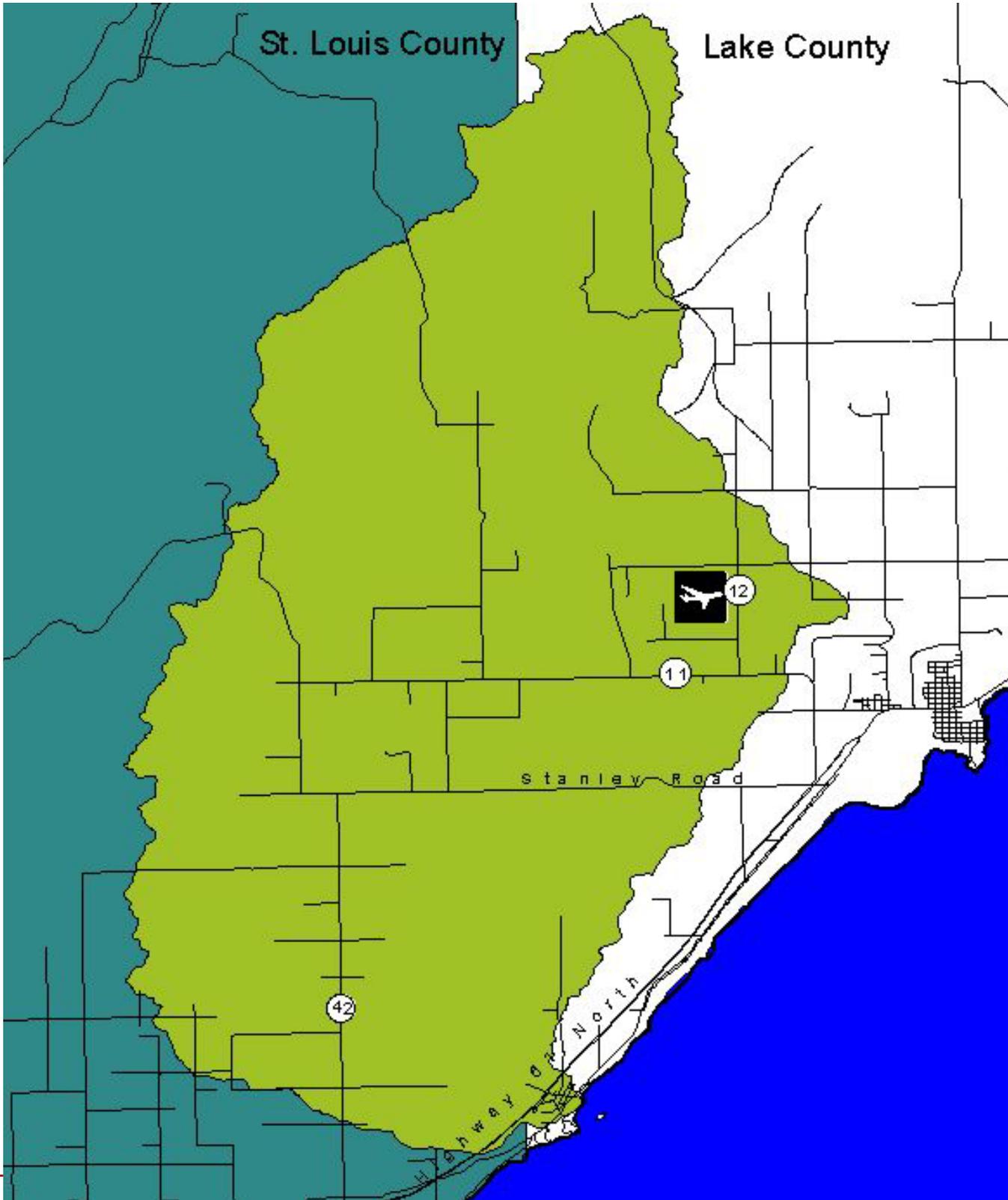
## Future of the Knife River

In the coming months further progress will be made towards having an approved TMDL. During this time we are hoping to get input and questions via meetings, phone calls, email, and any other form of communication. The TMDL process can be a long one, but we hope that the residents of the watershed will support the TMDL and the projects that result from it. Please feel free to call and ask questions and/or respond to the enclosed meeting request.

If enough interest is shown we will host at least one public meeting. Please show your support by responding to the enclosed meeting form.



# Knife River Watershed





## Forestry Information



Forested property constitutes 72% of the land use in the Knife River watershed. Private woodlot owners play a vital role in preserving and protecting this important resource by actively managing their properties. Many opportunities exist to help woodland owners become good stewards of their land. Whether your goals are to promote wildlife, realize income from forest products, encourage clean water and air, improve hunting and recreation, or simply to enjoy the natural beauty of your forest, natural resource professionals and programs are available to work on your behalf.

### **Forest Stewardship Plan**

A Forest Stewardship Plan will address your land ownership goals, your natural resources, and provide recommendations for management of your land. Together, you and a natural resource manager will prepare your plan. You'll specify land ownership goals, and a natural resource manager will then inventory and evaluate your woodland resources. After the inventory/evaluation, management recommendations will be outlined to meet your goals.

Begin your plan by contacting a natural resource manager through an office of the Department of Natural Resources, Soil and Water Conservation District, Minnesota Extension Service, forest industry, or a forestry consultant. The only requirement for obtaining a plan is that you must own 20 acres or more.

### **Property Tax Assistance**

Minnesota legislature has passed two packages that enable Minnesota's private woodlot owner to save on their property taxes. The Sustainable Forestry Incentive Act (SFIA) makes payments to private woodlot owners in exchange for an agreement to maintain their woodlot without development. The payments this year are up to \$8.61 an acre. A new 2c tax classification is also available with a tax rate of 0.65 for forested property.

More information on both tax alternatives can be obtained by contacting your county assessor, Minnesota Extension Service, or Minnesota Department of Revenue.

### **Community Forest Resource Center (CFRC)**

Since 1998 CFRC has been working to promote responsible forest management by encouraging the long-term health and prosperity of small, privately-owned woodlots, their owners and their communities. CFRC collaborates with forestry cooperatives and landowner associations to develop resources and infrastructure to facilitate their healthy development. These organizations provide ways for landowners to work together and pursue good management of their forests.

CFRC also provides low-cost access to forest certification in accordance with the ten principles established by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) as a system to assure responsible forestry as well as recognize good forest management in the marketplace through the FSC label.

CFRC Contact Info:

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
2105 First Avenue South  
Minneapolis MN 55404 USA

Telephone: (612) 870-0453

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# Forestry Information

## **Minnesota Forestry Association (MFA)**

MFA serves Minnesota's woodland owners by promoting stewardship of all forest resources. MFA is Minnesota's oldest conservation organization, founded in 1876 to promote wise stewardship of forest lands.

For more information, or to become a member, the MFA can be contacted at:

*P.O. Box 496  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744  
Telephone: 1 800 821-TREE (8733)*

## **Woodland Advisor Courses**

The Woodland Advisor Program provides opportunities to learn about Minnesota woodland stewardship. Everybody is welcome at Woodland Advisor classes.

Classes are designed to share practical, helpful information in a clear and enjoyable format. You'll hear from knowledgeable instructors, meet other landowners, and get answers to your own questions. To learn more about the Woodland advisor program contact:

Mike Reichenbach  
University of Minnesota Extension Service  
Cloquet Forestry Center  
175 University  
Cloquet, Minnesota 55720  
Telephone: (218) 879-0850

## **Cost Share Assistance**

Landowners may be eligible to receive cost share payments to carry out woodland management activities. In addition to the financial incentive for qualifying landowners, technical assistance and long term planning will also be made available through programs administered by state, local, and federal governments.

Eligible forest management practices include those that will benefit forest health, wildlife habitat, and water quality. For more information on

current cost share opportunities contact: DNR- Forestry  
Steve Bartz  
Soil and Water Conservation District 1568 Hwy 2  
Tim Byrns Two Harbors, MN 55616  
215 North 1<sup>st</sup> Ave East Telephone: (218) 834-6614  
Duluth, MN 55802  
Telephone: (218) 723-4865

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Danny Weber  
4850 Miller Trunk Highway  
Duluth, MN 55811  
Telephone: 218.720.5209

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### *Our Mission*

*The mission of the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide technical, educational, and financial resources to land occupiers in order to implement practices and projects that preserve, protect, and enhance water quality and other natural resources.*

**We're on the web:  
[www.southstlouisswcd.org](http://www.southstlouisswcd.org)**



### **Knife River TMDL**

#### **South St. Louis SWCD**

215 N 1st Ave E Rm 301

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