



2015 Master Water Steward Candidates

Mark Berg

I grew up in northern MN on the Red Lake River and enjoyed canoeing and catching catfish in my youth. Enjoying the recreational benefits provided by other bodies of water, like kayaking on Walden Pond in Massachusetts and biking around Cedar Lake in Minneapolis, has greatly enhanced my appreciation of clean water. Additionally, clean water is essential to brewing great tasting beer!

As I have aged (and hopefully matured), I've increasingly become more interested in environmental stewardship and preservation of our local water resources. With my background in research and writing, I hope to utilize my training in the MWS program in a water policy role in the future. I look forward to learning more about water issues and figuring out how to make a positive impact in my community.



Caitlin Cook-Isaacson

Caitlin lives in the Central Neighborhood of South Minneapolis. She has been enjoying the rain gardens installed in her yard and on her block by Metro Blooms in an effort to clean up nearby Powderhorn Lake. Her work as an orchard manager, permaculture designer, and home gardener is informed by the need for clean water. She loves to swim in the lakes of Minneapolis every summer and wants to protect their water quality.

Kim David

Having lived 23 years in Europe, where nature is more controlled and less accessible, made me appreciate the resources here in the U.S. for which we are individually responsible and that need to be respected and preserved. Having spent my summers on the same lake in northern Minnesota helped me become aware of the changing nature of the environment and the challenges it faces. Faced with lake shore erosion, we modified the lake shoreline with a buffer zone of aquatic plants and flowers to protect it. We are closely working with DNR on a Forest Stewardship Program to help manage our forest, removing old growth and replanting sustainable trees. When I saw the opportunity to become a Water Steward, I jumped at the chance to learn more about how to preserve water resources. Horses are my first love and I ride every chance I get, which is not enough, as I work designing and producing the publications for Macalester College.



Miriam Eason

I grew up in Duluth, Minnesota on Lake Superior. I am a recent UC Berkeley graduate from a Master of Landscape Architecture program focused in environmental planning. In fall of 2014 I returned to the land of 10,000 lakes after eight years in the San Francisco Bay Area. My background is in geography and horticulture and I'm teaching Twin Cities' residents about raingardens with Metro Blooms. I look forward to getting my hands dirty as a Master Water Steward and collaborating with my neighbors to promote sustainable stormwater use.



Nelson Evenrud

A resident of Minnetonka nearby the Purgatory Park area, and big fan of most any recreational activity- much of which involves water. Enjoys time exploring, travelling, cavorting and playing sports with his wife and three children between ages 4 and 10. Volunteers with Coaching and serving with several recreational boards and endeavors, including 3 years on the Minnetonka Park & Recreation Board. Professionally, Nelson has been employed as Recreation Center Director with the Mpls Park & Recreation Board for most of adult life and part time before that beginning at age 14. He plans and programs activities, events, athletics,



rentals, after school care, summer camps, along with many other fun duties related to the job. Along with the connection to water within fishing, golf and other activities, he has a keen interest in water and all things related, especially as it pertains to our future and ability to enjoy it sustainably.

Sheila Frost

Sheila is a retired pediatric Speech Language Pathologist who has worked in educational and medical settings. Before completing her degrees in speech pathology, she studied Environmental Science Technology in Massachusetts. At that time job opportunities were not promising.

She walks the Minnehaha Creek near her home in south Minneapolis daily. Vacations take her to the water - oceans, lakes, rivers and streams.

As a member of her neighborhood environmental committee, she was encouraged to become a water steward. She looks forward to working with her neighbors on storm water issues.



Rebecca Wardell Gaertner

I have been interested in water quality since as a child I saw industry polluting Lake Superior.

Taking a Metro Blooms rain garden class about 13 years ago opened my eyes to the exciting world of native plants. We have native grasses, but removed all our turf-grass. We plant for the birds, bees, butterflies, and for good water management. My husband and I have created two rain gardens in our Minneapolis yard, and have rearranged all our drain spouts. As a member of my neighborhood environment committee I manage our neighborhood "Adopt a storm drain" program.



I am a Hennepin County Master Recycler, attended Al Gore's Climate Reality training, taught 5th and 6th grade, and have been a citizen lobbyist and activist at the Minnesota State Capitol. My husband and I traveled to New York City to march in the big climate march last September. I blog at <http://www.health4earth.com>

Lisa Genis

When Lisa was in 7th grade, her science class went on a field trip. They got to tour the Freshwater Society's facility out near Lake Minnetonka. She was fascinated by all of the "cool stuff" going on there. It was what propelled her into becoming a scientist. With a degree in Microbiology, she worked in basic research laboratories studying neurological disorders and Alzheimer's disease for a number of years. A return to school resulted in an additional certification in Medical Technology allowing her to work in a clinical setting. She then spent 6-1/2 years at Minneapolis Children's in their Microbiology/Virology laboratory. She no longer works for pay, but now spends her time volunteering as a Master Recycler/Composter, a WHEP monitor, a blood typist for Memorial Blood Centers, a baker at Open Arms and as a "jill-of-all-trades" volunteer with Surly Gives A Damn. Through the Master Water Steward program, Lisa hopes to add another dimension to her environmental advocacy by educating others about water issues and what they can do that will really make a difference. Lisa also enjoys cycling, hiking, tending her native prairie garden (now almost 20 years old!) and spending time with her husband and dog.



Jesse Hunt

Jesse Hunt was interested in lake water quality at an early age due to a fish and fishing project through 4-H at age 10. He visited Ken's Bait service and experienced how fry are nurtured, captured, identified, cared for and counted.

Visiting his grandparents often on their 120-acre wooded century farm and exploring the land around its eschar and two lakes gave him a unique geologic perspective. Becoming a landscaper for an upscale home builder brought home the importance of understanding ground water management.



He has done independent research in best practices. When the City of Carver proposed rebuilding 4th Street in 2012, Jesse was actively involved in the town meetings and provided several sound and innovative suggestions to mitigate troublesome water runoff during a walk-through with engineers and during meetings.

Jesse has taken most of the Master Gardener classes available to him at the Carver County Library System and helped start a community garden in Eden Prairie based on organic and sound soil and water practices.

Last year he was a Watercraft Inspector for Carver County Parks District working with the DNR to help keep invasive species out of Carver County lakes.

This year Jesse works for Environmental Services in Carver County's Recycling program as supervisor of the Norwood-Young America site Boy Scouts and 4-Hers, and also helps out at the Chaska facility

John Johnson

John is a lifelong St. Louis Park resident with an interest in doing anything outdoors. He enjoys kayaking Minnehaha creek as well as the BWCA. John has lived near the Minnehaha creek for the last 30 years. As a former Scout Master for the Boy Scouts of America, he has always had a passion for making our environment a priority and leaving it better than we found it. He also enjoys sharing his knowledge and information with others. When he is not at his full time job, John enjoys spending time with his family, grilling, and staying active.



Kristine Kvamme

Kristine grew up in southern Minnesota but spent a lot of time visiting her grandparents in South Minneapolis and has always had a special fondness for Lake Harriet. She moved to Minneapolis in 2011 after 14 years living in Wisconsin, Massachusetts and Oregon and is thrilled to be within walking distance of Lake Harriet and Minnehaha Creek. Kristine is passionate about community issues and sustainability, and is especially interested in recycling, composting and eating locally. Kristine joined the Master Water Steward program with dreams of filling her neighborhood with rain gardens. She enjoys reading, writing, cooking from a CSA share with her husband and growing vegetables from seed. Kristine also works for Do It Green! Minnesota.



Mary Pat McNeil

Mary Pat McNeil is "Solution Master" and owner at MP&G Marketing Solutions, a virtual branding, marketing, and communications agency bringing brands to life! Mary Pat has strategically built marketing services organizations and capabilities for major consumer products companies including Tonka Toys, Star Tribune, and General Mills.

My husband and I are very passionate about our water resources. Last summer when a Tier III feedlot hog farm operation was proposed to be constructed within a mile of our Morrison County lake cabin on Pierz Fish Lake – a small, spring-fed, protected lake—I did a fair amount of research and



community engagement work. As a result of our efforts, the farmers now have a 2500-foot manure application restriction vs. the original 150-foot setback. I feel we could have been even more effective had we been more knowledgeable about the process, geologic studies, water tables, and ground water contamination levels.

Last year I worked for the Mpls Park & Recreation board on sustainability initiatives and helped with PR and communications for the first public natural filtration swimming pond in North America that will open in Weber Park this coming summer. We live in Mound and we are currently working with the City to help market and promote development along Lake Minnetonka. The City experienced a PR disaster last summer after two days of [heavy rains overwhelmed the storm water sewer system](#) resulting in the diversion of untreated sewage into the storm drains in an attempt to avert sewer backups for homeowners. The sewage eventually flowed into the lake providing prime fodder for local news channels. We would both like to become better educated in order to speak more knowledgeably about water issues and to help educate others about this precious resource.

[Jeff Olson](#)

I want to help spread the word that water is important and should not be taken for granted. It was my great fortune to grow up on Lake Minnetonka. The late 60's and into the 70's were also the beginnings of organized efforts to clean up the lake. Save Our Lake along with the first Earth Day made a lasting impression on me. The Master Water Stewards program is affording me the perfect way to carry on those traditions that protect and preserve the places that have given me so much pleasure.



[Dorothy Pedersen](#)

Dorothy Pedersen grew up all over the world, as the daughter of an USAF officer. Born in Germany, she has traveled or lived in most of Europe, the Caribbean, Mexico, lived in Iran for 3 years, and lived or traveled through more than 30 states. Experiencing so many natural environments and cultures has brought a sincere appreciation of the wonder of life, nature and water.

Dorothy moved to Minnesota in 1981 after completing a business degree at the University of Nebraska. Working in corporate America for several years in Human Resources, she left with the birth of her son and opened up her own landscape design and installation company, Nature's Garden LLC, in 1989. In addition to a certification as a landscape designer, she is the



past president of the Ramsey County Master Gardener program and a former member of that program for over 10 years, as well as the Tree Care Advisor program. She is the past Secretary-Treasurer of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers, MN Chapter, and is currently President of the CAC for Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District. She lives on Silver Lake with her husband Roger and hopes to continue to protect the environment through the Master Water Steward program and outreach into her neighborhood and community.

Constance Pepin

Connie has lived in the Linden Hills neighborhood of southwest Minneapolis for over 30 years and has been an active volunteer for most of that time, at Hennepin Parks (now Three Rivers) and on many environmental projects with her neighborhood council and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (where she was a Volunteer of the Year in 2013). A beginning bird-watcher, she currently volunteers at both of the bird sanctuaries in the Minneapolis Park system--Roberts Bird Sanctuary and the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden & Bird Sanctuary. Connie's approach to gardening changed completely in the 1990s, when she read *Noah's Garden* by Sara Stein and became inspired to restore the ecology of her own backyard. As her concern about water quality grew, she redesigned her yard by replacing concrete surfaces with permeable surfaces and planting diverse native plants, including a butterfly garden. She sometimes brags that she eliminated all turf from her yard and installed the first "rain driveway" in the neighborhood, to eliminate stormwater runoff from her yard. As a Master Water Steward, Connie hopes to help inform and encourage neighbors to conserve and protect water, for the the benefit of all living beings.



Heidi Quinn

Heidi grew up in the western suburbs and spent her childhood visiting the Boundary Waters annually beginning at the age of 8. She holds a B.S. in Environmental Science, Policy, and Management with a minor in Sustainability Studies from the University of Minnesota. After college Heidi spent her summers working a handful of various internships sampling and monitoring water quality around the state. She is a current MN GreenCorps member serving in the Green



Infrastructure Stormwater track at Minnehaha Creek Watershed District. Heidi is passionate about water resources and looking forward to getting her hands dirty.

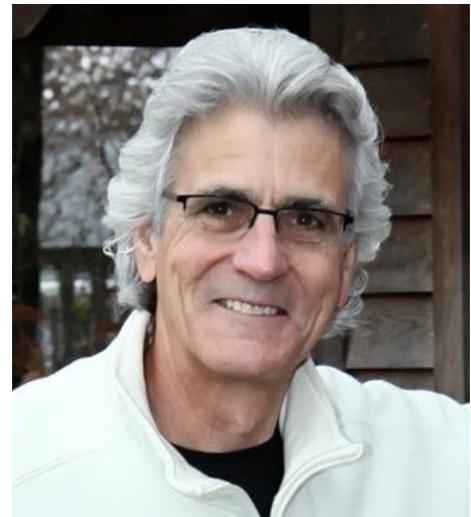
Christina Schmitt

Christina works as an Environmental Educator for Hennepin County’s Environment and Energy Department. She has also long been active in the Minneapolis arts and culture scene—playing guitar in female-powered garage rock bands and doing PR for 89.3 The Current—and is currently the Board Chair for Altered Esthetics, a Twin Cities-based arts nonprofit. She seeks opportunities for creative placemaking—where the arts and environmentally responsible behavior hum along together. Christina graduated from the University of Minnesota and lives near the Mississippi River in Minneapolis with her husband Bobby and daughter Violet.



Gregory Smith

Gregory J. Smith is “Design Master” at MP&G Marketing Solutions. As an award-winning marketer, creative director, and graphic designer, he is experienced on both the agency and corporate sides of the business. He has worked for numerous ad agencies with a variety of clients ranging from manufacturers to retailers to franchised fast food restaurant chains. Most recently his work has focused on educational, public sector and non-profit organizations. Greg’s work for International Dairy Queen earned him the marketer of the year award.



Growing up on a farm in northern Minnesota, I am very interested in preserving our natural water resources. When a Tier III feedlot hog farm operation was proposed to be constructed within a mile of our Morrison County lake cabin on Pierz Fish Lake -- a small, spring-fed, protected lake--my wife, Mary Pat McNeil, did a fair amount of research and community engagement work. I supported her at the public hearings and spoke on several occasions. As a result of her efforts, the farmers now have a 2500-foot manure application restriction vs. the original 150-foot setback. I feel we could both have been more effective if we were more knowledgeable about the process, geologic studies, water tables, and ground water contamination levels.

We live in Mound and we are currently working with the City to help market and promote development along Lake Minnetonka. The City experienced a PR disaster last summer after two days of [heavy rains overwhelmed the storm water sewer system](#) resulting in the diversion of untreated sewage into the storm drains in an attempt to avert sewer backups for homeowners. The sewage eventually flowed into the lake providing prime fodder for local news channels. We would both like to become better educated in order to speak more knowledgeably about water issues and to help educate others about this precious resource.

[Rae Ann Vandeputte](#)

Rae Ann lives in Victoria, just west of the Twin Cities. She loves gardening and is always looking for a new idea such as Square Foot Gardening or Winter Sowing. Since moving from Minneapolis in 2010 she has learned a lot about water, as her new home in Victoria overlooks a beautiful pond (which she learned quickly was a stormwater pond). She is hoping to educate her new suburban friends about the importance of water conservation and runoff. Rae Ann has a goal of visiting all 50 states with her children before they leave home (you can read about their adventures on her blog at www.DrivingTheDream.com). If you are ever in a meeting with Rae Ann she will most likely be knitting. She is always knitting.



[Lindsey Wyckoff](#)

Lindsey grew up in Ames, Iowa, moving to Minneapolis in 2010 to pursue a degree in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior from the University of Minnesota. While in school, she played trombone in the marching band, did her undergraduate research on cricket sex, studied ecology in Ecuador, and made two pilgrimages to the Galápagos Islands. Lindsey is currently serving with Freshwater Society as a Minnesota GreenCorps member. She hopes to use the skills she learns as a GreenCorps member and Master Water Steward to do what she can to protect the environment and engage others to do so as well. In her free time, she practices yoga, goes on long walks, and reads and travels as much as she possibly can.

