

The Minnesota River may be one of the first rivers in the nation to gain the prestigious National Blueway System designation!

JOIN US! You are invited to join a collection of partners in the preliminary stages of preparing a nomination package to the National Blueway System for the Minnesota River.

These partners include local citizens, citizen-based groups, state and federal agencies, agriculture, businesses and others.

This is an inclusive, open and transparent process and we need all interests to participate in the process to make the nomination a success.

THE APPROACH. The National Blueway System will use a landscape-scale approach to river management.

A River Blueway integrates land and water stewardship efforts within a working landscape from the headwaters to the mouth of a river.

The National Blueway System was established by the Secretary of the Interior on May 24, 2012, by Secretarial Order # 3321.

PARTNERSHIPS. National Blueway initiatives must be led by strong and diverse stakeholder partnerships consisting of the communities, organizations and agencies that are interested in working to maintain the river and watershed as a usable and valuable resource. These partnerships will collaborate, cooperate and promote a network of nationally significant rivers and their watersheds that are highly valued as economic, recreational, social and ecological assets by the communities that depend on them.

The Minnesota River Watershed Alliance has agreed to serve as the collaborative that will sub-

mit the nomination as the watershed partnership. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will sponsor the nomination.



Excited partners pose following a gathering in Granite Falls to learn more about the National Blueway System.



Rebecca Wodder, senior advisor to Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar, ceremoniously dips a paddle presented to her while visiting the Minnesota River Valley.

THE NOMINATION. A small group of representatives are now working on the nomination package. The nomination proposal will be submitted to the National Blueway System Committee within the U.S. Department of Interior in early 2013.

The nomination and designation process is entirely voluntary. It is partner-initiated via a self-evaluation based on established eligibility criteria. Once designated, National Blueway river systems will receive both prestigious public recognition benefits and technical and financial assistance during a five-year period of emphasis.

The National Blueway System Committee will promote, facilitate and leverage technical and financial assistance from federal agencies and other partnering entities who are invited by the NBS Committee to support the National Blueway System.

CONTACT US. To learn more about this exciting opportunity, contact one of these members of the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance. Lori Nelson, lnelson@friendsofmnvalley.org, 952-858-0737; Scott Sparlin, yasure@lycos.com, 507-276-2280; or Patrick Moore, cure-ed@info-link.net, 877-269-2873.