

Minnesota Wildlifera,

Welcome to the October 2021 edition of the Prairie/Farmland Newsletter. Enjoy!

Remember - we'd love for you to share any relevant content with us for inclusion in the next edition. Please send those items to either Jake (jcnelson8487@gmail.com) or Nicole (ndavros@gmail.com). And if you have any issues you'd like to investigate further with the committee, let Jake know.

Grassland/Farmland Wildlife, Habitat, Farming, Soil Health, & Federal Conservation Programs

- [Is hacking the next struggle for agriculture?](#) - Recently, a relatively small Iowa cooperative was hacked. If the alarms over cybersecurity in agriculture weren't going off before, they certainly should be now.
- [Grassland Conservation Reserve Program acres grow to more than 2.5 million](#) - This is double last year's enrollment and brings the total acres enrolled across all CRP signups in 2021 to more than 5.3 million acres, surpassing USDA's 4-million-acre goal. Producers and landowners submitted offers for nearly 4 million acres in Grassland CRP, the highest in the signup's history.
- [EPA Administrator Michael Regan vows to include ag input in new WOTUS regulations](#) - While little is known about how the Biden administration will rewrite waters of the United States, or WOTUS, definitions, EPA Administrator Michael Regan on Monday said exemptions for farming and ranching activities would remain in place.
- [Minnesota farmers tap technology to conserve water in drought](#) - Wildman relies on the hand-held soil moisture sensor, along with a stationary one planted in the middle of the field, to provide accurate information about how much water he needs to apply to his corn.
- [BLM headquarters moving back to D.C. from Colorado](#) - In August 2020, the agency's headquarters was moved from Washington, D.C. to Grand Junction, Colorado, in an effort by the previous administration to bring the agency's leadership closer geographically to the majority of BLM lands. In 2019, The Wildlife Society expressed concerns in a letter about this move and its potential impact to the BLM's wildlife program and employees.
- [Saving the Great Plains with prescribed fire, mixed grazing](#) - Rangelands in the Great Plains, and the ranchers who depend on them, are losing battles against an invasion of brush and shrubs on historical grasslands.
- [Prairie strips focus of upcoming field day](#) - "It's a very farmer-friendly practice in that prairie strips can be used by the farmer as a turnaround area for machinery and used as headlands," said James Fett, Mower SWCD's watershed technician. "Prairie strips really are an innovative, flexible solution that landowners can put anywhere on their farm."
- [Nearly 80% of Rural Farming-Dependent Counties Lost Population in Last Decade](#) - Rural counties where farming makes up a major part of the local economy were more likely than the rest of rural America to lose population over the past decade, according to a Daily Yonder analysis of U.S. Census data. Counties that depend on recreation, on the other hand, were more likely to gain population than rural America overall. Only 21% of rural counties with farming-dependent economies gained population from 2010 to 2020, the analysis shows.

Pollinators and Insects

- [New York Post - Why the honey bee 'apocalypse' is based on a lie](#) – Today, more than 2.98 million honeybee colonies are currently registered in the United States, according to the US Department of Agriculture — up from 2.35 million colonies in 2002. Not only are honeybees not endangered, they may be responsible for declines in other bee populations.
- [Echinacea Isn't Itself Anymore](#) – Even to someone intimately acquainted with the genus Echinacea, many of the latest coneflowers elicit a double take. Some are nearly unrecognizable; others represent a dramatic divergence from those that nature made. So before you shop, you have a decision to make: Are you planting a pollinator garden or do you just want some high-summer bloom for visual consumption?
- [The amazing tale of butterfly 'ps 397' - which helped illuminate monarch migration](#) – 44 years ago, a monarch that was tagged in Minnesota helped unlock the monarch migration when it was later found in the mountains of Mexico.

Pesticides and Invasive Species

- [Invasive Species of Grass Threatens Kansas Pastures, Grasslands](#) - An invasive species of grass is taking over pastures and grasslands. As David Condos of the Kansas News Service reports, some researchers and landowners are trying to stop it from changing the Kansas prairie forever — if it's not already too late.
- [EPA Will Ban A Farming Pesticide Linked To Health Problems In Children](#) – Chlorpyrifos has been linked to neurological damage in children, including reduced IQ, loss of working memory, and attention deficit disorders. Chlorpyrifos has been sprayed on crops, including strawberries, apples, citrus, broccoli and corn since 1965. The new rule banning chlorpyrifos will take effect in six months.
- [Climate warming promotes pesticide resistance through expanding overwintering range of a global pest](#) - By facilitating local persistence all year round, climate change can promote and expand pesticide resistance of this destructive species globally. These ecological and evolutionary changes would severely impede effectiveness of current pest control efforts and potentially cause large economic losses.
- [Vigilance urged after potentially damaging bug is detected in Vermont](#) - Agriculture officials in Vermont are asking people to remain aware and vigilant following the recent discovery of an invasive pest that could harm fruit crops and other products.

Webinars, Podcasts, Videos, Social Media, & Other Events

- [Guardians of the Grasslands](#) – [13 minutes] Our native prairie is home to over 60 species at-risk but it is disappearing and at an alarming rate. However, cattle are maintaining and preserving these iconic landscapes and providing hope for the plants and animals that call them home. Sometimes what you thought was the problem, is really the solution.
- [The Perennial Promise Growers Cooperative is promoting their ecosystem and earth-benefitting crops](#) – [6 minutes] The newly formed Perennial Promise Growers Cooperative has an eye towards marketing perennial crops — Kernza®, a perennial grain, to start — that also provide ecosystem services.
- [Discover the Minnesota Prairie Landowner Network, Summer 2021](#) – This initial mailing for the Minnesota Prairie Landowner Network was sent earlier this summer to native prairie landowners across Minnesota. A digital copy is now available on the DNR's website.