

RPU Plugged In



2012 Environmental Achievement Award Recipients and Nominators



Individuals and Organizations Recognized for Environmental Efforts in the Community



Eight local individuals and organizations were selected to receive the Environmental Achievement Award for their environmental efforts in 2012. This year's recipients span a wide range of efforts, including leading protection and preservation of the Zumbro Watershed to ridding public areas of cigarette butt litter. Every effort in the direction of increasing environmental stewardship is necessary and beneficial to ensure that future generations will be able to

enjoy the local environment for many years to come. The Olmsted County Environmental Commission and Rochester Public Utilities are proud to mark this as the 21st year of recognizing local individuals, businesses, and organizations for their efforts.

For a full list of past recipients, visit the RPU website at www.rpu.org.

THE 2012 RECIPIENTS ARE:



Ron Fuller (right)

As one of the original organizers of the Zumbro Watershed Partnership (ZWP), Ron Fuller has been a leader in protecting the Zumbro River Watershed. Ron has volunteered his time at many ZWP events, is active in the Lake Zumbro Improvement Association and Lake Zumbro Forever, Inc, and has always served in an action capacity to further the presence and accomplishments of those organizations. Ron's efforts and vision for the watershed benefit both Olmsted County residents and all citizens who live and recreate in the watershed.



Pam Hansen (right)

Through the spring and summer of 2012, Pam Hansen was an active volunteer assisting in stream sampling programs to access and monitor water quality conditions in Olmsted County. Pam assisted in collecting stream samples and field measurements at three sites on the Zumbro River and six sites on the Whitewater River. As a retired teacher and lifelong volunteer, Pam exhibits the true spirit of civic engagement and what it means to lead by example.



Bill Boyne

As editor of the *Rochester Post Bulletin*, and more recently as a columnist, Bill Boyne has provided informative news coverage and thoughtful editorials on a range of environmental issues, including energy, climate, water, air, infrastructure, and food. His editorials often provided a local focus to national environmental issues. His editorial advocacy has been instrumental in guiding local decisions on many of those same issues.



Louie Bortolon

Nearly every day for the past four years, Louie Bortolon has walked a 1.5-mile stretch of 55th Street NW, between the East Frontage Road of Highway 52 and Essex Park, collecting debris and recycling what he can. Louie's demonstration of civic responsibility and environmentalism sets a great example for others to follow. Louie's efforts have resulted in clean public spaces and a more beautiful environment for those who frequent the area.



John Adams Middle School "Butt Kickers" (Breanna Sharp, Melissa Schmid, Khiara Las)

Since 2011, the "Butt Kickers" of John Adams Middle School have worked diligently to clean public areas and educate the community about the hazards of cigarette butt litter. Their efforts have informed their peers at John Adams and the residents of Rochester that cigarette butts are toxic to our landscape, adding pollutants to our local waterways and environment. Since their inception, the "Butt Kickers" have picked up more than 30,000 littered cigarette butts.



Doty and Hank Klein (Doty not pictured)

Doty and Hank Klein are instrumental leaders in the Cimarron Neighborhood CROPS Garden in Kings Run Park established by the Rochester Area Foundation in 2011. Doty and Hank served on the leadership committee, organized the garden, negotiated for an area on park land, designed the area, planted the plots, and have provided support and guidance based on their vast knowledge of organic gardening for other neighbors utilizing the community garden to grow their own produce. Doty and Hank have proven to their neighborhood that good things can come from hard work and dedication.



protecting those resources. He has also been a champion for a smoke-free indoor environment and helped lead the county and state in adopting smoke-free workplace regulations. Studies have found that those regulations have reduced heart attack rates in the county by 33 percent.



Friends of Indian Heights (Brian Lind, Dawn Littleton, Barbara Hudson)

Friends of Indian Heights (FOIH) is a grassroots effort launched in 2010 by a dedicated group of neighbors to conserve, preserve, restore, and improve Indian Heights Park, a 37-acre parcel in the Rochester Park System. FOIH has worked with numerous organizations to document the native plant species and wildlife habitat in the park, restore the oak savanna by removing invasive plant species, and develop educational materials and conduct tours on the ecological and historical features of the park. Members will soon work with the National Park Service to develop a community master plan to enhance the park's environment.

Rich Peter (right)

Through his work as a member of the Izaak Walton League and his position with Olmsted County, Rich Peter helped to develop a communitywide awareness of the region's vulnerable groundwater resources. He was also instrumental in getting studies completed and ordinances adopted that ultimately provide much of the framework still in place for

Save the Date!

RPU's Arbor Day Celebration is on Friday, April 26. It will be held at Mayo Park behind the Mayo Civic Center again this year.



See a video of last year's event by scanning this QR code:





What You Need to Know about RPU's Data Privacy Practices

This time each year, we like to share our data privacy practices with customers. By having these practices and procedures in place, we are able to provide greater customer care in a safe and responsible manner.

Whether it's in person or by phone, it's not uncommon for most places of business to ask individuals to confirm their identity before releasing information on an account or before making any changes. This may be done by requesting the last four digits of a customer's Social Security number, displaying a photo ID, and/or requesting some other type of personal identification. These checks are solely to ensure that none of your personal information is released or used without your consent. RPU follows these required data privacy practices to ensure that your information is protected.

When calling RPU, a representative may ask for confirmation of your identity to ensure that we are in fact speaking to you personally. Anyone unauthorized on your account will not be able to obtain information on your account. This includes spouses, roommates, parents, siblings, etc. You may authorize anyone on your account to obtain the information, but unless specified, no account information will be released.

Special circumstances include a situation where the person listed on the billing statement isn't the person who pays the bill, for example:

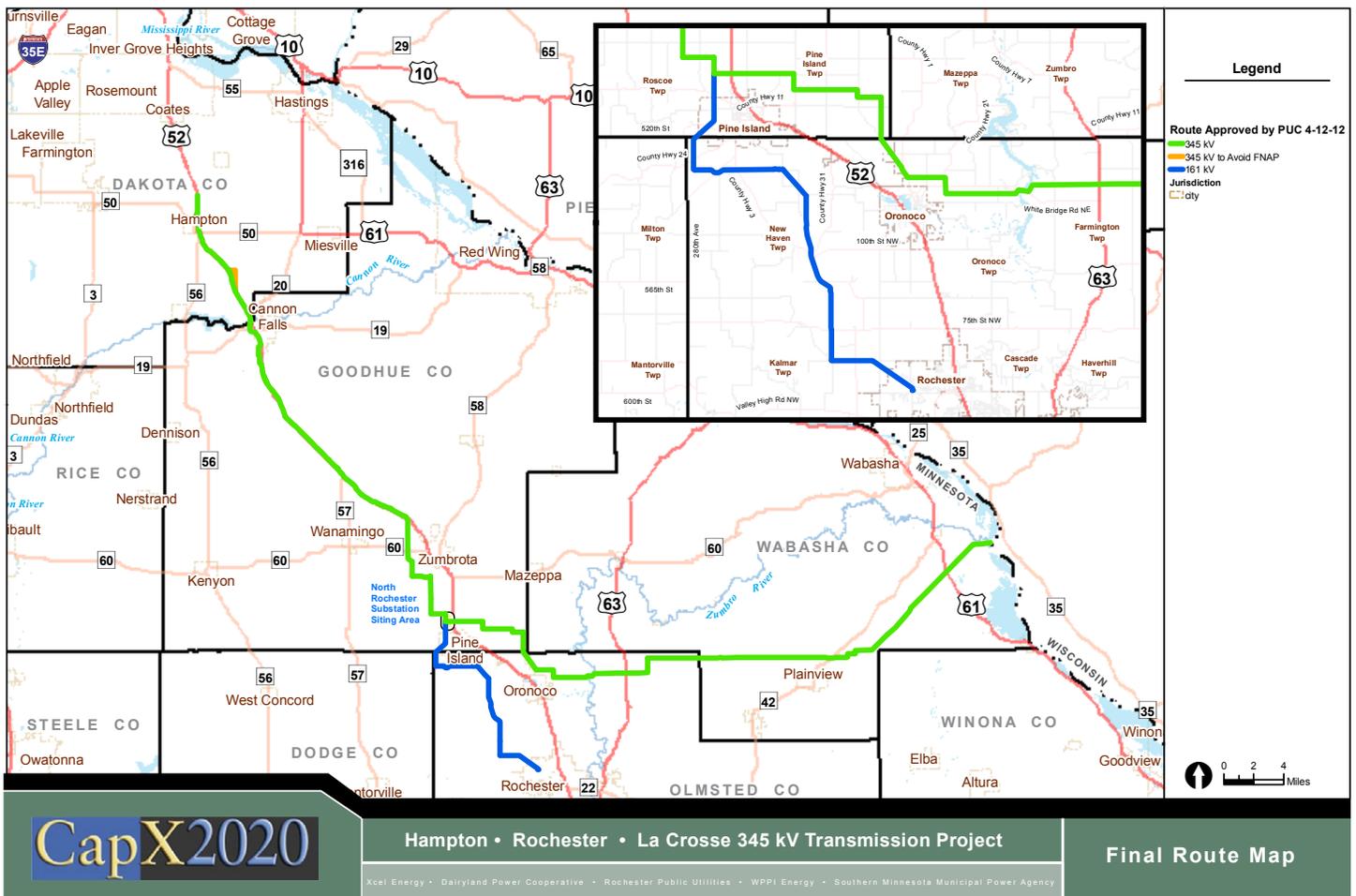
- Unauthorized people can make a payment on anyone's account, but no account information will be released, including the account balance.
- Power of Attorney (POA). In these situations, RPU requests that POA documentation is received before releasing information to any third party.

An RPU representative may, at any time, request verification of the account holder's identity by bringing in a photo ID and/or Social Security card and/or passport to the RPU office. This is also true for individuals who would like to set up new service, but are unable to verify their Social Security number.

If paying by credit/debit card in the office, RPU representatives will ask for an ID to ensure you are the actual card holder. If the name on the card does not match the ID card, RPU may not be able to process a payment using the card.

Data privacy practices are in place to protect customers and businesses from fraudulent activity. RPU follows the MN Data Privacy guidelines to ensure that customer information is kept confidential.

More information on the data privacy practices can be found at www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=13.685.



CapX2020 Update

The Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse project is one of five transmission projects in the CapX2020 initiative designed to increase access to renewable generation and to improve reliability across the state of Minnesota and into Wisconsin. RPU is a partner in the Hampton-Rochester-LaCrosse line, with approximately 9 percent ownership of the project. Other utilities involved in the Minnesota line include Xcel Energy, Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, Dairyland Power Cooperative, and WPPI Energy.

The Upper Midwest's electric transmission grid hasn't had a major upgrade in nearly 30 years. Electricity consumption in Minnesota has nearly doubled since 1980, according to data from the state's department of commerce. In addition to upgrading the electric transmission system, CapX2020 will also help utilities meet the Minnesota Renewable Energy

Standard (RES), which requires utilities to deliver 25 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2025.

The first major step in the project was the filing of the certificate of need (CON) back on August 16, 2007. Significant planning and coordination was done prior to the filing of the CON. In addition to the 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, the project will include two 161 kV lines specific to the Rochester area. These two line additions will provide added redundancy in the transmission system to increase system reliability.

Construction on the first segment of the project is scheduled to begin in late January, which includes the 161 kV line from the new North Rochester substation near Pine Island to RPU's Northern Hills Substation located at the intersection of 55th St. and 50th Ave.

NW in Rochester. Another segment of the project will bring a 161 kV line from the North Rochester Substation to RPU's Chester Substation along 50th Ave. SE. Along with added reliability; the additional transmission infrastructure will support the increased import of electricity needed due to the decommissioning of the Silver Lake Plant by the end of 2015.

The larger 345 kV line will extend from a new substation near Hampton, MN, to the North Rochester Substation and then continue east until terminating at a substation near Holman, WI. Work on this line will begin later in 2013.

Completion of the entire project is currently scheduled for the 4th quarter of 2015.

For more information, visit the CapX2020 website at www.capx2020.com.



Community Education Class

Residential Geothermal Heating and Cooling

Whether you are building a new home or considering a new heating and cooling system for your present one, consider the economic and environmental advantages of geothermal technology. It is the world's most advanced, most cost-effective heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system for new or existing homes. This class will provide you with geothermal basics: what it does and how it works. Learn how it uses the ground as a heating and cooling source. Geothermal

heating and cooling systems can provide greater comfort and energy savings. Find out information on federal tax credits and Rochester Public Utilities' installation incentives.

Instructor: Arnie Lorimor
Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2013
Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Session(s): One
Location: Cascade Meadow Wetlands & Environmental Science Center

Registration can be made by calling 507.328.4000 or online through the Rochester Community Education website (www.rochesterce.org).

ATTEND A FREE ENERGY EFFICIENCY WORKSHOP!

Tuesday, March 12, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.
 Kellogg Middle School – 503 17th St NE

Monday, April 15, 2013 6:30 p.m.
 Lincoln Choice Elementary School – 1122 8th Ave SE

Reserve your spot! Contact Ashley Robertson at 888.734.6365 or arobertson@mncee.org.



Attendees are eligible for a home energy audit. Auditors will also install products that can help you start saving right away. You'll receive information on energy efficiency financing and rebates. This \$400 value is available to workshop attendees for a co-pay of only \$50! Visit www.rpu.org to learn more.



RESIDENTIAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM



Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association

**Tom Bovitz
 Memorial Scholarships
 for High School Seniors
 Entries Due April 5, 2013**



ESSAY SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST:

- * First Place \$2000
- * Second Place \$1500
- * Third Place \$1000
- * Fourth Place \$500



Visit www.rpu.org for essay guidelines and to download a scholarship entry form. Good luck!



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Holiday Hours**
The RPU Service Center will be closed
the following days.
**February 18 in observance of
President's Day**
Payments can always be made online
at www.rpu.org or over the phone by
calling **855.210.2285**.

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