

To the Scandia Planning Commission

To the Scandia City Council

January 1, 2013



Please allow me to write about three words: currency, life and benefit.

The first word; currency = money which is in actual use.

We think we know what currency is. It is money. It is precious. We can't get along without it or away from its problems. It is all around us...on the air waves, in our pockets, in our banks for our futures. The fiscal cliff, debt, borrowing, taxes, tax rates, investments, big banks with our bucks, balanced or unbalanced budget, etc.

But currency is also a medium of exchange, and before too long we may be looking at water as currency. Money as currency will be SIMPLY USELESS in the face of NO WATER.

Look around us here. White Bear Lake is historically low and it seems likely much of its aquifer is used up. Look at our sloughs, ponds, lakes, creeks, streams and our precious and special St. Croix River. You can't drive from Scandia to Taylors, Osecola, Stillwater, and Forest Lake without seeing what right now is A LACK OF WATER. A LACK OF CURRENCY. A sign of the future?

*Water is being alarmingly wasted and used up to water lawns, golf courses, wash cars and fill swimming pools in areas in our country which are actually deserts (like TX, AZ, NM and CA).

*The huge Ogalala Aquifer will be out of water.

*Rivers everywhere are at an all time low.

*Water is being used everywhere for agriculture and industry. After it is used and polluted, it is reissued into our streams.

*Fracking pollutes water. Some people are able to set their tap water on fire! How would you like that? How much would your property be worth with water like that?

*And there is mining for gravel and sand in the Midwest for the oil companies to bring up oil.

Ask this question? Is it a good idea to abuse the water that exists today by allowing ONE single entity/individual business to go about making currency/dollars for themselves here in our community of Scandia?

Soon water may be dearer than any dollar, peso, deutschmark, pound, ruble, rial, franc, yen or Yuan! AND YOU CAN'T PRINT OR BORROW MORE WATER!

YOU CAN ONLY PROTECT, SAVE and NURTURE THE CURRENCY THAT IS OUR WATER....NOW.

You can do that by making the right decision. **NO CUP for Zavoral/Tiller!**

Water is NOT an infinite resource....anyone in Scandia can SEE that now. We are in our own drought that has been persisting for some years. Look at our warmer winters, less snow, less rain...lots of wind and heat to blow and evaporate the moisture from the ground, from trees and all plants and drying up the earth to reveal cracks that used to be reserved for deserts.

Do you want to be a part of a process that wastes or damages our precious currency? Do you really want to OK this Zavroal/Tiller venture for their gain? For our loss?

WATER will be more precious than money. Think about it....it is coming.

LIFE, the second word:

Life is precious. And there are real threats to life here in Scandia now. Traffic is substantial. As one who drives nearly every day around Scandia, to and from Stillwater, Marine, Taylors, Osceola and Forest Lake, I can really appreciate how many gravel trucks there are NOW. A short time ago, one in front of me shot off yet again another huge rock from his uncovered trailer roaring down 97 and smacked my windshield. Another replacement.

If it is not rocks flying off at my car, it is like driving in a desert in a sandstorm... as the small particles just fly in a cloud off those trucks.

The traffic study in your materials speaks only about the intersection of 95/97. Indeed, that will be a nightmare there if you grant a CUP for this misadventure in business. But, there are other very dangerous crossings in our supposedly bucolic and rural setting. They will worsen as well.

Have you EVER tried to turn west toward Forest Lake on 97 from Oakhill Rd? You are literally taking your life in your hands. The traffic ROARS up the school hill towards Scandia way over the posted 50 mph. Other vehicles traveling west roar off the stop sign at Olinda and 97 and zoom and accelerate to the west. Gravel trucks, scores of them all day long, are in this traffic mix...and they don't stop or slow down well.

Why the state of MN, MNDot, Washington County, Scandia elementary school, or Scandia haven't done something about the speeds on 97 is beyond me. Apparently the right people don't drive these roads all the time like many of us do during working hours, day in and day out. in all weather. It is very dangerous. Ask our Washington County deputy.

Life hangs in that traffic balance. The noose sure will be tighter at the nightmare intersection of 95/97.

The third word is BENEFIT: Who/what benefits from the Tiller Operation on the Zavoral property? Obviously, the interested parties: Zavoral, Tiller and their legal advisors. Do we as homeowners? Does Scandia as a city? Our environment? How?

WHERE are the swells of people in favor of this mine operation...where have they been? Where are their positive words, arguments, facts, and information? I have been to many meetings and

have yet to see or hear any abundance of words of approval, support or positive input about this proposal.

It is up to you. You can do the right thing. Benefit for the few? Benefit for the many? Currency now or currency in the future? And life? You only get one.

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Extraordinary snowfall needed to relieve drought

Jim Suhr, Associated Press

2:24 PM CST, January 2, 2013

ST. LOUIS (AP) — When his drought-stricken Nebraska farm was blanketed with several inches of snow, Tom Schwarz welcomed the moisture. But it wasn't nearly enough.

He had hoped for a wet, snowy winter. Instead, he's watched with worry as the sky spits mostly flakes that don't stick.

"I just shudder to think what it's going to be if we don't get snow," Schwarz said. "A friend told me it would take 150 inches of snow to get us back to normal precipitation."

Despite getting some big storms last month, much of the U.S. is still desperate for relief from the nation's longest dry spell in decades. And experts say it will take an absurd amount of snow to ease the woes of farmers and ranchers.

The same fears haunt firefighters, water utilities and many communities across the country.

Winter storms have dropped more than 15 inches of snow on parts of the Midwest and East in recent weeks. But climatologists say it would take at least 8 feet of snow — and likely far more — to return the soil to its pre-drought condition in time for spring planting. A foot of snow is roughly equal to an inch of water, depending on density.

Many areas are begging for moisture after a summer that caused water levels to fall to near-record lows on lakes Michigan and Huron. The Mississippi River has declined so much that barge traffic south of St. Louis could soon come to a halt. Out West, firefighters worry that a lack of snow will leave forests and fields like tinder come spring, risking a repeat of the wildfires that burned some 9.2 million acres in 2012.

Scores of cities that have already enacted water restrictions are thinking about what they will do in 2013 if heavy snows and spring rains don't materialize.

For a while, it seemed no snow would come. Midwestern cities including Chicago, Milwaukee and Des Moines, Iowa, had their latest snows on record. How much would it take to make things right?

"An amount nobody would wish on their worst enemy," said David Pearson, a National Weather Service

advertisement



The advertisement features a black and white photograph of a smiling woman with long, wavy hair. Overlaid on the image is the text "SINGLE & CHRISTIAN?" in large, bold, white letters. Below this, in smaller white text, is "FIND GOD'S MATCH FOR YOU®". In the bottom left corner of the ad, the "ChristianMingle.com" logo is visible. In the bottom right corner, there is a button that says "BROWSE for FREE" with a right-pointing arrow.

hydrologist in Omaha, Neb. "It's so out of this world it wouldn't make much scientific sense (to guess). It would take a record-breaking snowfall for the season to get us back on track."

That's why Schwarz is worried about his 750 acres near Lexington in south-central Nebraska. To save his corn last summer, he pulled water from deep wells and other sources in his irrigation district, but the alfalfa he couldn't irrigate died, something he's never had happen before.

The soil was so dry he didn't even try to sow winter wheat, a crop that's planted in the fall and goes dormant over winter, relying on snow as a protective blanket.

"If we don't get snow, we'd better get rain this spring or we're done," Schwarz said.

The 150 inches — more than 12 feet — isn't likely to materialize. That would be about four times the average winter snowfall in Chicago, a city famous for its storms. Schwarz's area usually gets about 29.5 inches of snow during the winter. As of Dec. 27, it had just 6.5 inches.

Even if a massive storm developed, the temperature would have to be right for farmers to benefit. If snow melts on frozen ground, the water will run off into rivers and streams, instead of being absorbing into the soil.

Runoff would be welcome in Sioux Falls, S.D., which was among countless communities that clamped down on water use last summer as rivers and lakes that supply power plants and households grew shallower.

South Dakota's biggest city imposed its first water restrictions since 2003 as the Big Sioux River, which recharges its aquifers, dropped. Homeowners were limited to watering lawns once a week. Washing outdoor surfaces like sidewalks, driveways and parking lots was banned.

"This is the driest year in our town's history since the early 1950s," Mayor Mike Huether said as 2012 drew to a close.

With just 5 inches of snow and some rain so far this winter, the conservation efforts will back in place next year "unless we get one heck of a snowfall and bust this drought," Huether said.

Western states rely on snow and ice that accumulate in the mountains during the winter for as much as 80 percent of their freshwater for the year, according to the Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The melting snowpack replenishes streams, rivers and reservoirs and provides water for cities and crops.

A deep snowpack also can make the wildfire season more manageable by wetting forests and fields.

Tom O'Connor, the rural fire chief in Divide, Colo., would relish that after enduring what the governor called the state's worst wildfire season ever in 2012.

O'Connor's volunteer department responded to more than 80 calls in June, compared with the usual 30 calls. Three-fourths of the calls were related to wildfires.

The fires came after Colorado got one of its smallest snowpacks in years — by some accounts tying 2002 as the lowest snow buildup in the 45 years that records have been kept.

Still, climatologists caution that it's too early in the winter to give up hope.

"We could be singing a different tune this winter if a storm system cooperates," said Dave Robinson, a Rutgers University geography professor who's also the New Jersey state climatologist. "Sometimes you get what you wish for."

Associated Press writers Scott Bauer in Madison, Wis.; Matt Volz in Helena, Mont.; and Mead Gruver, Cheyenne, Wyo., contributed to this report.

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