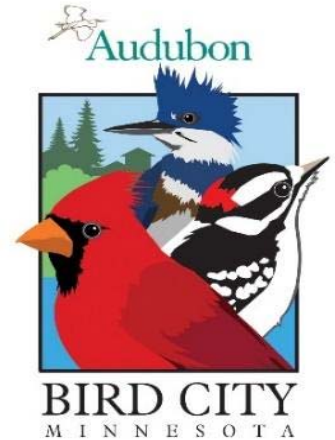


**BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices**

**Community: Bemidji**  
**Bird City Minnesota | Full Checklist**



Requirements: Bird City communities are recognized for meeting at least 8 of the 19 criteria including 1 required action and 7 best practices (BP) in 3 categories as specified below. Examples of actions for each best practice are provided.

Instructions: For each action checked please provide a complete narrative description. *(The actions listed on this form are examples of activities that might fulfill the Best Management Practice)*

Bemidji Bird City Partners: City of Bemidji, Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society (MHAS), Birds, Bees, & Butterflies – Bemidji, Bemidji State University (BSU), Headwaters Science Center (HSC), Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – NW Regional Office (MNDNR), Lake Bemidji State Park (LBSP), Bogs & Logs Chapter of the Minnesota Naturalists, Bemidji Chapter of Citizen Climate Lobby.

**Required of all Bird City communities (complete 1 of 1)**

- Adopt an official resolution and hold a celebration recognizing International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). See [www.migratorybirdday.org](http://www.migratorybirdday.org) for ideas. Sample resolution available.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resolution Date (attach a copy):</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IMBD Event and Date:</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Register your event at <a href="http://www.migratorybirdday.org/events.html">http://www.migratorybirdday.org/events.html</a></li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Event description:</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018</li> <li>• Bemidji Purple Martin Fest and Nature Expo/Bird City Celebration. Saturday June 30, 2018</li> <li>• Done</li> <li>• This event includes talks and demonstrations on purple martins, bluebirds, native plants for pollinators, and a keynote talk by Bruce Carlson on our lakes. Take a pontoon boat ride to visit purple martin colonies around Lake Bemidji. Kids can make and take home a bird feeder compliments of Home Depot and the Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society. There also will be a 'Raptors Live!' presentation at Lake Bemidji State Park on Friday evening.</li> </ul>
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**Category I: Educate and engage citizens in birding and conservation (complete at least 2 of 5)**

- Best Practice #1:** Increase awareness of birds in your community

(1) Create a map and/or information about [birding locations](#) in your area and make it available to citizens and tourist outlets in print and/or online

- A list of birding hot spots is available from [Visit Bemidji](#).

(2) Develop a [birding checklist](#) for your area and make it available to citizens and tourist outlets in print and/or online

- [Checklist developed for Lake Bemidji State Park](#) (LBSP)

## BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices

(3) Install and maintain a birding kiosk and / or signage that identifies birding locations in your area

- Interpretive kiosk/sign on purple martins at Cameron Park.

(4) Share regular social media posts about birds and birding

- [Frequent MHAS Facebook postings](#)
- **Visit Bemidji created a [Birding in Bemidji](#) page on their tourism website and highlighted birding events on their [Facebook page](#)**

### ☒ **Best Practice #2:** Involve residents in conservation and stewardship projects

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(1) Create and maintain and/or encourage [bird feeding](#) stations at parks, nature centers, schools and tourism / lodging sites.

- LBSP maintains a very active bird feeder in winter, hummingbird feeders in summer
- BSU maintains several bird feeding stations along campus walking trail

(2) Illustrate how your community has a program that involves schools, garden clubs, or other organizations in bird conservation activities.

- **See BP #8 [Birds, Bees & Butterflies – Bemidji](#). Partners include Bemidji Garden Club, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Middle School, Watermark Art Center**

(3) Develop a program to involve community members in hands-on land and stewardship projects. ([GS #18.8](#))

- [Parks Partners](#) Program (BJI GS18.8)
- **BSU Sustainability Office hosted Annual [2018 Sustainable Places Tour](#) showcasing sustainable land management practices including local native plant gardens**

### ☒ **Best Practice #3:** Educate and engage youth audiences

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(1) Promote the creation of a [youth birding club](#) / support their activities

- HSC hosts weekly [Science Clubs](#) at 3 different locations in town. It provides hands-on afterschool science activities for students in 3rd through 5th grades. **In addition, an Environmental Science Club was added in 2018 for Middle School students**

(2) Demonstrate that educators are incorporating birds and bird conservation into their formal and informal learning environments on their own or through existing curriculum like [Flying WILD](#).

- City Recreation Coordinator attended Project Wild/Aquatic Wild training workshop Feb 2017.
- City will be offering activities in City Parks in the future

(3) Sponsor or facilitate training for educators in the [Flying WILD curriculum](#)

- Regional Park Naturalist trained to lead Flying Wild workshop. **HSC staff organizing workshop for K-12 educators in 2019**

## BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices

- (4) Provide bird related programs for children, youth and families
- MHAS owns and manages a 460 acre tract known as the Neilson Spearhead Center (NSC). The [Young Naturalists Program](#) engages over 100 Bemidji area young people each year with a unique combination of experiential learning and nature education
  - Headwaters Science Center "[Raptors Rule](#)" [demonstration program](#). Presented 20-30 times in 2018 to area schools and groups.
  - **HSC Creativity Festival (11/22/2018): 'Build a Bird' activity**
  - **HSC Flight Camp July 23rd-27<sup>th</sup> Grades 1-4. Exploring how planes and birds fly.**
  - [HSC Owl Birthday Program](#)

### *Best Practice #4: Promote citizen science monitoring and research*

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- (1) Demonstrate that your community is represented in at least one bird monitoring program such as the [Christmas Bird Count](#), [Great Backyard Bird Count](#), or [Chimney Swift Sit](#).
- (6) Facilitate citizen participation in water quality monitoring (ex. [WHEP - Wetland Health Evaluation Project](#))
- Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice
- **MHAS [Bemidji Christmas Bird Count, 12/15/2018](#)**
  - MHAS monitors and reports on [Spearhead Lake Water quality](#) as part of the MPCA Citizen Lake Monitoring Program
  - **BSU students & Dr. Hiller involved in research project monitoring 50+ bluebird/tree swallow houses for parasites and productivity.**
  - **BSU students & Dr. Hiller involved in long-term research project on purple martins (both projects involve houses maintained by private landowners)**

### *Best Practice #5: Ensure access to nature*

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- (1) Work to encourage traditionally underserved communities to visit and enjoy birding in your parks
- (3) Develop one or more accessible nature / birding trails
- (4) Identify and remedy gaps within your community's system of parks, offroad trails and open spaces. ([GS #18.1](#))
- (5) Plan and budget for a network of parks, green spaces, water features and trails in all new development areas. ([GS #18.2](#))
- **Outdoor classroom/ nature study area constructed at North Country Park in underserved neighborhood. Hosted 2018 Monarch Festival**
  - LBSP provides 3 accessible trails: [Rocky Point, Sundew Pond, and the Bogwalk](#)
  - [City Parks, Open Space & Trail System Plan - 2011](#)
  - [City parkland dedication fees for new subdivisions](#)

**Category II: Protect, restore and enhance bird habitat (complete at least 3 of 7)**

**Best Practice #6: Practice conservation planning**

(1) Certify your community as a [GreenStep City](#)

- **Bemidji is a [Step 3 - GreenStep City](#). Bird City activities included in annual Green Step City Report (BP 9 – Natural Resource Conservation Design Action 7 – Bird City)**

(3) Include ecological provisions in the community's comprehensive planning process that explicitly aim to minimize open space fragmentation and/or establish a growth area with expansion criteria ([GS BP#6.4](#)).

- **Greater Bemidji Joint Planning Board included a number of bird-friendly community actions in the updated [Comprehensive Plan](#); including Objective 11.3 Promote the Preservation of the Night Sky of the Greater Bemidji Area, and Objective 11.6 Encourage Bird and Pollinator Friendly Practices for New and Existing Buildings and Landscapes**
- [BSU Master Landscaping Plan, 2013](#) provisions to use native species, protect and restore natural areas, sustainable practices
- [BSU Climate Action Plan](#) Action # 1, Goal 2: Use native landscaping to provide water quality treatment

(5) Conduct a Natural Resource Inventory or Assessment ([NRI or NRA](#)); incorporate protection of priority natural systems or resources through the subdivision or development process ([GS BP#10.1](#))

- [2013 City Tree inventory/ assessment](#)
- **Created GIS map of boulevard tree species, condition, etc. to assist in management**

**Best Practice #7: Create and protect habitat**

(2) Increase the amount of bird habitat in the community by enlarging existing habitat, acquiring new and/or restoring parcels - creating connections wherever possible

- **BBBB Established 5 new bird and pollinator friendly demonstration plantings. See BP#8- Other**
- BSU has adopted a Master Landscape Plan that integrates native, perennial and edible plantings across campus to promote environmental health and natural habitat. **A new native plant project was installed in 2018 adjacent the Centennial Building**
- [South Shore shoreland restoration project](#)

(4) Provide information to property owners on how to create and enhance backyard habitat for birds and/or participate in bird-friendly habitat certification programs (ex. [National Wildlife Federation](#), [Audubon Native Plants for Native Birds](#) - spring 2016)

- See “Birds, Bees & Butterflies – Bemidji” initiative BP #8 – Other

**Best Practice #8: Promote use of native and beneficial plant species**

(1) Develop and disseminate recommendations for citizens on preferred plantings for birds & pollinators

- See brochure for “[Birds, Bees, Butterflies & Bemidji](#)” campaign - BP #8 – Other

(2) Create demonstration areas with signage to promote bird-friendly plantings

- **Signage installed at all Birds, Bees & Butterflies plantings. See BP #8 – Other below**

## BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices

(3) Participate in [existing "pollinator friendly" programs](#) and / or develop a program to provide pollinator habitat

(4) Adopt local landscaping/nuisance ordinances that promote, rather than create barriers for, native vegetation including taller grasses and forbs which provide important food and cover for birds.

Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

- Mayor's Monarch Pledge adopted, Monarch committee established
- [Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Board Zoning Ordinance](#) – Performance standards for Native Landscaping (Section 1006) and Tree Preservation (Section 1007)
- MHAS is partnering with the City of Bemidji and multiple local organizations on a local campaign we are calling "[Birds, Bees, Butterflies & Bemidji](#)" to promote planting of native trees, shrubs, and flowers for birds and pollinators. Local businesses, the city, BSU, and others will install bird and pollinator friendly plantings. Partner with local nurseries to provide plants and information.
- **2018 BBBB activities**
  - **Established 5 new bird and pollinator-friendly 'demonstration' plantings and worked on 3 sites planted last year. New sites include the Bemidji Middle School, Leech Lake Tribal College Library; Little Bird Sculpture Garden Planting – Bemidji Public Library, Bemidji State University 'Centennial Garden', Watermark Art Center**
  - **Initiated an annual 'Top 10' list of native plants for birds and pollinators in our area. A flyer was created and distributed. A joint sales promotion event was held (6/16/2018) with local nurseries and garden centers featuring presentations by BBBB partners in their greenhouses.**
  - **Held two "How To Get Started With Native Plants" workshops.**
  - **Held two community celebrations highlighting birds, pollinators and native plants: Monarch Festival (9/22/18) and Purple Martin Fest/Bemidji Bird City Celebration (6/30/2018).**
  - **Held 5 tabling events at community celebrations.**
  - **Engaged 67 volunteers, 600 participants.**

### **Best Practice #9: Control invasive and detrimental species**

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(2) Actively manage species that are having a detrimental impact on habitat or wildlife (ex. Cats, White-tailed Deer, etc.)

(3) Actively manage invasive plant species (ex. buckthorn, garlic mustard and purple loosestrife)

- City manages two special deer hunt areas
- LBSP manages three special hunts to limit the whitetail population
- LBSP actively manages to control buckthorn, knapweed, loosestrife, etc

## BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices

### ☒ *Best Practice #10: Create and protect nesting opportunities*

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(4) Encourage the use of nest boxes / structures including not only creation, siting, and installation but also maintenance and monitoring. Keep records of structures and usage.

- City erected Purple Martin houses at Cameron Park
- DNR Annually maintain bluebird trail on Paul Bunyan State Trail, east side of Lake Bemidji
- BSU maintains Purple martin, bluebird, and wood duck houses on BSU Campus
- Bogs & Logs Master Naturalists erected a bat house at LBSP maintain bluebird trail at North Country City Park

### ☒ *Best Practice #11: Ensure best management of urban forests*

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(1) Certify your community as a [Tree City USA](#) ([GS#16.1](#))

- City of Bemidji is a designated Tree City USA

(3) Develop a list of recommended tree and shrub species, at least 1/3 of which are native and beneficial to birds

- Native species list for Bemidji area developed for [Birds, Bees & Butterflies - Bemidji](#) initiative (BP#8 other)

(4) Work with local growers / suppliers to increase / ensure local supply of native trees / shrubs / plants

- See BP #8 - Other

(5) Build community capacity to protect existing trees/to plant resilient species by certifying at least one or more local staff/volunteers as [MN Certified Tree Inspectors](#) from the MN Dept. of Natural Resources. ([GS BP#16.6](#))

- Bemidji P&R has completed an [Emerald Ash borer preparedness plan](#)
- City of Bemidji has 4 P&R staff certified as Tree Inspectors

Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

- **MHAS wrote letter to Beltrami Co Board advocating they maintain dual certification (FSC & SFI) on County forest lands**
- **MHAS provided detailed comments on MN DNR's Sustainable Timber Harvest Analysis Report**

### ☒ *Best Practice #12: Ensure clean water in natural waterways*

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(1) Maintain set-backs and buffers of at least 50 feet from wetlands, rivers and lakes

- [Greater Bemidji Area Joint Planning Board Zoning Ordinance](#), Article IX Shoreland Regulations

(2) Encourage and support the creation of [rain-gardens](#) on private and public land

- **3 raingardens established as part of the WaterMark Art Center project (See BP8 – Other)**

(6) Use sources of nonpotable water, or surface/rain water for irrigation. ([GS #18.5c](#))

- Rain barrel at Gitigaan, BSU's community garden ([2016 Progress Report, pg 7](#))

(7) Support a multi-party community conversation around improving local water quality. ([GS BP#19.2](#))

- **HSC hosted '[We Are Water MN](#)' traveling exhibit. Interactive programs encouraged people to share stories and learn from each other about water quality issues and experiences.**

## BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices

Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

- [South Shore development plan](#) – native species planting and restoration of pine forest
- Native plant species used for the [Bemidji Lake Aquatic Management Area](#) & Paul Bunyan State Trail development in South Shore project
- [Highway 371 Reconstruction and Lake Bemidji South Shore Native Vegetation Restoration](#)

### Category III: Reduce Threats to birds (complete at least 2 of 6)

#### *Best Practice #13: Reduce collisions with windows*

(1) Demonstrate that your community provides property owners with information on how to protect birds from window-strikes

(6) Develop comprehensive guidelines or requirements for addressing bird-safety in the design of both municipal and private buildings in the community.

- MN DNR installed window treatments at regional office to reduce strikes.
- **Updated Greater Bemidji Area Comprehensive Plan addressed bird-friendly development. Chpt 12, [Implementation Action Plan Objective 11. 6, Action 1: “Promote the use of Minnesota Department of Administration Buildings, Benchmarks & Beyond \(B3\) Bird-Safe Building Guidelines to limit the risk of built environments to birds”](#)**
- **Research project initiated to pinpoint BSU campus buildings that present the greatest risk for window strike**

#### *Best Practice #14: Reduce threats from other man-made structures*

No actions completed

#### *Best Practice #15: Reduce light pollution*

(1) Adhere to [Lights Out](#) operations according to Audubon's Lights Out program; sign each municipal building on; encourage participation community-wide

(3) Develop a plan for [Dark Sky](#) compliance including a timeline and priority actions

(4) Implement plan to replace inefficient fixtures (exterior building, street, parking lot/ramp and traffic lighting) with Dark-Sky compliant, energy efficient, automatic dimming lighting technologies ([GS#4.6](#), [4.7](#) and [4.8](#))

- MN DNR installed new outdoor lighting applying appropriate Lights Out practices
- **Updated Greater Bemidji Area Comprehensive Plan addressed bird-friendly development. Chpt 12, [Implementation Action Plan Objective 11.3 “Promote the Preservation of the Night Sky of the Greater Bemidji Area”](#)**
- 95% of all traffic signals within city outfitted w/ LED lamps

## BEMIDJI BIRD CITY 2018 Annual Report - Summary of Ongoing and **New** Best Practices

### *Best Practice #16: Reduce disturbance and predation by free-roaming pets*

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No actions completed

### *Best Practice #17: Reduce the threat of pesticides and other toxins*

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(3) Encourage and promote the use of non-lead tackle and ammunition. Work with local sportsman's clubs to include related education in hunter education / gun safety.

- **BSU Student Wildlife Society Chapter helps with several copper bullet demonstration and education programs for deer hunters, including during the fall 2018 'rifle-sight-in day' at the new Beltrami County Shooting Sports Park.**

(4) Reduce toxins in the environment by coordinating clean up of lead ammunition on gun ranges and lead tackle at fishing areas. (Pick up fishing line to reduce this entanglement and ingestion risk).

- **Issue raised to BSU Physical Plant department to reduce spraying of insecticides on buildings to treat spiders. Use eliminated.**

### *Best Practice #18: Reduce climate impacts*

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(1) Develop a climate action plan as part of comprehensive plans or in a separate policy document to reduce energy use and carbon emissions ([GS#6.5](#))

- **City Council passed [Resolution No 6178](#) recognizing Climate Change and Urging Congress to Levy a Revenue Neutral Fee on Carbon in Fossil Fuels (9/17/2018)**
- [BSU Climate Action Plan](#) progress tracked annually (see [2016 progress report](#)).
- **BSU President Hensrud signed the Resilience Commitment upgrading their status to a signatory of the Climate Commitment and broadening BSU's commitment to campus-community partnerships, on behalf of the BSU community**
- **[Bemidji Chapter](#) of Citizen's Climate Lobby conducted considerable outreach in the community on climate change, including: tabled at 6 events, hosted film screening of [Saving Snow](#), collected 136 letters to members of Congress urging action on climate, and helped the Bemidji City Council pass a resolution endorsing carbon fee and dividend**

(2) Ensure residents have the option of purchasing green energy

- Beltrami Electric Coop offers members the option to receive, [locally-produced, solar energy](#). 33% of the retail energy is [wind generated](#)

(3) Demonstrate a decrease in energy use and carbon emissions through operational or building design changes.

- City participates in the [Guaranteed Energy Savings Program](#)



## Picture albums of Bemidji Bird City activities

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- “How to get started with Native Plants workshops”: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/GHfVYdcDnocquQDd6>
- “Birds, Bees & Butterflies – Bemidji Top 10 Native Plants promotion event” : <https://photos.app.goo.gl/PAFFmSMNcML1MZym8>
- “Sustainable Places Tour”: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/c487mN8bvRNRuxQs5>
- “Monarch Festival”: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/RRuAuMzsuqFkZiG59>
- “Watermark Art Center planting”: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/GuExeAUwd6Sq9kdM6>
- Bemidji Bird City Celebration/Purple Martin Fest, June 30, 2018: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/vmnGvZ9imhCHPgb38>

## Media Coverage links to relevant stories.

- Local Audubon Society lands grant for native plant project: Bemidji Pioneer <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/news/4445271-local-audubon-society-lands-grant-native-plant-project>
- MASTER GARDENERS: Native flowers add buzz to your gardens: Bemidji Pioneer <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/sports/outdoors/4446499-master-gardeners-native-flowers-add-buzz-your-gardens>
- MASTER GARDENERS: Pollinators not limited to the bees or butterflies: Bemidji Pioneer <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/opinion/columns/4449888-master-gardeners-pollinators-not-limited-bees-or-butterflies>
- MASTER GARDENERS: Plant native trees and shrubs in 2018: Bemidji Pioneer <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/news/4452888-master-gardeners-plant-native-trees-and-shrubs-2018>
- MASTER GARDENER: Beneficial bats for the garden: Bemidji Pioneer <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/sports/outdoors/4473757-master-gardener-beneficial-bats-garden>
- BLANE KLEMEK: Bemidji helps lead the way as part of Minnesota Bird City program: Bemidji Pioneer <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/sports/outdoors/4454697-blane-klemek-bemidji-helps-lead-way-part-minnesota-bird-city-program>
- March of the Monarchs: Bemidji holds second-annual Monarch Butterfly Festival: Bemidji Pioneer, <http://www.bemidjipioneer.com/news/4503192-march-monarchs-bemidji-holds-second-annual-monarch-butterfly-festival>
- A Native Plants Movement Blooms in Bemidji: Audubon Magazine <https://www.audubon.org/magazine/spring-2018/a-native-plants-movement-blooms-bemidji>
- Community Spotlight: Bird-Friendly Bemidji Celebrates At Purple Martin Fest: Lakeland PBS <https://lptv.org/community-spotlight-bird-friendly-bemidji-celebrates-at-purple-martin-fest/>
- Bemidji Parks & Recreation Program Guide: (pg 14-15) [https://issuu.com/cityofbemidjiparksandrec/docs/summer\\_brochure\\_2018](https://issuu.com/cityofbemidjiparksandrec/docs/summer_brochure_2018)
- City of Bemidji Weekly Newspaper (June 22, 2018) [https://www.ci.bemidji.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7BDC40720D-A823-4643-91CD-6456402D11F6%7D/uploads/06-22-18\\_Weekly\\_Newsletter-Rev.pdf](https://www.ci.bemidji.mn.us/vertical/sites/%7BDC40720D-A823-4643-91CD-6456402D11F6%7D/uploads/06-22-18_Weekly_Newsletter-Rev.pdf)
- Water exhibit comes to Headwaters Science Center: Bemidji Pioneer, <https://www.bemidjipioneer.com/news/4536378-water-exhibit-comes-headwaters-science-center>
- Headwaters Science Center In Bemidji Presents “We Are Water MN”: Lakeland PBS, <https://lptv.org/headwaters-science-center-in-bemidji-presents-we-are-water-mn/>