

SWCD Focus



Tulip

Adjusting to the Times with COVID-19

COVID-19. That's the word right? This thing that didn't exist and now it does, changing every facet of what we had come to think of as daily modern life. Well, it has changed some things for us here at Hubbard County SWCD, but it hasn't changed our dedication to serving the Hubbard County community, improving access to sustainable land management practices, and getting conservation projects done on the ground.

Like you, we have no idea how long these changes will be in place, but we sure do intend to learn a few things and improve our capabilities even while under these new pressures. Please continue to reach out to us when you have questions about soil, water, forestry, lake shore, watersheds, buffers, or possible cost share projects. We are available by telephone, email, and by appointment.

The Changes:

Our Park Rapids office is closed except by appointment. We are each working remotely and can be reached by our alternate emails and phone numbers as listed to the right.

Unfortunately, we will not be holding the Envirothon at Bemidji Lake State Park this year and the state event is cancelled as well.

We have not yet decided whether to hold the Freshwater Festival as planned or if the event will be moved to an online event that is inclusive of more grade levels. Please stay tuned to our website and subscribe to our email updates or Facebook posts to be among the first to know when we are able to decide.

Our tree orders are still on but pick up will run a little different from previous years.

The Constants:

We will continue to do field work and to meet with individuals regarding plans for projects, Wetland Conservation Act questions, perspective Reinvest in Minnesota or Wild Rice Easements (RIM), and Forest Stewardship.

We will also continue to work with our partners and apply for grants to expand the number and type of projects that we can do in the future.

You will likely see us out taking samples and measurements on local streams and lakes. Please wave and say "hi" if you do. We hope everyone will have time to get out and enjoy our resources, spend a little time paddling or fishing or walking the landscape -- appreciating this beautiful place where we get to live.

Hubbard SWCD 2020 Tree Sales

Tree sales have been going well again this year and we are anticipating distribution will go well although it might take a little longer than normal this year.

Hubbard SWCD trees are scheduled to be available for pick up on Friday, May 1st from 1-6p, Saturday, May 2nd from 9am-6pm, and Sunday, May 3rd from 1-3pm on the south of the end of the Hubbard County Fairgrounds as before. We will have signs posted to show which building to come to during our distribution hours.

Because of the probability for social distancing as the COVID-19 may still be considered a pandemic, we ask everyone to be courteous and stay in/by your vehicles until it is your turn to get your items. We are still working out the details as to how we can make everything work smoothly and keep everyone safe.

We plan to mail out reminder cards again this year, like we have in the past. It would greatly help our staff if you could bring this post card with you to present when you stop for your order. That way staff will have the proper name for your order and hopefully speed up distribution as well as reduce any confusion. If you are not able to personally pick up your items, please consider passing your post card on to the person you are sending to pick up your order. As of now we plan to have our staff bring your complete order to your vehicle. Clients who have ordered many items may be asked to help staff load their order with the understanding that we will do our best to maintain recommended social distancing.

We usually have a few items available to sell individually while we are distributing client orders; we are still working on the best way to handle this situation while keeping everyone safe and satisfied. After we have a set plan for these final items, we will update our website and Facebook page with instructions. If you have questions after reviewing our plan for a safe distribution of trees, feel free to call the number we will post within the instructions for further help. Please understand that we will work with everyone to the best of our ability to keep everyone safe through this process.

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District Supervisors

Hubbard County SWCD Board meets the 2nd Wednesday, monthly, at 8:30 a.m. at our new location, 603 Central Avenue North Park Rapids, MN 56470

- Marcel Noyes, Chair
- Don Rettinger, Vice-Chair
- Lynn Goodrich, Secretary
- Bob Iles, Treasurer
- Don Sells PR & Information

District Staff

Crystal Mathisrud, District Manager
(crystal.hcswcd@gmail.com)
(651)380-3460
Annette Olson, Admin Assistant
(adolegare@gmail.com)
(218) 671-0602
Water Resource Technician
will start May 11, 2020

www.hubbardswcd.org

Assisted by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Dan Pazdernik, D.C
(daniel.pazdernik@mn.usda.gov)

Alicia Laturnus, Soil Technician
(alicia.laturnus@mn.usda.gov)

9th Annual Hubbard County Grazing Workshop

By: Dan Pazdernik

On January 29th, 2020, the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service held our 9th Annual Grazing Workshop at the Guthrie Community Center. It was a nice winter day with mild temperatures, and we had a large turnout. Part of which was no doubt due to the weather conditions, but a much larger factor was the continuously building interest in the yearly program. With 60 + people in attendance, this year's turnout was the largest of all 9 years.

To hold a successful workshop, we all know that the topics must be interesting and informative to the targeted audience and that is our goal. The audience generally includes beef, dairy, and other livestock producers but it is open to anyone wanting to attend. Over the years our focus has primarily been on grazing management and soil health along with animal health and producer perspectives on grazing management. The speakers and topics for the 2020 workshop included: Kent Solberg with the Sustainable Farming Association presented on cover crops, forages, outwintering, soil health, and tying it all together; Nathan Hulinsky from the U of M Extension gave a presentation

on different types of farm record systems; Dr. Randall Lindemann, DVM gave a presentation on managing difficult calving situations and maternal problems; and Greg Booth gave an overview of pasture management, which he has adopted by utilizing the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), with his wife Vicki in their Cass County beef grazing operation. The event ran from 9:00 am 3:00 pm and much interaction and discussion were generated by the presentations. Many thanks to our sponsors and funds from the Local Water Management Plan Grant that allow us to hold this event free of charge to all attendees. The speakers did a great job and we thank them as well along with all the staff involved in putting the event on. We have received a ton of positive feedback from attendees and we plan to hold the event again in January of 2021.

If interested in attending our future grazing workshops, please inquire at the office or keep a lookout for flyers and posters that circulate in January prior to the event. Pre-registration is appreciated and may be required in the future so we can correctly plan for food and space needs. We hope to see you at next grazing workshop!

Minnesota Groundwater Protection Rule

Information collected by: Alicia Laturus

The complete article and weblinks can be found on our website at www.hubbardswcd.org

In 2019, the state of Minnesota passed the Groundwater Protection Rule (GPR). The intent of GPR is to reduce the risk of nitrates leaching into vulnerable groundwater areas. The GPR regulations began January 2020.

The GPR is based on the Minnesota Nitrogen Fertilizer Plan (NFMP) which was developed following a multi-year process with extensive stakeholder input. The NFMP outlines the state strategy for preventing contamination and responding to elevated nitrate from fertilizer in groundwater. The rule outlines steps to reduce the severity of the problem in areas where nitrate in public water supply wells is already elevated. <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/pesticide-fertilizer/minnesota-nitrogen-fertilizer-management-plan> .

In January 2020, use of nitrogen fertilizer in the fall and/or on frozen soils will be restricted in areas of the state with vulnerable groundwater, such as areas with coarse textured soil, shallow bedrock, or karst geology, and in public wellhead areas – known as Drinking Water Supply Management Areas (DWSMAs) .

The GPR is broken down into two parts. Part 1 focuses on the restrictions of the timing and location of applying nitrogen fertilizer. Part 2 responds to DSWMAs which already have elevated nitrate levels. There is a four-level mitigation process in certain cases. Two of the levels are voluntary and the other two levels are regulatory. For additional details visit: <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/nfr> .

Hubbard County does fall in the Statewide Fall Restriction area because of our coarse textured soils. <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/chemicals/fertilizers/nutrient-mgmt/nitrogenplan/mitigation/wrpr/wrprpart1/vulnerableareamap>. The GPR calls for people to follow the nitrogen fertilizer Best Management Practices (BMPs). The purpose of the BMPs is to protect water quality while at the same time maintaining farm profitability. The BMPs should also be

practical to implement. They refer to practices relating to the timing, rate, placement and source of fertilizer application and other practices that increase fertilizer use efficiency and decrease potential loss to the environment.

A person can also implement Alternative Management Tools such as: planting perennial crops or using seed hybrids, using conservation tillage and residue management, using variable rate technology and possibly enrolling in the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certifications Program (MAWQCP) <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/environment-sustainability/minnesota-agricultural-water-quality-certification-program-2> .

There are a few exceptions to the Groundwater Protection Rule. Fall application of nitrogen fertilizer will be allowed in vulnerable groundwater areas:

- to establish winter grains planted in the fall;
- for fall pasture fertilization;
- for perennial crops;
- for grass seed production;
- for cultivated paddy rice;
- for research on fields 20 acres or less in size, and
- for growing fall cover crops within a potato rotation

Additional exceptions and exemptions at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/1573.0030/> .

University of Minnesota Extension - Guidelines for Manure Application Rates at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cpqxFfSA3mZddwDtoss7j3jrl9frDkX/view> .

Learn more about other frequently asked questions about the Rule at: <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/gwpr-faqs> .

If you need extra help with any compliance issues or financial assistance you can get more information about the AgBMP Loan at: <https://www.mda.state.mn.us/agbmploan/borrower> .

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Outstanding Forest Steward

By Marcel Noyes,
District 2 Supervisor

Hubbard SWCD nominated Gary Roerick from Laporte, MN for the 2019 Outstanding Forest Steward Award, and was given recognition at the MASWCD State Convention in December 2019. A resident of Hubbard County for the past 42 years, Gary has been very active working to keep the natural forest lands vibrant. He presently has two active forest stewardship plans covering over 700 acres and continues to explore what ways to work with SWCD to help manage forest resources and preserve the environment. Every year Gary continues to plant additional trees, this year he will again plant 100 or so on his property. We would like to thank Gary for the many great things he has done and is still doing to help our natural resources in Hubbard County.



Welcome our new District Manager!

Welcome Crystal, our new district manager who started in October. Crystal has Minnesota roots growing up on the Iron Range and the Red Wing area. She brings a strong science background as well as professional experience in research, sales, grant writing and customer service to our District.

Crystal's experiences include serving in the US Air Force as a fuels and supply Technician in Texas and Alaska, has identified and collected plant fossils in the Eastern Bighorn Basin in Wyoming, and served as an assistant director at Watermark Art Center in Bemidji. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in English and Science with an emphasis in Biology and Geology and a Minor in Outdoor Education at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls in 2008 and earned her Master's Degree in Creative Writing at Hamilton University in 2014.

Crystal has always been interested in water quality and welcomed the chance to do her part. When the SWCD District Manager position opened last fall, she was transitioning into the freelance world of web design and digital marketing for the arts.. She is excited to bring new ideas into our District and to help Hubbard County residents with improvements for their shoreline, buffer or other erosion concerns. We also look forward to spreading water related education to help us keep our lakes and rivers as pristine as possible for future use in our county and others downstream.

One Watershed One Plans and Local Opportunities

By: Crystal Mathistud

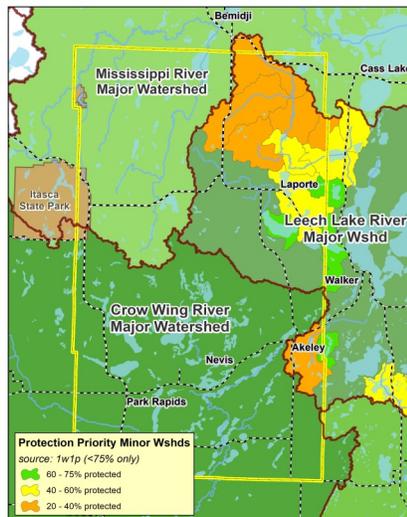
Watershed funding is shifting in the state of Minnesota, moving from a county approach to a holistic watershed approach which aims to get local organizations working across political boundaries in order to make a larger impact on improving and protecting our water resources so that we can continue to enjoy them now and in the future. The goal is for the entire state to shift to major watershed based plans, called One Watershed One plans, by the year 2025.

Hubbard County and Hubbard County SWCD have been involved in the planning phase of both the Leech Lake River and the Mississippi Headwaters One Watershed One Plans and we intend to be strong participants and perhaps leads in the Crow Wing River One Watershed One Plan in the near future. See each watershed in the county as designated on the map below. The Leech Lake River plan is the first to move from planning to implementation with funding for project development beginning to come in as of late March 2020.

We are fortunate that the Leech Lake River Watershed includes many high quality bodies of water as well as healthy groundwater, so the major goals in our two-year work plan are to address storm-water issues, inventory culverts so we can plan to replace and upgrade those that are not functioning well in their current state, and to pursue the implementation of more land management plans such as forest stewardship, conservation easements, and grazing lands plans. If you are reading this and you see that your

(One Watershed One Plan continued) property is within the Leech Lake River Watershed, please enquire with our office this year about management plans that are of interest to you. It is an especially good time to think about improvements that could be made to benefit your current land management operations and about the legacy you would like to leave behind.

If you are looking at the map and see you are in one of our other Major Watersheds, know that plans are being developed for your area and additional opportunity for management plans and projects will be coming in the next couple of years. Now is a good time to think about what the community needs are and to make sure that the



Map by Mitch Brinks

SWCD and/or County knows about those needs so that we can address them as we work together to create the goals and workplans for the Mississippi Headwaters and Crow Wing River Watersheds.

This is a very exciting time for anyone who is interested in watersheds, water management, forestry, land-use, and wildlife as local organizations work together under these new watershed plans for the benefit of our communities and our total landscapes.

Free Nitrate Clinic held the first Friday of every month at the SWCD office located at 603 Central Ave N Park Rapids, MN **pending any mandated restrictions**. Please call 218-732-0121 if you have any questions.



HUBBARD COUNTY
Soil & Water
Conservation District

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Park Rapids, MN
Permit #21

603 Central Avenue N Suite 100
Park Rapids, MN 56470

Phone: 218-732-0121
Fax: 855-547-8729
NRCS Phone: 218-732-9723

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EEO-The USDA prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political belief, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information should contact USDA's TARGET center at 202-720-2600.

The tree order pickup is still scheduled to be held on May 1st, 2nd & 3rd at the south end of the county fair grounds in Park Rapids!

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide leadership, education, technical advice, financial assistance to landowners, cooperating agencies for various programs and projects with the goal being the whole community working together in harmony to pursue the sustainable management, wise-use, and protection of the District's soil, water, forests, wildlife, and recreational resources.

Kids' Learning Corner

10 Facts about U.S. Groundwater Use

1. Only 1% of the water on Earth is useable, 99 % of which is groundwater.
2. The U.S. uses 349 billion gallons of fresh water every day.
3. Groundwater is 20 to 30 times greater than all U.S. lakes, streams and rivers combined.
4. Groundwater supplies 33% of all water used by municipalities in the U.S.
5. 44% of U.S. population relies on groundwater for drinking.
6. More than 13.2 million households representing 34 million people have their own well.
7. Agriculture irrigation uses 53.5 billion gallons of groundwater daily; in 1950 it was 2.2 billion gallons.
8. Ogallala, the largest U.S. aquifer underlying 250,000 square miles would need 6, 000 years to refill.
9. California pumps 10.7 billion gallons of water daily, a third more than the next highest state, Texas.
10. The world's most extracted raw material, groundwater use is estimated at 259 trillion gallons per year.

2020 Annual Freshwater Festival

The Board of Supervisors will decide if the 2020 Freshwater Festival Event will be held at Camp Wilderness Boy Scout Camp at our April Board Meeting. We are trying to organize an online session or sessions that all students can be linked into. This will take some time and we will reach out to teachers with information to pass on to their students when it becomes available. If the Board decides to postpone this years event instead of canceling it, SWCD staff will reach out to volunteers and teachers to inform everyone of what the plan will be. Thank you for your understanding and we look forward to holding the 2021 Freshwater Festival as in the past. Please let us know if you have any questions. Our present contact information is on the front page of our newsletter.

Rain Monitors

Do you have a few minutes to spare each day? Hubbard County SWCD would like to have someone monitoring our precipitation in each of our townships. We are looking for monitors in the following townships: Arago, Badoura, Clover, Fern, Helga, Lake Alice, Thorpe and Rockwood. Several other townships could use a second monitor within the township. It only takes a moment to check the gauge and record your findings on the monthly sheet we provide and turn in or mail in to our office. If you think you might be interested in helping us collect this data, please call our office at **(218) 671-0602** during stay in house is happening! All materials are

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