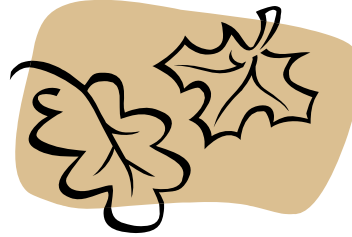


SWCD Focus



Volume 36 Issue 2

Fall 2014

Irrigation Scheduler Program Grows in 2014

The Todd, Wadena and Hubbard Irrigation Scheduler Program had yet another successful year in 2014. In its second year, the program was able to double from 20 fields in 2013 to 40 fields in 2014. With the state and general public pushing for better water management, farmers are seeing benefits from this program not just for its second opinion on when to water or not, but for its water usage records. At the end of every year, the Irrigation Scheduler Program sends out a report to each farmer showing how many inches of water was lost due to over irrigating. These records are great to show the state and general public that your farm is doing water management.

For those that have never heard of this program, it's based off the same, very successful program offered by East Otter Tail SWCD.

Through the process of irrigation water scheduling, Wade Salo, Irrigation Technician, is able to help producers determine how much water is needed to keep their crop healthy throughout the growing season by calculating the evapotranspiration (ET) rates for each of the major crops grown in the area.

With ET estimates, updates from producers on weekly rainfall and irrigation amounts, and a weekly site visit to the field to check soil moisture, the technician is able to provide a chart to the producer showing where the soil moisture levels are at and how much time before they should think about watering again. When used properly this program can save farmers money by preventing crop loss due to insufficient moisture, prevent leaching of ferti-

lizer, and reduces energy and running cost by preventing over watering of crops.

Accurate information is key in making the scheduler program successful. To help improve accuracy, Todd, Wadena and Hubbard SWCD's installed four new weather stations. Funding for this project was made possible with Clean Water Funds. Located near the cities of Clarissa, Staples, Hubbard and Pine Point, these weather stations are located in irrigated crop land. Go to Wadena SWCD's website to access information regarding ET and growing degree days.

If you would like more information on the irrigation scheduler program or weather stations, please contact Wade Salo at 218-631-3195 x 109.

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District Supervisors

The District Board meets the 2nd Tuesday monthly at 8:30 a.m.

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

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On the web at:
www.hubbardswcd.org

FY 2015 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

By Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist

ST PAUL, MINN, September 12, 2014 – Agricultural producers looking to solve natural resource problems on their farms should apply now for assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Application acceptance deadlines for FY 2015 in Minnesota for EQIP are: October 17, 2014, November 14, 2014 and December 19, 2014.

EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts up to a maximum term of ten years in length. These contracts provide financial assistance to help plan and implement conservation practices that address natural resource concerns and for opportunities to improve soil, water, plant, animal, air, and related resources on agricultural land and non-industrial private forestland.

EQIP is just one tool for landowners who want to put soil and water conservation on the ground. By working with the local NRCS office, you will find out what NRCS programs might work best for you on your land. If not EQIP, then perhaps the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) or Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP).

Applications for EQIP are accepted on a continuous basis, however, NRCS establishes application acceptance or submission deadline dates for evaluation and ranking of eligible applications. Contracts will be awarded to producers' with the highest rankings until funds are exhausted.

Top 10 EQIP Tips for Producers

ST PAUL, MINN, May 9, 2014 — According to NRCS, there's a sure fire way to ensure that working with NRCS to create an EQIP contract will work well for all involved. The key is to understand program rules and regulations that are part of this government program. Follow the Top Ten Tips for Making EQIP Work to find benefits for the land and producers' bottom line.

While planning an EQIP application, this is an excellent time to interact with NRCS staff and discuss different conservation practice options that address resource concerns and select the best options. During the onsite visit, NRCS staff will evaluate other potential resource concerns and explain how NRCS technical staff can provide ideas, assistance, and program funding.

A submitted EQIP application is not a guarantee of financial assistance to implement all conservation practices. Applications that receive the highest ranking score—those which

offer the greatest environmental impact—are selected first for funding and a contract is developed with each individual.

It is important that applicants understand the terms of their contract and agree to those terms by signing the contract. Implementation of any conservation practice(s) on the land can begin only after a contract is finalized—after both the producer and NRCS have signed it and the electronic paperwork is filed. Below are the top ten EQIP Tips:

1. Be actively involved in the development of your conservation plan; it is designed to address your natural resource concerns and goals.
2. Carefully review the conservation plan created by NRCS staff before signing the contract. Be certain you understand what is required of you and others.
3. Read the Contract Appendix to fully understand the legal implications of the contract.
4. Realize your EQIP contract is a legally binding agreement between you, as a participant, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. By signing the contract, you agree to perform specific tasks in return for a federal payment(s).
5. Do NOT start any practice included in your plan until the contract is finalized. The contract is considered final when federal dollars are obligated and assigned to the contract.
6. You MUST start or apply at least one conservation practice within the first 12 months after your contract is finalized.
7. Ensure conservation practices are implemented within timeframes established in the contract.
8. Understand that ALL installed conservation practices must meet NRCS Standards and Specifications. This is ESSENTIAL in order for producers to receive any payment for practice installation.
9. Maintain ALL funded conservation practice(s) in your plan for their intent and full lifespan.
10. Inform NRCS field office immediately if circumstances arise those require any change to the contract, plan, or practice implementation schedule.

If EQIP sounds like it offers information and solutions your operation is ready for, contact the county USDA Service Center and get the planning process started. NRCS takes applications every day or visit the NRCS website at www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov to learn more.

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

AIS Watercraft Inspector Program



We are just about done with year three of our watercraft inspector program. This season we conducted inspections on 30 water accesses in Hubbard County. We have continued to use our decontamination station that is available on an on-call basis. Our inspectors were trained by the DNR on how to conduct inspections and how to detect aquatic invasive species. We also had 10 inspectors that were level 2 trained which allows them to conduct decontaminations of watercraft.

The purpose of our watercraft inspection program is to inspect watercraft while educating the public on watercraft laws, what to look for regarding AIS, and what could happen if a lake becomes infested. As of August 17, we have conducted 11602 inspections with over

7300 hours spent at accesses. Of the 6953 watercraft inspected upon entry, 661 (9.5%) were last in infested waters, 1056 (15.2%) had out of state registration, 161 (2.3%) had their drain plug in, 105 (1.6%) had water in their boat, and 103 (1.5%) had vegetation on their boat or trailer.

State law requires boaters to remove aquatic vegetation, zebra mussels, or other invasive species, and prohibits launching a boat or trailer with these species attached. Boaters are also required to remove drain plugs when traveling on public roadways and drain water holding devices when leaving boat accesses. We encourage boaters to dry out any remaining water that may be in their boat. Juvenile zebra mussel veligers are free floating and microscopic and can be transported in

water from lake to lake. State law also requires that boat lifts, docks, swim rafts, and related equipment be placed on shore to dry for at least 21 days before going to another water body.

We want to thank the lake associations, townships, cities, and Hubbard County for taking a proactive approach to protecting our pristine lakes.

“October’s poplars are flaming torches lighting the way to winter.”

– Nova S Bair

“Every leaf speaks bliss to me, fluttering from the autumn tree.”

– Emily Bronte

Free Nitrate Clinic held the first Friday of the month at the SWCD office located at 212½ 2nd St W, Park Rapids, MN. Please call 218-732-0121 if you have any questions.

2015 Tree Orders

We are now taking orders for the 2015 tree planting season.

We have four new species available for order this year, Thornless Honeylocust, Eastern Hophornbeam, Black Walnut and Elderberry. We are also offering a Wild Berry Packet that includes Elderberry, Serviceberry, Flowering Raspberry and Red Mulberry.

All prices on the tree form include tax and you can order tree supplies along with your tree order.

If you are interested in ordering any of the new species or other trees and products we offer, please fill out the enclosed order form.

Please call our office with any

questions and visit our website to view the tree guide for descriptions of the trees.

Order early to ensure you get the species you want!

Thornless Honeylocust



Elderberry





Forwarding Service Requested

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

212 1/2 2nd St W
Park Rapids, MN 56470

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

2015 Tree Form Enclosed

EEO- All programs of the Hubbard County Soil & Water Conservation District are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

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.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District is to help preserve surface and ground water quality, to encourage wise land use decisions throughout the district, and to foster a secure and prosperous community with agriculture, tourism, and industry working together in harmony for the general welfare of the people of the district.

Kids' Corner

Autumn Scramble

1. paer _____
2. suiqlrr _____
3. plpae _____
4. nrgaeo _____
5. ireofbn _____
6. eeavsl _____
7. crewsrcao _____
8. oacnr _____

Help the squirrel through the maze to find its acorns

