

SWCD Focus

LEECH LAKE RIVER ONE WATERSHED ONE PLAN

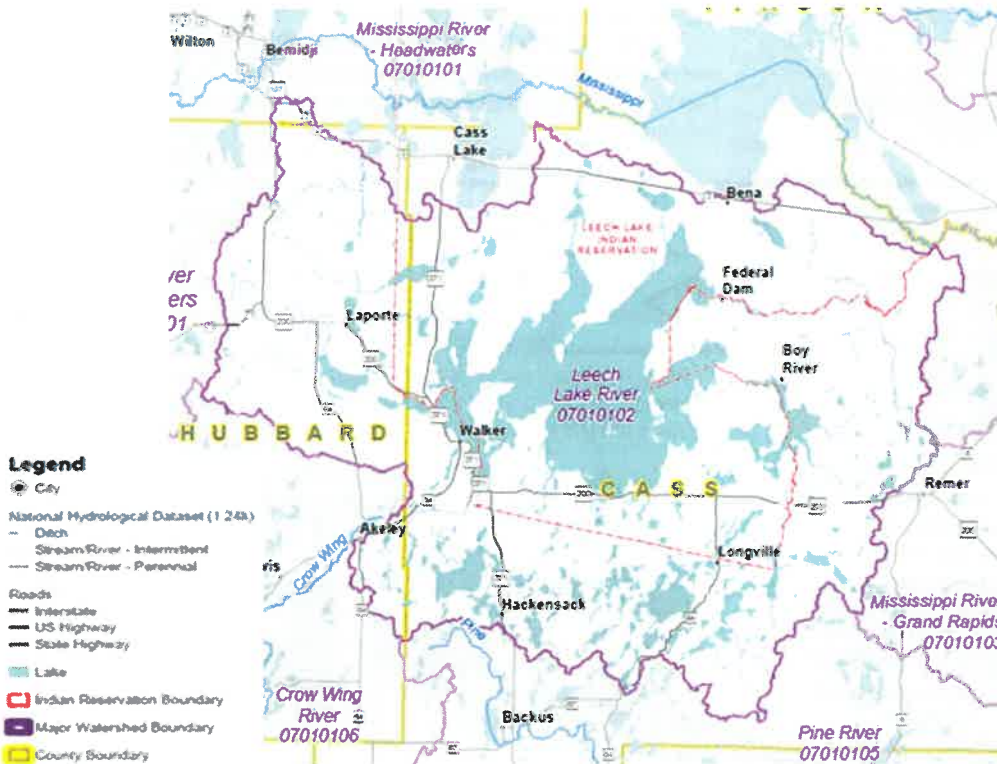
By Julie Kingsley, SWCD District Manager

The history of water planning in the state of Minnesota started in 1937 with Minnesota Soil Conservation, after the dust bowl days. In 1955 the Minnesota Watershed Act was passed. In 1985 the first Local Water Management Act was passed and each county began developing water management plans. In the last five years this philosophy has changed and grown. In the past a certain lake or a designated stretch of stream would be monitored and tested for any concerns with the whole system not being included. In 2007 the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) implemented the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies (WRAPS). Each of the 80 major watersheds within the state of Minnesota has or will be evaluated. The WRAPS process went to the whole watershed approach as a unit, assessing the watershed condition as the starting point for water quality assessment, planning, implementation and measured results. This developed a scientific approach and baseline for each major watershed.

Hubbard County has three major watersheds, the Crow Wing River with the WRAPS completed in 2015, the Leech Lake River WRAPS completed in 2016 and the Mississippi Headwaters WRAPS

which will be completed in 2017/2018. The WRAPS are a five year information gathering process, with two years of gathering scientific data, the rest being spent on gathering the public's input, doing modeling of the "what if's" that could happen within a watershed, then the draft WRAPS are written and submitted for review and the final publication of the WRAPS. This process will be done every ten years for all of Minnesota's major watersheds.

In 2015 the Local Government Round table, made up of the Association of Minnesota Counties, the Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts, and the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts moved water planning to the next level with One Watershed One Plan (1W1P). This was passed by the legislature in Minnesota State Statute §1038.101, subd 14 and §1038.801 charging the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) to define the purpose and structure of this new water planning program. BWSR's vision for 1W1P is to align local water planning on major watershed boundaries with state agencies toward prioritized, targeted and measureable implementation plans. (continued on page 2)



Volume 39 Issue 2

Fall



Inside this issue:

Cover Crop Overview	2
Web Soil Survey	2
Wetland Violations	3
Dept. of Ag. BMP Low Interest Loans Available	3
Tree Ordering Information	3
Kids Corner	4

District Supervisors

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

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

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www.hubbardswed.org

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

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NEWS FROM NRCS

Cover Crop Overview

By Dan Pazdernik, District Conservationist

Cover crops can be grasses, legumes, forbs or other herbaceous plants that are established for seasonal cover and conservation purposes. They may be used on all lands needing vegetative cover for natural resource protection and improvement. Cover crops are an excellent tool when used in combination with other practices such as conservation crop rotations and residue management practices to improve soil health.

What are the benefits/purposes of a cover crop? There are a variety of reasons to plant cover crops. Some include:

- Reduce soil erosion from wind and water
- Improve soil health by improving organic matter
- Increase soil porosity & infiltration
- Improve soil microbiology
- Produce/scavenge crop nutrients
- Capture and recycle or redistribute excess nutrients in the soil profile
- Improve nutrient cycling
- Improve water quality
- Enhance wildlife habitat
- Protect crops from damage by wind-borne particles
- Minimize soil compaction
- Weed suppression
- Soil moisture management

There are many things to keep in mind when you decide to plant a cover crop and you will need to ask yourself: What species should I plant and what are the recommended planting rates and dates? What method will I use to plant? How will I terminate the cover crop before the following crop? If I use a chemical to terminate the cover crop, how will it affect the following crop? These are just a few of the many considerations that go into planning a cover crop.

Cover crops are increasingly being used by farmers for the multiple benefits they contribute to soil and crop management systems. Farmers who invest in cover crops typically do so for higher yields, nutrient retention, soil improvement, forage for livestock, reduced erosion, reduced input costs, and a more sustainable cropping system overall.

If you are interested in learning more, there are many valuable resources

available to the public about cover crops. The Midwest Cover Crop Council website at <http://mccc.msu.edu/> is a great resource with a user friendly cover crop chart to aid in the decision making process. Your university specialists have a wealth of knowledge about cover crops and you can also check out the online resources on the Minnesota NRCS website at www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov or visit your local USDA service center.

Web Soil Survey

By Alicia Laturus, Soil Technician

Hubbard County's first Soil Survey report was published back in 1930 by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Bureau of Chemistry and Soils in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. The second Soil Survey was published (on compact disc) by the USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station in 2003. Today you can find the most current soils information on the internet. It is produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey and operated by USDA – NRCS.

The Web Soil Survey can help you plan activities on your land, plant tree/shrub species that will work with your soils, show how wet/dry the area is, how erodible the land is and other physical properties of your specific soils.

The web address is... <http://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov> . You can follow four simple steps to get soil information of your particular land.

Step 1: Click on the Area of Interest (AOI) tab: start with the county/state or a specific address. Next, draw a polygon around the area in question.

Step 2: Click on the Soil Map tab: you'll see all of the soils in that area, along with number of acres of each soil type. Next, click on the Map Unit name to see the more information about each soil type.

Step 3: Click on the Soil Data Explorer: you'll see Intro to Soils, Suitabilities and Limitations for Use, Soil Properties and Qualities and Soil Reports tabs. These tabs will give you more specific information about the soils on your land.

Step 4: Click on Shopping Cart (Free) tab: you can print off a map and receive a report of the soils on your land.

Feel free to call the office with any questions you may have about the Web Soil Survey.

Helping People Help the Land

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LEECH LAKE RIVER ONE WATERSHED ONE PLAN –cont. from page 1

This leads us to the Leech Lake River One Watershed One Plan between Hubbard and Cass Counties. The process has begun with a Memorandum of Agreement between the two Counties being signed. A Policy committee, a Planning committee and an Advisory committee have been formed. The data is being collected, compiled, analyzed and in the process for soliciting public comments.

The kick-off meeting was held September 15, 2017 at the Walker, MN Community Center with a free brat and bean dinner, Ron Shara the speaker, and a review of the Leech Lake 1W1P process. The main program was to collect public input on areas of concern and importance to residence within the Leech Lake River watershed. For more information, please check out the Leech Lake 1W1P information at Cass County website www.co.cass.mn.us and link to the Leech Lake River 1W1P or go to the Hubbard SWCD website at www.hubbardswcd.org for the link. For questions please call John Ringle Cass SWCD at 218-547-7256 or Julie Kingsley at Hubbard SWCD at 218-732-0121 ext. 4

Your Tax Dollars Put To Good Use!

Be sure to check out our next news letter article on our recently completed Community Partners project! See how the Legacy Amendment dollars are put to good use at the Pine Haven Christian Assembly Camp.



Wetland Violations

By Julie Kingsley, District Manager

If you are planning a construction or drainage project this year on your property, please keep in mind the locations of wetlands. The Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA), Rule 8420, regulates impacts to wetlands in the state of Minnesota. These impacts may include draining or filling wetlands either wholly or partially, excavating or converting an area to a non-wetland use. For example that low wet area in your front yard that is just too wet to mow for part of the year or is hard to get anything to grow in may be a wetland. If there happens to be a wetland in or near your project or you aren't sure if it is wetland, please call the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) at 218-732-0121 or stop by the office at 603 Central Ave. N., Park Rapids to discuss your project. The process is simple and an application is free. It is better to get the information you need before you start a project rather than being in violation in the middle of it and having to pay a fee, and then having to un-do your project. The SWCD will first do a site evaluation to determine if a wetland is present; then if one is, determine if your project will impact that wetland. There are 8 Basic (Circular 39) Wetland Types with many subcategories under each type. Once an application is submitted it is checked to see if it is complete. If it is, the application goes out for review to the Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP). Comments are received back and then the SWCD can make a determination on the project.

The state of Minnesota has a "No Net Loss" of wetland law. Hubbard County SWCD has seen a rise in the number of Wetland violations this season. A wetland violation may lead to a Misdemeanor charge against the landowner and/or the responsible party, so it is important to get your wetland applications filed with the SWCD **BEFORE** any work is done. Also be aware that if you are doing any work in the shoreland area of a lake or stream (within the first 1000 feet of a lake or 500 feet from a stream) a permit is needed from the Hubbard County Environmental Services office. Their number is 218-732-3890. (cont. at top)

Wetland Violations –cont. Any work done within the stream or lake itself should also be evaluated before work is started with the DNR area Hydrologist at 218-732-8960 to see if a permit is needed. It is the landowner's responsibility to be informed and to get any permits necessary. It is always better to check it out beforehand than receiving a citation later.



Department of Agriculture BMP

Low Interest Loans Available

By Julie Kingsley, District Manager

Low interest loans are available to help landowners finance repairs, replacement wells or water treatment equipment to provide safe drinking water or solve potential pollution problems that effect wells. To qualify for this portion of the loan program there must be an existing drinking water well. Repairs to existing wells, replacement wells, sealing unused wells and water treatment systems, such as reverse osmosis, are eligible. Wells may provide drinking water for homes, businesses, or animal facilities.

Do you need a new septic system or an upgrade, want to install a solar or wind system, but just don't have the money? The Department of Agriculture has a low interest BMP (Best Management Practices) loan program that may work for you. The maximum interest rate is 3% plus lender fees and has a 10 year maximum term and uses local lenders for the loan. Applications are available at the Hubbard SWCD and for septic loans applications are available at the Hubbard County Environmental Services office.

Other loans available through this program are: Beginning Farmer Loan program, Agriculture improvement program, Livestock expansion program, Livestock Equipment loan program and many more. To find out more information go to: www.mda.state.mn.us/grants/loans/agbmploan or call 651-201-6618 or call your local SWCD office.

2018 Tree Order Form

Our 2018 Tree Order Form is enclosed and we are ready to take your order for next spring! This year we have a pin cherry instead of black walnut and a bur oak instead of the red oak. Some of our shrub species have been rotated, so please be sure to read through what we have to offer! We are carrying a larger variety of native seed kits and are offering different size packages as well. Pictured to the right are some of the new size packets that will cover 100 square feet including a native grass mix. For the listing of species included in each mix, please check the nursery website: <https://mnnativelandscapes.com/products/seed/>.

If the size package you want is not listed on the order form, please call our office to see if it might be available.



Monarch Mix



Pollinator Seed



Savanna Mix

The plant kits last year were beautiful and we will offer them again!

Please note that we are requesting payment in full for ALL orders under \$100.00 and final payment for orders over \$100.00 will be due no later than April 30th.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

FALL SCRAMBLE: 1) Squirrel 2) Corn 3) Apple 4) Rake 5) Leaves 6) aCorn 7) bRisk 8) ghOst 9) Windy 10) colorS SCARECROWS



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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.

2018 Tree Form Enclosed

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 Corner
 Fall Scramble**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

11. If you answered them correct boxed letters will create this word: (see page 3 for answers)

FREE Nitrate Clinics held the first Friday of every month from 9 am-2 pm at the SWCD office located at 603 Central Ave N, Park Rapids, MN. Please call 218-732-0121 if you have any questions.

Volunteers still needed!
 Hubbard SWCD is looking for volunteers to do rain monitoring in Hubbard County. I am happy to report that we gained five new rain monitors since our last newsletter! The following townships still need coverage for rain monitoring: Arago, Clover, Fern, Hart Lake, Helga, Lake Alice, Lake Hattie, Mantrap, Nevis, Thorpe, and White Oak. We welcome anyone interested in monitoring the precipitation in Hubbard County. Please call our office and ask for Annette! Rain gauge and materials are supplied, all we need from you are a few minutes each week to record information and turn it in to our office at the end of each month. (218) 732-0121 ext 4