



Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District

News & Notes

This newsletter also available at www.dakotacountyswcd.org Volume 25, Number 1 Spring, 2006

SWCD Supervisor Filing Opens July 4

Dakota County citizens interested in natural resources issues at the local level are encouraged to run for Supervisor of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Supervisors from District 1 and 3 will be selected at the general election in November of 2006:

District 1 includes the Cities of Burnsville, Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, South St. Paul, Sunfish Lake, and West St. Paul. District 3 includes Hastings, Marshan Township, Nininger Township, Ravenna Township, and Vermillion Township.

The SWCD Board of Supervisors consists of five members, each elected to a four (4) year term. Any citizen of legal voting age who lives in an open District is eligible for election. Interested citizens must file a "Minnesota Affidavit of Candidacy," from the Dakota County Treasurer Office located in the Administration Center at Hastings, along with a \$20 filing fee. The filing period is July 4 to July 18, 2006. Elections are held during the general election on Tuesday, November 2, 2006. Voters countywide elect SWCD Supervisors.

Serving as an SWCD supervisor is a great way to get involved with the protection of land and water resources. SWCDs are local units of government that manage and direct natural resource management programs in cooperation with Dakota County, Federal, State and local organizations. Minnesota's ninety-one SWCDs cover the entire state and generally follow county lines.

SWCD supervisors have three main responsibilities during their four-year terms.

They set overall policy and long-term objectives; develop annual and comprehensive plans; and work with SWCD staff to see that policies and plans are implemented. They are not paid a salary; however, they do receive compensation for attending meetings and are reimbursed for expenses.

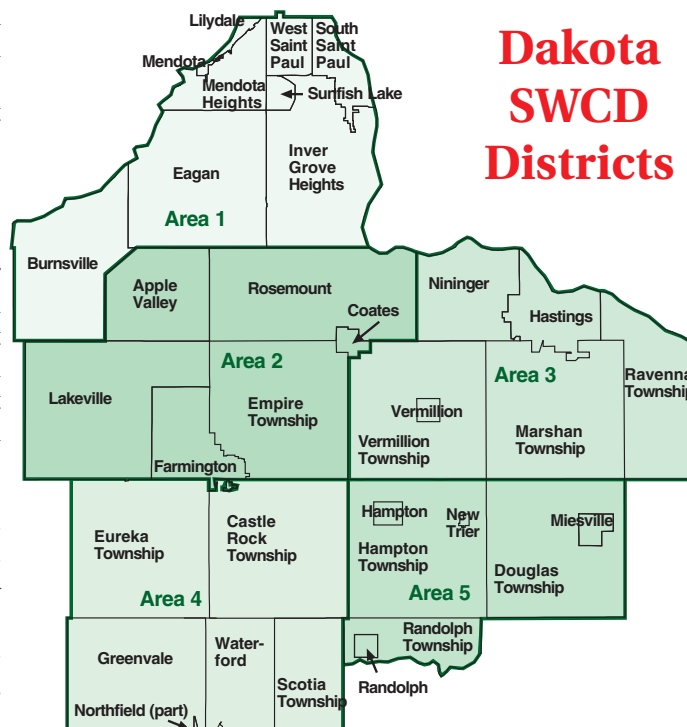
For more information about SWCD supervisor positions or filing for the election, contact the Dakota County SWCD at 651-480-7777.

SWCD Establishes 2006 Officers and Meeting Dates

The Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) held its first Board of Supervisor's Meeting for 2006 in January. At this meeting, officers were elected and meeting dates established for the year.

Officers for 2006 will be Joe Meyers as Chair (District 5); Chris Nielsen as Vice-Chair (District 4), Michael Pliml as Secretary (District 1), Kevin Chamberlain as Treasurer (District 3); and Marian Brown as Public Relations and Information Officer (District 2).

The Board established the first Thursday of every month at 9:00 a.m. to hold the monthly meetings. All meeting dates are subject to change. The meetings are open to the public and are held at the Dakota County Extension & Conservation Center in Farmington. For more information about our Board meetings, you can access our web site at www.dakotacountyswcd.org or contact our office at 651-480-7777.



Dakota SWCD Districts

News & Notes

published semiannually by
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Water Conservation District**
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District Board

Joe Meyers, *Chair*
Chris Nielsen, *Vice-Chair*
Michael Pliml, *Secretary*
Kevin Chamberlain, *Treasurer*
Marian Brown, *Public Relations and
Information Officer*

District Employees

Brian Watson,
District Manager
Laura Jester,
Watershed Conservationist
Jim Davidson,
Urban Conservationist
Todd Matzke,
Resource Conservationist
Brad Becker,
Resource Conservationist
David Holmen,
Resource Conservationist
Lana Rotty,
Administrative Assistant
Dee Parker,
Office Assistant
Mike Isensee,
Urban Conservation Technician
assisted by the **USDA Natural
Resources Conservation Service**
Michelle Wohlers,
District Conservationist
Matthew Schaar,
Soil Conservation Technician

The Dakota SWCD Board of Supervisors meets on the first Thursday of every month. All meeting times subject to change. With changes of address or subscription inquiries, call 651-480-7777.

All programs and services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.

Equipment Rental Available for Conservation Activities

The Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District has several pieces of equipment available for rent to landowners within Dakota County to install conservation practices.

No-Till Drill:

A Truax no-till drill is available for rent to establish native prairie, pasture, alfalfa, and/or clover directly into soybean stubble, corn stubble, or unplowed pastures and hayfields. Special disks on the drill allow it to plant seed into harvested crop fields, depleted pastures, or cut hayfields without plowing them first. The drill has three separate seed boxes that allow it to plant different types of seed at varying rates at the same time. Rent is \$50 for the first acre and \$10 for each additional acre. Rent includes delivery to and from your site. The planting width of the drill is 10.5 feet, with 7 inches between each planting row. A tractor with at least 45 horsepower and two hydraulic couplers in the back is required to pull the drill.

Tree Planter:

A tree planter is available to rent for \$50 per day. This includes delivery on a trailer to and from your site. The tree planter requires a tractor with at least 18 horsepower and a 3-point hitch. Caution should be used when using a tractor with over 50 horsepower; hitting rocks or other obstructions with larger tractors can damage the planter. It is typically more efficient to plant trees by hand if you are planting less than two hundred trees. The tree planter is very efficient when planting long, straight windbreaks, shelterbelts, or block plantings with over two hundred trees.

Hand Seeder:

A hand seeder is perfect to broadcast seed on two acres or less. Often times the no-till drill can be too large and cumbersome for planting less than two acres. To plant native prairie with the hand seeder, you need to fill the seed box, turn the hand crank, and walk at an even speed across a plowed and level field. The hand seeder distributes the seed in ten foot swathes. After planting, the seed typically needs to be incorporated into the soil with a roller, harrow, or even a weighted piece on a chain link fence. The hand seeder can also be used to "frost seed" legumes into existing pastures. Frost seeding involves broadcasting seed, typically clovers, across pastures during freeze and thaw cycles. The freeze and thaw cycle works the seed into the soil, allowing it to germinate in the spring. Frost seeding is usually most effective in March. There is no charge for using the hand seeder, but a \$50 refundable deposit is required.

Krimper:

A krimper is used to reduce erosion potential by anchoring straw into exposed soils. Straw is spread over the area and grass seed is planted beneath the straw. The krimper has sharp disks that roll over the straw, cut it into the soil and stand it straight up to keep the soil in place until the grass seed emerges and stabilizes the area. The krimper can be pulled using the hitch behind a tractor with at least 18 horsepower. There is no charge for the krimper if it is being used as part of an erosion control practice.

Grant Funding Available

In addition to providing technical assistance to implement conservation, the Dakota County Soil and Water



*Trout Brook,
March 24, 2005*

- Grass Waterways
 - Water and Sediment Control Basins
 - Raingardens for Stormwater Management
- Landowners should plan ahead to the extent possible. It often takes six months or more to review project proposals, complete necessary application forms, identify source of funding, and obtain funding approvals. All SWCD projects that receive cost share are reviewed and approved by the Board of Supervisors. Please contact the SWCD at 651-480-7777 to learn more about how we can assist with your conservation project.

Conservation District (SWCD) and our working partners with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have multiple funding opportunities to reduce your cost to implement your conservation project. No matter if you live on the farm or in the city, we have multiple cost-share programs and grants available to implement conservation. All cost-shared projects must demonstrate water quality benefits.

Examples of projects the SWCD and NRCS has help to fund over the years include:

- Streambank and Lakeshore Stabilization
- Feedlot Improvements
- Native Plantings



*Trout Brook,
Nov. 14, 2005*

Board Adopts Strategic Plan

The Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board of Supervisors adopted five-year strategic plan in January of 2006. The Plan provides goals and implementation strategies to address natural resource threats in Dakota County through the year 2010.

The SWCD is working with communities and citizens of Dakota County to be a leader in conservation through technical, financial and educational assistance.

The SWCD Board of Supervisors identified nine priority issues and developed strategies to address these priorities over the next five years. The adopted Strategic Plan can be viewed on the SWCD web site at www.dakotacountyswcd.org.

SWCD Contractors List

The Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is asking contractors to contact our office if they would like to be added to our contractor list. Contractor lists are routinely distributed to landowners who are working with the SWCD to install conservation projects on their property. Examples of the services sought for conservation projects include, but are not limited to, excavation and earthwork, native prairie restoration and seed supply, concrete installation, ecological landscape design, gutter installation, and no-till drill rental. Examples of SWCD projects include grass waterways, sediment basins, streambank stabilization, native prairie planting, native prairie burning and weed control, rain garden installation, manure pit construction, feedlot improvement projects (concrete and gutter installation), and no-till farming.

If you are interested in being included on our contractor list, please contact the SWCD at 651-480-7777.

Stormwater Training

As part of an ongoing partnership with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has hosted several stormwater training events at the Extension and Conservation Center in Farmington over the past few months.

With about three hundred construction sites in Dakota County over one acre in size, sharing information regarding MPCA regulations and the latest stormwater management techniques is essential to minimize adverse impacts to water quality during and after construction.

We will be completing our spring stormwater training classes in May. Seats are available for the following events:

Erosion and Sediment Control Certification Program

An Erosion and Sediment Control Certification Program is being offered through the University of Minnesota. Designers, site managers and inspectors,



and installers are required to provide evidence of the appropriate level of certification to perform erosion and sediment control duties for MnDOT or state aid projects.

Inspector Installer Certification Course •

May 17

Target Audience: Erosion control contractors

Course Description: This course is an ideal introduction to erosion and sediment control regulations and best management practices. Participants work from

the Erosion and Sediment Control Pocketbook Guide to learn about proper installation and maintenance techniques.

Site Manager Certification Course • May 15 and 16

Target Audience: Erosion Control Inspectors and Site Managers

Course Description: This two-day course is an in-depth look at state regulations, best management practices, planning and implementation of effective stormwater management during construction.

Please contact the SWCD at 651-480-7777 if interested in attending these courses.

Pliml Attends National Association of Conservation Districts Meeting

This past winter, Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor Michael Pliml joined a thousand conservation leaders from across the nation as they gathered in Houston, Texas to discuss natural resource issues. The sixtieth Annual Meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) convened from January 29 to February 2, 2006 with the theme "Living a Legacy, Leaving a Legacy." The conservationists met to set policy, discuss key conservation issues, elect officers, recognize national award winners, and celebrate sixty years of conservation.

NACD President Bill Wilson of Oklahoma noted in his opening remarks that "Much has changed over those sixty years, but the core components that constitute the drive to achieve the conservation on the ground are alive and well today." Speakers focused on a commitment to work more closely with landowners and associations.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) chief Bruce Knight emphasized the staying power of the

partnership. "NACD, through local commitment, has worked with NRCS for sixty years to develop practical ways to help landowners accomplish sensible conservation," Knight told the crowd. "This has changed the American landscape. Your success makes the USDA a leader on cooperative conservation," he added.

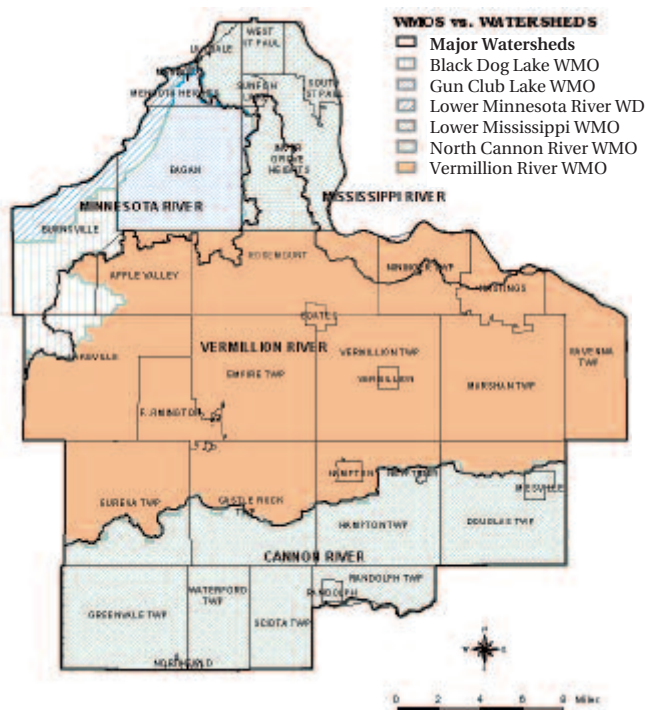
For nearly seventy years, conservation districts have worked to promote and establish the wise use and conservation of natural resources. The National Association of Conservation Districts serves as the national voice for the nation's nearly three thousand conservation districts. Its programs and activities are intended to advance the goals and objectives conservation districts in helping the millions of cooperating landowners and land managers they serve conserve and protect America's natural resources.

NACD was founded by conservation district leaders in 1946, and is built on the philosophy that conservation decisions should be made by the local people who are most affected by those decisions.

Vermillion River Watershed JPB Adopts Management Plan

On November 3, 2005, the Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Board (JPB) adopted the Vermillion River Watershed Management Plan. The plan includes goals and objectives that include protecting and improving surface water quality, wetlands, groundwater quantity and quality; managing rate and volume of runoff; managing and protecting floodplains; promoting sustainable growth and rural land conservation; maintaining and improving open space for recreation and wildlife; and educating officials and the public on watershed issues.

Dakota County Watersheds and Water Management Organizations



North Cannon River WMO Receives Grant for Sediment Control

The North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization (WMO) was recently awarded a \$30,000 Metro Environmental Partnership grant from the Metropolitan Council. The primary objective of this grant is to reduce sediment loss within the Trout Brook Watershed. Trout Brook was recently added to the Federal list of Impaired Waters due to high levels of turbidity or cloudiness of its water. The WMO will use the grant funds to assist landowners with installation of best management practices that reduce erosion and control sediment such as water control basins and grassed waterways. For more information, contact Laura Jester, Dakota SWCD at 651-480-7784.

In order to reach their goals and objectives, the JPB is now in the process of developing standards and rules that will likely be implemented at the local community level. These may include criteria for establishing buffers along streams and wetlands, requiring that a certain amount of storm events infiltrate into the ground rather than discharging to a stream, or regulating the amount of floodplain that can be altered.

Staff from cities, townships, agencies, and various organizations is working to evaluate appropriate standards. The goal is to develop a complete set of standards by this summer and adopt it as policy in December.

North Cannon River WMO Adopts Model Stormwater Control Ordinance

In November 2005, the North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization adopted a stormwater control ordinance. The goal of the ordinance is to “prevent or reduce negative impacts from stormwater runoff and to provide for the protection of water quality and natural resources by requiring land disturbance activities comply with Township standards.” The ordinance strengthens current State law regarding erosion control at construction sites and stormwater management for development. In addition, it contains more stringent requirements regarding stormwater infiltration and development of pollution prevention plans.

Tree Sale

The Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) will be selling over thirty thousand trees again this year for conservation purposes. The SWCD is no longer accepting pre-orders for tree purchases. However, you may still be able to purchase selected tree varieties during the cash sale on April 27 and 28. Availability of trees through our cash sale is limited.

Delivery of pre-ordered trees and our tree cash sale will be:

April 27: noon to 6:30 p.m.

April 28: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Trees available through our cash sale will be on a first come, first served basis. All cash sales are limited to two hundred trees per customer. You can contact our office at 651-480-7776 or visit our web site at www.dakotacountyswcd.org to determine available varieties.

Volunteers for Tree Plantings Needed

The Dakota Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is seeking volunteers to help plant native tree and shrub saplings on Saturday, May 6 from 9:00 a.m. until noon. The planting will take place in Lakeville along the banks of South Creek, a tributary to the Vermillion River. By working to re-vegetate the streambank, volunteers are helping to enhance wildlife habitat and protect the water quality of this DNR designated trout stream.

This shoreline restoration project is made possible through a grant from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for establishing native plants in environmentally sensitive areas.

This rain or shine event is being organized in partnership with the City of Lakeville and Friends of the Mississippi River. To let us know you will be volunteering, please call Dakota County SWCD at 651-480-7777 one week in advance.

Newsletter Contest Announced!

The Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is seeking your input to improving our newsletter. We are asking you to help us in determine a new name for our publication. *News and Notes* has been the SWCD newsletter publication name for over ten years. The once-quarterly publication was reduced to twice annually in 2002.

If you have an idea for a new name to our newsletter, please send your idea to our office at 4100 220th Street West, Farmington, Minnesota. You can also e-mail us at swcd@co.dakota.mn.us.

The winner will be selected in December of 2006 and will be rewarded with a small prize. Newsletter name ideas must exemplify our organization and mission of providing high quality assistance to the citizens of Dakota County for the protection of land and water resources.

**Dakota Soil & Water
Conservation District**
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An Inside Glance...

- ❖ Supervisor Filing Deadline Approaches
- ❖ Volunteers Needed for Tree Planting
- ❖ Tree Sale Approaching



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Non-Profit
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U.S. Postage
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Farmington, MN
Permit No. 23