



## **DAKOTA COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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### ***News***

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#### **Stoffel Family Receives Award for Outstanding Conservation Practices**

The Stoffel family of Vermillion Township was recently recognized for their dedication to conservation on December 2, 2013 at the Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Convention. Over the past several years the Stoffels have voluntarily installed a number of practices that protect the land and help keep water clean.

Wally and Bernadette Stoffel, along with their sons Greg and Dan, have been selected by the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) to receive the 2013 Outstanding Conservationists Award for their dedication to conservation. The Stoffels installed grassed waterways within their cultivated fields and a 14-acre native prairie planting to reduce soil loss. They also enrolled over 290 acres into Dakota County's Farmland and Natural Area Program permanently protecting a quarter-mile of vegetated buffer along the Vermillion River. More recently, the Stoffels planted a cover crop of radishes, at their own expense, on 80 acres of cultivated land to stabilize the soil, improve soil health, and reduce nitrates from entering surface and groundwater resources. The Stoffels are working with the University of Minnesota Extension and County staff to develop test plots that research and evaluate appropriate application rates of nitrogen fertilizer on irrigated land.

"The Stoffels are a great example of installing conservation practices both with long-term and short-term benefits to our soil and water resources," said Brian Watson, Manager at the DCSWCD. "The Stoffels have demonstrated the willingness to look at new ideas, actively install conservation practices and participate in

research that helps us better understand the relationship between how surface water and groundwater interact in the Hastings and Vermillion area.” Each year the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District honors a landowner, business, or organization for their contributions to conserve or restore natural resources in Dakota County. The DCSWCD commends the Stoffel family for their conservation efforts.



*Greg, Dan, Bernadette and Wally Stoffel (left to right) along with their loyal companions.*

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