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Kasey Jenc

PF Wildlife Biologist

NRCS Staff

Cory Walker

Conservation Service Team Leader

Mark Dybdal

Conservation Program Manager

Rich Geving

Soil Conservation Technician

Kevin Behrens

Soil Conservationist

Olivia Michelson

Soil Conservationist

Cindy Wojtkiewicz

Farm Bill Technician Aid

2023 Conservation Newsletter

Est. 1954

Tree Open House

Douglas SWCD will be having their annual Tree Open House January 31. SWCD staff will be available that day to assist you with planning, layout and species selection for your tree planting projects. If interested in ordering trees for the 2023 year, please see the Tree Order Form. Questions, please call the office today!

(Inside back cover of newsletter or at <http://www.douglasswcd.com/services/trees/>)



Conservation Farmer 2023

The Douglas SWCD is proud to announce the Langdon Collom family as this years Conservation Farmer Family for Douglas County. The Collom's operate a beef and cash crop operation a few miles out of Rose City. The Collom family has converted from a beef feedlot to a grass raised beef operation. Currently they have 60 angus cross cow pairs and 25 feeder cows.

They have 80 acres of cropland that is all farmed no till or reduced till. Cover crops are planted after the main crops are harvested, this allows the cattle to graze the fields in the winter. When needed, the cattle are also moved around for grazing on the 200 acres of pasture.

The Colloms have been huge advocates for conservation programs, and through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), they have put in over two miles of waterlines, with eight watering facilities, three geothermal, and five tire tank waterers. They also installed two plus miles of fencing on pasture ground for a rotational grazing system. The need for commercial fertilizer has been reduced because of the increase in winter grazing on the cropland and pastures. The Colloms also use portable windbreaks which provide wind protection to livestock from cold winter winds and are moved around fields in winter to help distribute manure throughout the fields and pastures.

Langdon has a metal shop on the farm where he creates and develops his own tools to help increase his efficiency at the farm. He has built a three point waterline plow that can install shallow bury pipeline. He has helped other farmers in the area by lending out his equipment to help them install their shallow water lines as well.

The Collom family continues to convert new farms (rented and owned) into permanent pasture which in return improves water quality and soil health of the land. They have plans in the future to continue with more conservation practices. On behalf of the Douglas SWCD we want to congratulate the Collom family!



Chippewa watershed bus tour

The Chippewa River Watershed covers parts of Ottertail, Douglas, Stevens, Pope, Stearns, Swift, Chippewa and Kandiyohi counties. Staff from the Chippewa River Watershed Planning Committee put together and hosted a bus tour on July 15 for Supervisors, Staff and other agency staff involved with the One Watershed One Plan. The bus tour departed from the pope county fair grounds and featured a few projects and unique facts about the watershed. Some of the projects highlighted along the tour were a ravine restoration project in Pope County, streambank protection project in Douglas County, an a landfill groundwater protection project in Grant County, and a wetland restoration and rain garden in Swift County. Each and every project that was on the tour had a great story and a lot of dedicated staff time and money that went into preserving our natural resources.

Rain Gardens

Douglas SWCD staff partnered with the Legacy of the Lakes Museum to do a water talk on rain gardens. Although it was during the summer months and attendance was not the best, the information presented was still very useful and helpful to those that showed up. There is some cost share available for parts of the county if interested. Please call the office today to ask questions and see if this type of a project is a good fit for your area!

Cost Share–Erosion Control

The Erosion Control and Water Management Program provides grants to SWCDs so they can help landowners offset the cost of installing conservation practices that improve water quality by reducing soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution.

Landowners or operators can apply for up to **75%** cost share for their project. Once approved by the local SWCD Board, work can begin. These funds help the local SWCD implement state-approved conservation practices. Some of the practices include: rain gardens, streambank and shoreline protection, water and sediment control structures, and side inlets. Most practices have a life span of 10 years, which means that they must be maintained for that length of time.

Kernza®

On August 23, the Douglas SWCD staff hooked up their no-till drill and helped perform a Kernza® planting at the Alexandria Area High School. Kernza® is a robust perennial grain developed from intermediate wheatgrass that is up and coming. It is enriching fields around the world and pleasing palates (some say it gives food a nutty flavor). Why is this crop so sought after? The root structure is one of a kind; the average length for this grain is 10 feet, but can in the right growing conditions reach up to 30 feet deep! It will produce a crop for many years, and can be grazed in between without harming the grain.

Over-all, the test plot was just about an acre, and was planted with the Douglas SWCD no-till drill at 17 lbs. of seed per acre. If interested in the progress of how this project is turning out, head over to the high school and look for the signs! Kernza® is regulated, requiring permits to attain and grow this grain. Can't wait to see how it grows and turns out, and where this grain can go in the future! This event was put on through the help of the Alexandria Area High School Agriculture Education Department, University of Minnesota and Extension Services.



Who you Gunna call?

With lots of calls coming in lately, we wanted to make sure you are calling the right place to help with your questions:

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) - Department of Natural Resources/County

Farm land lease rates - Extension

Federal programs - Natural Resources Conservation Service

Home repair grants - Rural Development

Hydrology - Department of Natural Resources

Low interest septic loans - Soil and Water Conservation District

Shoreland restorations - Soil and Water Conservation District

Trees - Soil and Water Conservation District

Water testing kits - Soil and Water Conservation District

Wildlife (animals) - Department of Natural Resources



Youth Outdoor Activity Day

The 2022 Youth Outdoor Activity Day is in the books! Douglas SWCD helps participate in this event by being on the planning committee and also being a sponsor. What a spectacular day on a number of fronts the weather was cool, slightly breezy, and overcast. Absolutely perfect considering we had forecasts for high heat and storms throughout the week.

Everybody always wants to know about attendance. Well, this year we shattered our previous record, this year there were 2,587 kids that participated. Notice the word participate; there were no observers on this day! Kids threw axes, shot bb guns, archery, crossbows, held fish, salamanders, and turtles, tromped around in snowshoes, devoured ice cream (okay, maybe that isn't an activity), rode ATVs, looked through binoculars and spotting scopes, fished for trout, casted fishing rods, went on a nature hike, and so much more. This year we featured 50 outdoor activities for kids to try and gave away over 5,000 articles of outdoor gear to help remove the barriers for kids experiencing the outdoors! With volunteers, we had over 5,000 people at the event. With all those people, we are proud to say we had no accidents or issues. That is a testament to the 20 people on the planning committee which put forth an enormous effort to make sure this day ran smooth for everyone. Of course, the planning committee didn't run the activities. That was done by over 300 volunteers who gave up most of their weekend, used their equipment, and a lot of money to provide the kids the opportunity to try activities that they haven't done before! Keeping this day free is unique and special, it allows families to spend quality time together enjoying events like these which hopefully leads to more time in the great outdoors. Lastly, we cannot thank our donors and sponsors enough. This event happens every year the last Sunday in August. For more information please visit www.youthoutdooractivityday.org.



Farm Service Agency (FSA)



USDA announces details for the upcoming Census of Agriculture

America's farmers and ranchers will soon have the opportunity to be represented in the nation's only comprehensive and impartial agriculture data for every state, county and territory. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will mail the 2022 Census of Agriculture to millions of agriculture producers across the 50 states and Puerto Rico this fall in phases; starting with an invitation to respond online in November followed by paper questionnaires in December. Farm operations of all sizes, urban and rural, which produced and sold, or normally would have sold, \$1,000 or more of agricultural product in 2022 are included in the ag census.

Collected in service to American agriculture since 1840 and now conducted every five years by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the Census of Agriculture tells the story and shows the value of U.S. agriculture. It highlights land use and ownership, producer characteristics, production practices, income and expenditures, among other topics. Between ag census years, NASS considers revisions to the questionnaire to document changes and emerging trends in the industry. Changes to the 2022 questionnaire include new questions about the use of precision agriculture, hemp production, hair sheep, and updates to internet access questions.

To learn more about the Census of Agriculture, visit nass.usda.gov/AgCensus or call 800-727-9540. On the website, producers and other data users can access frequently asked questions, past ag census data, [partner tools](#) to help spread the word about the upcoming ag census, special study information, and more. For highlights of these and the latest information on the upcoming Census of Agriculture, follow USDA NASS on twitter [@usda_nass](#).

New NRCS Staff



Hi, my name is Kevin Behrens and I am a Soil Conservationist at the Alexandria, MN USDA Service Center. I grew up in west central Minnesota near Dumont on a grain farm. I have a B.S. in Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management from the University of Minnesota and am completing a M.S. in Natural Resources, Science and Management from the University of Minnesota where I studied forest hydrology and watershed management with an emphasis on biogeochemistry. My graduate research examined the response of mercury in wetlands and the atmosphere from changing climates at the Spruce and Peatland Responses Under Changing Environments (SPRUCE) experiment near Grand Rapids, MN. I am also a veteran of the United States Air Force where I served as an Aircraft Electrician in Minot, ND. My education and military experiences have created a strong sense of community and public service especially in rural communities. I am passionate about utilizing emerging technologies and using science to address resource natural concerns to prepare communities for a changing climate.



NRCS STAFF

(L-R): Cindy Wojtkiewicz, Kevin Behrens, Mark Dybdal, Rich Giving, Cory Walker, and Olivia Mickelson



SWCD Staff

Back (L-R): Jessica Albertsen, Starla Arceneau, Danielle Anderson & Kasey Jenc

Front (L-R): Jerry Haggenmiller, Ian Olson & Andy Rice



SWCD Supervisors

Back (L-R): Mike Clearly, Rod Froemming, and Billy Dropik

Front (L-R): Paul Barsness and Ken Rutten

Hello, my name is Olivia Mickelson. I am a new soil conservationist in the Douglas County office for NRCS. I have been here since the Middle of June. I am originally from the Frazee/Detroit Lakes area. I grew up on a 4th generation turkey farm where I grew a passion for agriculture. Following that passion, I went to The University of Minnesota



Crookston where I graduated with an Agronomy degree and a minor in Ag Business. I am grateful for all the experience that I have had at UMC. In my free time I enjoy hunting, fishing, and just enjoying the great outdoors! I have two horses that I love to take trail riding. In the picture above is, Zelda, my German Shorthair Pointer who loves hunting just as much as I do! Thank you for welcoming me into the Douglas County area and I can't wait to meet you all!

Weed Watch:

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) has updated the identified list of noxious weeds. On the top of the list is still Palmer Amaranth, Wild Parsnip, Canada Thistle, Oriental Bittersweet and Common Tansy which have been confirmed in Douglas County. Please do your part by helping to control or eradicate noxious weeds to help control the spread. Contact Tom Anderson the county weed inspector with any questions or suspected weeds. 320-762-2999



Buffers and Beyond

Soil loss, wind erosion, and gullies are just a few things farmers have experienced over the last few years. Douglas SWCD can help! There are programs to address these every day problems in our farm fields.

One practice is a buffer, (which is still the law for public ditches and waterways), and another option is a field windbreak. Buffers are a strip of land that is covered in vegetation typically between a field and road, or a field and a waterway, to help reduce the amount of runoff and erosion. Windbreaks are a single to multiple row of trees and possibly shrubs planted in a linear fashion.

If you have some land, a farm field or shoreline with erosion, soil loss, or simply need some technical assistance, please reach out to the SWCD office today! We can assist you in planning, and help you to determine which practices are best for you. Also there might be cost share funding available (depending on the project and where you are in the county).

Douglas County Fair

The Douglas County Fair was August 17-20th and once again the Douglas SWCD had a presence at their booth in the Fish and Game



Building. This year's topic was "Programs, Practices, and Partnerships For Conservation". There were handouts, promotional swag, educational trivia questions and lots of smiling faces as they learned about what the district does and helps with throughout the year. The Evansville Area Sportsmen club was so gracious and donated 4 wood duck houses to be raffled by the district at the fair.

Nitrate Clinic Recap

Douglas SWCD once again held a FREE nitrate water testing clinic on Sept 2, 2022 from 9 am - 4 pm. This year with our building still closed to the public, the nitrate clinic was held out at the Douglas SWCD Tree Shed. Staff had brochures and information to take home that highlighted other tests that can be ran to ensure safe well water consumption. A total of 70 samples ran for nitrates during the clinic.



No-Till Drills for Rent

Douglas SWCD has two 10' Haybuster no-till drills available for rent. These drills work well for seeding native grasses, pasture mixes, hay mixes, alfalfa, soybeans cover crops, and small grain. The rental rate is \$9.00 per acre (\$100 minimum) in Douglas County, and \$11 per acre (\$150 minimum plus an additional \$150 delivery fee) for surrounding counties. Douglas SWCD will deliver the drill, calibrate it for your seed, and pick it up when you are finished. Call the Douglas SWCD to reserve one of the drills.



Seed

The Douglas SWCD has food plot seed available for landowners. Two different deer mixes are available, a perennial mix and an annual mix. The perennial mix includes Alsike Clover, Lanino Clover, Medium Red Clover, White Dutch Clover, and Chicory. The annual mix includes Forage Peas, Radish, Turnips, and Haybet Barley. There is also a Pheasant/Turkey mix containing Wildlife Sunflower, Wildlife Grain Sorghum, FSG Pearl Millet, and Sugar Graze II Sorghum Sudangrass. Each mix is packaged in one acre bags. Food plots are important to retain wildlife in your area after crops are harvested in the fall and to provide food for wildlife throughout the winter.



Cover Crops, Native grass and forb (flowers) seed mixes are available to landowners for conservation practices. Douglas SWCD Staff will work with landowners to determine an appropriate seed mix that is required for the practice they choose to adopt. Typically they are set mixes for the different practices, but we can work with landowners on custom mixes if desired. Native grass and forb plantings provide optimum habitat for wildlife and their deep root systems make them effective controlling erosion.

Mark Your Calendars

Douglas SWCD will be hosting their 2023 Nitrate Clinic on March 29 from 8:30 AM - 4 PM

Like us on Facebook: [DouglasSWCD](#)



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

CREP is a program that has been growing in popularity statewide due to the program incentives that were introduced during the summer of 2018. CREP targets high-priority conservation concerns specifically related to our water resources – wetlands, lakes, rivers, and wellhead protection areas – and establishes permanent vegetation. Farmers are paid a one-time RIM payment in addition to an annual CRP rental payment for 14-15 years. Participation is voluntary and contracts are perpetual.

The Douglas SWCD office can answer questions you might have about what the program offers.



Surface Water Assessment Grant (SWAG)

Douglas SWCD received a surface water assessment grant (SWAG) through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) which is a two year program for sampling and assessing water quality in the county. This year we had a total of twelve sample spots. Three streams and nine lakes in the Long Prairie River Watershed. The purpose of SWAG is to collect data on surface water quality to identify lakes and streams that are in need of restoration or protection strategies.

Rural Development (RD)

USDA Rural Development has funding available for very low- and low-income individuals and families seeking to purchase or repair a home in a rural area.

USDA's Direct 502 Home Loan Program offers financing to qualified very-low and low-income applicants that are unable to qualify for traditional financing. No down payment is required, and the interest rate could be as low as one percent with a subsidy. Applicants must meet income and credit guidelines and demonstrate repayment ability. Generally, rural areas with a population less than 35,000 are eligible.

The USDA Section 504 Home Improvement program offers loans and grants to very-low income homeowners for various repairs and accessibility needs. The maximum loan amount is \$40,000 at a fixed one percent interest rate, with a repayment term up to 20 years. Loans may be used for a wide variety of repairs including siding, windows, doors, and other updating needs to the dwelling.

Grants up to \$10,000 are available to homeowners 62 and older and must be used to remove health and/or safety hazards. No repayment is required on the grant if the homeowner remains in their home for 3 years. Examples of grant eligible repairs include fixing a leaking roof, replacing a failing septic system or drilled well, installing a ramp or remodeling a bathroom for accessibility needs, and replacing a furnace.

Contact the Alexandria, USDA Rural Development office today to see if you qualify. For more information please contact USDA Rural Development at 320-763-3191 x 4, or check out the website at: www.rd.usda.gov/mn.

Other District Highlights

The Douglas SWCD is very proud to have boots on the ground to make a lasting impression on the land while helping get conservation efforts in the community.

Some highlights we accomplished this year are:

1 MN Ag. Water Quality Certified Landowner

4 Low income septic upgrades

Over 29,000 trees sold; 11,262 trees planted by district

28 Tree plantings

7 Shoreland improvement projects

1,712.6 Acres planted with the district no-till drills on 82 different sites

40 Acres of cover crops planted

1 Ag. Waste Pit Closure

29,285 Feet of fabric mulch installed

240 Tree tubes installed

AG. BMP Loans - 4 Septic upgrade

9 Water and Sediment Control Basins

2 Gully Stabilization projects

2 Diversions

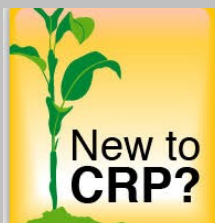
Met with hundreds of landowners on site

Lots of virtual events/outreach

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

There are multiple program options for your farmland if you're looking to transition portions or all your land to native grasses, trees, wetlands, or pollinator-friendly habitat, both short-term and permanent. CRP is a non-permanent option, offering 10 to 15 year contracts for landowners who establish approved vegetative cover to help control soil erosion, improve water quality, and enhance wildlife habitat. Options vary within the program depending on the field features and your conservation goals – we will work together to find the best fit.

Landowners and farmers who enroll in CRP receive a yearly rental payment to establish and maintain those native grasses, trees, or other approved cover as well as cost-share assistance for establishment. Currently, there are close to 22 million acres enrolled nationally with room for further enrollment. Almost 66,000 acres of CRP will be expiring in Minnesota in 2023 with the potential for re-enrollment on most. If you are interested and would like to talk about possible options, call or stop by the Douglas SWCD office and talk to Kasey Jenc, Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist.



Poster Contest Winners 2022

The 2022 kids poster contest through the National Association for Conservation Districts (NACD) was once again a huge success! There was over 75 posters submitted by the 5th and 6th grade students within the county. The SWCD staff have a presentation that gives the students some background information with hands on activities to get them excited about the theme/topic for the poster contest. This years theme was "Healthy Soil, Healthy Life". All students have to either make their own poster, or work with up to two more students and create a mural that is judged by district supervisors and staff at our board meeting then sent on to the area meeting. All the top posters from Douglas County were selected from St. Mary's school! The kids' posters were featured at the County fair.



Environmental Quality

Incentive Program (EQIP)



The EQIP program provides technical and financial assistance to producers for conservation practices for their operation in the community. The program delivers economic and environmental benefits for a variety of conservation activities including high tunnel systems, no-till, cover crops, water & sediment control basins, forest management plans, grazing plans, nutrient management, ag. waste systems, and more.

Through the EQIP program, the NRCS helps producers improve air and water quality, build soil health, improve forest lands, conserve energy, and more to achieve climate smart agriculture for their operation. Selected 2023 EQIP applicant contracts for funding will be approved March 17th, 2023.

To participate in EQIP, applicant must be a farmer, rancher, and forest landowner who own or rent eligible lands. For more information, visit nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The NRCS offers technical and financial assistance to eligible producers through the CSP program to go beyond traditional agriculture practices for ag. and forest lands. The program offers opportunities for producers to expand their operations through several climate smart practices by applying natural resource conservation enhancement activities. Participation in this program is completely voluntary and is a 5-year commitment to integrating conservation into their operations beyond traditional practices.



CSP encourages land stewards to improve their conservation performance by installing and adopting additional activities, improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities on their agricultural and forested lands. NRCS staff will conduct an evaluation of the land offered to determine eligibility requirements for the program and provide technical assistance to improve operations. The program compensates producers for adopting and maintaining a baseline level of conservation. The deadline for 2023 CSP applications is in early 2023.

For a complete conservation activities list, and to learn more about CSP, visit the office today or visit nrcs.usda.gov/farmbill.

Gully Stabilization Project

This is a project that has been in the works for years. Surveyed back in 2016, this site has gully erosion which is eroding soil along drainage channels by surface water runoff which causes sediment along with nutrients to be deposited into Lake Ida. With the heavy rains that we have seen in recent years, some of the channel banks had begun to sluff in as well. Initially, it was discussed to reshape the channel and try to establish native vegetation to reduce the erosion and keep the site more natural, but



due to the amount of water that flows through this channel and the tree canopy creating almost full shade in this area that was not a great option. It was decided that rock lined channel with turf reinforcement mats (TRM) in some areas would be the best option to stabilize this site. The channel is almost 600 feet long and took 360 cubic yards of rock where work was completed.

In addition to the work in the channel, a concrete structure was placed at the entrance of the main culvert that feeds into this channel to meter down the water during heavy rain events. This will slow down the flow of water, which will reduce the risk of erosion within the channel. It took 5 different landowners to get on board for this project to get completed. A Clean Water Fund Grant, 319 Grant along with Douglas County Water Quality Legacy Funds were used to help cost-share the expenses for this project. Just look at that transformation! Call the office today if you have a project.

Be a Hero... Transport Zero!

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) have been part of our lakes ecosystem for many years now, but what exactly is it? Aquatic (water-dwelling) invasive species are non-native plants, animals, and organisms that have invaded our natural ecosystems beyond their natural historic range. Currently in Douglas County, there are Zebra Mussels, Eurasian Watermilfoil, Carp, Curly-leaf Pondweed, and Flowering Rush.



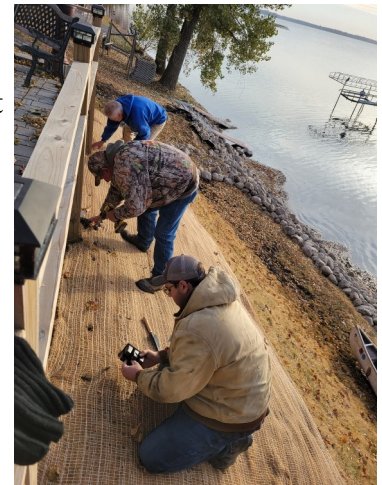
Over the years, various AIS have shown up and spread throughout the Douglas County waters. The first CD3 (waterless way to Clean, Drain, Dry, Dispose of unwanted invasive species) Station was purchased and installed on Lake Osakis. There were also three Aqua Weed Stick and Bait disposal areas purchased which will be placed at lakes around the county to help prevent the spread of AIS.

Please report any suspicions of AIS to Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. In most cases, live specimens/samples need to be collected as well as the exact location it was found. For more information on AIS, water quality or lake information for Douglas County check out the website:

www.AlexAreaLakes.org

Shoreland Projects

Over the years many different landowners have reached out to the office requesting cost-share or technical assistance with a shoreland restoration project. This particular project was cost-shared through a federal 319 grant and completed this fall by landowners and district staff, which included a lot of



partnering with various other agencies, and the county for permitting. This project consisted of 109 feet of riprap, stabilization blankets, and 1,008 native plants that were plugs to be installed. Projects like this are done when the shore starts to erode and landowners are concerned enough to do something to prevent it from happening further. Not only does it help stabilize the shore, it provides some new color and vegetation to the area which prevents this from happening again, while making the area look pretty and colorful! If you have a project on your shore that could use some assistance, or have questions on if you could possibly get some cost-share to help with the project, please reach out to the office today to get an appointment set up!

One Watershed One Plan (1W1P)

The 1W1P program offers planning resources and staff support for groups working together to develop comprehensive watershed management plans. These plans break the traditional planning boundaries (county lines) to follow the water – from the watershed headwaters to its outlet. A completed, approved plan is a source of non-competitive funding for SWCD's to implement projects in prioritized areas. Douglas has five watersheds and is participating in four plans (Douglas SWCD opted out of the Red Eye due the small acreage within Douglas). Douglas is at the headwaters of four of the watersheds, (all the water here flows out of the county). The Pomme de Terre and Chippewa Rivers flow south to the Minnesota River while the Long Prairie, Red Eye, and Sauk Rivers all flow towards the Mississippi River.

Pomme de Terre Watershed – Plan has been completed for a few years now and has money available for shoreline, erosion, and manure management projects. If you live in the watershed (NW corner of Douglas County, near Lake Christina) and have a project in mind give us a call and we may be able to help get it done.

Sauk Watershed – Plan started implementing projects this fall. To date, one field erosion project in Douglas County have been completed. This watershed covers Smith and Osakis Lakes and the city of Nelson.

Long Prairie Watershed – Plan was approved by the State in October and will start implementing projects spring of 2023. In Douglas County, this watershed includes all the area between the Otter Tail County line and Pocket Lake, and from Garfield to the Todd County line.

Chippewa Watershed – Planning team is working on establishing goals and identifying priority areas to incorporate into their plan. This watershed starts in Otter Tail County and flows south, picking up water from Douglas, Grant, Stevens, Pope, Swift, Kandiyohi, and Chippewa Counties before reaching the Minnesota River in Montevideo. It is anticipated that the plan will be completed in 2023.

Minnesota Agriculture Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP)

The MAWQCP is voluntary and helps landowners and farmers to protect our state's streams, lakes and rivers. Farmers are the original stewards of our soil and water. To become certified, it is as easy as 123. 1- application, 2- assessments, and 3- benefits. Producers working on certification also have priority for technical and financial assistance (including exclusive funding pools) to implement practices that promote water quality. The program has been available statewide since 2016. To date over 1,276 farms are certified which covers 890,075 acres statewide.



Will and Becky Haffner and their five children were recently certified through the MAWQCP. They, operate a diverse farm encompassing land in Douglas, Otter Tail and Todd counties. They grow corn, soybeans, wheat and alfalfa. The use of reduced tillage on all row crop acres helps to maintain crop residue on the soil surface going into winter and also in the spring after planting. Managing crop residue protects the soils from both wind and water erosion.

They also add a diversity of livestock to the operation which is designed to serve as meat to table. Each year 50 feeder cattle, 60 hogs, 380 finished lambs are available for purchase. Livestock is carefully and intentionally raised with standards in mind and then sold to buyers via direct sales at farmers markets and their family website. The Haffners keep busy with growing crops, making hay and tending to livestock!

They use consulting services are through Pro-Ag in Clarissa, MN, which provides regular soil testing, field scouting and consulting services, and are working closely with the local NRCS office to improve manure utilization and pasture management. Rotational grazing is utilized presently but plan to expand the managed pasture acreage with the addition of watering facilities to accommodate rotational paddocks to support their pasture management plans.

More information on these certifications is located on the Douglas SWCD website, or by calling the office. Congratulations Haffner family!

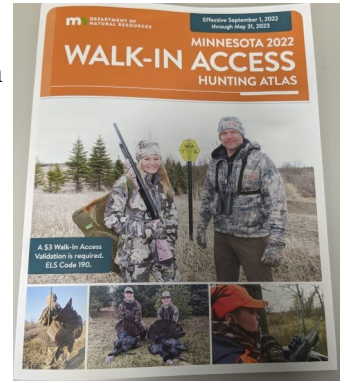


Walk-In Access Program (WIA)

Landowners may enroll private land in the Walk In Access program, allowing hunters with a WIA validation to access the land from Sept. 1 to May 31. Land must be at least 40 acres or contiguous with a WMA/WPA or another WIA, with priority to land enrolled in a conservation program. Most landowners choose to enroll their property for two or three years in this voluntary program and are paid a flat rate of \$18 per acre to allow walk-in hunting access.

Enrolled lands are covered under the Minnesota recreational use laws that limit landowner's liability. WIA land is for hunting only. Landowners agree to maintain the wildlife habitat through the hunting season; any management activities that may impact quality of habitat must be reported to the local SWCD or DNR WIA coordinator in advance. No motorized vehicles are allowed, and parking is along roads or in designated parking areas. No target practice, dog training, camping, horseback riding, or fires are allowed in WIA areas. DNR conservation officers handle any WIA violations as well as any hunting violations.

If you have any questions about the program, want a walk in access book, or if you are interested in enrolling your conservation land in the program, please stop by or call Kasey at the Douglas SWCD office.



Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) Loan Program

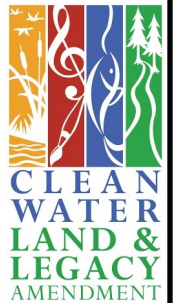
The Ag. BMP Loan Program is a water quality program that provides low interest loans to rural landowners, farmers, ranchers, and agricultural supply businesses. The goal of this program is to encourage landowners to implement BMP's which can prevent and/or reduce runoff from feedlots, farm fields, and other sources identified by the county's water plan or the watershed's Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Practices include: septic updates, conservation tillage equipment, variable rate planters, sprayers and manure spreaders.

There are three different roles of the Ag. BMP loan program: the borrower, local government, and lender.

The role of the borrower is to propose projects to the local SWCD for approval. If the borrower is able to meet the state eligibility requirements and can successfully demonstrate how it addresses local water quality priorities.

Local government (this is where the Douglas SWCD comes into play): the SWCD's role is to manage the projects and see them through. The county will approve the project and assist in locating a cooperating banker.

The lender is a local banker who evaluates the financial aspects of the project. With approval of the county and local bank, the project is implemented. Once completed, funds are sent from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) to the local bank and the loan is drawn up between the bank and the borrower. For more information please call the office or visit mda.state.mn.us/agbmploan.



Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)

Landowners are encouraged to check with the SWCD before beginning any project that may impact a wetland(s). The State of MN has wetland laws regulating the draining, filling, or excavation within wetlands. Federal law and state law requirements vary, so check both to ensure all laws are being followed.

In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in the installation of/or additions/upgrades to drain tile systems. These activities need to be reviewed by our staff to prevent wetland violations. It is also a good idea to check with our office before cleaning drainage ditches as such activities may impact wetlands. Some drainageways are classified as Protected Waters by the MN Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) and require permitting through that agency as well. One issue that occurs periodically is impacts to what are classified as Type 1 and/or Type 2 wetlands. The land can still be considered a wetland regardless if there is standing water or cattails present or not. We encourage you to contact our office if you are unsure if an area is a potential wetland.



2023 Tree Order Form
Douglas Soil & Water Conservation District
900 Robert Street, Suite 102
Alexandria, MN 56308
320-763-3191 Ext 3 www.douglasswcd.com

Office use only

Paid _____

Receipt _____

Date _____ Name _____ Phone _____
Mailing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Payment for trees must accompany order. Trees will be reserved for you upon payment only. Make check payable to Douglas SWCD.
No guarantee can be made for tree(s) survival.

Number of Bundles	Species of Trees	Growth Rate	Mature Height	Cost
	Small Shrubs (Sold in bundles of 25 trees @ \$47.50)			
	Arrowwood	Moderate	6-10'	
	Buffaloberry	Moderate	6-14'	
	Nanking Cherry	Rapid	6-10'	
	Black Chokeberry	Moderate	3-6'	
	American Cranberrybush	Moderate	8-12'	
	Gray Dogwood	Moderate	6-12'	
	Redosier Dogwood	Moderate	7-10'	
	Juneberry	Moderate	6-15'	
	Common Lilac	Mod-Rapid	8-12'	
	Large Shrubs/Small Trees (Sold in bundles of 25 trees @ \$47.50)			
**	Mountain Ash	Slow	20-30'	
*	Chokecherry	Mod-Rapid	12-25'	
**	Red Splendor Crabapple	Rapid	10-25'	
*	Nannyberry	Moderate	10-20'	
	American Plum	Mod-Rapid	10-20'	
*	Laurel Leaf Willow	Rapid	25-40'	
	Large Trees (Sold in bundles of 25 trees @ \$47.50)			
	Paper Birch	Rapid	50-70'	
**	Black Cherry	Moderate	50-70'	
**	Hackberry	Rapid	40-60'	
**	Red Maple	Mod-Rapid	50-70'	
*	Silver Maple	Rapid	50-80'	
**	Sugar Maple	Moderate	50-75'	
**	Bur Oak	Slow	40-70'	
**	Red Oak	Moderate	60-80'	
	Siouxland Poplar - Cottonless	Rapid	50-100'	
**	Black Walnut	Moderate	35-65'	
	Conifers (Sold in bundles of 25 trees @ \$47.50)			
	Northern White Cedar	Moderate	20-40'	
	Red Pine	Moderate	75-100'	
	White Pine	Rapid	75-100'	
	Black Hills Spruce	Moderate-Rapid	30-60'	
	Norway Spruce	Rapid	40-100'	
	Potted Conifers - 1 gallon (\$12 each)			
	Northern White Cedar	Moderate	20-40'	
	Red Pine	Moderate	75-100'	
	White Pine	Rapid	75-100'	
	Black Hills Spruce	Moderate-Rapid	30-60'	
	Norway Spruce	Rapid	40-100'	
	Special Order - Ask about other species before January 31st			

** Tree Tubes Strongly Recommended

* Tree Tubes Recommended

Planting Charges:

\$0.75 Our Tractor for Planting

\$2.00 Hand Planting Bare-Root

\$150 Min. Planting Charge In County

\$150 Min. Planting Charge + \$150 Transport Charge - Out of County

Fabric/Plastic Mulch:

_____ ft @ \$0.40 per foot

_____ fabric squares @ \$2.00 each

Tube/Stake Charges:

_____ 4' tubes @ \$3.00 each

_____ 5' stakes @ \$3.00 each

Fabric Installation:

\$0.60 per foot (\$150 Min)

\$2.00 per fabric square (\$150 Min)

Tree Cost

Tube Cost

Stake Cost

Fabric Cost

Staple Cost

Subtotal

7.380% Sales Tax

Planting Charges

Tube Installation

Fabric Installation

Grand Total

Tube/Stake Installation:

\$2.00 per tube/stake (\$150 Min)

Turf Staples:

_____ Turf Staples @ \$0.08 each

Please contact Douglas SWCD before ordering if interested in having us plant trees, install fabric or install tubes.

Douglas Soil and Water Conservation District



900 Robert Street Suite 102

Alexandria, MN 56308

320-763-3191 Ext. 3

Prsrt First Class Mail

U.S. Postage

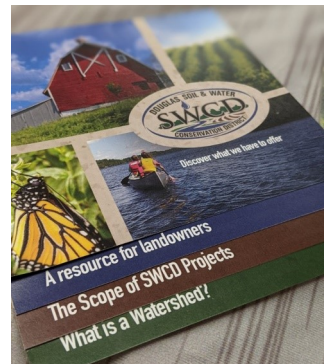
PAID

Permit No. 3876

Twin Cities, MN

Programs, Practices and Services

Douglas SWCD has put together this handy guide to communicate with landowners what we are all about! Information included inside is a great resource for landowners which briefly covers the history of the Douglas SWCD. It also provides a scope of SWCD programs, practices, services, and technical support for landowners throughout Douglas County. Lastly, it highlights what a watershed is and provides you information on where each one is in the county. If interested in one of these brochures, or have questions please call the office!



Conservation Trees, Planting and Fabric Mulch

2022 marked the 60th year Douglas SWCD sold trees. The tree open house was canceled but staff were available to take tree orders and answer questions. Douglas SWCD sold out of all the trees that were pre ordered! We had a beautiful start to spring with weather being very accommodating to getting all the trees planted in a timely fashion.

We are now taking orders for trees for spring 2023 plantings. Whether you are looking at planting a hedge, shelterbelt, living snow fence, field windbreak or wildlife habitat, we have the right shrubs and trees for all your needs. We offer a variety of small shrubs, large shrubs, small trees, deciduous trees and conifers.

Not only do we provide trees for your selection, we also provide services from planning to planting, fabric mulch installation and tree tube installation. Fabric mulch improves the survival rate of your trees by providing moisture retention and protection from weed competition. With the fabric mulch, post-planting maintenance is virtually eliminated! Tree tubes protect your trees from rodents and deer, encourage straight, sturdy trees and act as mini-greenhouses reusing the moisture from the trees. Our staff will gladly work with you and we can provide design assistance for farmstead shelterbelt, field windbreak, living snow fence and wildlife habitat plantings. If you are looking at completing a tree planting, you might be eligible for cost-share to help pay for the planting. There are federal and state programs that provide funding to help pay for the costs associated with a tree planting.

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