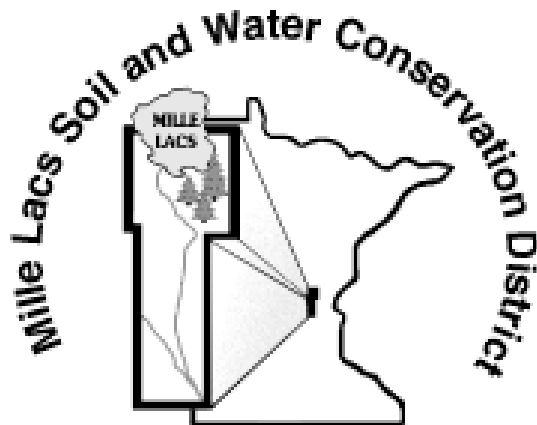


Mille Lacs Soil and Water Conservation District



2011 Annual Plan of Work

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The Mille Lacs Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is a local government unit organized in 1955, operating under a state charter issued in 1944 by the Minnesota Secretary of State and organized under the provisions of Chapter 103C of Minnesota Statutes as recodified in 1995. The Mille Lacs SWCD is governed by a Board of Supervisors composed of five members elected to four-year terms by the voters of Mille Lacs County. Representation on the Board is from five supervisor nominating districts. These supervisor nominating districts are based on similar geographic and property usages rather than by population to better serve the land use needs. Supervisors must live within their nominating district but are elected in a county wide election.

The 2011 Supervisors are:

District One: Linda Evans, appointed to fill term expiring at the end of 2012

District Two: Kurt Beckstrom, term expires at the end of 2012

District Three: Ray Schultz, term expires at the end of 2014

District Four: Barb Eller, term expires at the end of 2012

District Five: Bob Hoefert, appointed to fill term expiring end of 2014

The District staff for 2011 includes a full-time District Manager/County Agricultural Inspector and a full-time Conservation Technician/Assistant County Agricultural Inspector.

The year 2011 regular SWCD staff are:

District Manager/Co Ag Inspector: Susan Shaw

Conservation Technician/Assistant Co Ag Inspector: Lynn Carter

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides a full-time District Conservationist and Soil Conservation Technician. The 2011 NRCS District Conservationist is Shannon Carpenter, and the Soil Conservation Technician is Jordan Kudrna.

The District office is co-located with the NRCS office at the Ag Service Center, 1016 Fifth Street SE, Milaca, MN 56353.

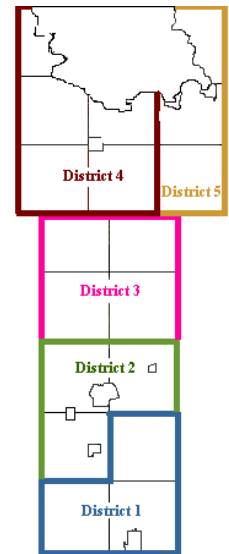
MISSION: IT IS THE MISSION OF THE MILLE LACS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO ASSIST AREA PEOPLE WITH SOIL AND WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

On February 10, 2009 the Mille Lacs SWCD Board of Supervisors adopted the Mille Lacs County Comprehensive Local Water Management Plan as its Comprehensive Plan for 2009 through 2011. This Annual Plan provides a mechanism for implementing the District's Comprehensive Plan by identifying the actions that should be performed during the calendar year 2011 and provides guidelines for the SWCD/NRCS staff to follow in order to achieve the District's objectives.

AREAS OF PRIORITY CONCERN:

The Mille Lacs County Local Water Resource Management Plan assessments identified the Rum River Watershed as an area of high priority, with specific concern in the Mille Lacs Lake sub-watershed, West Branch of the Rum River and Anoka Sand Plain areas.

Mille Lacs Lake watershed has been identified in the County Local Water Management plan as a high priority concern because it has a small watershed tightly encircling the lake that is



more than 70% developed with seasonal and year-round homes, businesses and other commercial interests. The majority of these parcels use on-site sewage treatment systems.

The West Branch of the Rum River has been identified as a priority concern because of the current agricultural land use and future development potential.

The Anoka Sand Plain area has been identified as an area of priority concern because of the sensitive soils and high water tables in the area.

November 2009 the SWCD Board completed a Long Range Strategic Planning process identifying District strengths, weaknesses and activities that the Board and staff felt should have increased attention and investment to meet emerging trends and needs in Mille Lacs County. Four priority activities identified were Urban BMPs and Stormwater, Rain Gardens, Rum River Surface Water Assessment, and Education.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES:

Eight objectives are outlined to meet Comprehensive Plan concerns and priorities, as well as SWCD Board strategic planning goals. Following each objective are specific actions planned by the SWCD for the upcoming year, which must be taken to meet that objective.

The Eight (8) broad-based categories for the 2011 Objectives are:

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OBJECTIVE ONE: ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THAT PROTECT, ENHANCE, MAINTAIN OR RESTORE SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER QUALITY.

Action Items:

- a. Work with the County to develop a process that provides a coordinated approach to resource management as it relates to development. This process would address natural resource issues that overlap the scope of individual efforts by planning & zoning entities, Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP), SWCD and others. This process will provide decision makers and land use planners with the information they need to make informed land use decisions by providing technical expertise. Specifically, best management practices (BMPs), focusing in the areas of erosion, sedimentation and stormwater control.
- b. Participate with the County in the development of a Geographic Information System (GIS) to assist in mapping natural resource development activities for improved analysis of impacts.
- c. Promote tree planting, provide technical assistance for species choice, planting, and management, and provide for the availability of large quantities of trees and shrubs for conservation plantings at an economical cost.

OBJECTIVE TWO: IMPROVE STORMWATER RUNOFF QUALITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

Action Items:

- a. Work with communities and homeowners regarding the management of stormwater inputs that they can control and improve.

OBJECTIVE THREE: MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE GROUNDWATER QUALITY THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

Action Items:

- a. Continue to provide free well water testing clinics for Nitrates annually in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.
- b. Coordinate groundwater resource information available to map the presence of known nitrates in groundwater.
- c. Promote the need to seal unused wells and provide or direct them to cost share assistance if available.
- d. Monitor groundwater levels of Department of Natural Resources non-irrigation observation wells.
- e. Continue to support a network of volunteer rain gauge monitors keeping daily precipitation records for the State Climatologic Office.

OBJECTIVE FOUR: ASSESS THE ABILITY OF WATER RESOURCES TO MEET THEIR DESIGNATED USES.

Action Items:

- a. Apply for funding through PCA to create monitoring plans of waters for a more comprehensive assessment of waters in Mille Lacs County.

- b. Assist the Snake River Watershed with their Clean Water Partnership and Groundhouse 319 Implementation grants by providing education and technical assistance. Provide technical assistance with the Snake River, Ann River and Knife River TMDLs.

OBJECTIVE FIVE: WORK WITH LAND MANAGERS, LAND OWNERS AND OPERATORS, REGARDLESS OF LAND USE TO ENCOURAGE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS).

Action Items:

- a. Use the BWSR State Cost Share program funds and other potential programs to solve as many resource concerns as possible.
- b. Assist the Mille Lacs County landowners by implementing the SWCD duties under the Rural Preserves Property Tax Program (RPPTP).
- c. Encourage the use of buffers around wetlands and waterways to provide space between which human activities such as recreation, lawns, parking, storage, agriculture, etc. and wetland functions like runoff filtration, wildlife habitat, etc. can coexist.
- d. Nutrient Management Planning - The District was awarded a Clean Water Fund Competitive Grant to provide outreach and complete nutrient and manure management plans with 9 farmers in the Rum River Watershed and 1 in the Groundhouse River Watershed on approximately 1,958 acres to reduce nutrient and bacteria runoff to surface water and groundwater.
- e. Maintain availability of a no-till grass interseeder and promote the planting grasses using no-till methods when appropriate.
- f. Promote and make available the AG Best Management Practices Loan program that provides low interest financing to farmers and rural landowners to encourage agricultural best management practices, and projects that reduce existing water quality problems caused by agricultural activities or failing septic systems.
- g. Develop a marketing resource on BMPs for landowners.

OBJECTIVE SIX: ADMINISTER THE COUNTY AGRICULTURAL INSPECTOR PROGRAM.

Action Items:

- a. Carry out Agricultural Inspector Duties as required by state law by providing regulation as per Minnesota Statute 18.81. The regulatory effort by this position provides protective and educational service to the public and regulated industries with the end result of protecting the public health, the environment, and the consumer.

Duties included in County work plan:

CODE: A= yes B= no currently dedicated hrs but willing to participate C= not participating	Duties	Actions
A	Noxious Weed (18.76-18.91)	Noxious weed inspection, GIS weed mapping, control, education, violation follow up, twp officer training, CAI training, administration
A	Seed (21.80-21.92)	Seed Sampling & Inspecting, # (20) samples per year, violation follow up, administration
C	Screenings (21.71-21.78)	
	Control programs for (below)	

	when requested in writing	
C	Invasive plant species	
C	Feed	
C	Fertilizer	
A	Pesticide	Pesticide Applicator Testing
C	Plant & Insect pests	
B	Other Ag Programs when requested in writing	
B	Administer Noxious Weed Funds	
A	Submit Reports & Attend Meetings	
A	Publish Notice	
A	Primary Contact for Plant Bio Control	Biological Control Implementation

OBJECTIVE SEVEN: PERFORM SWCD DUTIES UNDER THE MN WETLAND CONSERVATION ACT.

Action Items:

- a. Administer the SWCD duties of the MN Wetland Conservation Act. Protecting wetlands according to the Minnesota Wetlands Conservation Act (WCA) of 1991. Work with the County Environmental Services, providing support and technical services for WCA program. Develop Wetland Restoration plans and review monitoring plans of created/restored wetlands as required. Serve on Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP). House reference materials, providing technical information and services.
- b. Provide information and outreach to the public about the value of protecting wetlands.

OBJECTIVE EIGHT: PROVIDE INFORMATION AND OUTREACH TO THE PUBLIC AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ABOUT OUR SOIL AND WATER RESOURCES AND HOW THEY CAN BE PRESERVED OR RESTORED.

Action Items:

- a. Educate the public by developing and distributing materials that explain conservation issues in a manner that is clear and non-threatening.
- b. Incorporate workshops when appropriate into Rain garden, shoreline restoration or other conservation projects when appropriate.
- c. Host 5th Grade Conservation Education Day in Mille Lacs County.
- d. Promote and participate in the Area III and State Envirothon, High School competitions.
- e. Offer educational opportunities and presentations to schools, organizations, and the public.
- f. Provide information about natural resource protection to local papers, radio stations or other media.
- g. Utilize membership in the Milaca Area Chamber of Commerce to identify private sector business owners that will be long term stakeholders in watershed protection. Generate civic engagement.
- h. Maintain the SWCD website with current resource protection and assistance information.

ADMINISTRATION:

The administrative goal of the SWCD is to provide high quality public information, customer relations and organization management so as to increase public participation in conservation programs and insure adequate funding and staffing levels.

Action Steps:

- 1) Administration coordination, personnel management, legal oversight, financial management, board meeting responsibility, public information oversight, annual and long range planning.
- 2) Maintain a professional and efficient working relationship with cooperating agencies in order to address as many resource concerns as possible.
- 3) Promote a positive public image and excellent customer service. Cultivate communication with County Commissioners and local legislators to keep them informed of local conservation efforts.
- 4) Provide expenditure and project outcomes data accessible to the public on the District website in order to meet legal reporting requirements as well as provide transparency of activities to public.
- 5) Convene locally led conservation work group meetings to address local conservation needs assessment and identify priorities and priority areas.
- 6) Improve staff performance and coordination by holding regular staff meetings, updating position descriptions as necessary, and arranging training opportunities as appropriate.
- 7) The SWCD and NRCS prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.
- 8) Review and discuss the Civil Rights policy as contained in MOU with SWCD Board.

FUNDING:

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are funded through a variety of sources. Many of the program administration dollars and funding for landowner projects are state dollars allocated by the legislature and passed-through the State Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR). General operating funds are obtained from BWSR, counties, fees for service and grants or partnership agreements with the federal government or other conservation organizations. The conservation district is responsible for administration of the funds in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, chapter 103C.

MILLE LACS SWCD WORKLOAD ANALYSIS
JANUARY 1, 2011 TO DECEMBER 31, 2011

	Annual Work Plan Objectives	Hours			Funding Source
		Manager	Technician	Total	
	Administration	856	0	856	BWSR-General Services County/SWCD
1	Encourage development patterns that protect, enhance, maintain or restore surface and groundwater quality	100	308	408	NRBG-LWM
2	Improve stormwater runoff quality throughout the county	100	300	400	NRBG-LWM
	Maintain or improve groundwater quality throughout the county	50	50	100	NRBG-LWM
3	Assess the ability of water resources to meet their designated uses	50	50	100	TMDL
5	Work with land managers, land owners and operators, regardless of land use to encourage best management practices (bmps)	100	400	500	NRBG-LWM CWF
4	Administer the County Agricultural Inspector program	100	200	300	County
	Perform SWCD duties under the MN Wetland Conservation Act	200	0	200	NRBG-WCA
6	Provide information and outreach to the public and local government about our soil and water resources and how they can be preserved or restored	100	400	500	BWSR-General Services
	Meetings and Training's	50	50	100	County/SWCD
	Annual, Holiday, Sick Leave	374	322	696	County/SWCD
	Total Staff Hours Needed	2080	2080	4160	

REVENUES**County Misc. Revenues**

Mille Lacs County Annual Allocation	\$	61,275
NRBG Water Management Plan	\$	11,296
NRBG Wetland Conservation Act (WCA)	\$	5,000
Subtotal - County	\$	77,571

Other Grants:

Snake River Watershed Assistance		
Snake River Watershed TMDL	\$	-
Anne River TMDL	\$	-
Groundhouse TMDL Implementation Plan (319)	\$	2,000
Subtotal - Other Grants	\$	2,000

State Revenues

BWSR Project Grants (C/S)	\$	6,724
State General Services Grant Funding:		
Easement Services (RIM)	\$	729
General Services	\$	18,259
Subtotal - State	\$	25,712

Charges for Services

Tree Program sales	\$	25,000
Interseeder/Tree Planter Program	\$	500
DNR groundwater level monitoring contract	\$	960
Co Ag Inspector charge for pesticide applicator testing	\$	125
Rural Preserve Property Tax Program fees	\$	400
Subtotal - Charges for Services	\$	26,985

Interest & Misc. Revenue

\$ 800

SUBTOTAL - ALL REVENUES \$ 133,068*Amount to be spent from Deferred Grants* \$ 7,000**2011 TOTAL REVENUES** \$ 140,068**EXPENDITURES****Personnel Expenses**

Employee Wages (2 full time employees)	\$	67,207
Supervisor Meeting Compensation	\$	4,000
Medical Ins./DCP	\$	15,787
FICA/Medicare	\$	5,214
PERA	\$	4,955
Subtotal - Personnel	\$	97,163

District Operations

Computer IT + LAN/WAN (NRCS)	\$	3,159
Dues	\$	2,937
Education, Promotion	\$	300
Employee Expenses/Training	\$	2,700
Liability Insurance & Bonding	\$	3,000
Phone	\$	800
Postage	\$	500
Rent	\$	4,750
Supervisor Expenses/Training	\$	4,000
Vehicle Expenses	\$	2,000
Website (grant reporting requirement)	\$	400
Subtotal - Operations	\$	24,546

District Operations - Supplies

\$ 500

Subtotal - Supplies \$ 500**District Project Expenditures**

Tree Program cost of goods	\$	20,000
Interseeder/Tree Planter maintenance	\$	400
Ag BMP revolving loan program administration	\$	200
BWSR Project Grants (C/S)	\$	5,379
Subtotal - Project Expenses	\$	25,979

2011 TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 148,188**Over (Under) Expenditures** \$ (8,120)